

Salt Shaker

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LET THERE BE LIGHT 真光



吴显芬传道

Eddie Goh



快要过年了！

对中国人来说“年”有它的传说 - 中国古时候有一种怪兽，人们称它为“年”，头长触角，非常地凶猛。这只怪兽长年住在海底，每到除夕才爬上岸，吞吃牲畜和伤害人命。因此，每到除夕，村民都扶老携幼逃到深山去躲避被“年”这只怪兽的伤害。

有一年当村民正准备逃亡躲避的时候，来了一个老乞丐，但谁也没有时间来帮助他。不过，这时有个老太太同情他，给了他一些食物，便叫他快点离开。这乞丐笑着对这老太太说：“婆婆你若愿意让我在你家住一晚，我一定能把“年”赶走。”这老太太在乞丐的要求下，让他住在她的家，自己却和众人往山上去躲避了。

就在除夕夜，这只“年”如往年一样来到了这个村庄。但它发现与往年不一样。这老婆婆的家，门贴大红纸，屋子内灯火通明。这只“年”看了之后，便怒气冲冲地往老婆婆的家冲进去。这时屋内忽然有“砰砰啪啪”的响声，这只“年”吓得转身就逃，从此不敢再出现了。原来“年”最怕红色，亮光和炮竹声。这也是华人在新年必备的三件事物。

在新加坡，我们已经不能在新年燃放爆竹，但华人过新年还是很看重红色的物品，新年家里也大放光明，特别是除夕夜，更是满屋子光亮到天明。其实华人对光一向来都情有独钟，常用的词语有“光明前途”，“光明正大”，“光芒四射”，“光明磊落”，“光宗耀主”等等。民间宗教也很看重光，好多东西都要“开光”才有果效。

其实“光”是上帝最早在世上的创造。上帝创造宇宙万物的时候，一切都是黑暗的，于是上帝说要有“光”，世界才有了“光”。光与暗是相对的，黑暗往往代表了邪恶的一面，因为很多见不得光的事，都在暗中进行，就是罪恶的事。

耶稣对众人说：我是世界的光，跟从我的就不在黑暗里走，必要得着生命的光。（约8：12）

耶稣的门徒约翰也说：那光（耶稣）是“真光”，照亮一切生在上的人。（约1：9）

耶稣为了爱世人，把“真光”带来世界，却有很多人还四处地在寻找光。耶稣的“真光”不只是照亮了世界，更照亮了我们的心灵，让我们不再惧怕，心中充满了平安。

“神（上帝）就是光，在他（上帝）毫无黑暗”（约一1：5）

但愿在新的2016年，有更多华人后裔能够知道耶稣就是“真光”，愿意来就近光，不用长途跋涉、四处辛苦地寻找光，因为“真光”就在我们的心门外。主耶稣曾经说：看哪！我在门外叩门，若听见我声音就开门的，我要进到他那里，我与他，他与我一同坐席。（启3：20）；有耶稣同在，就有了光；所以耶稣说我们信徒是世上的光。

在此恭祝大家新年蒙恩。你的光要照耀在你的周围，特别是在还未信耶稣的亲朋戚友当中，好让他们知道耶稣才是世上的“真光”。

SHAKING SALT

The Lunar New Year is around the corner. There is a legend surrounding the word nian (年, Mandarin for “year”). In ancient China, there was a beast that people called “nian”. This ferocious beast with its large head and long horns lived at the bottom of the sea, surfacing only on the eve of the Lunar New Year. Once onshore, it would devour the livestock and attack the humans. So much so that the villagers – including the elderly and the children – would escape deep into the hills to safety.

One year, just as the villagers were making their annual flight, a beggar arrived in the village. An old woman was the only one who took pity on the beggar. She gave him some food and told him to leave quickly. The beggar merely smiled and said: “Old woman, if you would consent to letting me stay in your home for a night, I will be able to drive ‘nian’ away.” The old woman agreed, but she herself joined the other villagers in the hill.

On the eve of Lunar New Year, ‘nian’ made its pilgrimage to the village as usual. But something was different this year. A large piece of red paper was plastered on the old woman’s main door, and the whole house was brightly lit. ‘Nian’ was provoked to anger and charged into the old woman’s home. Even as it did so, loud cracking noises could be heard. ‘Nian’ was so afraid that it ran for its life and never appeared in the village again. It turned out that ‘nian’ was afraid of the colour red, of light and of the sound of firecrackers. These three items are also what the Chinese prepare to celebrate the Lunar New Year.

In Singapore, firecrackers are now banned. But the Chinese still favour the colour red. A traditional Chinese home is lit from the evening of Lunar New Year Eve till the next day. There are many Chinese idioms associated with light (guang, 光), all of which are positive associations such as “being above board”, “radiant”, “honest”, “making one’s ancestors proud”. Other religions also treat “light” as being significant.

In fact, after God created the heavens and the earth, “light” was His next creation. The world was filled with darkness until the Lord declared that there was to be light. Light and darkness cannot co-exist. Darkness typically represents evil; much wickedness is carried out secretly.

