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# SALTSHAKER



TRINITY  
Methodist Church

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## THE REAL RULING PARTY

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*Shaking Salt*

# the real ru



## **God's Plan is Sometimes Elusive and Beyond Comprehension**

I'm sure the loss of former Foreign Minister George Yeo after this year's general election is a rather painful one for some of us. My parents have been reminding me constantly that things like this happen, but they are always part of God's plan no matter what. Post-election, I asked God why He would let such a good minister suffer defeat. I cannot imagine how Mr Yeo himself felt. After considerable reflection, I finally admitted to myself that beyond feeling upset for Mr Yeo's loss, I was actually scared.

Because like many of us, I would like to believe that things will go my way if I pray earnestly enough. But our faith journey is not a bed of roses, and sometimes God may let us fall – and fall hard too at that. Things don't always go the way we want even if we feel like we don't deserve what we get. The tragic story of Job always comes to mind when I think of such trials. The Book of Job has always greatly disturbed me. I believe the Lord has great plans for he who trusts in Him, and He will reveal these plans in His time. But like Job, the present challenge is for us to keep the faith until these plans are revealed. It has always been a struggle to wholeheartedly articulate and accept this, but hey, faith isn't easy after all, is it?

## **Showing Christian Love in a World Almost Devoid of Compassion**

One word described how I felt about myself after the elections - ashamed.

The public opinion towards a particular female candidate was negative and destructive. If I were her, I don't think I would have lasted through the elections. Over Youtube, Twitter, blogs, facebook and every other social media channel, she was "flamed" badly (in contemporary urban language, to "flame" is to insult someone electronically). People criticised her for her personality, the way she spoke, her shopping buys, fashion sense, hair, face, inexperience - the list went on. Try typing her name on the facebook search



# ling party



bar and nothing short of at least 10 hate groups are listed. The “flaming” was malicious and, together as a nation, we probably succeeded in destroying the self-esteem of this young lady. I don’t know how she felt but I imagine it was not too far from devastation.

In light of all the negativity, my conscience nagged me to defend her against certain hateful comments about her on Youtube, and I did. (Naturally, I got ‘flamed’ for that too but that’s not the point.) Nevertheless, I am still ashamed of myself because once the election results were announced, I took up the chant - like some others - to have her out and another candidate voted in instead. If that doesn’t make me a hypocrite, then I don’t know what does.

I am pretty sure about how God feels towards her. As Christians, some of us are guilty of forgetting that this lady is also a child of God and very much loved by Him. As Christians, we need to show the love that God wants us to. In this world devoid of compassion, we are called to be the radical voice of mercy and acceptance. Unfortunately, the general election revealed many of us Christians to be just like the rest of the world. But perhaps it’s not too late to try and turn the tide around.

## The Real Ruling Party of Singapore

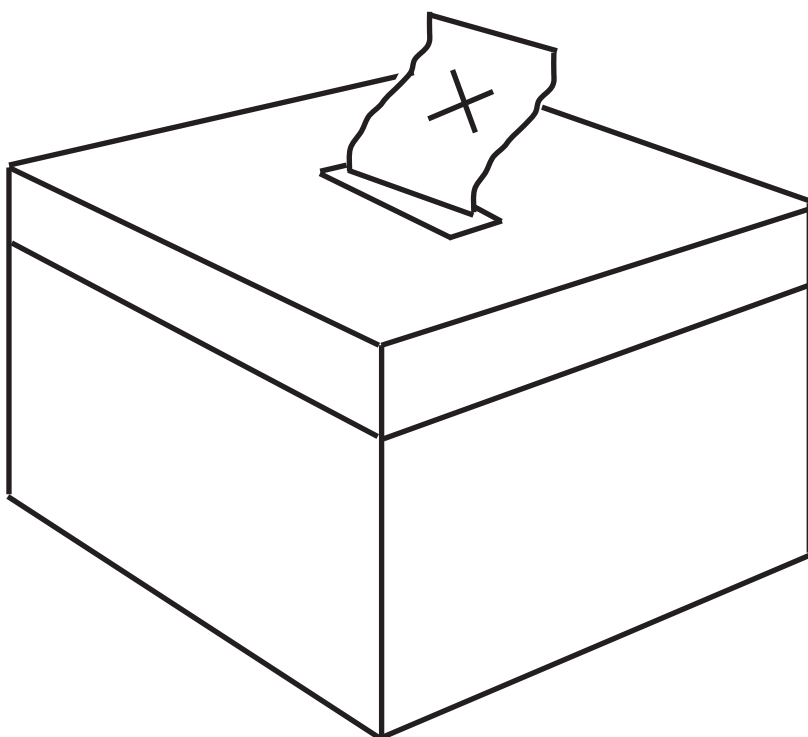
Pre-elections, the media was saturated with Singaporeans’ calls against a one-party government. Some are happy with the 81-6 composition in favour of the People’s Action Party (PAP) in Parliament. Others feel that the PAP still holds too much power.

Whichever the case, I think it’s time we take a step back and realise that nothing much has changed regarding the One-

Party rule. Nothing ever will, because no matter how many elections we go through, there will always only be One Party in charge of us all. And that’s the Father, Son and Holy Spirit – one Triune God.

I hope we remember that despite all these changes in the world, God is constant and He is our real One-Party government. The best thing we can offer post-election Singapore is to pray for wisdom for our newly-elected earthly leaders, and to do our part as children of God in effecting change in our nation according to His will.

In this year’s general election, Singaporeans have called for more alternative voices in Parliament and that call has been answered. There is however a higher calling for more alternative voices in our nation, in our world. Maybe it’s time we answer that call too.





# BECOMING ROOTED LIKE A REDWOOD



# Let's Hear It Again!

While not meant to be a botany class, this church camp offered an interesting lesson on the root system of the Californian Sequoia Redwood.

Although each individual root is only 13 to 14 feet deep, a Sequoia tree of 450 feet has a root system that covers an area of four acres. The roots gain strength by growing in an interlocking mass or attaching themselves with the root systems of neighbouring trees.

Using this analogy, while we as Christians sink our roots into God's word, we should be doing it within a community so that we can grow and draw strength from each other just like the majestic Sequoia trees, which are the tallest living things on this planet.

As Rev Dr Wee Boon Hup expounded on the topic of being deeply rooted, based on Colossians 2: 6-7, he reminded listeners that to be a strong vine with healthy branches, we need to begin with fertile soil that accepts the seed (God's word) and grows. However, obstacles could come our way, such as weeds of bitterness that could choke our otherwise receptive heart to listening and doing God's word, soil that is so packed together that God's word is unable to penetrate, or anxieties and distractions that suffocate our resolve to obey God. Only a repentant heart open to God's leading is able to abide in

This is taken from Rev Dr Wee Boon Hup's talks at this year's Church Camp in June 2011

God, producing healthy soil, seed and plant.

Using an architectural image, building a stable structure requires one to lay solid foundations. That means paying attention to the right details in our life, such as our devotional life, sin, presence in church, commitment to ministry work. A Christian's foundation also consists of apostles, prophets, citizen-saints, with Christ as the chief cornerstone. We do not grow deep by ourselves, but together with the household of God. The early Methodist movement was different from others of that period as it required a high level of accountability within the community. Weekly small group meetings, bringing together believers from all social classes, would begin with members' open confession of sins.

If we are going to be effective Christians, it is impossible to do it alone as we would lose that important element of spurring and even provoking each other spiritually.

When we are deeply rooted, we would naturally have a high gratitude quotient, giving thanks in all circumstances, including

illnesses, delays and failures. When we live with thankfulness, we are in the will of God.

Scripture also says that we are created to do good works and to share Christ. We were reminded that the number one commandment is to love our neighbour as ourselves. Hence we are to extend our love and good works to both Christians and non Christians who are in need, as the parable of the good Samaritan illustrates. When we openly offer our time, knowledge, faith, money and all other aspects of our lives, the more we will receive as God does not short change us. The more we receive, the more we would want to give when our gratitude quotient is high.

\*All bible references in this article are from the New King James Version



connect with God

SEE PAGE 12 FOR CHURCH CAMP PHOTOS!

