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SALTSHAKER



TRINITY
Methodist Church

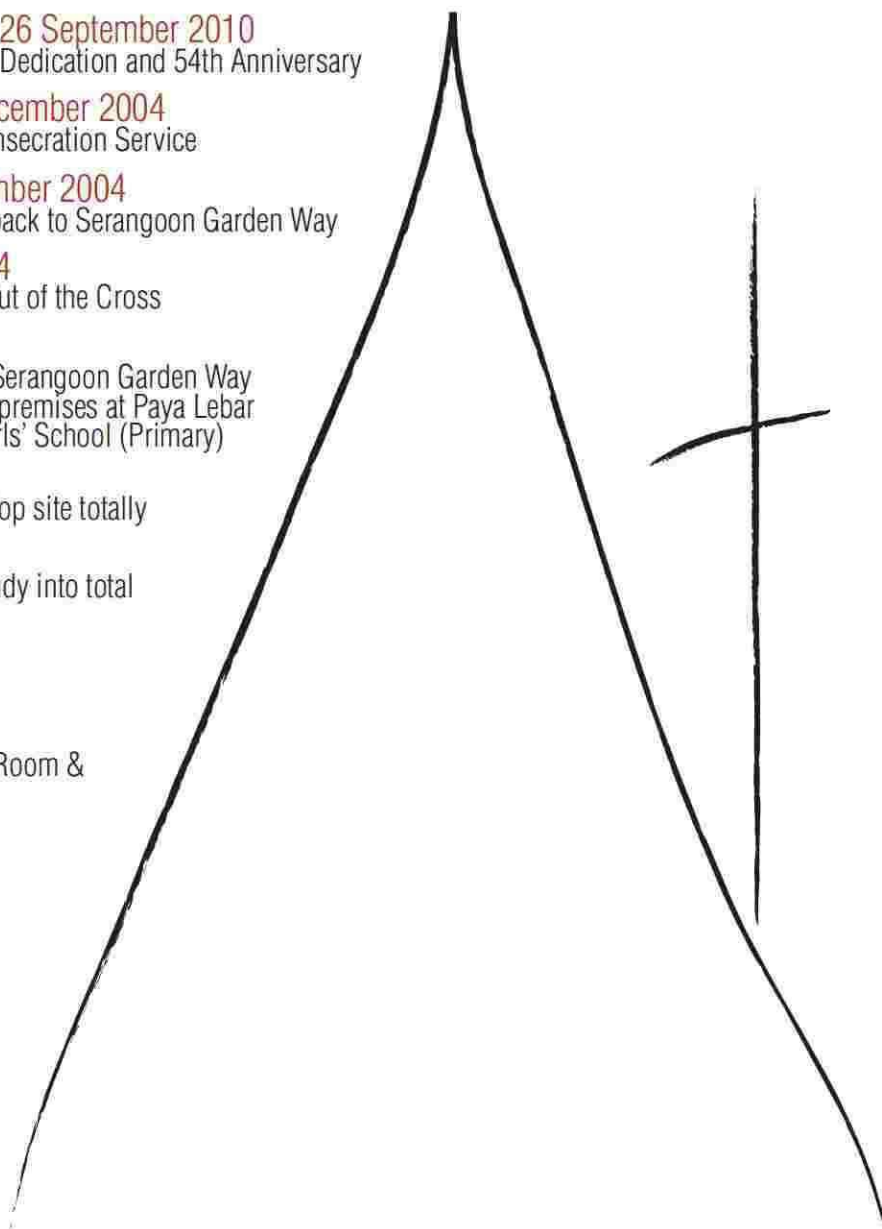
MICA (P) 158/09/2010

Special Edition

Journey of Faith



- 26 September 2010
Dedication and 54th Anniversary
- December 2004
Consecration Service
- November 2004
Move back to Serangoon Garden Way
- July 2004
Topping Out of the Cross
- 2002
Move out of Serangoon Garden Way
to temporary premises at Paya Lebar
Methodist Girls' School (Primary)
- 2000
Decision to redevelop site totally
- 1988
Dedication of TEC. Study into total
redevelopment
- 1984
TEC completed
- 1978
Addition of Choir Loft, Upper Room &
Basement
- 21 February 1965
Dedication Ceremony
- 17 February 1963
TMC officially open for services
- 10 June 1962
Groundbreaking Service
- May 1962
Tender accepted for construction of
Sanctuary
- January 1959
Purchase of land for \$59,486.49



"I remember the welcome, generous offer from St. Peter's for the use of their sanctuary, for worship on Sundays, the happy procession of palm-waving children from Cowdray Avenue to the church on Palm Sunday, and the bold adventure, under Olin Stockwell's encouragement, of buying the site at the corner of Lichfield Road for future development. Should we build a hall and classrooms that could be used by the whole community, while continuing to use St. Peter's for worship? Or should we plan a church building of our own? The debate was long and serious, but the decision eventually clear-cut."

-- Rev Christopher Smith
TMC's Silver Jubilee, 11th Sept 1982

"You began as the early church did in biblical times, as a church in a house (Rom 16.5; Col 4.15). You grew by the warmth of your fellowship, by the certainty of your faith in the living Christ, and by your faithfulness to the task of making your love real in Christ-like service. Now we bid you to press on to the new achievements of Christian witness in the sure knowledge that He who has been your life in days gone by will be your strength in the days to come."

-- Esther and Rev Olin Stockwell
(former principal of Trinity
Theological College), July 1982,
in the year of TMC's Silver Jubilee

"The Psalmist describes in the first Psalm "a tree planted by streams of water". The leaves provide shade and relief to passersby. The fruits provide refreshment and joy. What a wonderful picture for a local church! – called to provide spiritual shelter and relief, and also spiritual food and nourishment to people. Your church is challenged to continue this great ministry".

-- Bishop Rev Dr Robert Solomon
Sept 2006, TMC's 50th Anniversary

Once Upon A Time

by P Sathiasingam
Honorary Steward (Sept 2005 -)



They had not a single cent in the kitty.

But the pioneers of Trinity Methodist Church made the bold and landmark decision to buy a piece of land for \$59,486.49.

That was in 1959. And hence began the church's journey of faith, one that the pioneers undertook with much fear and trembling.

Yet, the prayers of the faithful were answered as the present site was received as a divine gift from God. Divine because, amongst other things, TMC was the last of the Methodist Churches to be blessed with a 999-year leasehold property. Divine because it took only two years for the debt to be fully settled through pledges from members, fundraising projects, generous donations from individuals and sister Methodist churches.

Some things just do not change. History **does** repeat itself.

Throughout our 54-year history, TMC's members and friends have given cheerfully towards the building of the Sanctuary, the addition of the Choir Loft (now known as the Upper Gallery) and the old Upper Room, the Trinity Education Centre (TEC), and the current complex.

The decision to redevelop the house in which the Lord is worshipped today was not hastily conceived in a day, a week or even a month. As early as 1988, just four years after the TEC was completed, the requirements of God's ministries at TMC catalysed a study into the redevelopment of 34 Serangoon Garden Way. This contemplation was to take seven years, and a further 10 years lapsed as TMC tried to find a way to alleviate the lack of space. Eventually, the gavel struck and the decision

was made to proceed with the redevelopment in 2000.

God has led the way in this leg of TMC's journey of faith. Barely three months after moving out from the church premises, on 18 March 2003, the Sanctuary roof caught fire due to hot works. This was a blow because it was the intention to leave the Sanctuary untouched due to its sentimental value. However, God had other plans and the restoration of the Sanctuary has been a real blessing. Not only do we have the original structure, it is structurally better than the original Sanctuary as metal struts have replaced the former timber ones. These improvements were made at no cost to TMC as the contractor's insurers picked up the tab.

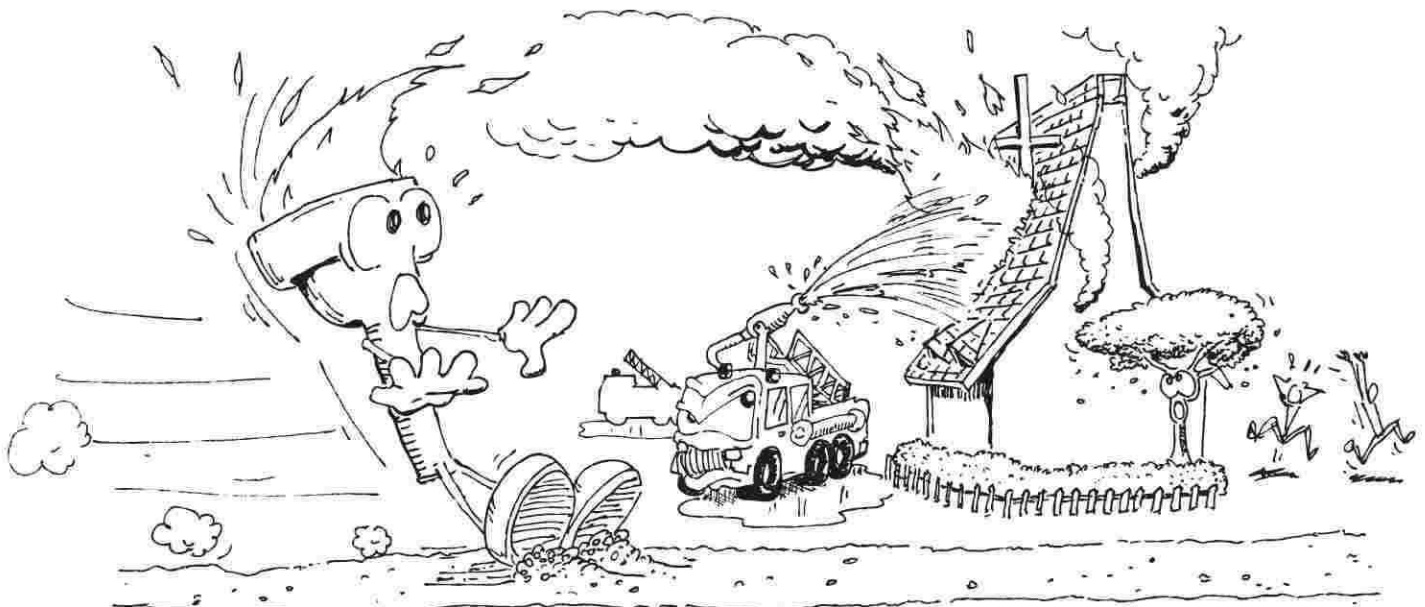
On a rainy day on 31 Jul 2004, a Topping-Out with the Cross ceremony was held at TMC. Bishop Rev Dr Robert Solomon, referring to the fire that destroyed the Sanctuary roof, reminded us that, in the Old Testament, fire and rain were symbolic of God's presence.