Jesus said: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” (Jn 8:12)

John said: “The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.” (Jn 1:9)

Jesus brought true light into the world because He loved all men. Yet many continue their search for what they consider to be light. But Christ’s light not only lights up the world – He also lights up our soul. We need never be afraid. We can have the peace of Christ.

“This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.” (1 Jn 1:5)

In this Lunar New Year, may more Chinese know, and want to draw near to, the True Light instead of looking for happiness in the wrong places. The Light is just outside the door of our hearts. Jesus said: “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.” (Rev 3:20). When we are with Christ, we are with the Light, and consequently, as disciples of Christ, we are also the light of the world.

I wish all readers a new year filled with the Lord’s grace. Let your light shine, especially among your pre-believing friends and relatives so that they may know that Jesus is the True Light of the world.



LO-HEI!

THE CHRISTIAN WAY

基督徒! 让我们捞起!

Lo-Hei (Cantonese dialect for 捞起, laoqi, meaning “to raise”) is the toss of salad items popularly practised by the Chinese in Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia during the Lunar New Year.

Yusheng is a Teochew-style raw fish salad. It usually consists of strips of raw fish (most commonly salmon), mixed with shredded vegetables and a variety of sauces and condiments, among other ingredients. Yusheng literally means “raw fish” but since “fish (鱼)” is commonly conflated with its homophone “abundance (余)”, yúshēng (鱼生) is interpreted as a homophone* for yúshēng (余升) meaning an increase in abundance. Therefore, Yusheng is considered a symbol of abundance, prosperity and vigour.*

*[*A homophone is a word that is pronounced the same as another word but differs in meaning. They may also differ in spelling]*

捞起(广东话指“升起”), 是本地, 马来西亚和印尼华人在农历新年捞取沙拉的一种习俗。

鱼生是潮州式的生鱼沙拉, 一般有生鱼片(常用三文鱼), 拌入搅碎的蔬菜和不同的酱料以及一些其他的佐料。鱼生既是生鱼片, 因“鱼”的发音与“余”同音, 华人取“余升”的好喻意期望来年能够丰衣足食, 因此, 鱼生象征丰盛、欣欣向荣与活力。

POSSIBLE CHRISTIAN PRACTICE 基督徒的实践

Although the Lo-Hei is a popular practice of the Chinese, Chinese Christians can join in too, and observe it in a way that will NOT:

- give the impression that we can make 'luck' come to us by a 'magic ritual' since we believe God is the Lord of our lives and our fortunes;
- have financial prosperity as the main focus of our celebration;

BUT INSTEAD WILL:

- put emphasis on remembering God's promise to love and care for us throughout the year
- focus on His desire to bless others through us as we live in community

The following is a possible way to Lo-Hei the Christian way. Do try this out amongst your pre-believing friends and family this Lunar New Year!

1. When all the items are on the table, start off by offering a New Year greeting:

“新年蒙福 (*xin nian meng fu*) - May you be blessed this new year!”

2. Add fish slices:

“年年有余 (*nian nian you yu*) – abundance and excess. The Lord provides food in abundance.” (Job 36:31)

3. Add pomelo or lime over the fish:

“大吉大利 (*da ji da li*) – a smooth flow of good things. The Lord will turn the darkness into light... and make the rough places smooth.” (Is 42:16)

4. Add pepper / five spice powder:

“五福临门 (*wu fu lin men*) – five blessings will visit your home. Thank you Lord for the promise that all blessings will come upon us when we obey you.” (Deut 28:2)

5. Add oil sauce in a circular motion:

“顺顺利利 (*shun shun li li*) – may all things go smoothly. Praise the Lord, for anointing us with the oil of joy.” (Ps 45:7)

6. Add plum sauce:

“甜甜蜜蜜 (*tian tian mi mi*) – a sweet life! Praise the Lord, for the sweetness of His Word... sweeter than honey to our mouths.” (Ps 119:103)

7. Add red carrots:

“鸿运当头 (*hong yun dang tou*) – fortune shines. Thank you, Lord, for showing favour to us with restored fortune.” (Ps 85:1)

8. Add green radish:

“青春常驻 (*qing chun chang zhu*) – eternal youth. Renew us Lord, with the strength of a youth to soar like the eagle for you.” (Is 40:31)

9. Add white radish:

“步步高升 (*bu bu gao sheng*) - progress to a higher level. Thank you God for raising us up to be seated with Christ in the heavenly realms.” (Eph 2:6)

10. Add peanuts:

“金玉满堂 (*jin yu man tang*) - a household of gold and silver. Thank you Lord for the promise that the house of the righteous is filled with treasures.” (Prov 15:6)

11. Add sesame seeds:

“生意兴隆 (*sheng yi xing long*) – a flourishing business. The righteous will flourish like a palm tree... planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God.” (Ps 92:13)

12. Add deep-fried flour crisps shaped like pillows:

“满地黄金 (*man di huang jin*) – streets of gold. Praise the Lord, for the streets of pure gold that you have prepared for us to live in eternity.” (Rev 21:21)

