

# July

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TRINITY  
Methodist Church

50th anniversary

M.I.T.A.(P) No.014/09/2005



# SALTSHAKER

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## A MESSAGE FROM LCEC CHAIRMAN

### Our TMC Vision and Mission

I trust that by now, you would have seen our large banner and have read almost weekly in our Sunday worship service bulletins, of our Vision of becoming a church where "Every Member *Experiences* the Reality and Work of the Holy Spirit and *Understands and Practises* Discipleship". This means that for each of us, we seek to become a true disciple of our Lord Jesus, actively growing in Him, constantly empowered by His Holy Spirit, so that as a church, we may become one that is manifestly led by the Presence of the Holy Spirit in our midst.

While we pursue this vision over the next few years, we must not forget that our ongoing long-term purpose in being His church is to "Share the Love of Jesus with the non-believers in our community and beyond". This means that while our *Vision* draws us forward by inspiring and guiding us to build the kind of Spirit-led church we seek to become, this is only so that we may become more *effective* in discharging our *Mission* and fulfilling our *Purpose* as a church.

### Looking Back at 2005

We moved back to our redeveloped premises in late November 2004 and began 2005 with much anticipation, hope and excitement. With our first services back here, the Consecration Service, and then services as usual, we have indeed settled back into Serangoon Garden Way (SGW).

But the redeveloped physical church always reminds us that it is *not* back to SGW as usual, and not back to services as usual. Our service times have changed. After some adjustments, most of us have settled into the new timing structure. This has allowed us to have more time for fellowship after services, instead of rushing off as in the past.

The "buzz" at the Open Plaza area is also a significant new development. Enjoying a cup of coffee with some biscuits or food provided by our WSCS ladies, while talking and sharing with one other - this is something that we should not take for granted. We must be thankful to our Lord.

The revised service times have also allowed us to run the *Adult Bible Classes (ABC)*. The attendance at ABC has varied, depending on the needs of the people with regards to the topics of study. Indeed, for several of these classes, the time between services has been too short, and we will have to see what we can do to deal with this.



The *Sermon Series* approach adopted by the pastors is also a major positive development. This facilitates continuity and gives a sense of learning. The different series in themselves are also significant. In particular, the *Purpose Driven Life (PDL)* series was very well received. This, coupled with the PDL-based ABCs or groups, and the associated PDL Fair, and Celebration Finale during the Easter 2005 weekend, may be seen as the climax of our spiritual journey as a church as we return to SGW. Our pastors also concluded Part One of a series on the Holy Spirit in late 2005 (which was followed by Part Two with the Reverend Dr Norman Wong at the Holy Week services this year). This series clearly seeks to help us move towards our desire of seeing each one of us *experience the reality of the Holy Spirit* in our daily lives.

Then, there is the gradual increase in *attendance* at our *Services*. Average weekly attendance has returned to, and even surpassed, the level prior to our redevelopment. New people have obviously joined us in our worship of the Lord. Almost every week, we have welcomed new people. Even as we look around, we are likely to see people whom we are not too familiar with. God adds people to His church, in His own ways.

Our people have continued in their giving towards the work of the church, as well as towards the TMC Redevelopment Fund. Almost every week, we have received donations to the fund. Indeed, upon looking back, we have found that our people have contributed more than \$5 million over a four-year period. Beyond this, we have received loans from members and friends, as well as from our sister churches to help us minimise the commercial interest charges. For all these, we remain thankful to our Lord.

The *Small Group Ministry* has continued to be an important pillar of spiritual growth and support for our people. There has been an increase in the number of groups, with some of them originating



from the PDL experience last year. New people have also been added to existing groups. Let's be thankful for this area of work too.

The *Prayer focus* is another area of work that has been blessed by the Lord. Apart from the Leaders' Prayer meeting, the Intercessory Prayer Committee has been meeting in prayer every week, as well as on every Sunday. The setting up of a 24/7 prayer schedule is in the works. While the attendance at the Leaders' Prayer meeting can be further improved, we must remain thankful that it is He who has been pursuing us and seeking us to pray more.

The other significant new development is that of the monthly *Leaders' Retreat*. This has provided the avenue for teaching, feeding and encouraging all leaders in our midst. More specifically, as we learned about Discipleship together in the last one year, we have begun to appreciate the need to practise discipleship through small relationship-building accountability groups rather than through programmes. This seems to augur well for us as it points us towards what we should be doing with regards to the Discipleship element of our church-wide Vision.

I should also make mention of the TRAC Annual Conference 2005, which was held for the first time on TMC grounds. This was a significant event as it allowed us to see and experience in a tangible way that we are part of a great connectational system of Methodist churches in Singapore!