We cannot doubt that God has been present with us.

How else could we have discharged our debt, two years ahead of the projected time?

For me, the dedication of TMC on 26 Sep 2010 is almost the "alpha and omega" of my own journey of faith (I say "almost" because who knows what the Lord has in store!). I have been involved with the façade changes of TMC for almost 54 years. Yes! For as long as TMC has been in existence. And I am truly in the Lord's debt. I hope that members and friends of TMC who have given sacrificially in support of all her building projects will join me in saying:

"The Best of all is, God is with Us"
- John Wesley.



To Proceed, Or Not To Proceed? That Was The Question

by Pastor Ivan Tan
LCEC Chairperson (September 1999 – January 2003)



It was late at night and the discussion among the Local Church Executive Committee (LCEC) members had gone on for hours. Opinions were expressed with frankness and openness. To redevelop the land or not?

Then, someone stood up.

He took a personal stand. The redevelopment project is necessary for the sake of the next generation, he said.

The room fell silent. Deafeningly so.

And then, one by one, they stood up, in one completely spontaneous and concerted act.

In those few moments, led by the Spirit, the LCEC members made the unanimous decision to proceed with the redevelopment project.

That happened at an LCEC meeting in January 2000, when the project was formally proposed by the Church Redevelopment Committee (CRC).

The proposal to redevelop the premises was the fruit of several studies done in the 1990s regarding the space requirements of TMC's growing church ministries. It turned out to be one of the most contentious issues in my term in office.

That night, almost all LCEC members took turns to voice their concerns. We were all acutely aware that this had to be a decision led by the Holy Spirit.

There were advocates for redeveloping the land - the additional space was required to keep pace with the growth of the church and the redevelopment would demonstrate good stewardship of the 999-year leasehold land on which TMC sits. Others were keen to strike a balance between the likely cost of the project and the money that could be used to help the poor and/or fund new ministries and missions work.

That night, it came down to that significant moment - when that LCEC member took a stand and invited the rest of the LCEC to join him. The vote - by show of standing feet and raised hands - was unanimous, and there were no abstentions. With this clear mandate, the CRC launched the redevelopment project with the bolstered confidence that united brothers and sisters in Christ give to one another.



"Give Us Some Space!"



by Rev Philip Lim Min Hock
Pastor-in-Charge (August 1998 to December 2006)

It all started with the Youth Ministry asking for more space for their small group meetings. Every nook and corner of the church was already occupied by one ministry or another.

"Reclaim some of the dead spaces in the church." That was the initial response.

An architect, Gregory Raeside, whose child was with the TMC Kindergarten, was asked to advise on how we could enlarge useable space.

One thing led to another and the renovation project evolved into the S\$12 million redevelopment project instead.

When plans were being drawn up and submitted to the authorities for approval, 9/11 (in New York) happened. The world was thrown into a crisis.

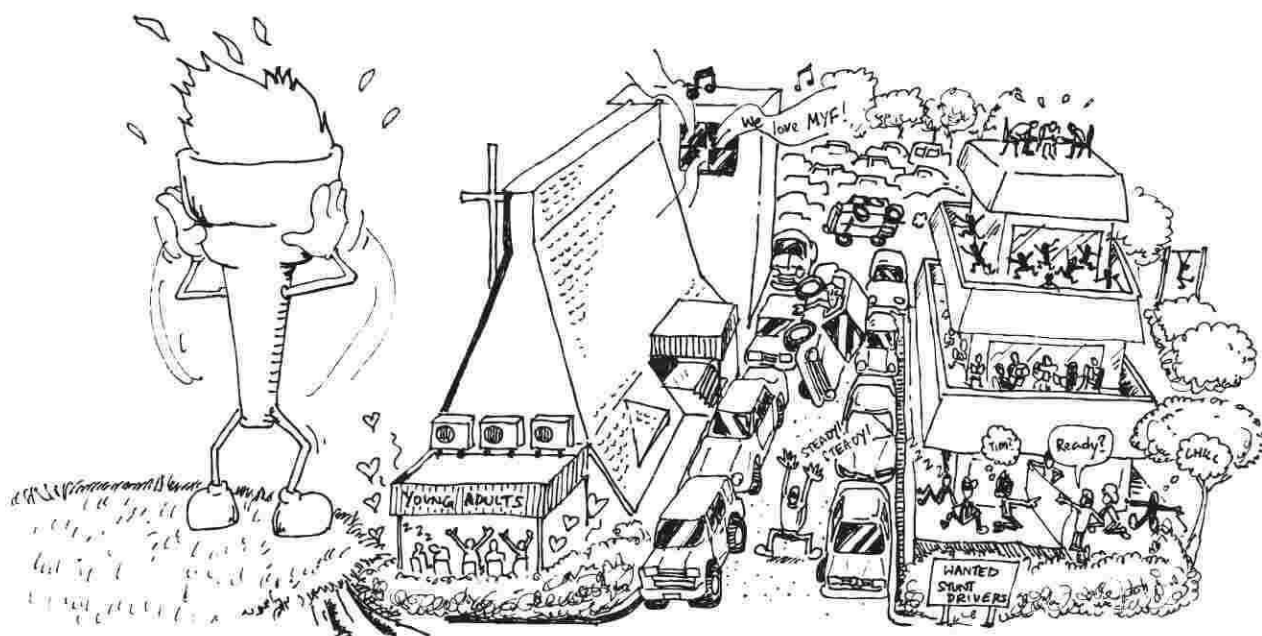
With an uncertain future ahead of us, as the Pastor-in-charge then, I thought it best that we revert to the original renovation plans, which would have been more manageable.

But I thank God that the leadership did not budge. Instead, the leaders stood up to pledge their support for the redevelopment of the church. And that was when the redevelopment of the church went full-swing.

When the redevelopment project was launched, I had many people tell me to my face: "That's too big a project for Trinity. You don't have the kind of leaders or members to do it!"

Perhaps, but perhaps not as later events have proven. I thank God that Trinity has had leaders and members who were faithful to God and went the extra mile to see to the completion of the project.

I thank God and congratulate Trinity, all her past and present leaders, members and worshippers who have worked hard with the result that the church is now debt-free to be dedicated God's glory!



Row, Row, Row Your Boat

by Dr Hum Sin Hoon (LCEC Chairperson, Jan 2003 – Aug 2007)



A \$12m ship sitting and rotting away in the harbour. This was the vision of TMC which the Lord gave one of our leaders soon after the redevelopment project began.

Did this mean that we were not to spend \$12m in redeveloping the church? I agonised before the Lord over this.

The Lord's answer came quickly. He assured me that He is merciful, and that the vision was a warning that we would, indeed, rot away if we did not build a **spiritual** church even as our physical premises were being built. We needed to be spurred on by the Lord during our time out in the wilderness at Paya Lebar Methodist Girls' School (Primary) (PLMGS (P)) to build a spiritual TMC, to move the new \$12m ship out of the harbour in order to pick up the many others out there who needed the Lord's salvation.

This we did as we pressed on towards the vision of TMC "as a Church where Every Member Experiences the Reality and Work of the Holy Spirit and Understands and Practises Discipleship".

Things moved swiftly in 2003. We moved out of the Serangoon Garden premises and held our first service at PLMGS (P) on the first Sunday of January 2003. We had expected a drop in Sunday attendance, but it was still sad to observe it when it actually happened.