*"As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving." Colossians 2: 6-7*

*"Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord," Ephesians 2: 19-21*

*"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" Galatians 5:14*

**On the obstacles that can prevent us from receiving God's word effectively:**  
*"Bitterness has an appetite and it can eat up our heart."*

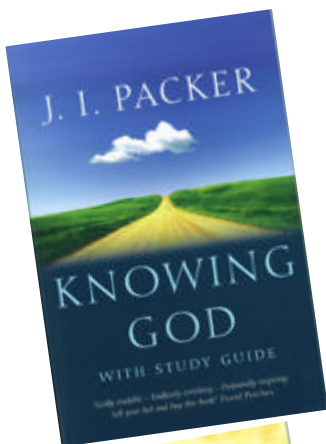
**On what abiding in God's love is:**  
*"It's like being a sponge. If someone squirts you, the joy of God will come out!"*

**On the topic of spurring and provoking one another in order to strengthen our root system:**  
*"Iron sharpens iron and sparks will fly."*

**On the result of being deeply rooted in Christ:**  
*"Your growth in your spiritual life isn't measured by how much better you are, but how much better others around you are."*

**On loving one's neighbour as oneself:**  
*What must I do to be that neighbour to someone in need?*

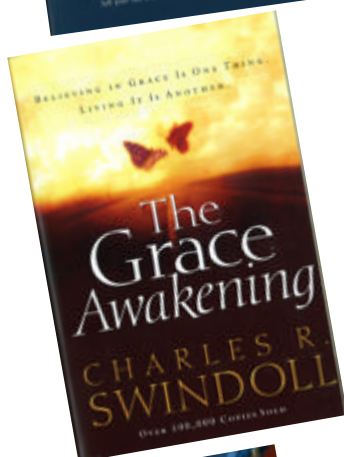
# BIBLIOTHEQUE



**Knowing God by J. I. Packer**  
Price : \$15.00 (Special Offer, U.P \$20.00)

J. I. Packer's *Knowing God* has become a classic of the Christian faith as it helps Christians understand who God is with clarity and grace and who we are in Jesus Christ.

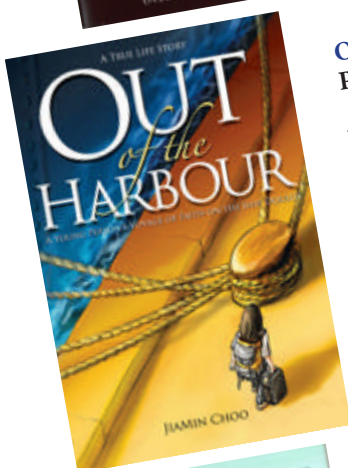
This book is not only relevant to Christians today but is an essential read for anyone who wants to build a closer relationship with Him.



**The Grace Awakening by Charles R. Swindoll**  
Price : \$23.50

*The Grace Awakening* reminds Christians to stop living in legalistic, performance-oriented bondage because God has given us an amazing, revolutionary gift of grace and freedom which sets us apart from every other "religion" on the face of the earth.

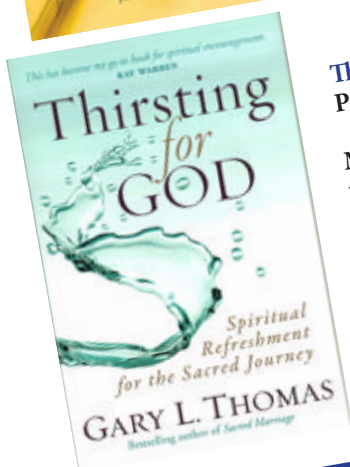
In this best-selling classic, Charles Swindoll reminds us that grace is the message of the gospel and the good news of salvation and we need to remember that we are saved by grace and should live by it.



**Out Of The Harbour by Jiamin Choo**  
Price : \$24.90

In a remarkably vivid and candid account, Jiamin Choo reveals her most intimate moments from 25 handwritten journals penned over six years. Jiamin's life is that of a young person who, fresh out of school, obeyed God's call to choose the path less trodden to serve in full-time missions on board Operation Mobilisation's ship *Doulos*.

From 2005 to 2009, she sailed to over 30 countries to bring a message of hope. She learnt to love the world beyond her shores, one port at a time. Jiamin is now back in Singapore, serving with OM as a missions coordinator, mobilising people for the global harvest field.



**Thirsting For God by Gary L. Thomas**  
Price : \$22.00

Many Christians are tired of living on the spiritual equivalent of fast food, promises which offer quick solutions to our problems but draw us away from the fulfilment of having a meaningful and authentic relationship with God.

Discover what it means to have a truly relevant Christian walk that is centred on God, that will not just survive but thrive even in desert times.

These books illustrate the central theme for TMC's Church Camp 2011. Let's continue to live our lives in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as we were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness through the daily reading of the Word and the lives, commentaries and thoughts of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

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# letters to God *revealed*

Monday, June 20, 2011

Forgetting What Is Behind; Pressing On To What Is Ahead

(taken from: <http://lifeisnotbad.blogspot.com/>)

Yesterday I posted this statement on my Facebook wall: "... if I do not wish to have regrets tomorrow, I have to make my actions count today."

This is especially true for me lately as some of my actions have led to regrets the next day. This applies in my relationships with people - especially those whom I am close to but have taken for granted; in my outlook towards life as recently I have been more negative towards people and circumstances because I have been feeling that life, God, everything and everyone are being unfair to me; in my walk with God where I can learn so much of Him daily but then I let the distractions of life draw me away from Him.

I had a great time with God today. I walked from The Playground@BigSplash in East Coast Park to The National Sailing Centre - roughly a distance of 5km. I decided on this route as I used to spend time with God by the beach or at MacRitchie Reservoir at the beginning of each month, evaluating and reflecting on my life. I would take those private moments with Him, giving thanks for His blessings and praying about the struggles I was facing in my journey.

Other than just letting God know the struggles I stated in the second paragraph, I also made sure that I was still and listened to His promptings.

One thing I was challenged to do is to forget what lies behind but to press on to what is ahead. What I have done in the past I cannot control anymore because it is done, but what I can do is in the future. This time, I

am not letting my emotions such as discouragement, frustration or resentment get the better of me. Instead I will let God lead me accordingly.

In doing the above-mentioned, I pray that those whom my actions have affected because I did not keep my life in check will allow me to make amends and also trust me again. I pray that some of these relationships will be restored to what they were before when both parties enjoyed each other's fellowship and company.

The restoration and reconciliation may take a while but I will press on.

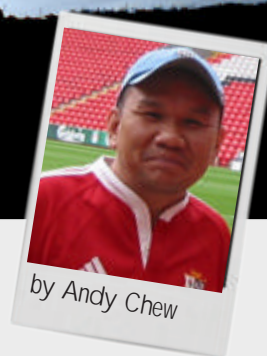
I am also challenged to get back on track with God again. I have decided not to compromise in reading God's Word, praying and being still before Him daily. I will also further enrich my walk in attending teaching courses which may be beneficial to me.

I will also try to blog regularly so that I can share about God's goodness and my life's journey (both the joy and pain) to those who want to read my postings.

Well, it has been a great day. Thanks be to God for that! :)

*"Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."*

**Philippians 3:13-14**



# When Faith Starts,

# Fear Ends



I believe that when we go through situations in our lives, God tends to bring to our attention what He wants to tell us at the most unexpected places and times if we seek him enough.

Under a Youth Ministry song-writing project called The Triple Three project, we have all been working together, writing songs that God has inspired us with. A recent song I shared with the congregation titled "Believe" was truly entirely inspired by God and the situations I experienced.

While browsing through a website containing Christian material, I came across this particular phrase that spoke a lot to me: "When faith starts, Fear ends". It was a simple phrase yet it was so true - that as long as we stand firm in our faith in God we can indeed face everything that comes our way. The first line of my song came about: Fear ends when faith begins.

This was especially apt as during the period of time I was writing this song, we were going to receive our A level results. To be honest, for past major exams like the O levels or my promotional exams, despite praying hard about my results, I could never fully stop worrying about the outcome. But for once in my life before getting

a result for any major exam, I felt complete peace the whole week before results day because I really committed it totally to God and had complete faith that whatever the results were, God would always make a way. I hardly thought or worried about it at all and it felt really amazing. I couldn't explain it. A day before the results, a friend dropped me a text message, which contained a verse of encouragement, and then I knew that what I was feeling was the peace that God had put into my heart.