## 2006

We will be celebrating our 50th Anniversary this year. In the Bible, this Jubilee year represents The Year of the Lord's Favour! We trust that our Lord will pour forth His blessings upon us as we follow the Holy Spirit's leading into this year.

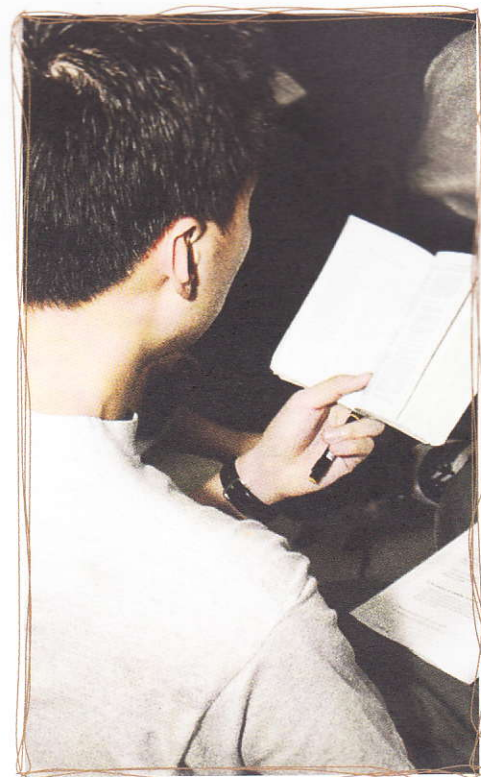
As part of our TMC Vision, our *Theme* in 2006 is TMC – *my Family*. We will highlight John 13:34, 35 as our *Theme Verse*: "A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so

*you must love one another*. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." This will allow us to focus on growing our Christian fellowship of loving care and concern for one another, and at the same time, extending this fellowship to embrace pre-believers so that they may experience Jesus' love through us and be saved into His kingdom.

We have launched our 50th Anniversary *TMC Calendar*. We have also launched our 50th Anniversary *TMC logo*, a new logo to signify our move with our God into a new era. Like your leadership, I hope you will be inspired by this to press on in your work for Him through our beloved TMC.

Also, you would by now be aware of our initiative to *welcome our visitors* better. We held a *Visitors' Welcome Lunch* to extend a warm welcome to all who newly joined us in our worship services in 2005. Our membership committee has launched a *Visitors' Corner* at the Plaza area and a new *Visitor's Welcome Pack* as well. Welcoming our visitors is part of our focus on building warmer fellowship in 2006.

The pastors have also launched a *Church-wide Engagement Programme (CEP)*, much like last year's PDL, where we can all read, listen, discuss, and learn together as one big TMC family. The pastors have







also planned to extend the *Altar Ministry* further, now that we have already witnessed the Spirit's work in moving people forward to the altar area to receive prayers, help and salvation.

The 50th Anniversary Celebration on 10 Sep 06 will be a major occasion for us to give thanks to our God for seeing us through the past 50 years. We plan to invite all our previous pastors and full-time workers. Of course, we also plan to invite many of our friends to join us as well, including those living in our neighbourhood.

#### Exhortation

On behalf of the pastors and your leaders, may I encourage you, urge you, beseech you, to join us in many of the activities planned for 2006. Let us seek the Lord daily, that we may all follow Him more closely, and that we may all indeed experience the reality and presence of His Spirit in our lives, so that more of those in our neighbourhood and beyond may be introduced to Him through us.



Together with you  
in serving Him at TMC,  
Sin Hoon.

*PS: May I ask one more thing of you – Please do continue to give to the Lord by participating in and contributing towards our TMC Redevelopment Fund as we still need a significant amount of dollars before we may consider this project completed.*

*Did you know that the WSCS is actually open to all women in TMC, and that all ladies aged 21 and above are welcome to join and participate in its events?*

*By Melissa Koh*

The perception of the WSCS over the years, especially among the younger women in TMC, has been that it caters more for the senior ladies in the church. This was probably inevitable as the activities of the WSCS usually involved cooking, sewing and other similarly domestic pursuits. In fact, the WSCS ladies are most renowned for their Food Sale Sundays, which take place on the first and fourth week of each month.

In order to correct this misperception, the WSCS has taken the opportunity to revamp itself to become more appealing to the younger modern woman. Not just any ordinary modern woman, but the modern woman yearning to lead a godly life.

Over the last half of 2006, the WSCS has strived to accomplish this by organising events such as the "Beauty in Balance" workshop, mushroom farm visit and a Sungei Buloh Nature Reserve tour. These were held to attract the younger women in the church to participate in its activities. Upcoming events that are lined up include line dancing lessons and cooking demonstrations. WSCS also recently launched a 50-piece patchwork in conjunction with TMC's 50th anniversary. These activities are not intended only for ladies, but are also a way of giving other members a non-threatening opportunity to introduce non-Christian friends to fellowship in church.