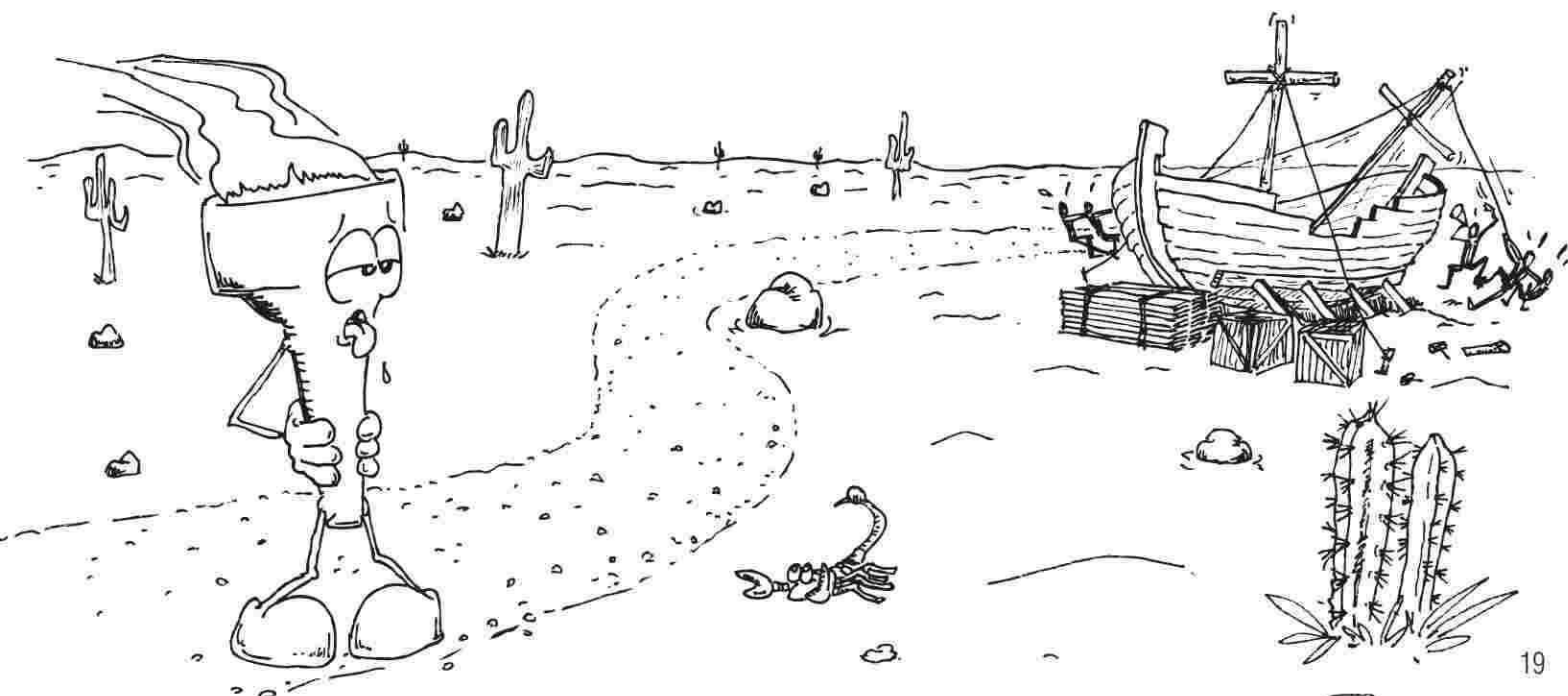
Gradually, though, attendance picked up as people adjusted their travelling patterns and found their way to the school premises. Before we could get comfortable, however, SARS struck. Attendance dropped significantly. Never before had the church witnessed the temperature-taking and contact-tracing measures that were put in place, and suffered by worshippers good-naturedly.

Soon after, a fire broke out at the Serangoon Garden site which made the local news – three fire engines were engaged in the fire-fighting. In spite of some of these discouraging moments in our journey, however, TMC's Mandarin Ministry was birthed during our sojourn in the wilderness of PLMGS (P) and its exponential growth was enormously encouraging.

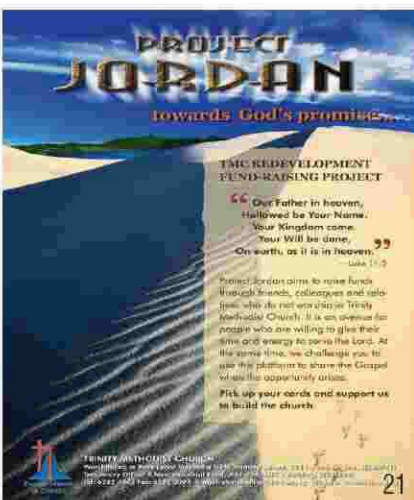
One bright Saturday afternoon, many months into the redevelopment, Chan Chong Hiok and I walked into the worksite at Serangoon Garden Way. The old sanctuary had been pulled down because of the fire, and there was one huge hole in the ground as digging had reached down into the basement three level.

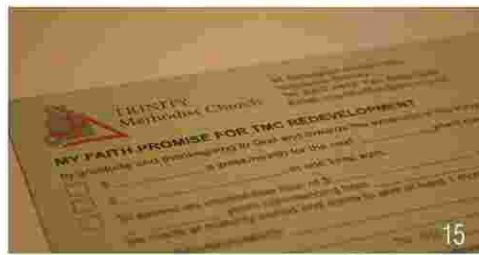
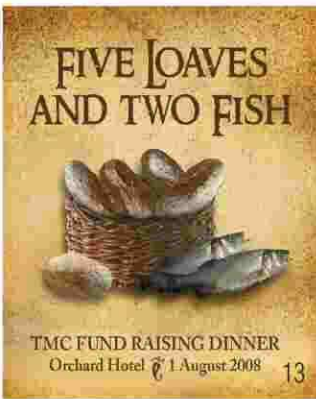
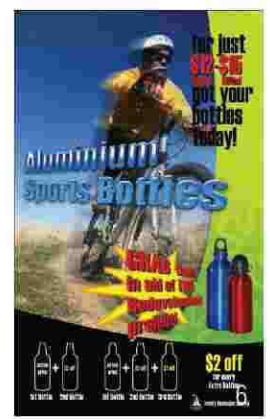
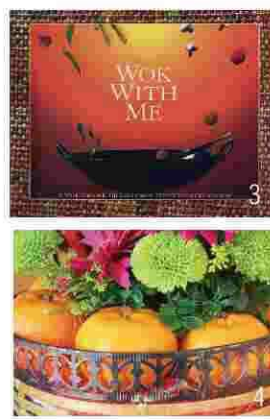
Chong Hiok and I surveyed the place quietly. This was surely holy ground that we were standing on. We felt moved to pray. I remember Chong Hiok said a specific prayer for me, declaring that the Lord had called me to serve as His leader during this particular period, and asking the Lord to give me His special strength. I felt the presence of His Spirit in that quiet but solemn moment. I was deeply encouraged to press on.

In October 2004, we moved back joyfully into our redeveloped premises. We needed to pay a \$12m bill for the project, but we knew the Lord would provide as long as we remained focussed on building a Spirit-filled TMC. The Lord is our Provider – He has provided. May we press on towards the goal, hungering for Him, worshipping Him, even as we rededicate a debt-free physical TMC to Him!



FUND RAISING THROUGH THE YEARS





1. A beautiful reproduction of Van Gogh's Starry Night for the Colour Your World auction.
2. One of the many sumptuous food sales held by the ladies of the WSCS.
3. "Wok With Me", a compilation of members' own recipes.
4. A Chinese New Year floral basket sold by the Floral Ministry.
5. One of the brochures for the Redevelopment Project.
6. Aluminium water bottles were sold.
7. The Youth Ministry's Basketball Tournament.
8. Mrs Jane Lim's workout classes.

9. The Youth Ministry's Carnival.
10. Cushion covers from the Tomb Raiders' sale of Cambodian products.
11. Mr & Mrs Sean Goh's sale of silk shawls.
12. The Senior Ministry's coin tin initiative.
13. "Five Loaves & Two Fish" Fundraising dinner.
14. One of the WSCS's mini bazaars held over the years.
15. A Faith Promise For TMC Redevelopment card.
16. The Columbarium.
17. Swarovski Jewelry sales

18. Participants from the golf tournament held in 2007.
19. Family Aspirations small group's sale of teddy bears.
20. A donation plaque for one of the pews in the Sanctuary.
21. Poster for Project Jordan.
22. Participants of the Amazing gRace car rally making a dash at one of the stations.
23. A photograph from the September page of the 2006 fundraising calendar.
24. A photo from the Shoot-For-Fund photo studio.



Man Proposes, God *disposes*



by Robert Yeo
Finance Chairperson (August 2006 – July 2010)

We, in TMC, are privileged to have walked together on this journey of faith as we redeveloped our Serangoon Garden premises. During this time, we have sharpened one another and sharpened our understanding of God's Word and work in our lives.

This has been so in my life.

"As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:9)

I was asked to be the auctioneer for an auction of photo prints, one of TMC's many fund-raising efforts. I had had no previous experience as an auctioneer, but my protestations were to no avail. I was told that I have a loud voice and was therefore ideal for the task. This did not seem very logical to me, but I was the Chairman of the Fund-Raising Committee then. Scared as I was, I clung on to faith that God would provide.

Fast forward to the night of the auction. I surveyed the people present. They were mostly retirees and children. I began to lose confidence. I told Pastor Philip (TMC's Pastor-in-charge then) that I did not think that we could meet the target of \$10,000. I told him that I would purchase one photo print at \$3,000 if response at the auction was poor.

But God had His own plans. We started the auction with the photo print "God is Love" and ended with the last photo print "Be still for I am God".