Philippians 4:6-8  
*"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

Throughout this whole experience of receiving results, I was also greatly encouraged by a friend of mine who got an "Ungraded" for General Paper, which basically meant that her chances of getting into most local universities were very slim or close to nil. Despite that, her faith totally did not waver. She even shared with a few of us close friends that she still trusted that God would bring her somewhere despite her results,

and she sounded so hopeful. This was in comparison to my other friends who didn't do as badly but were more upset than her. This really made me see how our faith in God can really change perspectives and attitudes.

Further inspiration for the song came when I was reading my Bible and read this verse:

*"Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, 'Why could we not cast it out?' He said to them, 'Because of your little faith. For truly I tell you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you."* (Matthew 17:19-20)

Looking back, I trust that God put this song in my heart as an encouragement to all - That no matter the size of your faith, as long as you trust in the promises of God, there is nothing that He can't do in our lives. That no matter what adversities we face, with even the smallest of faith, when we say things are impossible, God says I'm Possible.

Have you been touched by the sharings of our two siblings-in-Christ? Please consider telling us how God has been speaking to you! Drop us a message at [tmccomms@gmail.com](mailto:tmccomms@gmail.com) with the excerpt from your quiet time journal - you never know how your walk with God may touch the lives of others.

Listen to "Believe" at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gw8SctqhXWg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gw8SctqhXWg)



# A Prayer for the Season of Kingdome



Heavenly Father,

Creator and ruler of the heavens and the earth, we enter Your gates with thanksgiving and Your courts with praise. We declare the values and glory of Your Kingdom and exalt You above all things and worship Your Holy name.

We are eternally grateful and humbled by Your immeasurable and inestimable love in the redemption of this world through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that by this grace and mercy, we, Your unworthy creatures, through faith in You, are made heirs of eternal life.

Yet in spite of our privileged heritage, we struggle with living in victory. We allow cares of the world to encroach into our lives and in turn, become wrapped up in our daily responsibilities. We fail to see the big picture of living our lives for You. For this, we humbly and earnestly seek Your forgiveness and mercies.

We commit to seek a deeply-rooted relationship with You – drawing close to You, dwelling in Your Word and Presence. Create within us a renewed God-centered heart and a steadfast spirit that is fully committed and submitted to You.

In gratitude of Your faithfulness and everlasting love for us, help us to stretch out hands in hospitality to the world especially to our neighbours in need. Enable us to be great ambassadors of Your Kingdom and may people love You more as we reach out to touch others with Your love.

Lead us to specific neighbours and communities in need. Give us compassionate, willing and teachable hearts as You show us what You want us to do for each of them. Enable us to do it by providing us with the spiritual, emotional and even physical or financial means required to minister to them. Give us the wisdom to speak in love as we minister life, hope, help and healing to our brothers and sisters in need. In addition, make us your faithful intercessors and teach us how to pray in power for them.

May our greatest treasure be in serving You and may your Kingdom come and your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.

## What is Kingdome?

The Methodist Church in Singapore divides the period between Pentecost Sunday and Advent into two seasons: Pentecost and Kingdome. The Season of Kingdome constitutes the thirteen or fourteen Sundays beginning the last Sunday in August and continuing until the beginning of Advent at the end of November.

During the season of Kingdome we declare the values and glory of the Kingdom of God. Christ is celebrated as King and Sovereign of the world, with emphasis on God's Dominion over all of creation. The focus in this season is often on social justice and action that flows from a heart submitted to God.





# From Superstition to

## 从迷信到救赎

### 未成为基督徒以前的我

每当回想，还未是基督徒以前，我是一个非常忙与生意的人。而且也是一个很热诚的拜拜者，每当有关于神旦的节日，我会很认真看待。

我相信风水、算命，也很崇拜高僧、法师。总以为命运要靠自己掌握，也接受命定。

我是很迷信，出门做事，都会选日子，断时辰。就是不明白，人生不如意事，总是十之八九，而且用在算命，找师父的金钱，都不胜枚举。也偶尔会去求签问事。由始至终，挥不去的烦恼、问题与不安，依旧如影随形！

走过四十几年的拜拜生涯，我也持咒、念经、护法，有关活人、死人的事，我都很积极地参加。总以为就是在作神的事。

最后，总结起来，当时我的生命、运气、时常都有着担心、恐惧、烦恼与不安。我不容易相信人，也不太喜欢亲近人，只有生意上的伙伴、朋友。

我生活在失落与孤单的日子多过欢乐。心灵无所寄托。我常问苍天何时老？人生有几何？当那日子的到来，我又将何去？我心里总会想着，我愿随风而归去，不留下一片云彩。

### 我成为基督徒后的见证

2009年3月18日，这毕生难忘的日子将铭刻在我生命中。当天我约了两位要买我产品的新客户在汤申大厦，亚坤咖啡，下午3点见面。

那天耶和華显明在我面前。当下，我感觉头脑与思维顿时一片空白。自己就像一个小女孩，蹦蹦跳跳，口里哼唱着主耶稣的歌。

当我唱着：“主耶稣，你真奇妙。”在场的客人，拉着我的手，为我祷告。我才明白原来她是一位基督徒。她告诉我，我所遇见的这位老人，就是Jesus。并问我今天要不要接受主耶稣。我在没有想之下，说：“我愿意”，接着说“Amen”。

耶和華神是何等的奇妙，我只感觉我溶入在他的慈爱中，眼泪如雨般掉落下来。我深深体会到神就是爱。爱是神。神向我表达他对我的爱。我要享受它，就一定要爱神，并行在他的爱里。

神的怜悯是永无止息。他的恩惠、恩典是我丰富的启示，也是我灵命的粮食。神是听我们祷告的神。我求告他，神就回应圣经。以赛亚43章告诉我，他与我同在。当我忧伤、害怕，他就指引我诗篇121。我的帮助是从他而来，他会保护

我。Hallelujah!! 耶稣救我脱离了忧伤的灵，成为一个新造的人。我已无惧怕。

当时，过了三个星期，我大女儿来参加崇拜。正当赞美神时，神完全医治了她的恐惧及忧伤的心。大女儿也就被救赎了。Hallelujah!

我的口，今生今世都要来赞美、歌颂、敬拜他！因为忧伤的灵，痛悔的心，他必不轻看。他是那位公义、怜悯的神。我一生一世都要依靠他。敬畏他！我的好处不在耶和華以外。我要住在他的佳美居所。他的爱永远常住在我心灵深处。

我跟女儿在2009年12月12日接受洗礼。当天洗礼过后，圣灵感动我用灵歌唱出来给当天见证我洗礼的姐妹和牧师们听。如果有机会的话，我会再唱这首灵歌与其他会友分享。

2011年3月17日，我感谢主让伍传道和传道娘，在圣灵的感动下，陪我一起去柬埔寨传福音。何等恩典，感谢神为我们作的安排。我们把福音传给我柬埔寨的两位拜拜的好友。

深信我们有了播种的心，神也会让种子成熟，及安排他的仆人去收割。只要我们有信心，一切的事都能交在主的手里。Hallelujah!



# Salvation



Before I accepted Christ into my life, I was always preoccupied with my business. I was also a fervent idol worshipper who looked forward to holy days at the temple.

I believed in feng shui (geomancy), fortune-tellers, and I worshipped the temple monks.

I believed that one's destiny lay in one's own hands.

I was so superstitious to the extent that I would consult the almanacs before deciding the days on which to go about my business. After all, I thought, it is almost inevitable that misfortunes might befall me someday. Therefore, numerous fortune tellers and geomancers benefited from me. Occasionally, I would also seek lots at the temple. Despite my diligent efforts, my troubles continued to follow me as doggedly as my shadow.

For more than 40 years, I lived a life riddled with superstition. I chanted, meditated, clothed myself with amulets. I took a voracious interest in all matters concerning life and death. I thought that I was being spiritual in doing so.

In sum, my life was filled with worry, fear, trouble and anxiety. I trusted almost no one, and preferred to keep to myself. My acquaintances consisted mostly of my business associates.

I was more often despondent and alone, than happy, and my soul was restless. I often asked how long I would live, and what would happen after I passed on. I believed that upon death, I would simply depart as the wind does without a trace.

All this changed on 18 March 2009, a day that is now branded into my memory forever. I was scheduled to meet a new buyer at Ya Kun café in Thomson Plaza that afternoon.