POSSIBLE CHRISTIAN PRACTICE 基督徒的实践

虽然“捞起”的习俗在华人社体盛行，华人基督徒也可以参与，但要紧记一些不可有的观念。例如：

- 认为既然上帝是我们的主和主宰我们的命运，我们便可以通过某些礼仪来转运
- 视拥有更丰裕的财富为庆祝的主要原因

相反的，我们应该：

- 强调感恩上帝在一年里应许给予我们爱与关怀
- 把焦点放在上帝希望藉着他给我们的祝福去祝福其他有需要的人

以下是基督徒在捞鱼生的时可以说的祝福语，不妨在来临的农历新年期间与未信主的朋友和家人分享！

1. 当所有的食料都上桌了，开心地说：“祝大家新年蒙福！”

2. 把鱼生放入盘里：

“年年有余！神赐予丰盛的粮食。”（约伯记36:31）

3. 把柚子或酸酏放在鱼生上：

“大吉大利！神必在我们面前使黑暗变为光明，使弯曲的地方变为平直。”（以赛亚书42:16）

4. 撒上胡椒或五香粉：

“五福临门！感谢耶和华 - 如果我们听从耶和华你的话，以下这一切福气必临到我们身上，必把我们追上。”（申命记28:2）

5. 倒油：

“顺顺利利！赞美主，因为祂用喜乐的油膏抹我们。”（诗篇45:7）

6. 加甜酱：

“甜甜蜜蜜！赞美主，因为祂的话语在我的上膛多么甜美，在我的口中比蜂蜜更甜。”（诗篇119:103）

7. 加红萝卜：

“鸿运当头。各样美好的赏赐，各样完备的恩赐，都是从上面、从众光之父降下来的，他本身并没有改变，也没有转动的影子。”（雅各书1:17）

8. 加青萝卜：

“青春常驻！那些仰望耶和华的人，必重新得力；他们必像鹰一样展翅上腾；他们奔跑，也不困倦，他们行走，也不疲乏。”（以赛亚书40:31）

9. 加白萝卜：

“步步高升！感谢主使我们在基督耶稣里，与他一同复活，一同坐在天上。”（以非所书2:6）

10. 撒花生：

“金玉满堂！感谢主的承诺 - 义人家中财宝丰富。”（箴15:6）

11. 撒芝麻：

“生意兴隆！义人必像棕树一样繁茂……他们栽在耶和华的殿中，在我们神的院子里繁茂生长。”（诗篇92:13）

12. 撒香饼

“满地黄金！赞美主，因为祂给我们准备的城里街道是纯金的。”（启示录21:21）

The Tossing

All toss the salad towards the centre of the dish 7 times (the biblical perfect number) with shouts of “Lo-Hei!” and all close with this prayer for one another.

A Blessing Prayer for One Another

May everything you do be Ho-say (good)

everything you eat be Ho-jia (tasty)

every friend you have and make be Ho peng you (good friend)

everyday live a Ho-mia (good) life

and work days become like Holy-days this year

May the Lord bless you and keep you

The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace

Amen

捞起!

把鱼生捞起七次 (在圣经里“7”是完美的数字), 并大声呼唤“捞起”。之后, 大家可以一起祷告。

为彼此祝福的祷告

愿你所作的一切都美好

你所吃的都是美食

你所有的朋友和结交的都是好朋友

每天的生活都很美满, 你今年的工作轻松写意

愿上帝赐福与你, 保护你

上帝使他的脸光照你, 赐福给你

上帝向你仰脸, 赐你平安, 阿们

Some information from Wikipedia. 'Ritual' adapted from Rev Dr Lorna Khoo and Rev Joshua Loo's article at <http://aldersgate.sg/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/lo-hei.pdf>

This guide is also available at www.tmc.org.sg/cny2016.html, together with other materials to help you BLESS your family and friends this Lunar New Year.



FISHING FOR SOULS



By Mary Foo

cated my life to God and I wanted to love God more and to serve only Him and obey Him. That same year, I suffered from auto-immune problems. The pain was unbearable.

My joints swelled so I could not walk or move. I needed three people to assist me as I could not do anything for myself. I had insomnia. One night in total desperation, I prayed to be able to sleep in the name of Jesus. Jesus answered my prayer and gave me peace and I rested for five hours!

For three nights, I prayed and slept peacefully. Although my pain did not totally subside, God gave me peace. On the fourth day, I prayed in the name of Jesus and amazingly I was able to stand and walk on my own!

I first heard about Adalena during a discipleship course meeting. Adalena - a needy sister - was helping other needy families at Blk 15 Toa Payoh. I heard that she needed help with her ministry and so I asked her to share her testimony with me. What a moving testimony it turned out to be!

A TESTIMONY OF LOVE AND SERVICE BY ADALENA KOH

Before I became a Christian, my life was filled with heartaches, misery and difficulties. My parents separated when I was six months old and my grandmother raised me.

Granny brought me to the temple and to funeral sessions, where she was helping out. As a child, I searched for a god who could help me live forever with my grandmother because I did not want to go to hell.