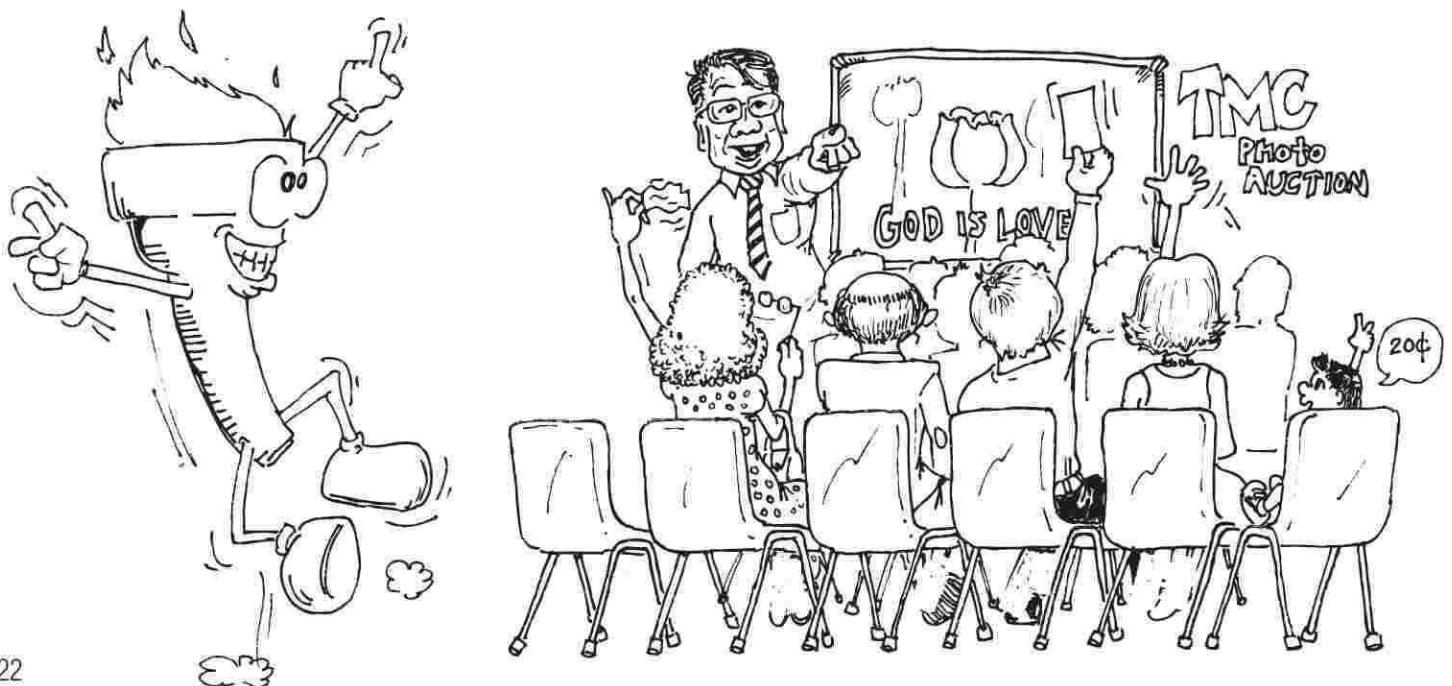
Thanks to the principal of Paya Lebar Methodist Girls' School (Primary), the late Ron Teo, Norman Ng, Lim Khia Teck, William Goh, Albert Yeo and many others, we raised \$27,132. This far exceeded our (my) expectations. This was a story of God's love for TMC and how we, as His children, must learn to be still in order to listen to Him.

Some of us may recall that we were hoping to be debt-free by the time of our 50th Anniversary celebrations in 2006. This never came to pass.

What man proposes, God disposes. It seemed that we were always meant to focus on God (and not the money), trusting Him to walk with us on this journey ... patiently.

The good Lord did not seem to be in a hurry then for TMC to discharge her debt, but when He blessed, we seemed to race ahead with wings. Two years after our 50th Anniversary, we held a fund-raising dinner, Five Loaves & Two Fish. There was no special occasion, no real reason to throw a dinner, no incentives given – just a sit-down dinner. But the Lord gave more than \$400,000.

My response to all this? We need to continue to strengthen our faith in Him and acknowledge that He is our supreme leader. We need only place our burdens on Him and He will give us rest. On 26 Sep 2010, truly, we can only give the good Lord all our thanks for His blessings, mercy and love for TMC.



Open Hands Give And Receive

by Rev Dianna Khoo
Pastor-in-Charge (January 2007 -)



When I took up the appointment as Pastor-in-charge of TMC in January 2007, I found a congregation that was quite tired of all their fund raising efforts which had been ongoing for a number of years. It was "fund-raising fatigue" that was pretty much felt across the entire congregation.

In some ways, a large looming multi-million dollar figure seemed always to feature as a cloud above our heads whenever we discussed new ministries or even the day-to-day running of the church. There was a constant refrain as to why things and ministries needed to wait until we had discharged all our debt. I admit to becoming somewhat discouraged having to hear this refrain countless times in various different ways. But still, I knew that we needed to press on, and I believed that God would provide.

He proved this several times including at the "Five Loaves and Two Fish" fundraising dinner of November 2008. We raised over \$400,000 from that one sit-down dinner alone. It amazed us and gave us a glimpse of how much God could and would do to supply our needs if only we exercised our faith. Over the past couple of years, through other focussed efforts and lessons on giving, we have indeed been so blessed such that the entire debt has been discharged with surplus in the coffers.

Let me share with you a story I read from Suze Orman, a financial guru. She regularly advises people how they can make or save more money. But she also tells people that they should give away their money to others totally unrelated to them.

Suze tells this story to illustrate her point. In Mexico, in the Mercado, Suze saw a man who was selling parrots. All of the parrots were perched with no cage, yet the parrots were not flying away. Suze talked to the man to find out

how he kept the birds from flying away. He told her that he trained them to believe that if they let go of the perch, they would die.

Suze says: "And that's how we are about our money. We clutch it so tightly that we believe that if we let go of it we will die. However, what we need to realize is that it is only when we open our hands to give away what we hold so dear that our hand is open to receive the gifts that can come to us. We cannot receive anything with closed fists. Only open hands can give and receive."

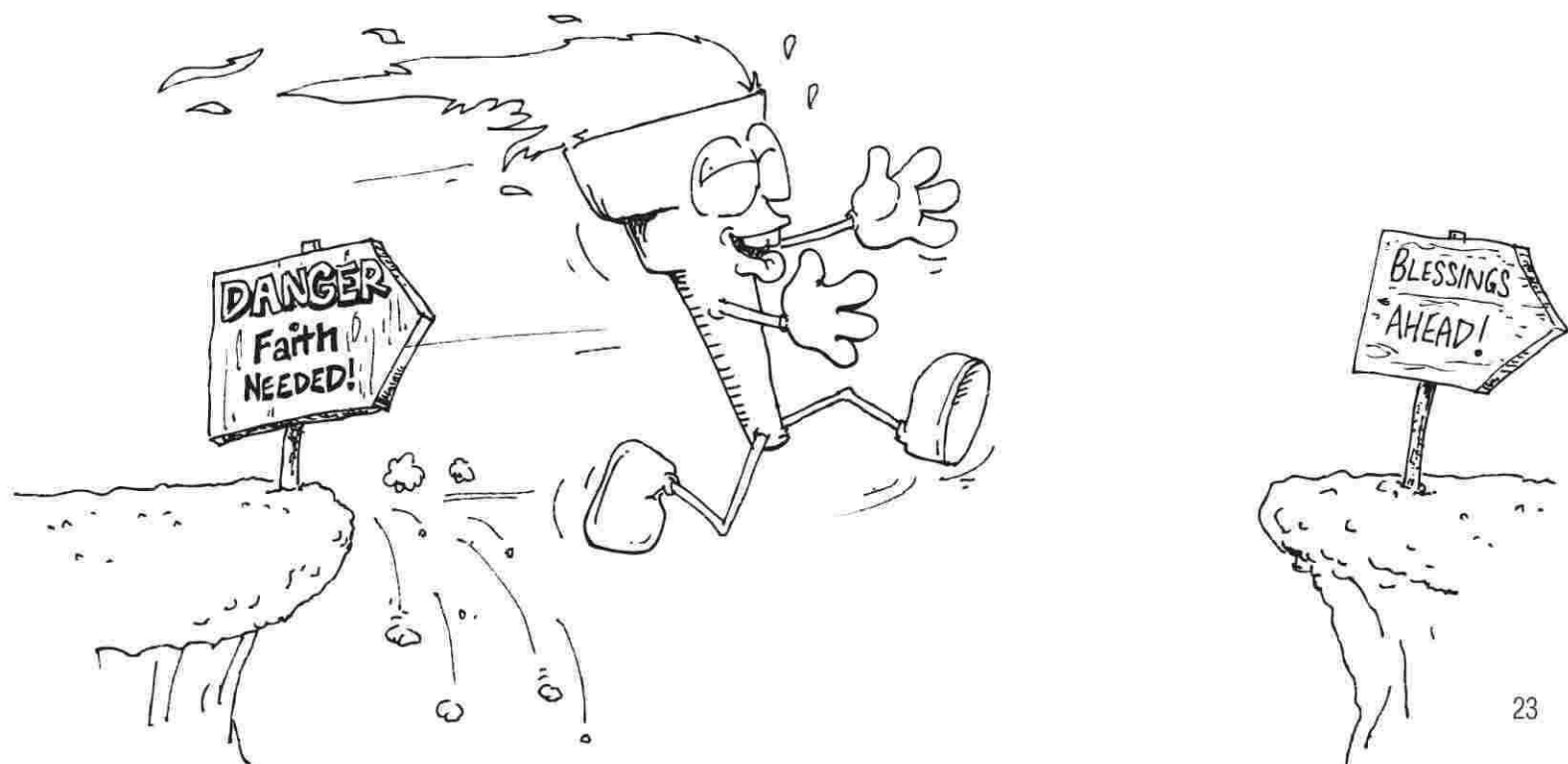
I find it fascinating that a completely secular financial guru gives advice that has such a profoundly religious truth. When we focus on trying to control every little thing, we make "Control" our God. However, when we listen deeply and intently to God's voice regarding the use of whatever little we have, we discover that God provides.