Jesus appeared before my eyes that day. As the vision appeared, my mind went blank momentarily. I felt like a little girl, and started dancing and singing.

As I was singing, "Lord Jesus, You are amazing," the lady buyer held by hand and prayed for me. I realised that she was a Christian. She told me that the vision of the old man which had appeared before me was Jesus. As she prayed for me, she asked if I was ready to receive Christ into my life. There was not a moment of hesitation as I gave her a resounding "Yes", followed by "Amen".

Jehovah is amazing beyond description. I felt bathed in His love as my tears rained down my face. I had encountered His love deeply.

Love is God. God is love. God expressed to me how much He loved me. If I wanted to enjoy that love, I needed to love Him, and abide in His love.

The Lord's compassion knows no bounds. His grace has been revealed to me, and is nourishing to my spirit. He listens to our prayers. When I petition Him, He answers me from His Word. He is with me as He has promised in Isaiah 43. I know from Psalm 121 that He guides me when I am hurt or afraid. My help is from the Lord, who protects me. Hallelujah!

Jesus rescued me from my broken self. I am a new creation. I am no longer afraid.

Three weeks after I accepted Jesus into my life, my eldest daughter was also saved as she sang songs of praise and worshipped the Lord. God healed her, and delivered her from her fears. Hallelujah!

I shall praise, and sing and worship Him with my mouth all of my days. For He has not taken lightly my broken and contrite heart. He is a just and compassionate God. Not only will I depend on Him, I will fear Him all the days of my life.

There is no good that I can do outside of Christ. I want to dwell in His beautiful abode. His love will forever be in my heart.

On 12 December 2009, my daughter and I were baptised. The Holy Spirit moved me to sing a song for those who witnessed our baptism that day. I hope to share this song with my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ one day.

On 17 March 2011, Lay Ministry Staff Eddie Goh and his wife Rebekah who were prompted by the Holy Spirit accompanied me to Cambodia where I shared the Gospel with my idol worshipping friends. Thanks be to God for His leading.

I believe that if we sow His seeds, God will make them grow. He will dispatch His harvesters. All we need is faith. The rest is in God's hand. Hallelujah!



# In & About TMC

connect with one another





# A (YOUTH) SUNDAY OF EPIC PROPORTIONS!



by Terri Koh

Youths in Singapore always get a day off from school on Youth Day.

As for TMC, Youth Ministry always celebrates Youth Sunday (i.e. the Sunday before Youth Day) by taking over conduct of the 8.45 am and 11.15 am services from the adults. Yes, this includes worship leading, scripture reading, ushering AND preaching!

This year, Youth Sunday 2011 saw our very own Lay Executive Staff for Youth Ministry (what a mouthful for “youth worker”) Timothy Yong, take to the pulpit (his first time!).



gastronomic treasure wasn't enough for our hungry mateys, there was hootin', tootin' and some hearty pirate singin' by our very own Russ Hoe, Mark Tan and Josh Yee. Four other brave buccaneers also took to the fore for our dress-up competition!



Based on the passage from Nehemiah 4, and entitled “Facing Opposition”, Tim shared with the congregation that it was essential to face opposition in prayer. Also, even though it was inevitable that we would face discouragement when faced with opposition, we could trust that God would never forsake us and was in fact, using opposition to mould and refine us.

After the 11.15am service, the Youth Ministry transformed from landlubbers into a shipload of swashbucklin' scallywags, dressed in their best rags for our pirate-themed EPIC-NIC!

Shiver me timbers! Loopy earrings, beards, hooks, swords, scars and flags were the order of the day. Our guests tucked into a sumptuous buffet complete with ice-cream from Simply Shiok! (in case you didn't know, Simply Shiok! is run by Alfred and Gladys Lie from TMC!). Aye, and if the

We thank God for the epic proportions of fun, fellowship and food that was shared among our youths and our EPIC-NIC guests. Youth Sunday 2011 was truly EPIC!

If you're interested to find out more about Youth Ministry, our activities and our youths, do pop by at The Upper Room every Sunday (except 5th Sundays of the month) and say “YO-HO-HO!”. Also “LIKE” us on our TMC Youth Ministry Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/TMC-Youth-Ministry/>.

It's fairly difficult to miss the new pastor on the block. A tall, gangly man, with a shock of not-so-white hair and a face ready to crinkle into a smile, he generously accepted my request for an interview for this month's edition of the Saltshaker.

Gleaned from a conversation that spanned more than an hour, covering a spectrum of topics from Angelina Jolie ("Salt" was the latest DVD he watched) to Batu Pahat (where he travels to eat durians), the Saltshaker proudly presents...

# P is for...



by Terri Koh

**Pioneer** of the Military Christian Ministry, which he helped develop while serving as a military officer before being called to full-time ministry. He was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in 1972. During his time with the Military, he was the Head of Signals in the Officer Cadet School. He was also involved in the SAF counselling movement, where he counselled soldiers in the detention barracks, some of whom were there because of drug use. He recalls that, as a platoon commander, he saw many of his men come to know the Lord.



(Rev) **Peter Goh**, the new pastor on the block. Hailing from the westlands of Clementi, Rev Peter's previous appointment was at Christ Methodist Church (in East Coast). He has now been parachuted to the north-eastern kampong of Serangoon Gardens (incidentally, he spent his childhood in the Seletar Hills estate). Rev Peter was the founding pastor of Cairnhill Methodist Church, and has also served in the pastoral ministries of Kampong Kapor, Faith and Fairfield Methodist Churches.

**Pak-tor (dating)** with his wife, Soo Kwan. He met her when he was working with the Military Christian Ministry in the army. She was, at that time, a volunteer accountant with Campus Crusade. He used to go to Campus Crusade to collect teaching materials and "she was there". They have been married for 32 years.

**Painting** which is a latent talent of his, or so he claims. He loves to spend time in art galleries and admire paintings, as he believes that paintings are the windows to a person's soul.

**Pai-kia** (bad boy) of the family. Rev Peter acknowledges that his sister and brother were more obedient than he when they were younger.

**Parent** to Ian and Claire Goh. Ian is studying medicine at the University of Queensland, Brisbane. Claire is a professional violinist. Reality TV buffs may know that Claire was the first runner-up in the 2011 Asian edition of the Amazing Race.



**Pastoral Counselling**, was the subject of his Masters' degree which he chose to pursue and completed in 2008 instead of theology as he felt that it offered him a way to help people in a real and tangible way. Prior to his MA, he obtained his B.Div from Trinity Theological College in the 1990s. He was 40 when he enrolled in TTC.

**Passionate** about working with seniors. He was instrumental in pioneering the Seniors' Ministry at Trinity Annual Conference (TRAC)-level and was the Director of the TRAC Board of Seniors' Ministry for 10 years. He is also passionate about teaching the Word of God.

**Piano**, guitar and the ukulele are the musical instruments he plays. He loves the ukulele as it's portable enough to be brought on mission trips and visitations to homebound members.

**Philippines**, where he did his Campus Crusade staff training. Rev Peter considers himself a "hard-core" Campus Crusader. While in the military, he spearheaded and grew Campus Crusade's military ministry. Along the way, he also inspired a certain Chan Chong Hiok to join full-time ministry life.

**Presbyterian** in his youth, Rev Peter attended Abundant Grace Church in Jalan Kayu. One day, he attended a gospel rally organised by the senior pastor of the church. Although he chickened out at the altar call, that night after the rally, the Lord convicted him, and he prayed at his bedside to receive Christ into his life.

**Psalm 37:4** which is his favourite psalm. "Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart" (NIV). His favourite hymn is "It Is Well with My Soul".  
*"If you love Him, please Him. The rest, He will provide, do not worry. This is a ... theological truth."*



One of Pastor Peter's photos

**Photography** which is also another of his interests. Ask him about his first camera, and he'll proudly reveal that his first camera was a Kodak Brownie, which he won in a Kellogg's cornflakes drawing competition when he was nine. If you're wondering, the Kodak Brownie still exists and is in mint condition. No, it is not for sale.

Petra, Jordan, which was mentioned no less than three times during the conversation. He is no Indiana Jones, but Rev Peter has a passion for visiting the Holy Land, having been there many times.