As part of the church, we too, should strive to help and support the WSCS as they seek to fulfill their core purpose, which is to reach out to all women. One way in which the female congregation may help the WSCS in its activities is for skilled and professional women to step out and offer their expertise as resource persons for talks, demonstrations, and conducting courses on topics of interest to women. Everyone can help by their participation and support of programmes and food or handicraft sales. Even husbands can help by being supportive of their wives' involvement in the WSCS. In this way, everyone in the TMC family can be involved to support this ministry to the women in our church.

#### What is the WSCS?

The Women's Society for Christian Services (WSCS) is an organisation formed within the Methodist church to be a support group to all women members. The purpose of the WSCS is "to glorify God with faith and gladness and to provide opportunities for encouragement and spiritual growth to all women within the church through Bible studies, special events, mentoring, and fellowship". One of the WSCS members' main goals is to be witnesses of God's grace and love to all women, and to pursue a greater knowledge of the Bible, which leads to holiness in God.



17 Dec 2005



# Chinese Evangelistic Outreach

by Ellen Seah



*It was an overwhelming moment as we witnessed people taking that step of faith to come forward, embracing one another and crying with joy! Hallelujah!*

At 5 pm, dark clouds were seen looming in the sky... Half an hour later, it started to pour. For all those involved in the Chinese evangelistic outreach event on 17 Dec 05, that was the last thing we wanted. The rain would make it inconvenient for people to travel and would potentially cause them to change their mind about attending the event. We could only pray.

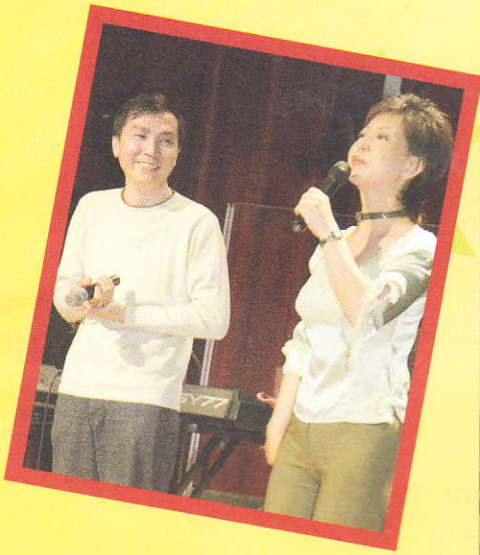
The worry did not last long however, for not only did the rain stop half an hour later, the result of it was this freshness that made everything look renewed. What a way to start the evening! Indeed, God had everything all planned out.

By 7 pm, most of us involved were ready and "on standby". The ushers took their positions and were eager to play host, welcoming guests with generous goodie bags as the guests started to stream into the worship hall.

Many who brought children parted with them as the children were led to join the children's programme. Our specially arranged transport brought many residents from the Serangoon North HDB flats. Another was a group of old folks from the Lions Home For the Elders. Familiar faces from the English congregation appeared with their parents and relatives. Greetings, handshakes, hugs... the anticipation regarding what would happen later that night was building up







The event started with the choir giving a rendition of Chinese Christmas carols. It was probably a first-time experience for many to sing Christmas carols in Mandarin! The carolling segment marked a wonderful start as it created a joyous atmosphere and put everyone in a celebratory mood.

Next, our invited celebrities, Ms Carol Chiam (a former Mediacorp Chinese newscaster) and her husband, Mr Carl Lim (a Lianhe Zaobao journalist), went on stage to give their testimonies of how God had worked in their lives. The testimonies were meaningful and simple to relate to. Carol and Carl then performed a Cantonese song and led the whole audience to sing along.

Finally, the highlight of the programme was the sermon by our invited speaker, Reverend Oh Beng Kee. As Rev Oh was a renowned preacher in the Chinese Christian community, we were full of expectations about his sermon for that night. Throughout the next hour, Rev Oh delivered a powerful sermon

that touched on life's many fundamental issues and thoughts, well-blended with humorous examples and analogies.

By the time we reached the altar call segment, God had touched and prepared the hearts of many in our midst. Rev Oh's invitation and promptings were heeded and within a short time, a large crowd of people had already stepped forward and congregated at the front of the worship hall. It was an overwhelming moment as we witnessed people taking that step of faith to come forward, embracing one another and crying with joy! Hallelujah! Rev Oh led our new brothers and sisters to pray the salvation prayer and then closed his sermon for the night.