Looking ahead, I hope TMC will, indeed, listen deeply and walk courageously, knowing that God has blessed us, and He will continue to bless us if we would just learn to trust Him and allow Him to mould and shape us into His likeness.

My hope for TMC is that we will move out of our comfort zones and reach out to touch more lives in our community, not merely confining our efforts to our existing members, but bringing the good news of His salvation to all. As our theme verse reminds us:

"Rooted and built up in Christ,
Strengthened in Faith,
Overflowing with thankfulness" (Col 2:7)

And so we embark on our next journey of faith with God, connecting with Him, with one another, and with others around us!



Lord of the Harvest, Giver of Seed

by Lim Khia Teck
LCEC Chairperson (Sep 2007 – present)



Where was the \$12m going to come from? That was the big question for TMC when we decided to take on the challenge of redeveloping the church. It was truly a big step of faith as we had no idea how we would be able to raise the funds.

We wondered whether we would be able to keep up with the interest payments for the construction loan which ran into tens of thousands of dollars every month. One church leader was even ready to mortgage his house to help us in case we ran into cash flow problems.

Thankfully, by God's grace, that was never necessary. Instead, we saw the whole church pull together to each play a part to raise the money. It has been heartening to see the TMC family unite with cheerful hearts and encouraging one another along the way, from the young children to our seniors, each contributing their gift of money and labour to expand God's tent so that many more lives may be touched by our loving Father in heaven. We also saw our sister churches and other well wishers come alongside to help us. Truly God has shown us His faithfulness and provision to allow TMC to pay off the redevelopment loans in a relatively short time. I recall Rev Philip Lim, our pastor-in-charge then, telling us when we began the project that God would never leave a church in debt if our hearts were obedient to His calling.

Indeed, God has been with us and led us along this journey of faith, especially through the early days when the mountain of debt seemed so high, and the times of economic downturn when we thought the people would stop giving. I am happy to say that through it all, we have overcome the difficult times as a church family, watched over by the Lord God Almighty, our Rock and our Redeemer.

With this redevelopment project completed, TMC will be putting her energy and resources into continuing the good work of our forefathers, reaching out to our community and beyond with the love of Christ, teaching them everything our Lord has commanded us.

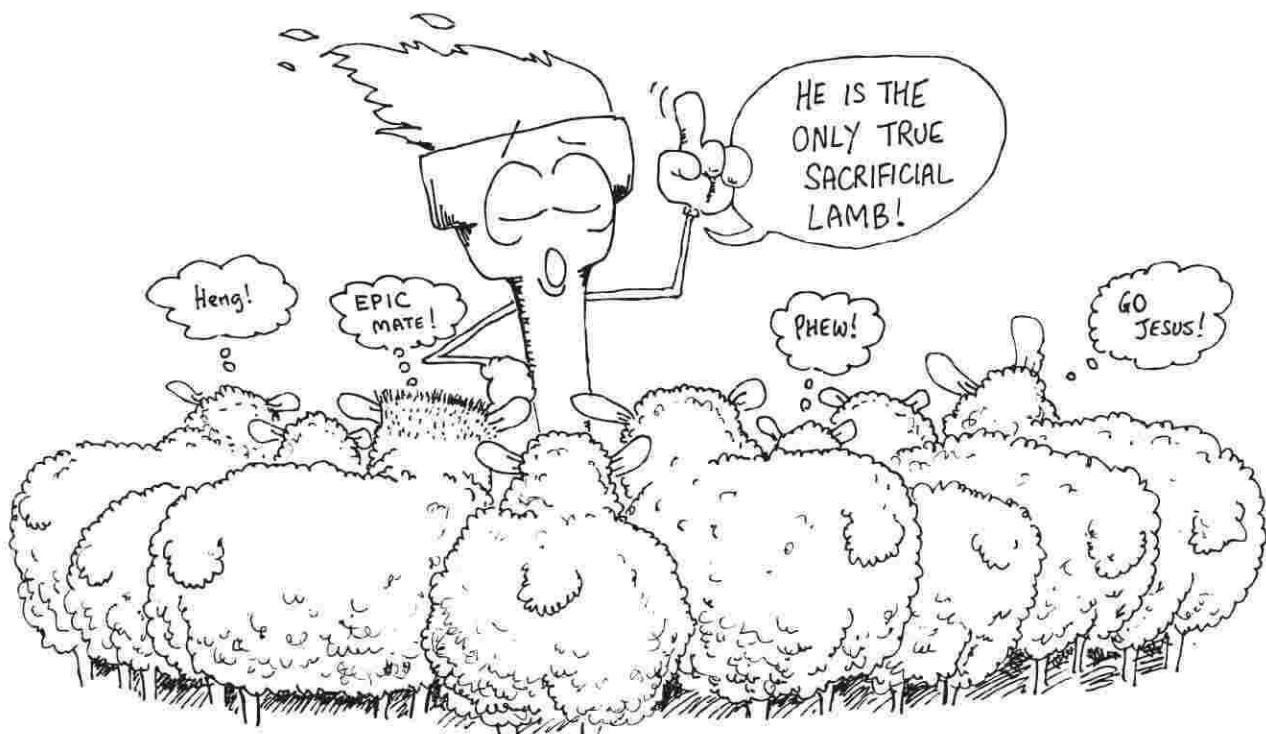
Locally, we want to give more of our attention to the community touch points we have set up at Contact 123 IT Centre in Serangoon North, as well as the St Luke's ElderCare Centre in Serangoon Central (in partnership with Yio Chu Kang Chapel). Already, we have made many friends at these centres, and some of them have come to visit us at TMC. It is our hope and prayer that many more will do so and find the joy of knowing Jesus as Lord at TMC as more of us at TMC set aside the precious commodity of time to befriend the people who visit these centres.

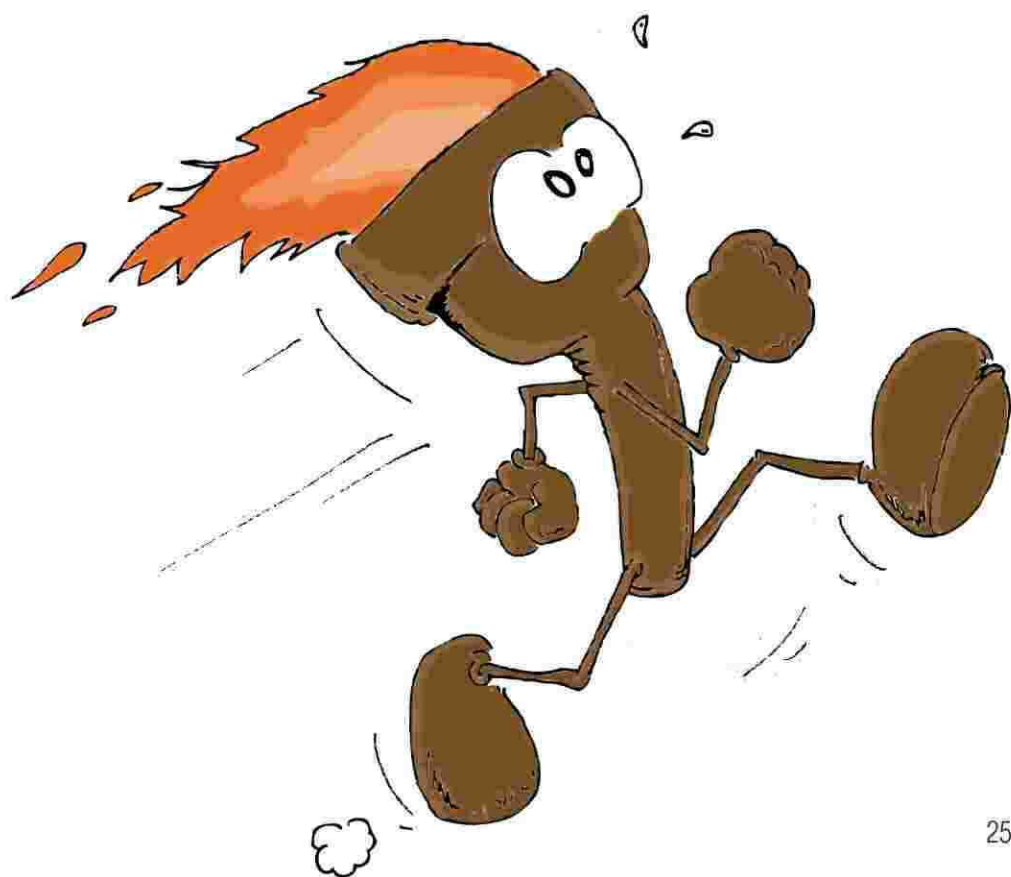
We also hope to extend a warm embrace to pre-school children, youths and their families through the TMC Kindergarten, and our work with the Boys' and Girls' Brigades. We hope that the Lord will use us as conduits to give them the opportunity to know Jesus.

Overseas, we remain committed to helping our sister church in Cambodia, Takmau Trinity Methodist Church, grow into a healthy, self-sustaining church. We thank God that the ministries started by our missionaries Jacob Cheng and Kevin Lowe have gained traction, and we will faithfully support them by our regular presence in Cambodia, our prayers, gifts, service and friendship. By God's leading, we hope we can truly be a blessing to the Khmer people through our ministries in Cambodia.

In the gospel of Matthew 9, we are told "when Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.'"

Today, many in our community, and many more in Cambodia, are indeed like sheep without a shepherd. Let TMC seek the Lord of the harvest. May He stir up our hearts, that we may avail ourselves and our resources, ready to be sent forth into His harvest field.