I became a vegetarian at 18 and started serving and teaching at a temple. I married a temple preacher at age 20. Our marriage was short-lived and we parted after the birth of our second daughter.

My life was meaningless and I wanted to die but I loved my children and granny. I drank and smoked every day. I lived my life in darkness for years until I received the Lord Jesus Christ into my heart.

I learned the truth about God at a church and I was born again on 20 May 08. From that day on, I dedi-



God showed me His grace, love and mercy. I decided to give my life to Jesus and follow Him by being a blessing to others even though I sometimes require the use of a wheelchair.

Due to my illness, I was certified unfit for work and could not financially support my family. But the Lord provided!

One day, my sister Chloe was at the beach. She noticed many fish close to the shore. Her then-boy-friend (now husband) caught more than 90 fishes and brought 50 for my family. God had provided!

After taking what was needed, we gave the rest away to the needy residents living in our block. (Pei Yann, a partner in ministry, Granny, my mother, my two children, my helper and I stay at Granny's rental flat in Toa Payoh.)

God continued to provide fish almost every day. Fish that helped us build bridges to our neighbours.

And thus began this ministry of reaching out to the elderly, the single mothers, the depressed, sick and needy in our block. People began to knock on our door asking for prayer. God healed the elderly and sick. Some came to accept the Lord. Soon, a small group of the residents met at one home regularly to worship and learn more about God.

**“AND HE SAID TO
THEM, ‘FOLLOW ME,
AND I WILL MAKE YOU
FISHERS OF MEN.’ ”
(MATT 4:19 NASB)**

Jesus has transformed the lives of those who chose to follow Him. All glory to Jesus.

“And He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”” (Matt 4:19 NASB)
Recently, God has put a burden in my heart to set up



a centre for the needy - a place to meet for fellowship and meals and to listen to bible stories. There is also a need to create jobs for single mothers or needy families who cannot find any work.

I believe that it's better to teach them how to fish instead of just giving them fish. We are praying for God's will to be done for we believe with God's provision and blessing, this will come to fruition. Please do pray along with us.

I thank God for the privilege to serve Him, the joy of being able to share the Gospel and to be a blessing to all. May God continue to grant me strength and wisdom to serve Him together with Pei Yann by reaching out to the elderly, sick, poor and needy.

I also thank God for Jesan, Joy, Chloe and many others who have sacrificed and loved those living in Block 15 Toa Payoh in Jesus' Name.

The Lord is asking, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here I am! Send me.” I shall love because the Lord first loved us!

Adalena can be contacted at adalenakoh@gmail.com

NO MONKEY BUSINESS



Ong Hon Yuh

The Year of the Monkey makes its entrance on 8 Feb 16.

This reminds me of one of my favourite Chinese classics, “Journey to the West”. In this story, a Tang Dynasty monk makes a westward trip from China to India to retrieve Buddhist sutras. Being a mild character who knows no kungfu, the monk is aided by three disciples and a dragon horse. The most famous - and rebellious - of these disciples is the monkey, Sun Wu Kong (孙悟空).

Before embarking on the pilgrimage, Monkey Sun’s list of misdeeds included turning the heavenly palace topsy-turvy, stealing the Heavenly Empress’ peaches of immortality and eating them. The peach trees yielded fruit only once in a few thousand years, and conferred longevity to whoever ate them. Without these peaches, the Empress’ “Feast of Peaches” banquet became a non-event. This thievery made Monkey Sun public enemy number one in this fictional heaven!

As a child, I enjoyed the dramatised scenes of Monkey Sun causing disturbance in the heavenly realms and dismaying the haughty deities – just like how a superhero won fights against the villains except that, in this case, the roles were reversed, the naughty monkey being the triumphant rogue over the supposed superhero deities. Back then, I also wondered why deities would yearn to eat the peaches of immortality. Didn’t they already live forever? Did they want to live longer than “forever”? If the deities yearned for longevity, how much more would mortals!

Longevity seems a much desired state. A platter of peach buns is served at the Chinese birthday meal of an elderly member of the family because peaches symbolise a long and healthy life. Junior members of the family wish their elders a long and healthy life when they greet them during birthdays and the Lunar New Year. Tradition has it that, if children stay up throughout the night of the Lunar New Year eve (shousui 守岁 literally meaning guarding the age/year), that would increase the longevity of their parents. Staying up all night is certainly an easier task to do to add years to someone’s life than trying to obtain illusory peaches of immortality.

But our God has made the path to eternal life far easier and more straightforward.

Eternal life is gifted to whoever believes in Jesus (Jn 3:16).

Yes, that’s the simple truth. We do not need to have the light-fingered prowess of Monkey Sun - no kungfu required. We do not need to be invited as a guest to the Heavenly Empress’ “Feast of Peaches” the next time the peaches are ripe. No need to wait a few thousand years to eat. We do

not need to keep awake on Lunar New Year’s Eve – no need to suffer cheesy variety shows or reruns of variants of “Journey to the West” fairy tales.