The event ended in a spirit of joyfulness, in the same way it had begun. For those who gave their lives to God that night, the old had gone and the new had come! May we now encourage and walk with these new brothers and sisters as they begin their journey with Christ.

Glory be to God!

## Children's Christmas Party





# GOD IS PATIENT!

Yes, God is very patient indeed.

It took me almost forty years to realise that.

*by Leow Whye Mong*

I grew up the youngest child of uneducated parents who practiced ancestor and idol worship. I was also the only one sent to an English school, albeit an unknown "neighbourhood" primary school located on the fringe of the then notorious Kampung Cheng San. It was no surprise that the larger part of my primary school days were spent in the swampy jungle behind the school where a number of us spent much of our time building little sheds among the sugarcane plants, catching spiders and rearing fighting fish. Life then was carefree.

In 1967, I was posted to Beatty Secondary School where I was blessed with many caring and kind teachers who turned my academic life around. Beatty was also where I was first introduced to God. In 1968, an enthusiastic classmate tried to convince me that his God was the "one and only God". However, at that point in my life, I felt that there were "a thousand and one gods". I did not need another one. Two years later, another overzealous young evangelist tried but also failed to convince me that his God was real. By then, I was a star student. If his God was real and all-powerful, why was he struggling? I could not understand it.

Life was generally smooth throughout pre-university, National Service and university. Hence, I felt no particular need for a god.

At times I did ponder over the purpose of life and marvelled at the wonders of nature.

I read the book *Mere Christianity*, which prompted me to think a little more about the existence of a "super being". Surely such a complex world could not have come into being just by chance. There must be creation and gods, maybe a "chief god".

Things got serious when I met a lady, Boon Sim, who would later become my wife. She worshipped at Zion Bible Presbyterian

Church. I would sneak out of my house to attend church with her. There was resistance from my family at first, but soon they accepted the fact that I would be converted and baptised. The years again rolled by. We were blessed with good careers and three uniquely different kids, but sad to say, my spiritual life never took off. I was not a good example for my wife and children. I was contented with being a Sunday Christian. By the age of 49, I already had hypertension for more than 20 years, was under medication for gout, hyper-thyroidism and now hypothyroidism, amongst other illnesses. For all of God's patience and grace, I got through each crisis only to drift back to my contented ways.

God must have finally lost His patience with me. On Sunday 6 Jun 05, for no reason, I felt giddy and faint after taking a bath. Boon Sim rushed me to hospital thinking that I had a heart attack. It was not. I was given the all clear, but life was never the same again. I had frequent giddy spells, breathlessness, cold sweats, fluctuating heart beats, erratic blood pressure, numbness, etc. It could happen anytime, so much so that I lost confidence when driving alone, wondering if I would pass out and crash. My work was affected.

I had seen my GP, consulted two heart specialists, a Chinese physician from Beijing and even a neurologist. Tests, a heart scan and brain scans showed no significant abnormalities. The doctors diagnosed it as Panic Attack Syndrome. I was given "happy pills" to calm my nerves and in the hope that the symptoms would be under control. However, the treatment did not help; and this went on for more than four months. Boon Sim prayed, I prayed, but my faith was weak. I succumbed to the physical symptoms, which began to occur more frequently. I felt as though I could die at any time.

By then, I was desperate for anything that could get me out of this. Through Cher Khee and Maely, I was led to the Friday Prayer Fellowship in TMC on the evening of 21 Oct 05. Brother Yan and fellow members of the group prayed for me and told me to come again the following Friday. That week, although I managed to reduce the medication, I was still a little sceptical. By God's grace, I went again on 28 Oct 05 and Brother Yan again ministered to me. I must first admit that I had been to rallies and cell group meetings where I had witnessed people being "slain" and wondered why this was so. I was convinced that I could resist and would always stay rooted to the ground.

But on that special night I finally surrendered. I confessed to God and sought His forgiveness and mercy. As Brother Yan prayed and took a few steps towards me, I could remember attempting to resist. I had a strange feeling within me. Although my eyes were closed, it seemed so bright in front of me. I felt a gush of wind and Brother Yan's footsteps sounded like the stomping feet of a whole army. I felt a calmness in my heart, and believe it or not, my left knee went limp and I fell backwards. The "landing" was soft and sweet – yes, I was slain! Hallelujah!

The rest is history. I no longer have to take any medication and I certainly do not need any because I can now call on Jesus' name. I have learnt that God's power is real and awesome. He is patient and forgiving. He waits for us, ever wanting us to come back to Him, but we must first humble and surrender ourselves, confess our sins, acknowledge Him and He will receive us just like the father who welcomed his son in the Parable of the Lost Son.

Thanks be to God. Hallelujah!