*"[Touring] the Holy Land brings the Bible alive... [it] teach[es] Christians not just to understand, but to love the Word of God that is so real."*

**Parting shot** - "I sense that TMC is really hungry for the Word of God and for growth."

# Leader's Column

## 领导专栏

Considering the global economic crisis in recent years, most of us have become relatively more conservative in our spending and perhaps, more deliberate in our savings. The first quarter report for 2011 from the Monetary Authority of Singapore stated that domestic economic activity is likely to be sustained at high levels this year, and that global growth is expected to moderate. However, Asia is expected to continue to grow robustly.

How are we reacting to these messages? Are we starting to spend more generously, or are we still very cautious about spending?

The real challenge that we as children of God face today is: How are we using the gifts and talents that our generous Heavenly Father has blessed us with? (2 Cor 9:8)

How did the New Testament churches react to such a challenge? "They share freely and give generously to the poor. Their good deeds will be remembered forever." 2 Co 9:9 (NLT).

What is the reason for the generous giving among the early churches besides their devoted love for God and fellow Christians? They were confident and convinced that as they shared their wealth, effort and time, they would be blessed richly by God.

When a worshipper of God fails to pay his tithe, he is described as robbing God. This certainly attracted a curse. "Should people cheat God? Yet you have cheated me! But you ask, 'What do you mean? When did we ever cheat you? You have cheated me of the tithes and offerings due to me. You are under a curse, for your whole nation has been cheating me.'" Malachi 3:8-9 (NLT).

On the contrary when a worshipper pays his tithe, it results in blessings. "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it." Malachi 3:10 (TNIV).

No wonder Abraham was abundantly blessed by God. We also can be blessed like faithful Abraham as we obey God with our tithes and offerings.

Consider Abraham - a man of faith, a prophet, and a friend of God. His devotion and commitment to God could hardly be matched by any of his generation.

By the grace of God, Abraham mobilised 318 trained men who had been born into his household to pursue Kedorlaomer's army, which had captured his beloved nephew Lot. Abraham defeated them and recovered all the goods that had been taken. He also took Lot back, together with Lot's possessions and all the other captives. Upon his return, Melchizedek, the king of Salem and a priest of God, brought Abraham some bread and wine as well and blessed him. Melchizedek affirmed that God is the ultimate Creator and Owner of both heaven and earth, and that it is God who had defeated Abraham's enemies for him. In response, Abraham worshipped the Lord with a tenth of all the goods he had recovered.

It is one thing to be religiously inclined but quite another to serve God wholeheartedly with our material possessions. Abraham did both. So should any person who desires to serve God in truth and in Spirit.

The Bible tells us that men of God

like Abraham and Jacob paid a tenth of all their income. (Genesis 14:20, Hebrews 7:2-6, Genesis 28:22). Under the Mosaic Law: "A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD." Leviticus 27:30 (TNIV). "Every tithe of the herd and flock—every tenth animal that passes under the shepherd's rod—will be holy to the LORD." Leviticus 27:32 (TNIV).

In the New Testament, Paul says: "On the first day of each week, you should each put aside a portion of the money you have earned. Don't wait until I get there and then try to collect it all at once." 1 Corinthians 16:2 (NLT). This signifies the giving of a proportion of our income like the tithe of the Old Testament. Paul teaches us to set aside a tenth of our income on the very first day that we receive our income, thus giving God first priority.

God did not and does not have any need of these material "offerings".

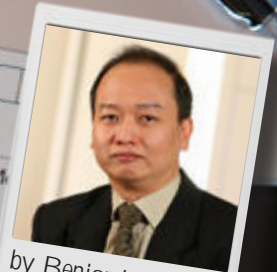
In practical terms, our tithes and offerings are applied towards the up-keep and maintenance of the pastors, lay ministry and church staff, and the ministries of the church through which God is worshipped, men are saved and the spiritual well-being of believers ensured. But the giving of tithes is, more importantly, a commandment. It is therefore mandatory that every true child of God faithfully tithes in obedience to God.

Our Lord Jesus talked about the poor widow's offering in Luke 21:1-4. It is not a question of whether she was poor or rich but the fact that she kept nothing for herself. She gave everything that she had. God looks at what we keep for ourselves as well as what we give to Him.

May we renew our covenant with God this year to set aside a tenth of what He has blessed us with so that we demonstrate that we truly love and serve God in truth and in Spirit!



# 1/10 is Good 十分之一为佳



by Benjamin Goh  
Finance Chairperson  
吴瑞福弟兄  
财务主席

connect with one another

近年来，在国际金融危机的冲击下，大部分人在消费方面都采取保守态度，对于储蓄也更为谨慎。新加坡金融管理局在2011年第一季度报告中指出，国内经济活动在今年将维持在高水平，全球经济增长预计会保持平稳。亚洲地区则预料会持续蓬勃增长。

对于这些讯息，我们有何反应？是开始提高消费，还是继续保持谨慎态度？

作为神的子女，我们在今时今日所面临的真正挑战是：该如何善用天父所赐予我们的财富及天赋？（哥林多后书9章8节）

新约教会是如何应对这项挑战？“他施舍钱财，周济贫穷；他的仁义存到永远。”（哥林多后书9章9节）

早期教会会众的慷慨付出，除了是出自于对神及主内弟兄的厚爱之外，还有什么原因呢？那是他们有信心，也坚信与他人分享财富、精力及时间的当儿，神将倾福予他们。

崇拜上帝的人不遵循十一奉献，就犹如剥夺属于神的供物，他将招来诅咒。“人岂可夺取神之物呢？你们竟夺取我的供物。你们却说：我们在何事上夺取你的供物呢？就是你们在当纳的十分之一和当献的供物上。因你们通国的人都夺取我的供物，咒诅就临到你们身上。”（马拉基书3章8-9节）

相对的，崇拜上帝的人献上十一奉献，将带来福分。“万军之耶和华说：你们要将当纳的十分之一

全然送入仓库，使我家有粮，以此试试我，是否为你们敞开天上的窗户，倾福与你们，甚至无处可容。”（马拉基书3章10节）

难怪亚伯拉罕得到了神满满的祝福。当我们遵从上帝的旨意，将奉献献给神，我们也能象亚伯拉罕一样，得到神的祝福。

亚伯拉罕对神充满信心，是神的朋友，也是先知。他对神的忠诚，无人能比。

亚伯拉罕在挚爱的侄儿罗得遭基大老玛鲁掳走后，召集了他家里318名训练有素的壮丁，追拿基大老玛。蒙神的恩典，亚伯拉罕将基大老玛击败，夺回被掳掠的财物，连他的侄儿罗得和他的财物及人民也都夺回来。亚伯拉罕归来时，神的祭司撒冷王麦基洗德带着饼和酒出来迎接，并为他祝福。麦基洗德确认上帝为至高的造物者，是天地的主，也是为亚伯拉罕击败敌人的神。于是亚伯拉罕将所得的十分之一献给上帝，作为敬拜。

有的信徒很虔诚，却不一定能在物质上全心全意事奉神。亚伯来罕两者都做到了。任何有意愿以诚实及心灵服侍神的，都应当如此行。

圣经告诉我们，属神的人如亚伯拉罕以及雅各都实行十一奉献。（创世记14章20节，希伯来书7章2-6节，创世记28章22节）。摩西律法中记载，“地上所有的，无论是地上的种子是树上的果子，十分之一是耶和华的，是归给耶和华为圣的。”（利未记27章30节）“凡牛群羊群中，一切从杖下经过的，每第十只要归给耶和华为圣。”（利未记27章32节）

保罗在新约中说道：“逢七日的第一日，各人要照自己的进项抽出来留着，免得我来的时候现凑。”（哥林多前书16章2节）这意味着我们将收入的一部分奉献出来，就如行旧约中的十一奉献。保罗教导我们在领薪水的第二天将所得的十分之一奉献给上帝，代表将神放在第一位。

神其实不需要物质上的供物。

实际上，我们的奉献用于支付牧师、执事及教会员工的薪资，也为执行堂内各项事工提供经费。这样一来，才可以确保教会正常运作，开展神的国度。更重要的是，十一奉献是一项戒命，作为神真正的子女都应当为服从神而这样行。

主耶稣在路加福音21章1-4节提到贫困寡妇的奉献。重点并不是妇人贫穷或富有，而是她毫不保留地献上一切。神不止在看我们付出多少，也在看我们保留多少。

愿我们在今年与神立下新约时，将他所赐给我们的十分之一抽出来献上，展现我们诚心爱主，并以诚实及心灵事奉主！

Pledge Sunday was  
on 24 July 2011. Have you  
filled out a pledge card yet?  
[www.tmc.org.sg/resources.html](http://www.tmc.org.sg/resources.html)

2011年7月24日是  
决志奉献主日，您填写  
奉献承诺卡了吗？

# MISSIONS ADDITION!



**TRINITY Methodist Church**  
"where faith and life connect"

about trinity | small groups | **ministries** | downloads | highlights | pulpit calendar | contact

(You are watching a slide show of the Youth Ministry's Mission Trip to Cambodia in December 2010)

**Missions**

"Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

**Related Links**

- [Mission Statement & Objectives](#)
- [Pray for Missions](#)
- [Trans World Radio in Missions](#)
- [Harvest Inn](#)
- [Photos from Children's Ministry Mission Trip Dec 2010](#)

On a scale of one to 10, how well do you really know Missions in Trinity Methodist Church? If your answer is five and below, here's something you must act on! The Missions ministry has its very own website which you can easily access from the Trinity Methodist Church homepage.