Make sure you BLESS everyone at the reunion dinner table with this truth. There’s no need for any other monkey business (pun fully intended).



Companions in Christ (CIC)

ALTERNATE TUESDAYS, STARTING FROM 23 FEB 2016 TO 25 APRIL 2017 (28 SESSIONS)

10.00AM-12.00PM | TMC

COST OF PARTICIPANT'S BOOK: \$20.00

Facilitated by Rev Paul Nga, Pastor at TMC, and Mr Lee Park Ming, lay executive staff.



The foundational Companions experience takes groups through a journey of five parts. Each part is five to six sessions in length. Participants follow the same pattern session—readings assigned and daily exercises are based on a weekly reading schedule and five daily exercises. Each group meeting is structured for a two-hour long session. During the group session, participants share their insights from their readings and exercises, and then engage in a deeper exploration together.

The Companions in Christ 28-session journey involves ...

- Preparatory Meeting (1 session)
- Embracing the Journey: The Way of Christ (5 sessions)
An exploration of spiritual formation as a journey toward wholeness and holiness, individual and in community, through the grace of God.
- Feeding on the Word: The Mind of Christ (5 sessions)
An introduction to several ways of meditating and praying with scripture.

- Deepening Our Prayer: The Heart of Christ (6 sessions)
A guided experience of various classic forms and styles of prayer.

- Responding to Our Call: The Work of Christ (5 sessions)
A presentation of gifts and calling, giving of ourselves to God in willing obedience, and receiving the fruits and gifts of the Holy Spirit.

- Exploring Spiritual Guidance: The Spirit of Christ (5 sessions)
An overview of different ways of giving and receiving spiritual guidance from one-on-one relationships with a spiritual guide, to spiritual growth groups, to guidance in congregational life.

- Closing Retreat: Developing a Rule of Life (final session – possibly stay-in 2D1N – tbc)

More information from flyers at the iSunday Counter / www.tmc.org.sg/d&n.html (including registration forms).



By Kwa Kiem Kion

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES — THAT FIRST SABBATH

Many of us like the idea of a Sabbath and really believe in it...a day of rest from our weary labour. But the reality is that few of us actually have a Sabbath. How can we...with so many responsibilities and things to do, like sending the children for tuition and enrichment classes, doing the marketing and going to church and then by Sunday night, having to prepare for the work week the next day? Maybe in another season of our lives, having a Sabbath will be more manageable and realistic.

We often overlook the fact that keeping the Sabbath is a command, along with not worshipping other gods, honouring our father and mother, and not stealing. While we are quite conscientious



about keeping those other commands, somehow keeping the Sabbath seems to slip away. We need to take Sabbath-keeping much more seriously.

Exodus 16 records a time when the Israelites had to live out the Sabbath command. This was while they were in the wilderness, and the Lord promised to provide manna for them to eat. They were to collect manna each day, and they were to collect a double portion on the day before the Sabbath so that they did not need to collect any on the Sabbath.

**FIRST, JUST AS GOD
PROVIDED MANNA FOR THE
ISRAELITES EVERY DAY FOR
40 YEARS, KEEPING THE
SABBATH MEANS THAT WE
SO DEEPLY TRUST GOD
TO PROVIDE FOR ALL OUR
NEEDS THAT ON ONE DAY
WE CAN REST.**

Those who went out on the Sabbath did not find any manna on the ground; and those who tried to hoard manna on other days found that it stank the next day. We can learn several lessons from this story.

First, just as God provided manna for the Israelites every day for 40 years, keeping the Sabbath means that we so deeply trust God to provide for all our needs that on one day we can rest. So often we feel that we have to work hard to have it all (security for our families, opportunities for our children) and so we dare not pause.

We are afraid that if we do not work, we will be behind, and our bosses and colleagues will not be happy. But just as God provided for the Israelites, surely He will also provide for what we, and our families, need?

Secondly the Israelites did not have to collect manna on the Sabbath so that they did not have to work for their food; it was already provided for them. So the principle of the Sabbath is to “not work”. But the

Sabbath “is not an excuse for mindless or superficial entertainment. It is a time for slowing down, for reflection, hospitality, enjoyment of the good gifts of God that we find in others, in God, and in creation.

Perhaps what we can do is live into this structuring of our time, and ask God to help us see the ways that it can be used for rest, refreshing, renewal, and joy. That won't be the same for all of us, not even on the same day for all of us, and it doesn't need to be.” (Christine Pohl, “More than Enough” (<http://elink.asburyseminary.edu/more-than-enough/>))

So let us take God's command seriously. Keeping the Sabbath means instilling and maintaining a rhythm in our lives of rest and work each week. We need that time to remind ourselves that we are not our work, or status, or position at the office or even in church.

Rather the Sabbath is a weekly and tangible reminder that we are God's children and everything that we are and have is from Him. It is one day each week when we can revel in that, and rest in the love and goodness of our Heavenly Father who is also the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe.