Join us on
this journey
of faith in the
ministries God
has entrusted
us with...





The Mission Is Still the Same – Proclaim and Live the Truth in Jesus' Name

There was a time in TMC when missions was seen as just the work of a few, when the church in Cambodia was discouraged and attendance in our sister church Takhmao Trinity Methodist was dwindling.

But God heard the cries of the faithful intercessors here in TMC, and moved to convict and refresh.

As we celebrate 54 years of God's goodness, we thank God for His hand in the field of missions. In the last 10 years, more and more in TMC have participated in the work in Cambodia – one-third of TMC has visited Cambodia as part of the missions programme, and at least three ministries (Children, Youth and the WSCS) are sending regular teams to Cambodia.

Our sister church in Cambodia is also growing.

In 2008, Jacob Cheng and his wife Wai Cheng answered God's call to minister to the Khmers.

God had also placed a burden in Jacob's heart for the encouragement and discipleship of our sister church. It was a time of great discouragement - church attendance was at an all-time low and the existing members were tired of reaching out to their neighbours. Having reached out at least thrice and been rejected each time, they were discouraged by the hardness of hearts.

This was compounded by the realities of bread-and-butter issues - of having to find work and worry about putting food on the table each day. **Based on the United Nations Development Programme Human Development Report 2009, 35 per cent of Cambodians live below the national poverty line of US\$0.45 per day.** Many of our Khmer brothers and sisters struggle to make ends meet.

Since moving to Phnom Penh, Jacob has been tireless in meeting up regularly with the leaders and members of the church, encouraging them and challenging them to discipleship. The teams that we have sent to Cambodia have also been used by God to encourage our Khmer brothers and sisters in Christ.

Today, the church has more than tripled in size - from less than 10 members to between 30 and 40 members. As we move into another year ahead, we look forward to seeing God move even more - in their lives and ours, convicting us all to live out His great commission.

Here's how you can play a part in Missions:

- *Interceding for our brothers and sisters in Christ in Cambodia and for those who have yet to know Him.*
- *Getting involved in a trip to Cambodia – for more information, please contact Andy Chew (9664 4528 / cybrchew@gmail.com)*

Growing In Good Company



The Girls' Brigade 55th Company: Touching lives, one girl at a time.

Lay Lin was your typical shy, reserved Secondary One girl when she entered the Girls' Brigade (GB) in her first year at Serangoon Garden Secondary School (SGSS). Timid and quiet, she obediently took orders from her superiors but lacked the confidence to explore things for herself, or venture beyond her boundaries.

The GB in SGSS, otherwise known as the 55th company, welcomes first-year students just like Lay Lin every year. For some, their apparent shyness stems from more deep-seated personal problems - the struggles of growing up in

a single parent family or the failure to receive the attention they desire from family members and peers.

For many others, they are simply - like most girls their age - beginning to find themselves and learning to deal with the academic and emotional challenges that growing up brings. It is during these teenage years that the GB hopes to make a positive impact on the life of each young brigadier.

Every GB girl will spend four to five of her formative adolescent years in a programme that is concerned with her spiritual, physical, educational and social development. In the 55th company, a regular weekly session includes Devotion,



Lee Hui Ling

SQUAD SEDIA

If you thought the Boys' Brigade (BB) was just another co-curricular activity in Serangoon Garden Secondary School (SGSS), you would be... with respect... wrong.

In the BB, each boy has the opportunity to be a leader, to have his philosophies, ideas and values shaped, the opportunity to learn life skills and to be guided each step of the way. And most importantly, the opportunity to learn about Christ and Christ's love for each and everyone of them, not only in Word, but through the lives of the officers as well. TMC is proud to acknowledge all the officers of the 47th Company as TMC's soldiers for Christ.

I had the privilege of spending an afternoon with the BB boys at their Leadership Training Camp in June. And it was clear that something special is happening within this group.

Whilst it was wonderful to see the boys working together and encouraging one another in each task, it was even more wonderful to see the faces of the officers - filled with pride and joy - as they watched their charges, as if watching their own children, growing up before their eyes.

The following is a testament to the immense efforts of the BB officers and helpers

and their vision to see every life nurtured, transformed and surrendered to Christ.

Asked how the officers had impacted his life, BB boy Clement Chan, who is in Secondary 3, spoke about how Eu Beng,



TMC member, Peter Lim (extreme right)

'Singspiration', the screening of videos that teach biblical messages or moral values, badge work and drill practice. Occasionally, outings are organised and the girls take part in activities like rock-climbing, dragon boating or kayaking.

With only 18 members, it is still considered a small company by most standards. But their captain Hui Ling believes that the GB still can play a big part in the lives of the girls in its care. Both a member of TMC and a teacher in SGSS, Hui Ling says that she "hope(s) to see girls find the true meaning in life through GB."

They need to learn to cope with life's challenges by depending on God and developing a relationship with Him, she says. And the GB is a good way to introduce God and life skills to them.

But this young company still faces several challenges. Hui Ling is praying for a Christian teacher to assist her in running the GB and for more volunteers to step forward to help

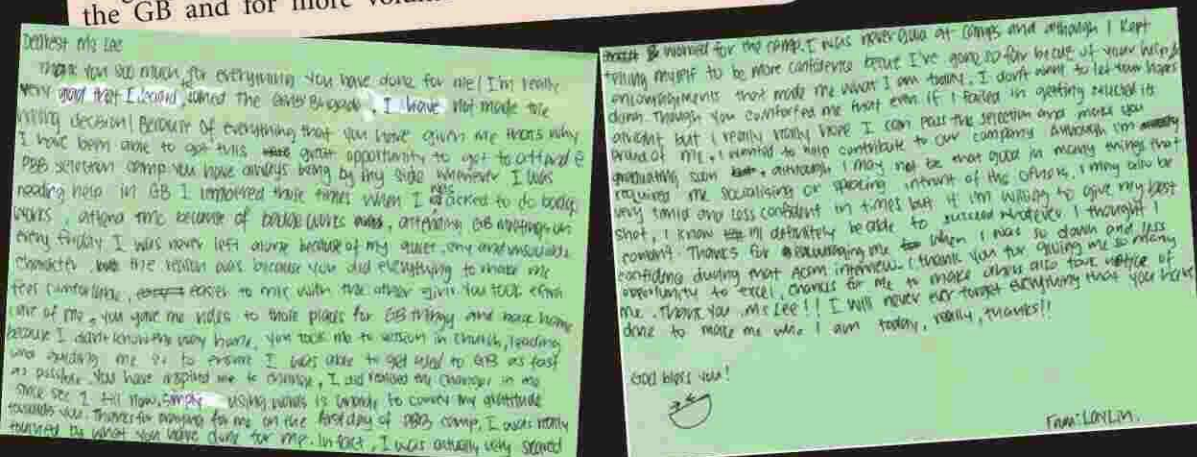
with conducting badge work on Fridays. Each volunteer needs to avail herself for between one to four sessions, to facilitate lessons or impart to the girls specific skills she may possess.

Lay Lin is now 17. Lately, she wrote a thank you note to Hui Ling, thanking Hui Ling for what she has done for her through the GB. She has learnt a lot from GB, and it has "made her life more meaningful". Hui Ling herself sees a change in Lay Lin, who is now more open and willing to try new things, more cheerful and more confident.

Indeed, this is what the GB is about - the patient efforts of those serving in the GB to build relationships with the girls and serve as godly examples for them, and the slow but sure transformation that is witnessed in each girl's life.

Perhaps not everyone who enters the GB will emerge completely changed. But for Hui Ling and those who volunteer in the GB's 55th company, girls like Lay Lin make their efforts worthwhile.

If you are able to serve with the GB on Fridays from 2 to 6 pm, please contact Lee Hui Ling at huddington@yahoo.com



Onward Christian Soldiers of the Boys' Brigade 47th Company!

taught him a valuable lesson in not running away from problems in life. Said Clement, "It dawned on me that I have been always running away from many problems instead of facing them. What he did impacted me and I am now trying to be like him, and despite having a certain disability or a problem, to not give up but face it."

Clement also recounted how two other officers, Peter and Choo Siang, went to visit him in his home when he was sick. He said, "I was very touched by their care and concern as they sacrificed their free time just to come to my house to see whether I was well. I want to change for the better and to show more care and concern for others."

By His amazing grace, and also the efforts of our TMC volunteers there, may the BB continue to impact and transform the lives of many young boys in SGSS for many more years to come.

The 47th Company needs you! If you care enough about the lives of young men, serve with our TMC soldiers and the BB, please contact Lim Choo Siang (lcscmh@yahoo.co.uk).



TMC member, Lim Choo Siang (extreme right)



More Than Child's Play



Stepping into the TMC Kindergarten on a weekday morning is one of life's simple pleasures.

Bright hues of colours adorning the walls greet you and, there is a constant hum of activity coming from all corners of the room. One K1 class is reciting in Mandarin, another is at the art station furiously attacking their worksheets with crayons.

Over at the other side of the room, the Nursery class sings grace before tucking into their mid-day snack. Through a glass pane, I spy the older boys and girls from the K2 class ride by on their tricycles, echoes of their laughter trailing behind them.

Most of these children are blissfully unaware, but all these activities are intentionally planned to uphold the kindergarten's philosophy (see next page).

Journeying alongside the Chen Su Lan children

by Eugenia Koh (Picture: Third from right)

The children from the Chen Su Lan Methodist Children's Home (CSL) may not be orphans.

But the hurt and deprivation they experience from having parents who are unable to care for them is unimaginable to most of us.