You're bound to give yourself a higher number on that scale once you've visited the website. Perhaps even go on to participate with your presence, gifts, prayers and service. It's a mouse-click away, and you have nothing to lose, so let your fingers do the work and learn more about TMC Missions now!

In a nutshell, the website provides you with more information on the various aspects of TMC Missions and its involvement in Cambodia. You can access photographs from Missions-related events and various newsletters such as the Trans World Radio Newsletter. The web link to Care for Cambodia, which is the work of our missionaries, Norman & Fi, can also be found on the Missions web page.

The Missions website link can be found at:  
<http://www.tmc.org.sg/missions.html>  
Alternatively, you can access it from the Ministries tab on the TMC Homepage:  
<http://www.tmc.org.sg>

If you wish to know more about how you could participate in Missions work, please contact *Andy Chew* at [cybrchew@gmail.com](mailto:cybrchew@gmail.com) (Missions Chairperson).



# small group connect

Beta is the new kid on the block, at least in terms of small groups at Trinity Methodist Church. TMC has several small groups that have been around for 20 years. So Beta, a one-year-old small group, is a mere baby.

Here are twenty questions we posed to Beta...

## When was Beta born?

After the 2009 run of the Alpha Course.

## How did you happen to form a new small group?

Caroline felt led to start a new small group with the members of her Alpha group in 2009.

## Why the name Beta?

It was a natural choice! After Alpha comes Beta... Also, like most Singaporeans, we aren't very good at naming things... we really couldn't think of any other names at that point :p

## Name one challenge you have faced.

Keeping each other updated on things that are happening in our lives during the times that we do not meet. We have started a secret Facebook group for Beta so that we can post prayer requests, reflections, and photos.

## Name one rewarding thing that's happened in Beta.

The founding members served in the Alpha course run in 2010. After that run, we had a few more Alpha "alumni" who joined the group.

## Who's in this group?

Berni, Caroline, Dunstan, Gillian, Hsiao Yuen, Nicole, Tyan & Valerie.

## Do your members serve in ministry?

Some of us do. The founding members have served in the Alpha task force.

## When do you meet?

Every second and fourth Sunday of the month in church, from 2 to 4 pm.

## What does a normal meeting look like?

We start with lunch at a venue close to church and return to church for worship, bible study and prayer.

## And how about a not-so-normal one?

There was that one time we hiked up Bukit Timah Hill. We have also done a silent retreat at Hangout@Mount Emily.

## What bible study materials do you use?

We have used audio sermons by Pastor Benny Ho as well as materials adapted from books on various topics, e.g. Holy Spirit.

## How do you select materials?

Through prayer - the Holy Spirit reveals areas of focus and we look for suitable materials on the topic.

## Is time commitment of members a problem?

Yes, so we deliberately choose materials that do not require members to do "homework". So although everyone is busy during the week, when the time comes for Beta, they are committed to coming together for the



bible study and fellowship.

## In what ways can your members grow in their spiritual lives through the small group?

We provide support for each other in our spiritual journey, share genuinely about our triumphs and struggles, and pray for one another in times of trials. We are encouraged because we know that we do not walk alone.

## Are you accepting new members?

Yes!

## Any admission criteria?!

No, we welcome all who desire to know Him (and us)!

## What is your hope for each member?

That they will experience more of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

## What's the one unique thing about the group?

We are the only small group "born" from Alpha so far.

## How can we pray for Beta?

That every Beta member will grow strong in the Lord, maintain a close walk with Him, and be used by Him wherever we have been placed in the marketplace.

## What is your wish for TMC?

That we will indeed be the light for this community and beyond!

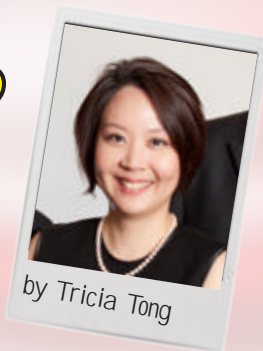
If you would like to pay a visit to Beta, please contact Caroline at [feedmylambs@hotmail.com](mailto:feedmylambs@hotmail.com)

## About Small Group Connect...

This column is from the small group committee at Trinity Methodist Church. It seeks to bring and integrate small groups into the church life of Trinity Methodist Church. More about small groups at TMC can be found at [www.tmc.org.sg/smallgroup.html](http://www.tmc.org.sg/smallgroup.html), or through Park Ming at [parkming@tmc.org.sg](mailto:parkming@tmc.org.sg) or 62824443

# Marilah kita bersatu\* - The TMC Spirit

(\*Come let us unite)



by Tricia Tong

9 August. Singapore's National Day.

One of the "hot" election topics for General Election 2011 was "Foreign Talent", and how they were depriving Singaporeans of jobs, cheap property, space on the MRT and committing a whole host of other transgressions.

On the occasion of Singapore's 46th anniversary of independence, let us remember some other Foreign Talent who arrived on the shores of Singapore a long, long time ago.

On 7 Feb 1885, James Thoburn and William Oldham landed in Singapore. "Their arrival was not the result merely of human planning and intention. That God was directing them can be evidenced by the fact that Charles Phillips, the man who had issued the Macedonian call to Thoburn through a letter, was waiting for them at the Singapore harbour even though he had not been informed of their arrival – at least by humans. The night before Thoburn and Oldham arrived in Singapore, Phillips had a dream of their arrival. It was a small reminder that God had a hand in Methodism's arrival in Singapore."

From the following day, a Sunday, Rev Thoburn held services at 8pm daily for 15 consecutive days at the Town Hall - now Victoria Theatre - secured with the help of Mr John Polglase, the assistant municipal secretary. On the sixteenth day, 23 Feb, Rev Thoburn organised the first Methodist Church in Singapore. Like other contemporary Foreign Talent, he purchased three properties - Mount Sophia, which became home to the Methodist Church in Singapore for many years.

These Foreign Talent missionaries entered into social work almost immediately upon their arrival in Singapore.

- Elevating the importance of education for boys and especially for girls by opening schools, including the Anglo-Chinese School in 1886

- Dealing with social ills such as drinking, gambling, opium smoking, and smoking
- Providing medical assistance among the poor, opium addicts and others who needed help
- Social work including among children, "paupers and lepers" and rescuing women from slavery, brothels and ill-treatment from their families.

Fast forward to the 21st century and today, we have the Methodist Welfare Services with 13 centres and outreach programmes which serve an average of 5,000 people a month.

Another feature of GE 2011 was the electorate voicing concerns for the poor and needy. There was animated debate about whether this "vulnerable group" was sufficiently cared for by the politicians or whether this ought to be the purview of social workers. There was also enthusiastic argument about the adequacy of monies allocated towards the financial aid of the "poorest of poor". Bloggers "flamed" voters for considering upgrading more important than the care of the disadvantaged.

Has the average Singaporean become accustomed to delegating responsibilities of care to others – to our domestic help, to nursing homes, to charities - to Other People?

We thank God that we are able to make the occasional, even frequent, donation towards the work of social concerns and missions. Last year, TMC raised money for Khmer Bibles several times beyond the original target in a matter of a few Sundays.