# Celebrating TMC's 50th Anniversary

*Saltshaker catches up with Mr. Ron Teo, Chairperson of the Organising Committee for TMC's 50th Anniversary Celebrations.*



## **Q: What is the significance of the 50th Anniversary Celebrations?**

We want to take this opportunity to give a proper salute to our pioneers who had the vision to start this church in Serangoon Gardens. As a result we are able to benefit from their foresight in purchasing this piece of land for the church. The celebrations are also a time to look forward and to remind ourselves that we are here for a purpose – to try our level-best to reach out to the people around us.

This year's church theme, TMC – My Family, is very appropriate as we celebrate TMC's 50th Anniversary. When TMC was first started, one of the driving forces for the pioneers to establish a church in Serangoon Garden was so that they could nurture their families in a church environment. This force remained even as the church moved into the 21st century. Indeed, the newly introduced church logo depicts this focus on the people in our estate and the desire to bring them to our church.

## **Q: What are some highlights of the year-long celebrations?**

The merchandising of 50th Anniversary souvenirs is one aspect of the celebrations. This started with the calendar in December – featuring photographs by one of our church members, with accompanying Biblical verses. This was followed by the sale of limited edition time-pieces in January. There will be other Anniversary merchandise planned for the forthcoming months. So, be on the lookout for them.

There are three main aims for the merchandising efforts. Firstly, proceeds from the merchandise sold would be channelled into the TMC redevelopment fund. Secondly, the merchandise produced is for the purpose of building up the community of believers in TMC. For example, the verses in the calendar can be used for meditation while the watches have the word 'Pray' on them, which is a timely reminder for the congregation to

do so. Finally, the merchandise can also be utilised as part of our evangelistic efforts. One example is the distribution of TMC calendars to our neighbours in Serangoon Gardens when we invited them for the Christmas event and our church services.

In addition to the merchandising, there will be a special event every quarter as part of the celebrations. These include the church camp in June, the 50th Anniversary celebration dinner in September and the Christmas event in December. We are also looking to producing a coffee-table book to commemorate TMC's 50th Anniversary. This is scheduled for release on the very day of the Anniversary celebration, on 10 September.

## **Q: How can the congregation at large be involved in the 50th Anniversary celebrations?**

We would really like to see the congregation at large take an active part in as many of the events as they can. Rather than just coming for the Sunday services, shaking hands with the Pastors after service and then going off on their own separate ways, participating in such activities will enable members to grow and feel that they are together as one.

I remember years ago, as a child, in Geylang Methodist Church, we were raising funds to buy that piece of land in Katong where Christ Methodist Church now stands. For those of us who were not able to contribute in cash, we contributed in kind. We were there at fun-fairs manning game stalls, sweeping and clearing up afterwards. Doing things together brought us all the more closer.

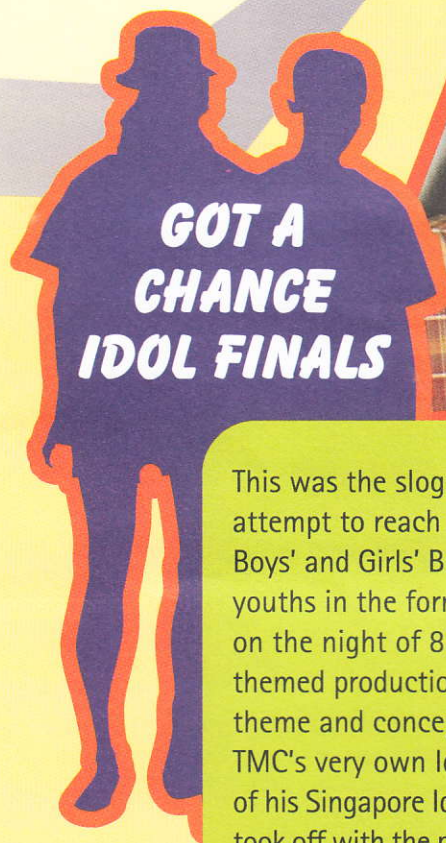
I believe that a good portion of the congregation would like to participate and help but they just do not know what they can do. That being the case, I suggest that they signal their intentions to the church office accordingly.

Let's all get involved.