Rev Paul Nga will be preaching five sermons on spiritual disciplines this year. Sabbath-Sacrifice, Solitude- Simplicity, Scripture-Study, Stewardship-Service, and Sojourners-Submission.

Kiem, who is one TMC's local preachers and a lecturer in Inter-Cultural Studies at the East Asia School of Theology, will be helping our readers in following that sermon series through this column.

The following materials are also recommended so that you can follow the sermon series more actively.

Spiritual Disciplines – The Tasks of a Joyful Life (8 studies), by Larry Sibley from Fisherman Bible Study Guides (Special offer \$9.80)

Spiritual Disciplines Companion – Bible Studies and Practices to Transform Your Soul (8 studies with 6 sections in each study), by Jan Johnson from InterVarsity Press (\$34.00)

More at www.tmc.org.sg/pulpit.html. Queries to Park Ming / parkming@tmc.org.sg

DON'T TOUCH!



By Tricia Tong

This column is about the things that little people can teach us about our relationship with God.



In a twinkling of an eye, my daughter will be two years old soon.

Victoria, or Vicky as we call her, was advanced in many things as a baby. She started to sleep through the night at two months (what bliss!). She rolled over at four months, and walked at 10 months. There are trade-offs for all this progress. She started the much-famed “terrible twos” in her “ones”.

As Vicky grows, it has become more difficult to child-proof everything in the home – unless we put her in the playpen all day (but that might constitute neglect). Obviously, child-proofing becomes next to impossible in public. Consequently, there are frequent hollers of “No, Vicky!”, “Stop, Vicky!” and “Don’t touch, Vicky!”

It is amusing (at least to me and only sometimes) to observe Vicky standing in front of a prohibited item

and saying to herself: “Don’t touch... Don’t touch... Don’t touch *ah...*” (with the wagging of her little pointer) and proceeding to prod or take up the item anyway.

Isn’t that the way we sometimes are with God, our Heavenly Father?

Adam and Eve hesitated momentarily before eating the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. They heard God say: “Don’t eat.” But they succumbed to temptation and ate anyway.

What does the Bible tell us about overcoming temptation? Let me just focus on one.

“Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” (2 Tim 2:22)

“Flee from sexual immorality...” (1 Cor 6:18)

Flee. Run away. Positively and actively get away. Do not just stand there and say to yourself repeatedly: “Don’t touch”.

The problem with us is that we believe that we have enough willpower to withstand the onslaught of temptation that comes our way. But we don’t.

As a simple example, think of the amount of feasting you indulged in over Christmas 2015.

The Bible warns us that the devil is wily; he prowls and schemes. Most successful schemes aren’t obvious. There aren’t road signs showing “This Way to Devil’s Schemes”.

More often than not, when faced with the temptation to sin, we know that God forbids it. But we rationalise that God is loving and so He will understand our need, which isn’t usually a need but more a covetous desire.

We know what the Bible says about sin and even particular sins. But we try to read between the lines and make the Bible read as if it is ambiguous on the subject. We know what God is telling us personally. But we choose to listen to our misguided friends, however sincere they might be.

Vicky might think that, instead of standing still on the rubber mat, she can tip-toe up and down on the

wet bathroom tiles of the shower stall, and nothing untoward will happen to her but for mama’s yelling. But regardless of what she thinks, the truth is she will slip, slide, fall and hurt herself.

It really doesn’t matter what you believe won’t happen. What matters is what will happen.

When God tells us: “Don’t touch”, He does so out of His great love for us. Because Disobedience is a great friend of Consequences.

“Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” (2 Tim 2:22)

Parenting books tell us that when a toddler is doing something that she is not meant to do, the right thing to do is to lead her away and distract her with something else that is not harmful to her. I confess that my tired body does not always do that; it’s easier to just exercise my vocal cords. Fortunately, we are blessed with a perfect Parent in our Heavenly Father.

“[Our Heavenly Father] is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it” (1 Cor 10:13).

Flee from the devil. Flee to the Father. 



PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT



FRI 11 - SAT 12 MAR

9.00am-5.00pm

**2-Day Precepts Discussion
Leaders' Workshop**

Thursdays, 2.00-5.00pm / 7.30-10.00pm

18 FEB - 7 APR

excluding 17, 24 Mar

**Genesis Part 1
(Chapters 1 - 2)**

14 APR

**Talk by Dr Tjio Swee Chuan,
Chairman, Precepts Ministries SGP &
NTU Lecturer on the Science of Creation**

28 APR - 18 AUG

excluding 2 Jun - 14 Jul

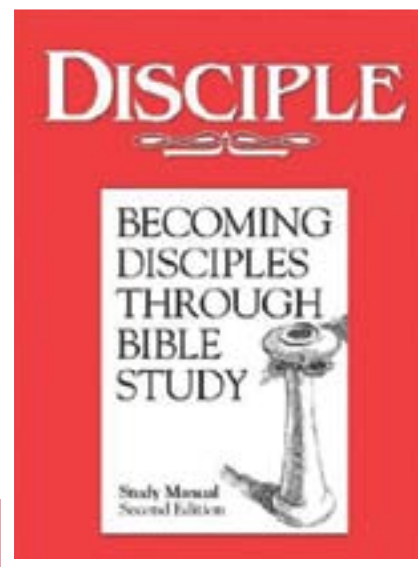
**Genesis Part 2
(Chapters 3 - 11)**

1 SEP - 27 OCT

excluding 22 Sep

**Daniel Part 1
(Chapters 1 - 6)**

**Register with Park Ming / parkming@tmc.org.sg
or www.tmc.org.sg/d&n.html#pup**



DISCIPLE I

Becoming Disciples Through Bible Study

*INFORMATIONAL SESSION (OPTIONAL) ON FRI 29 JAN
(REGISTER BY SUN 24 JAN)*

*ORIENTATION SESSION ON FRI 26 FEB
(FOR THOSE WHO REGISTER AFTER THE INFORMATIONAL SESSION)*

*DISCIPLE I COURSE ON FRIDAYS 04 MAR – 18 NOV
(34 SESSIONS)*

**ALL SESSIONS WILL BE HELD FROM
7.30-10.00PM | TMC, BARNABAS ROOM, L3
COST OF STUDY MANUAL: \$25**

The first phase of DISCIPLE provides an overview of the Bible – both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Through the daily preparation, the participants will get to read on their own approximately 70% of the entire Bible.

During the course of thirty-four weeks, DISCIPLE I study groups will move through the biblical story from Creation to the New Jerusalem.

The titles of the sessions along with theme words; theme verse(s); and major persons, events, and topics will fix the sequence of the biblical story in the minds of the participants. The principal Scripture for each session follows

the chronological movement of the biblical story.

Participants can attend the INFORMATIONAL SESSION on Fri 29 Jan to be familiar with the philosophy and format of DISCIPLE, before deciding whether to commence the course.

Facilitated by **Rev Paul Nga**, Pastor at TMC, and **Mr Philip Khoo**, a Local Preacher of Aldersgate Methodist Church, both Trainers with the DISCIPLE Agency.

***MORE INFORMATION FROM FLYERS AT THE
ISUNDAY COUNTER / WWW.TMC.ORG.SG/D&N.HTML (INCLUDING REGISTRATION
FORMS). REGISTER BY SUN 24 JAN.***

IN & ABOUT TMC

OSC CHRISTMAS PARTY AND MWS BURSARY AWARDS

REV PETER GOH'S
RETIREMENT SERVICE



CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION
FOR DOMESTIC HELPERS

MANDARIN SERVICE BAPTISM



CHRISTMAS SERVICE 2015 INCL CHILDREN'S BAPTISM



RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS





CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

TMC60 TIMELINE

January

Launch of 60th anniversary celebration and 60-Minute Blessing

Glory Trinity Methodist Church (Cambodia) Rebuilding

(artist's impression, right)



March

Presentation of the TMC Creed and the 60th anniversary theme song



May

60-hour Prayer in conjunction with Aldersgate Sunday



July

Family Day at Sentosa



September

60th anniversary service in TMC followed by lunch outside TMC

Visual presentation of 60-Minute Blessing and other testimonies



Look out also for

- Monthly testimonies from the 60-Minute Blessing at our services
- Special editorials in The Saltshaker
- Regular "Did You Know"s in the Sunday bulletin

and more...

www.tmc.org.sg/tmc60.html

THE 60-MINUTE **BLESSING** (In a nutshell)

As part of our endeavour towards being a disciple-making church, the TMC60 Committee encourages all TMC disciples to do "**The 60-Minute BLESSing**". Yes, it can take as little as 60 minutes just to **BLESS** someone.

How does it work?

BLESS one person for 60 minutes (spread over a few occasions), or a few people for a total of 60 minutes - there is no need to be legalistic about this.



Share your **BLESSing** experience with someone in the Witness & Evangelism team - encourages others to **BLESS**!

Obtain your 60th Anniversary '**BLESS**' Polo Shirt - we hope to have as many people as possible wear this on Sun, 11 Sep at the 60th Anniversary service.

Don't know how to start? Help can be found in the guide at www.tmc.org.sg/tmc60.html

Enquiries to:

Ms Chew Kim Ling
Mrs Claire Lowe

kimwoon@gmail.com
claire@tmc.org.sg



CELEBRATING
60 YEARS
OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

The First Decade

1956-1966

Taken from the archives for the 40th Anniversary

1956

LATE 1956

Small group of married couples in Serangoon Garden Estate envisaged a Methodist Church to serve this growing community.

DECEMBER

Malaya Annual Conference at Ipoh appointed Syn Wai Yin (a senior Trinity College student to begin work in Serangoon Gardens. Dr F Olin Stockwell, lecturer at Trinity College, provided spiritual leadership by building up the congregation and nurturing Trinity students by exposing them to work in Serangoon Gardens.



1957

9 MARCH

First meeting of Small Group.

17 MARCH

First Sunday service by Mr Syn Wai Yin at the home of Mr and Mrs Tong Kum Toh at 85 Cowdray Avenue.