If you:

- know of a suitable Christian household of Chen Su Lan Home
- can contribute towards the children's
- are keen to befriend one of the child

Please write to Eugenia Koh at eugenie@cslh.org.sg or contact her through the church office

More about the Home at [www.cslmcl.org.sg](http://www.cslmcl.org.sg)



But do we regularly (or is it more of a rarity) feed the poor and migrant workers, visit and befriend the elderly and infirm at St Luke's Eldercare Centre, in other hospitals and welfare homes, show a friendly face at the home of one of our homebound, give tuition to students at Contact 123, help children from the Chen Su Lan Home find rented accommodation, invite a lonely friend or neighbour to the monthly Yum Cha, or chaperone our friends from the Institute of Mental Health when they come to visit?

Jesus did not have much spare denarii, but he did not merely think about those in need. For sure, many people brought their sick to Jesus. Yet even though He needed only to say the word in order to heal, our Lord Jesus was physically by the side of the sick and those in need.

"A centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying, 'Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.' And Jesus said to him, 'I will come and heal him.'" (Mt 8:5-7)

**"A ruler came and worshiped Him, saying, 'My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her and she will live.' So Jesus arose and followed him."** (Mt 9:18-19)

**"And [Jairus] fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she was dying. When He came into the house, ... He ... took her by the hand and called, saying, 'Little girl, arise.'" (Lk 8:41-42, 54)**

Simon Peter followed Jesus's example.

"[Tabitha] became sick and died. ... the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them. Then Peter arose and went with them. ... Peter put them all out, and knelt down and prayed."

Methodist Foreign Talent arrived on these shores in the 1880s and followed Jesus' example.



connect with others

The theme for Singapore's 46th National Day is "Majulah. The Singapore Spirit" or "Onward. The Singapore Spirit".

Can we manifest as part of that Singapore Spirit, a spirit of compassion? The compassion we at TMC ask for every Communion Sunday as we sing our theme song, "Beauty for Brokenness"?

We are citizens (or permanent residents) of Singapore who are united in our belief in Jesus Christ – the Son of God – Who has shown us not just to talk about caring for others, but actually physically giving care to others.

The Saltshaker has its own slogan for you to consider this National Day. Marilah kita bersatu. For this ought to be the TMC spirit:

"Joined in one spirit to our Head,  
where He appoints we go,  
and still in Jesus' footsteps tread,  
and do His work below."  
(Blest Be the Dear Uniting Love, Charles Wesley)

(Facts about the heritage of the Methodist Church of Singapore (MCS) were taken from the web pages of MCS at [www.methodist.org.sg](http://www.methodist.org.sg).)

TMC's Outreach & Social Concerns ministry supports / serves:

- Bethany Methodist Nursing Home
- Chen Su Lan Methodist Children's Home
- Contact 123
- Homebound members of TMC
- Institute of Mental Health
- St Luke's Eldercare Centre
- Yum Cha

Details at [www.tmc.org.sg/osc.html](http://www.tmc.org.sg/osc.html)

If you are moved to follow Christ's example in acting out your social concerns, please contact Eric Cheong in the church office at 6282 4443 / [eric@tmc.org.sg](mailto:eric@tmc.org.sg)





# Uncovering Life

Life is a four letter word  
To some a four letter word is repulsive  
But Love is also a four letter word.  
What then is Life?

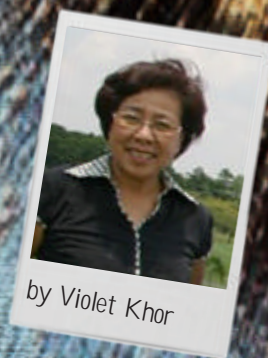
If one of the letters, 'f' is left out of the word "Life",  
Then we have the word "lie".  
Life becomes a lie  
When we do not live Life to the purpose and dignity to  
which we have been called

If two letters are left out, 'l' and 'e'  
Then we have the word "If"  
Life is to be lived abundantly to its fullest potential  
So that when you look back,  
It will not be a Life of "ifs"

Finally, if three letters are left out, 'l', 'f' and 'e'  
Then we have the word "I"  
Who is this "I"?  
Who is this "I" who speaks in and to this "Life"?

Is it "Love" or is it "Lie"?  
Although a single letter but it is powerful  
It determines how this Life responses to people,  
circumstances and the environment

It is the "I" who makes the choices.  
I would like to believe that the choices are made out of Love  
Hence to me "Life" is more like the four letter word "Love"  
It is a gift to be lived to its fullest.



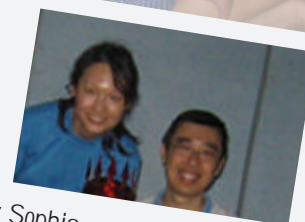
by Violet Khor

*(This poem was written  
to my colleagues  
of Cluster East on  
the occasion  
of my retirement.)*

LOVE  
LIFE



# Hearts of Gold in the Golden Land



by Sophia and Desmond Loh  
Worshippers in TMC who have  
embarked on the work of missions  
in their own special way

We spent several days in The Golden Land – Myanmar – in March 2011. We wouldn't call it a holiday. Instead, a "refreshing and impactful trip" is probably a more apt phrase to describe what we saw, felt and experienced.

Myanmar is one of the world's poorest nations and the poorest in Asia. More than 70 per cent of its people live below the poverty line. Unfortunately, it is difficult for the community to get access to foreign aid and the country has not escaped inflation either.

Pretty much cut off from the outside world, it is tough for Myanmar people to get their voices heard and to obtain help for their many needs. There is no mobile network in the country. Internet access is hard to get and when that is possible, sites are blocked and emails can be tracked.

We went to Myanmar with doctors / friends whom we have been praying with for a few years now. Though this was our first trip, this group of friends have been toiling the ground and sowing seeds for Christ in Myanmar for the past nine years. This trip was focused on visiting and encouraging our local partners in Myanmar, and to see if there have been any "fruits" from the partnership after all these years. We also visited the orphanages we have been supporting.

We had the privilege of staying in the farm run by the Myanmar Compassion Group (MCP). We were introduced to a world with no fans, television, hot water, taps that didn't work consistently, internet connection of any sort and toilets that were nowhere near our modern comforts. The orphans grow up in conditions like that or worse.

## Our local partners – MCP

Founded by Dr Dal and his doctor wife, Nu Ching more than a decade ago, MCP oversees 200 orphanages across Myanmar.

For years, our group has been in contact with this dear couple and their trusted aide, U La Mang (ULM), who is also a midwife and nurse.

These three amazing people, all in their 60s-70s, left an indelible mark on us. They toil tirelessly out of love for the orphans and their people. They could have chosen the "easier" and more logical way to retire, enjoying accumulated wealth from their professions. Instead, they continue to work 24-7 at their age. They maximise 365 days by:



- Running and seeing patients in MCP's medical clinic in Yangon. Funds are collected from private patients and are used to fund the orphanages.
- Going to their farm (which is an hour's dusty ride out of Yangon) every week and staying overnight to provide free medical services to the villages and orphans. We witnessed Dr Dal suffer an asthma attack in the farm, no thanks to the dust which found its way into our lungs during our open-car ride. Petrol is expensive hence the choice of a non-air-conditioned vehicle. Despite his discomfort and the state of his health, he did not complain. There was no stopping these dear old doctors from visiting the poor and needy in the farms.
- Frequently traveling to the rural villages in different states of Myanmar, providing free medical services to villagers and orphans.
- Managing MCP's operations, including equipping the orphanage directors, allocating and disbursing funds to orphanages and other MCP projects, overseeing multiple mobile medical clinics that regularly visit the various orphanages, running a "life skill centre" so that more local people can improve their skills and find jobs, developing projects that would enable MCP and the orphanages to be more self-sustaining.

The water tank



## Fruits of MCP work

Our prayer group has provided funds for various MCP projects over the last few years. We were glad to see that MCP has been good stewards of the money.

Years ago, there was no water tank at Kid's Life Orphanage and the kids had to manually 'draw' water. A water tank has now been built so that there is clean water for the kids.

Due to irrigation from this water tank, they have been able to generate more income from their farm and have since been able to build a proper two-storey concrete shelter for the children.

One of the kids



We met Benjamin at Kid's Life Orphanage. Now a nine-year-old boy who has clothes, shelter and an education, he is a far cry from the abandoned child from five years ago. Then, he was thin, near death and extremely ill. Thanks to the Sustagen milk brought in by our team and Dr Dal's care, he survived and is now doing well.