*by Patsy Ong*



# "Got a Chance, God a Chance"



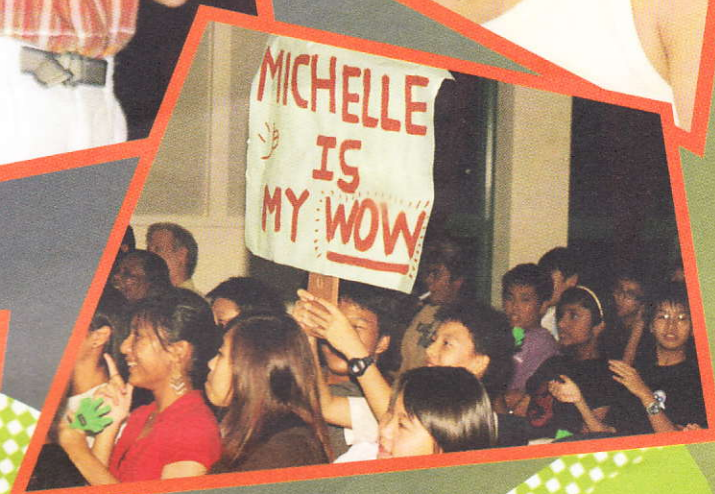
This was the slogan for the Youth Ministry's attempt to reach out to the neighbourhood, the Boys' and Girls' Brigade as well as friends of the youths in the form of an Easter Outreach event on the night of 8 Apr 06. Planning for the Idol-themed production started early in the year. The theme and concept for the event was related to TMC's very own Idol finalist, Jerry Ong's sharing of his Singapore Idol experience. The preparations took off with the printing of the flyers and posters, which the youths handed out as invitations to their friends. The youths also headed out in their groups to the neighbourhood, including areas such as Serangoon Gardens, Serangoon North, Serangoon Central and even Heartland Mall to distribute flyers to the general public.

The event started at 5pm with dinner and a chance for the youths to mingle around with the guests in a casual and informal setting. This was followed by a performance in the Worship Hall, which was transformed into a "studio. Three youths, taking on the personas of ditzy girl Michelle, Pulau Ubin native Crystal and the humorous and bookish scholar Peter, each sang a song in what was to be the "Got A Chance Idol

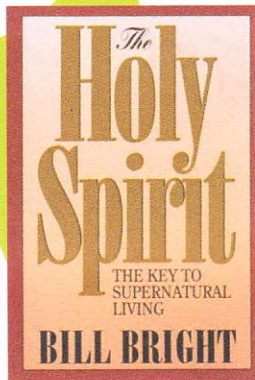
Finals". The two hosts also worked the crowd to a rapturous start which continued into chants of encouragement for the finalists and jeers at the not-so encouraging words of the judges. This then flowed seamlessly to Jerry Ong stepping onstage with his smooth rendition of U2's 'I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For'. He then proceeded to share about his Singapore Idol experience and how God lifted and carried him through. Tapping on the Idol theme, our guest speaker, Pastor Loon FuMan, then spoke about Jesus being the Idol of His day.

Although the eventual turnout, at more than 100 youths, was lower than our targeted attendance, the event was indeed a success as it was a stepping stone in terms of the Youth Ministry's nascent outreach efforts. We from the Youth Ministry saw the potential within our ministry for greater outreach in time to come. We also thank God for the many challenges faced and for how He carried us through. These trials have also brought about greater growth spiritually when we drew on the many lessons learnt. True to the slogan, we've got a chance, once we give God a chance.









# Book Review

## The Holy Spirit: The Key to Supernatural Living by Bill Bright

by Dr Fu Dunyi

In his book, author, Bill Bright, the founder and president of Campus Crusade for Christ International in California, shares helpful biblical principles to help us better understand the work of the Holy Spirit. With a deeper understanding of the Holy Spirit, we can experience the joy of supernatural living, which is open to every Christian. The essence of this book can be discussed under the following broad sections. They are:

- The Person of the Holy Spirit
- How one can be filled with the Holy Spirit
- Experiencing the joy of supernatural living with the Holy Spirit

### **The Person of the Holy Spirit**

The Bible tells us that the Holy Spirit is a person – the third person of the Trinity. At the same time, He is Almighty God and possesses all the divine attributes of God. The Holy Spirit is referred to in various ways in the Bible, e.g. "the Spirit of God" (Genesis 1:2), "the Spirit of holiness" (Romans 1:4), and "the Comforter" (John 14:16). The various names of the Holy Spirit contain a wealth of meaning and importance for every Christian because each name reveals Him. A deeper understanding of His holiness and of His spiritual nature will help us to live supernaturally with an abundant, purposeful and fruitful life.

### **How one can be filled with the Holy Spirit**

It is God's will for us to be filled with the Holy Spirit. It is His love gift to us. In fact, God commands us to be filled with the Holy Spirit, "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18). To be Spirit-filled, we cannot serve two masters (Matthew 6:24). A Spirit-filled Christian has given up his own powerless, defeated and fruitless life for the supernatural power, victory and fruitfulness of Jesus Christ. This is that marvellous, liberating experience that the apostle Paul writes about, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20). "For it is by grace you have been saved through faith; and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God; not by works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

If we try to live the Christian life through our limited human capacity, it becomes complex, difficult and even impossible to live. To overcome this, we need to surrender our lives fully to Christ in accordance with Romans 12:1-2. "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of the world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is; His good, pleasing and perfect will."