To minister to them, TMC volunteers meet with around 15 of these children each Sunday.

Our work with the home – for needy and disadvantaged children - began 25 years ago and was rejuvenated 15 years ago with our Outreach and Social Concerns ministry taking the lead. Small groups from TMC



Apart from the usual academic subjects, the children also have daily devotion before school begins every morning. They have been covering biblical heroes this year, learning about one individual every day for one week. The children are taught about the Bible, encouraged to pray, and sing gospel songs.

The teachers say that the seeds they have sown have borne fruit – many of the children are learning lessons in love and empathy, and often remind their teachers of people they need to pray for.

Mrs Melina Chen, the kindergarten principal, says that God has been good to the kindergarten. "I've experienced the sweetness of God in this place," she said. "And the Lord has thus far guided the kindergarten in its development, and provided sufficient volunteers from TMC and beyond to support the kindergarten's day-to-day operations".

She invites the congregation join her in praying for God's wisdom as the kindergarten seeks to reach out to pre-believing staff members.

May we, as a congregation, continue to support Mrs Chen and her team as they seek to provide a holistic pre-school education grounded in Christian values to reach families with young children so that they would experience the love of Jesus.

TMC Kindergarten's philosophy is to provide age-appropriate curriculum and a nurturing environment to:

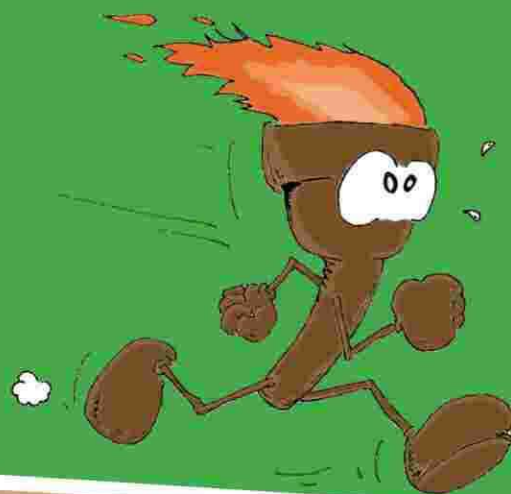
Ensure Total development of every child through play and orchestrated self-discovery

Foster Motivation for life long learning through cultivating the child's curiosity about the world at large

Instill Christian values through opportunities for the child to appreciate and experience God's love and goodness

Enlarge the Kingdom of God through frequent partnerships and interactions between the school and the community.

To help out at the Kindergarten (yes, you can!), please contact Mrs Melina Chen, Kindergarten Principal (6284 0894 / kindergarten@tmc.org.sg). More about the Kindergarten can be read at <http://www.tmc.org.sg/kindergarten.html>



would conduct weekly vesper sessions, give tuition, play football with the children on the weekends, take them swimming once a month and organise school vacation outings.

Through these interactions, friendships were struck between the children from the home and our volunteers.

Today, we are involved in meeting some of the children and youths every Sunday and organising outings, so as to befriend them on at a deeper level and, most of all, to show God's love through the sharing of our lives and our friendship.

There is, however, still much to be done in sharing God's love with CSL.

While many children may know of God, many have yet to truly know our God of hope personally. Many are still in pain, and many of their families are bound in the clutches in bondages of poverty and drugs.

As we celebrate yet another year of God's goodness at TMC, may God move us to be intercessors for these children. As we unite our hearts in prayer, we know that God will

continue to move powerfully, and that there will be many more years of testimonies to come from each of their lives.

Please pray alongside us for:

- Each child to know God personally as Lord and Saviour;
- God to reach out to the children's parents, that they will embrace God's love and be saved, and that they will to be empowered to break free from the bondages that hold them captive;
- Us as a church to embrace these children with love in the church family environment, and that through our lives, they will come to know the God Whom we worship.

To serve with the CSL children, please contact Paul Ng (pmsng@singnet.com.sg).

More about the Home can be found at <http://www.cslmch.org.sg/>



All Together Now...1...2...3.



TMC Member, Lucy Lau, giving tuition

There are always people in need of friendship and compassion.

And so, TMC set up an outreach centre known as Contact 123 in the hope of touching the lives of people living in the Serangoon North community.

Located at Block 123, Serangoon North Avenue, the centre functions mainly as a computer resource centre that draws children from around the neighbourhood, who come regularly to use the computers. Over time, the centre has grown into a place where children come to interact, play and learn.

Volunteers at the centre help with the children's homework. The children are encouraged to bring their homework to the centre with the incentive of getting free play time on the computers if they complete their

Small Gestures, Unexpected

Sometimes, it's the little things that really matter.

Like lending a listening ear to someone whose voice is usually left unheard. Or speaking with warmth and kindness to someone who has little experience of either.

You may think of these gestures as commonplace. Run of the mill. Nothing special.

But what many of us may take for granted in our everyday life is extraordinary to the 10 residents from the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) and Tai Pei Services whom some 15 volunteers from TMC have been ministering to once a month.

Although society sometimes views these residents as outcasts and figures of fear and ridicule, this should not be the case, Hui Lee, who has been serving in this ministry for the past five years said,

"Actually they are just people and they should not be ostracised by society. They are not scary," she said. "They can talk to you and relate with you. They just need more people to talk to them, to spend time with them, and they really appreciate little things like that very much."

And so one Sunday every month, for about two hours each session, TMC volunteers visit the residents at IMH where they sing songs and share God's Word, followed by breakfast.

Through these regular visits, Hui Lee and the volunteers began to develop friendships with the residents there. "As we went along, we grew committed (to the residents there). We felt that we could not let this ministry go like that because we were beginning to see the fruits of our ministry," she said.

Fruits - such as the first time the residents were able to sing Christian songs on their own. Or the time when a few of the residents began to call her by her name. Hui Lee said, "It is a very unexpected feeling of joy," she said.



..Contact!



by Melissa Koh

homework. Some children also come for the company as they are alone most of the time while their parents are at work.

Alice Chong, a retired school teacher and regular volunteer at the centre, said: "As many of the children who come to the centre are from dysfunctional families, this place provides a good opportunity for us to guide and befriend the children as well as to impart some values. We also conduct events on occasion, such as the Christmas party last year, which is a good platform for us to reach out to the children and their families."

Coming up, the centre will be implementing a structured weekly tuition programme for children from needy families. Alice, who will be participating in this programme, thinks that this programme will give her the chance to meet the same child more frequently, enabling her to build a more

meaningful friendship with the child. In time, she hopes to share the gospel with the children and their families.

The centre is also visited by some elderly neighbours who are in need of nothing more than a friendly face and a listening ear. The centre also runs IT courses for those in their golden years wanting to keep up with the times. It is certainly one of life's joys to see an elderly uncle logging onto Facebook!

Contact 123 welcomes volunteers who can help out regularly during weekday afternoons to give tuition to the children at the centre. Please contact Cathrine Sunithaa Mathiew (6282 4443 / 6285 8450 / cathrine@tmc.org.sg). More about Contact 123 can be found at <http://www.tmc.org.sg/ministries.html>

d Joy Ministering to residents of IMH

This did not come easily. Fellow volunteer Yvonne said, "Sometimes you can feel very bogged down at times because there's no response (from them). They are very passive and you feel like you're driving everything."

But, through this, she has learnt to be patient and to persevere despite the challenges they face in the ministry.

So what keeps them going? "Compassion," said Yvonne simply.

"In God's eyes they are precious. I want to share God's love with them. That helps to motivate me," she said.

TMC visits IMH on the last Sunday of every month. To volunteer with IMH, do contact Eric Cheong (6282 4443 / eric@tmc.org.sg).



by Amanda Yong





Lipton, Twinings or Boh?

I have always wondered what my life would be like in my golden years. At Yum Cha* - TMC's outreach programme for those aged 50 and above (younger folks are welcome) - I had a glimpse into several possible futures.

First, there is Alice Ng -- an inspiration and a testimony of God's providence and grace. A homemaker for as long as she can remember, she serves in the "Yum Cha" ministry together with many fellow Christian brothers and sisters to reach out to non-Christians and, to enable fellow brothers and sisters of TMC to enjoy fellowship with one another.

Having been brought up in an English-speaking environment, Alice has been doing her best to engage many people in different dialects.

With a teachable spirit, and God's providence, she picked up Mandarin through listening to Mandarin Christian songs, and now leads songs in English and Mandarin. As Alice said: "If you are prepared to serve, He will provide."

Inspiration number two, for me, is Adeline Chia, a long-time member of TMC. Just before I had the opportunity to chat with Aunty Adeline, she had been actively persuading a non-Christian friend to attend "Yum Cha" and was so glad when this friend agreed and showed up. She believes in doing what she can and letting God do the rest.

It was interesting and heartwarming for me to meet these people who, even though they have clearly 'eaten more salt than I have eaten rice' (an old Chinese saying), have not wavered, remained stagnant, or lost their passion and love for life and, most importantly, for God. In fact, they feel the greatest urgency to save souls for God.

Do you think that you have "been there, done that, seen it all" and that there is nothing more you could want out of life? Are you feeling old and jaded?

Well, come on down to TMC for a Yum Cha session and enjoy a time of refreshing complete with simple stretching exercises, a sumptuous meal (but of course!), songs, and a word from God. Bring your non-Christian friends with you. You will be pleasantly surprised that "Yum Cha" has more to offer than mere tea and cakes.

Be challenged to do God's work at our "Yum Cha" sessions.