We also visited two out of 200 orphanages and found it incredible how each orphanage of around 20 children was managed by just two people - the orphanage director and his wife. Talk about efficiency! The orphanages try to be self-sustaining through their farm produce. However, this is often insufficient and they reach out to MCP for assistance when required. During our trip, one orphanage asked MCP for US\$30 as they owed this amount to the school. Without the US\$30, the children would not be allowed to take exams the next day!

## MCP's Mission & Values

We left impressed by MCP's far-sighted vision and fierce determination to identify and implement income-generating projects so that they can be self-sufficient in the long run.

Having seen the fruits of their work and after our time spent with the MCP leaders, we are glad that there are



Sophia at shelter



Kid's Life & Singapore team

local leaders in Myanmar who care and live out values of transparency and integrity, with great commitment to improve the lives of the children.

## Moving forward

Unlike their neighbouring countries which have relatively free access to foreign aid, Myanmar is handicapped and funding is challenging. MCP is currently facing funding issues as key donors in the US have pulled out since the credit crisis. Another major donor just passed away in late 2010.

An orphan needs US\$35 a month, most of which goes first to food and then to education. An upper-middle-income working adult makes around US\$70 month in the city. These amounts are close to that of one good restaurant meal in Singapore, yet would make a huge impact in Myanmar.

MCP's current income-generating-project priority is in a town called Kalaymyo, which has a growing need for accommodation given the influx of local and foreign tourists and church organisations. As such, MCP hopes to build an establishment with 12 rooms and a conference hall that they can rent out. The facility would also have a Christian library (they already have a donation of books) that is much needed in Kalaymyo. The rental income would help to cover the operations of the library, and more importantly, provide additional sustainable income to help fund MCP's ongoing activities. However, they have raised about US\$90,000, only one-third of the amount needed for this project thus far. Once the funds have been raised, the facility can be built in less than a year.

## The call

We are moved to support them in their endeavours. God has blessed them with wisdom to use money wisely, compassion for the orphans and the poor, and grit to push through the projects.

We are excited to partner them as we know the little we provide has tremendous potential to impact the lives of so many out there. We have been blessed to see the smiles on the faces of the orphans as we sang and danced with them. They can lead a transformed and better life with our gifts.

With MCP workers on the ground, the orphans are cared for and are brought up with Christian values. They have the potential to grow up as children with hope and a future, to walk out of poverty and be the light in their generation.

We believe God brought us to Myanmar to tell their story. We have decided that we want to be a channel of blessing and will be giving a lump-sum love gift to MCP.

We hope that by sharing their story, God has touched your hearts in His way. If you are moved to bless them in whatever way, we would be delighted to speak with you. Your blessing, however small, would mean a great deal to them. If you are moved to pray for them, please do. And if you are moved to go see them yourselves one day, make a trip there or join us someday.

May we look beyond our shores and may God bless you richly!



Their first tractor

### MCP's Mission

... is to proclaim and demonstrate God's love to children in crisis as we train and equip national workers in compassion-based ministries by:

- ♥ Providing comprehensive care for children at risk, with an emphasis upon orphaned and abandoned children.
- ♥ Training and equipping nationals in compassion-based ministries, including but not limited to orphanage staff members, Bible school students, and other Christian lay workers.
- ♥ Providing Christian literature services to children and adults through the Christian Media Center in Yangon.
- ♥ Assisting in the development of micro-enterprise (income generation) projects for selected orphanages and church-based initiatives.

### MCP VALUES

include:

- ♥ We are committed to advancing the Kingdom of God through this ministry,
- ♥ We affirm God's heart, will and desire for all children as clearly defined in the Bible and are committed to rescuing and nurturing as many children in crisis as possible,
- ♥ We are committed to advocating for populations at risk, particularly orphaned and abandoned children
- ♥ We are committed to capacity building all individuals associated with this ministry,
- ♥ We are committed to fiscal integrity and corporate transparency.

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you;  
and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.



Ask Anything



# Alpha Course at TMC

Remember the difficult questions and awkward conversations with your relatives and friends about your faith, Christianity and the Bible? ALPHA is here to help!

ALPHA is an opportunity for anyone to explore the Christian faith in a relaxed setting. Each weekly session and discussion is thought-provoking, and one of the highlights of the course is the weekend away.

So sign up with your pre-believers friends & family. it's an opportunity to ask anything!

	Course Schedule
1 – 3:30 pm	Title
21 Aug	Who is Jesus?
28 Aug	Why did Jesus Die?
4 Sep	How can I be Sure of my Faith?
11 Sep	Why and How Do I Pray?
18 Sep	Why & How Should I Read the Bible?
25 Sep	How does God Guide Us?
30 Sep – 1 Oct (Fri Evening to Saturday Evening)	Alpha Weekend - Who is the Holy Spirit? - What does the Holy Spirit do? - How can I be Filled with the Spirit? - How can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?
9 Oct	How can I Resist Evil?
16 Oct	Does God Heal Today?
23 Oct	Why and How Should We Tell Others? plus Celebration!



## how to participate?

**Participants:** Fill in the registration form and drop it off at the ALPHA registration desk at the Plaza.

**Task Force:** Be part of the team that will be working behind the scenes to make it happen! Training will be provided.

For further details, please visit [www.tmc.org.sg/witness.html](http://www.tmc.org.sg/witness.html)

# EVENTS



## CREDITS

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**Yum Cha, 10am**  
is an opportunity for people to come together for fellowship  
Contact Eric Cheong at 9180 6713  
or Gek Khee, 9653 5116  
[www.tmc.org.sg/osc.html](http://www.tmc.org.sg/osc.html)

**Character Development in Toddlers, 7pm – 9pm**  
[www.tmc.org.sg/kindergarten.html](http://www.tmc.org.sg/kindergarten.html)

**Walk the Talk 9am – 1pm**  
Speaker session on prayer walks, and a practical session.  
Contact Caroline at [feedmylambs@hotmail.com](mailto:feedmylambs@hotmail.com) / 9827 6567  
[www.tmc.org.sg/witness.html](http://www.tmc.org.sg/witness.html)

**SKS Book Sale in TMC**

**WSCS AGM, 10:30am**  
Prayer Chapel

**ALPHA course**  
(with ALPHA weekend on 30 Sept - 1 Oct)  
Contact Caroline at [feedmylambs@hotmail.com](mailto:feedmylambs@hotmail.com) / 9827 6567  
[www.tmc.org.sg/witness.html](http://www.tmc.org.sg/witness.html)

**Workshop on “Mentoring”**  
organised by WSCS  
Speaker: Rev Bernard Chao  
Contact Lynn Cham through the church office

**St Luke’s Eldercare Visitation & Devotion, 10am**  
With our partner, Bless Community Services, we are reaching a wider community for Christ at SLEC in Serangoon. More about SLEC at [www.slec.org.sg](http://www.slec.org.sg).  
Contact Eric at 6282 4443 / [eric@tmc.org.sg](mailto:eric@tmc.org.sg) to visit SLEC with TMC.  
[www.tmc.org.sg/osc.html](http://www.tmc.org.sg/osc.html)



**Day of Prayer for Missions**  
[www.tmc.org.sg/missions.html](http://www.tmc.org.sg/missions.html)

**Institute of Mental Health**  
Visit to Institute of Mental Health (OSC)  
[www.tmc.org.sg/osc.html](http://www.tmc.org.sg/osc.html)

**Talk on “When God Shapes the W.O.M.A.N”**  
organised by WSCS  
Speaker: Rev Jenni Ho-Huan  
Contact Mary Foo at 96202311

**Mooncake Festival Outreach**  
Come and make friends with the Serangoon North community through the distribution of mooncakes.  
Contact Caroline at [feedmylambs@hotmail.com](mailto:feedmylambs@hotmail.com) / 9827 6567

**WSCS Bible Study 9am**  
by Esther Wong  
Contact Mrs Diana David or Mrs Joanne Wong at 96507126 / 98585517 for more details

**Healing Ministry**  
8 pm

**Men at Prayer**  
7 am

**WSCS Line Dancing**  
3 pm

Further details on TMC’s events can be found at [www.tmc.org.sg](http://www.tmc.org.sg)