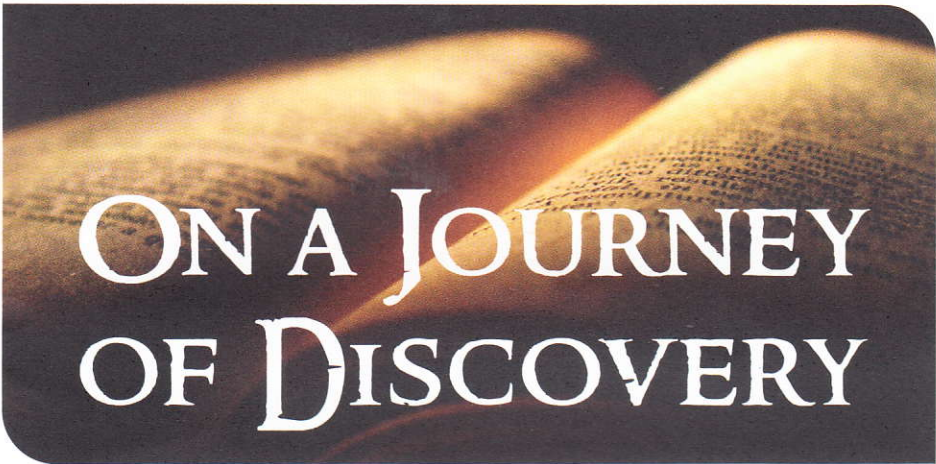
### **To Experience the Joy of Supernatural Living with the Holy Spirit**

A Spirit-filled Christian can experience a life of victory, joy, fruitfulness and abundance. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). We are complete in Jesus Christ; there is nothing beyond having the person of Jesus Christ in our lives. As Paul proclaimed, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13).

When we by faith are filled with the Holy Spirit, He guides us (John 16:13), empowers us (Micah 3:8 and Acts 1:8), sanctifies us (Romans 15:16 and 2 Thessalonians 2:13), bears witness in our lives (Romans 8:16 and Hebrews 10:15), comforts us (John 14: 16-26), gives us peace and joy (Romans 14:17), gives discernment (1 Corinthians 2:10-16 and 1 John 4:1-6), bears fruit in and through our lives (Galatians 5:22, 23), gives us spiritual gifts for the building up of the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:3-11), illuminates our minds with insights into the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:12, 13 and Ephesians 1:16, 17), reveals to us the hidden things of God (Isaiah 40:13, 14 and 1 Corinthians 2:10, 13), gives us God's marvellous love (Ephesians 3:17-19) and gives us peace of mind and heart (John:14:27).

Through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we can experience the joy of supernatural living by drawing on the inexhaustible, supernatural resources of God's love, power, forgiveness and abundant grace as manifested in the Bible. A Spirit-filled life thus makes the Bible become alive, obedience a joy, and faith complete.





# ON A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY

I was initially apprehensive when my small group leader Kim suggested that we all sign up for the Disciple I class. The class was going to be nine months long and we were only allowed to be absent from class three times at the most.

I usually have a lot of errands to run on Sunday so discipline, will-power and "push" from fellow group members would be required for me to go through the whole series. However, I did sign up in the end. And what a journey of discovery through the Bible it was!

Each day of the week we had to read a certain number of chapters of a book in the Bible followed by reflection. We also needed the help of a good study guide to understand many of the symbols, metaphors, historical background, contextual significance and application to our life. Setting aside a certain time each day to read the Word of God also requires discipline and a receptive mind. I must confess many times I did not follow the daily readings but instead would take one Saturday or Sunday morning to polish off all the readings in one go. The librarians at Woodlands Regional Library can testify to the number of times I rented a research cubicle there to complete my disciple class readings! This, of course, is not advisable but was a little compromise in my busy schedule.

After slogging through 34 lessons, what have I discovered or learned? First of all, I have found that the human mind and intellect is too shallow to understand the power of God's Word. It requires the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to appreciate the character of God and His relationship with man. As I journeyed through the Bible, the power and the sovereignty of God through the ages stood out. I began to see His amazing hand at work first with His chosen people – the Jews and then later with mankind in general through His son Jesus Christ. I saw His mercy, His caring nature at work and yet at the same time His wrath and vengeance on the enemies of His chosen people. Indeed, I learned that God is both the preserver and taker of life.