Invite your pre-believing friends to YUM CHA, Every first Wednesday of the month, 10.30am. Fee: \$5

Please contact Eric Cheong in the church office (6282 4443 / eric@tmc.org.sg) for more details.



GOLDEN MOMENTS AT SLEC

Mornings of song and sharing at Serangoon Avenue 4

by Cheryl Sim (Left photo: left)

The pleasant sound of simple Hokkien tunes and the occasional rattle of handmade shakers fill the air in St Luke's Eldercare Centre.

Two TMC volunteers are leading a group of about 30 old folks in a time of singing, complete with hand actions. Their audience joins in appreciatively, clapping and waving their hands in the air to the songs they are familiar with.

Once a month on Thursdays, a TMC contingent – led by Eric Cheong and comprising members from both the English and Mandarin services – head down to the cozy home nestled among HDB flats in Serangoon Avenue 4 to mingle with the residents. Most of these residents are alert and cheerful, and welcome the companionship of their friends from 三一堂 (Trinity in Mandarin).

Coming to St Luke's gives him the chance to meet new people and keep active, one resident, Mr Wong, said. Another resident, Madam S, said that with her three grown children busy at work and the passing of her late husband, the lack of companionship makes staying at home a lonely experience. Many like her long for friends in their twilight years – people in whom they can find a listening ear.

Our volunteers do their best to meet this need: after the sing-along session, they mingle casually with the residents, and streams of lighthearted banter brighten up the atmosphere

in the room. Most talk about their families, their health and their latest activities. Often the conversation turns to Jesus, and pockets of people around the room are seen bowing their heads in prayer. One or two even ask Christ into their lives!

Why do these TMC volunteers choose to spend two-and-a-half hours on a weekday morning at St Luke's?

For most of them, the joy of bringing cheer to the residents keeps them coming back.

Most of these volunteers bring with them no elaborate skill sets – just a listening ear, some spare time on their hands, a heart that desires to serve God – but what they have, they give. And in return, they are blessed with the warm friendship of Mr. Wong, Mdm. S and others like them.

Do contact Eric Cheong (6282 4443 / eric@tmc.org.sg) if you wish to serve at St Luke's Eldercare Centre every last Thursday of the month. More about St Luke's services can be found at <http://www.slec.org.sg/>

Start, Finish

and Everything Else in the Middle



by Yip Fook Yoon
Lay Leader (Sept 2005 -)

Someone once said, "There is a beginning and there is an ending to any journey, but the important point is really the journey along the way."

We thank the Almighty God for the vision and courage of our leaders who trusted God and took the bold step to embark on our church redevelopment project almost 10 years ago.

It was not always smooth-sailing. Many obstacles had to be overcome, such as the daunting cost of more than \$12 million, and truth be told, there were a few dissenters as to the wisdom of the project. Still, the church family was largely supportive of the project, giving generously towards the church redevelopment fund.

Now, a decade later, how does the lay congregation feel with the completion of this massive project?

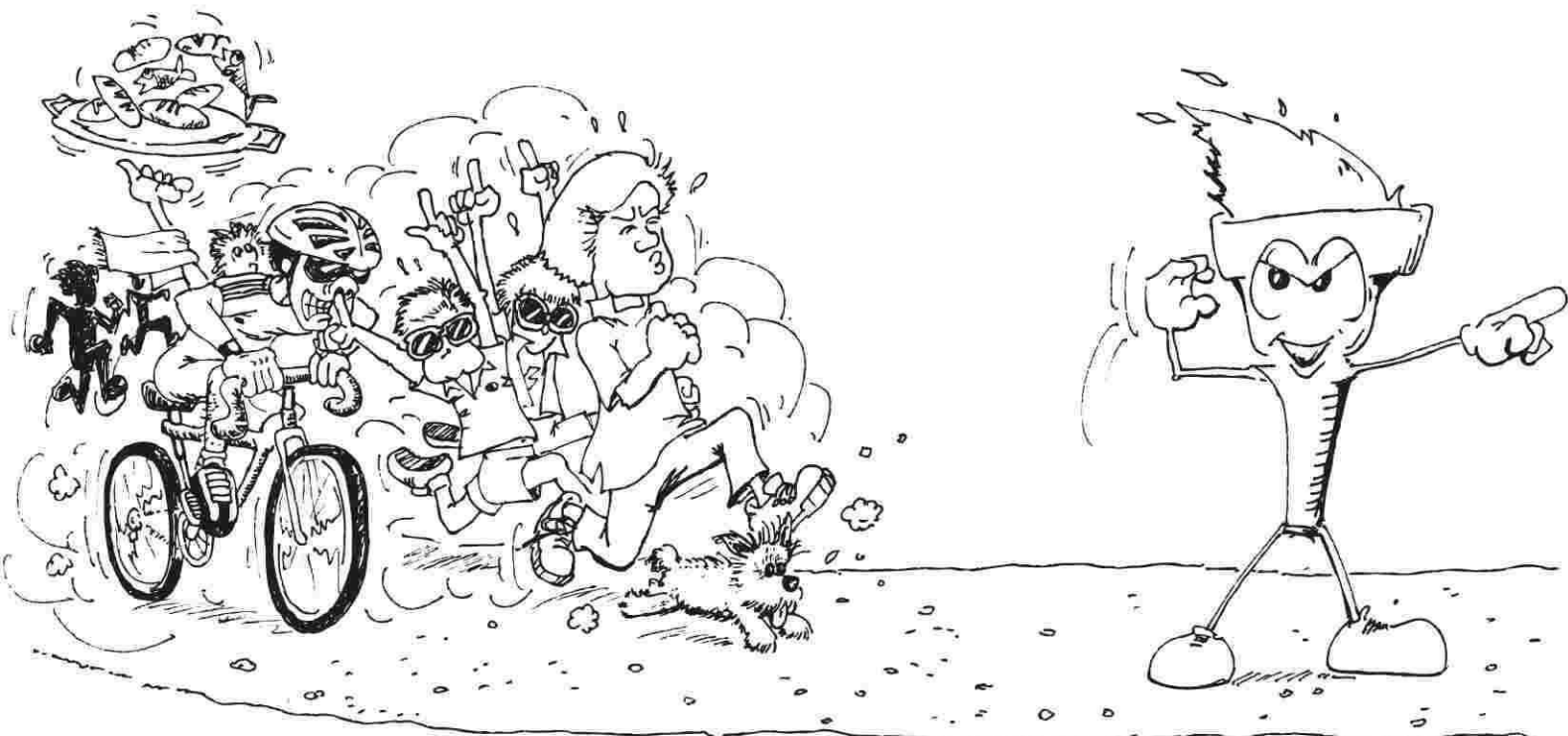
Naturally, after so many years of raising funds, there is a sense of relief and fulfillment. When I announced to the church on 11 July this year that we were debt-free, there was spontaneous clapping throughout the sanctuary! If it had been thought appropriate, I have no doubt that we might have heard a few whistles too. I myself felt a rush of emotion.

The overarching sentiment among the worshippers is really an overflowing thankfulness to God for His assuring hand in the midst of our anxieties and struggles. There was a sense of knowing that we were not alone, that God's presence was with us every step of the way.

TMC has shared the experience of depending on God, and we have grown stronger as a result of this journey. What, then, are our desires for the future?

We want to acknowledge and celebrate God's goodness and faithfulness, for the many challenges which have been overcome, and the lives that have been transformed in the process. We want to see more worshippers fill our worship spaces every week. We desire to see reconciliation take place. We look forward to fresh opportunities to reach out to the less fortunate.

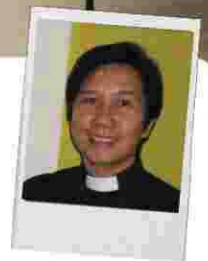
The redevelopment project has been a memorable chapter in our faith journey. We have had to completely trust God to reach our debt-free status. On our own, we would never have reached this outcome. It is indeed an indescribable feeling to know that we are – collectively – overwhelmed with joy and gratitude for God's faithfulness, patience, love and grace towards us. He has blessed us tremendously.





God with us, Revealed in us

by Rev Dianna Khoo



Emmanuel - "God is with us" - is often sung at Christmas but forgotten for the rest of the year.

On TMC's 54th Anniversary, we dedicate the entire TMC complex to God. We also take the opportunity to name the Worship Hall as "Emmanuel Hall" to remind us that, as He was with us in the past, He is still with us in this present moment and will be with us in the future.

We have a God who cares enough to come and reach out to humanity. Through Christ, he has shown us what God is like. He is a friend of sinners and people who are considered failures. He shows love and compassion to the outcasts of the world. He heals the sick and raises the dead. He teaches us not to use the values of this world to determine human worth when He says, for example, "The last will be first, and the first will be last" (Matthew 20:16). He teaches us that our value to God is more important than what anyone else may think about us.

As we dedicate the church, debt-free, we want to remember that God is with us all the time! In renaming the Hall, we remind ourselves that, each time we enter the Hall for worship - God is here. Thanks be to God!

Emmanuel, God is with us.
And if God is with us, who can stand against us?
Our God is with us - Emmanuel!
--"Emmanuel" by Michael Card

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast,
and our eternal home.

Under the shadow of thy throne,
still may we dwell secure;
sufficient is thine arm alone,
and our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,
or earth received her frame,
from everlasting, thou art God,
to endless years the same.

A thousand ages, in thy sight,
are like an evening gone;
short as the watch that ends the night,
before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever rolling stream,
bears all who breathe away;
they fly forgotten, as a dream
dies at the opening day.

O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come;
be thou our guide while life shall last,
and our eternal home.

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