However, this series was not just a history lesson. There were also many personal applications that I took with me from going through the lessons. I have become fully aware that Christians are called to be different. We are set apart to do God's work, that is, to build up His church. The Disciple study opens our hearts and minds to ministry, to service in church. It is faith with action, not just blind faith. It changes one's life. We become more aware of our sins, less judgmental of people and more sensitive to the old, the sick and the poor. Indeed, God called us into a process of sanctification of our lives. Best of all, it stimulates our interest in studying the Bible in greater depth. I am sure my group will sign up for the other three Disciple series after taking time off to assimilate all these lessons learnt and reflect on our 34 weeks of discipleship, fellowship and worship.

*by Andrew Low*

saltshaker

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# Auntie Pat's Eulogy

On Maundy Thursday, 13th April, Auntie Pat left Nancy this note:

*The world crowns success but the Lord crowns faithfulness;  
Your labour of love is not in vain,  
Each time He adds a 'jewel' to your name.  
Labour for God's glory turns common drudgery into an opportunity  
that gives joy and satisfaction.*

I think Auntie Pat loved poetry and she often encouraged all of us with words of "gems" and poetry. Here is a favourite of hers:

*"Rather than complain of the thorns on the roses  
be thankful for the roses amongst the thorns"  
Amid the thorny trials of life, God's buds of beauty grow  
If we'll rejoice and not complain, His peace and love we'll know.*

To another sister, she gave her "labour of love" – a jar of pickles – and these "gems":

*You are one of a kind – designed to glorify God as you can  
In God's service, our greatest ability is our availability.  
Accept God's grace through faith, proof His grace through works.  
Prayer is the soil in which hope and healing grow best.  
God uses lifestops to prepare us for the next start.  
Grace is God's riches, available at Christ's expense.*



Auntie Pat loved TMC, missions and WSCS, and always made it a point to support and actively participate in all our local WSCS programmes as well as in the General Conference and TRAC WSCS. We could always count on her to join us, even for programmes held at venues as far away as the Barker Road WSCS Hall.

Auntie Pat was very enthusiastic, eager and never refused any requests. She always mentioned that she was "honoured to be cornered" when asked to cook for WSCS food sales. Lilian recalled that Auntie Pat would telephone her early in the morning (even when she was not awake yet and Auntie Pat would apologise for waking her up), wanting to know what food to cook and when to donate. We loved her cooking and particularly enjoyed her *tau kwa pow*, *nasi ulam* and *mee goreng* among the many items that she cooked for us.

On her own, she made and bottled sambal chilli, selling them to church members and our ladies alike. Through her sambal chilli sales, she raised much funds, all of which was donated to the church.

We know that Auntie Pat's dearest wish, which she often mentioned to some of us, was for her children and grandchildren to attend church, love God and participate in giving and donating to TMC and to missions.

All of us have been much saddened by her departure. Indeed, we have lost a dear and loving "gem" – Auntie Pat. We have lost a dear sister whom we will always remember for her big heart, cheeky smile and funny jokes. We are going to miss her, but her love for God and her family, her frequent sharing and testimonies of God's goodness in her life, and her words of encouragement, will always remain with us.

by The Ladies of WSCS

# My Ordination

*24 Nov 05 was a special day in TMC's history. Not only was it the concluding day of the Annual Session of the Trinity Annual Conference (TRAC), which was held in TMC for the first time, it also saw TMC's Assistant Pastor being ordained as a deacon of the Methodist Church. Here is the newly-ordained Reverend Lai Kai Ming's personal take on his ordination.*



"Congratulations on your promotion, pastor!!"

Well, that's what quite a few church members wished me on the day of my ordination.

"Congratulations"? I guess so, since it's a happy occasion, and something good has happened. But I would have preferred "Praise the Lord". For the focus would then be on God, and not on me. "Promotion"? I guess so, since there's a new title – like when one gets promoted from Recruit to Private in the army. Then again, "promotion" sounds weird ... as if I've gone up some church ladder.

Whatever it is, I'm just glad that I've been ordained. Glad because God has confirmed His calling for me (given some 15 years ago). He has prepared me through 10 years in the Singapore Armed Forces. He has stretched me in my three years in Trinity Theological College. And he has humbled me through two years in Trinity Methodist Church (TMC). In spite of my inadequacies, my weaknesses, and my fears, He has chosen to use me.

Thank you, TMC. For you have nurtured me as a new believer, provided me with opportunities for service, and supported me unconditionally in my journey towards "pastor-hood".

Now I wear a collar – a constant reminder that I am a servant of Jesus, a symbol of my commitment to preach Christ and Him crucified, and of the privilege it is to be able to minister His grace and truth through His resurrection power.

Now I am a Reverend. I'm still pondering what that means.

by Rev. Lai Kai Ming