5 MAY

First Sunday School class at home of Mr and Mrs Tan Hoay Gie at 15 Huddington Avenue with Mrs Nancy Lee as Superintendent.

24 NOVEMBER

First service held at 4:30 pm at St Peter's Church, sharing premises with the Anglican Brethren.

25 NOVEMBER

TMC was officially constituted as part of the Singapore Methodist District of the Malaya Annual Conference at the first Quarterly Conference. Reverend Syn Wai Yin, who had been ordained, left us for further studies in the United States of America.

DECEMBER

Mr Kenneth Chellappah succeeded Reverend Syn as a Student Pastor with Dr F Olin Stockwell as Associate Pastor, and Mr Denis C Dutton as Student Assistant.





1958

4 MARCH

WSCS was inaugurated with Mrs Daisy Chellappah as its first President.

9 MARCH

Mr Tong Kum Toh was elected by Quarterly Conference as Chairman of the Church Building Fund Committee.

END 1958

Church purchased a piece of land at the junction of Lichfield Road and Serangoon Garden Way for \$60,000 for a church and parsonage.

1959

31 OCTOBER

Church Fair was held at St Peter's Church to raise \$2,500. First Methodist Church, Kalamazoo, Michigan, donated US \$5,000.



DECEMBER

Mr Larry Cheah Chee Yoon was appointed Pastor and Reverend Christopher Smith (Methodist Church of Great Britain and lecturer at Trinity College) was Associate Pastor.

1960

EASTER DAY

Members pledged \$11,000 towards Building Fund.

JULY

Trinity Methodist Youth Fellowship (MYF) was formed with Ms Lucy Lau as First President.

SEPTEMBER

Mr William Lim of Malayan Architects Co-partnership was engaged to prepare building plans.

DECEMBER

Reverend Christopher Smith was appointed Pastor by Annual Conference with Mr Peter Lee, Trinity College student, as Associate Student Pastor.



1961

11 JUNE

First MYF meeting held with Dr Olin Stockwell preaching.

END 1961

Membership had increased from 28 to 57 and debt for site was fully settled. Board of Trustees of the Methodist Church loaned \$60,000 for the building project.



1962

8 MAY

The Official Church Board accepted a tender of \$66,000 from Overseas Construction Company for construction of the Sanctuary.

JUNE

Second Grand Fair was organised under patronage of Mrs Celeste B Amstutz, wife of Bishop Amstutz. It raised over \$5,000.

10 JUNE

Ground Breaking Service at the Church site with Dr Olin Stockwell preaching. Construction work started the next day under the supervision of Mr Tong Kum Toh and Mr P Sathiasingam.

31 DECEMBER

Candlelight Watchnight Service was held in partially completed church preceded by a farewell dinner to Reverend and Mrs Smith.

1963-1964

17 FEBRUARY

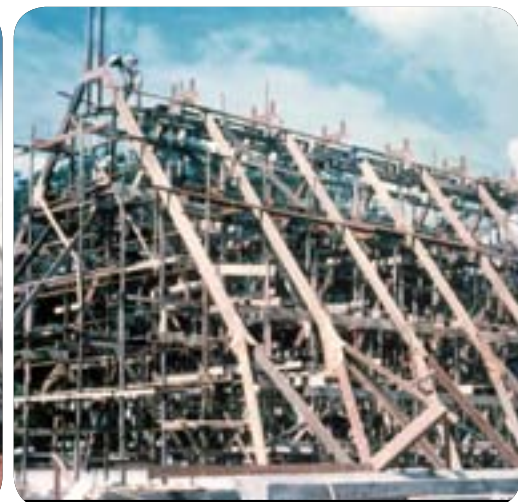
The church was officially declared open for services by Bishop H B Amstutz. Lay leader, Mr Andrew Lee and Trinity student Mr Tang Kin Wah took charge of the church services.

JANUARY 1964

Membership increased to 69 and Sunday School attendance continued to grow.

1 MAY

Grand Fair was held under the patronage of Mrs Eileen Smith to raise \$8,000 for the Building Fund.



1965

21 FEBRUARY

Dedication ceremony for the Church was officiated by Bishop Robert F Lundy.

LATE 1965

Reverend Chew Hock Hin was appointed to TMC where he served 5 years. A full church choir under the able leadership of Mrs Chew Chin Jin was formed.



PASTORS

in the first decade



Rev Syn Wai Yin
Pastor (Dec 1956 - Nov 1957)



Rev Dr F Olin Stockwell
Advisor to Rev Syn



Rev Kenneth Chellappah
Student pastor (Dec 1957 - Dec 1959)

Rev Dr F Olin Stockwell
Associate Pastor

Rev Larry Cheah Chee Yoon
Pastor (Dec 1959 - Dec 1960)

Mr Denis C Duton
Student assistant



Rev Christopher Smith
Associate pastor (Dec 1959 - Dec 1960)
Pastor (Dec 1960 - Dec 1962)

Mr Peter Lee
Associate student pastor



Mr Andrew Lee
Lay Leader (Jan 1963 - Sept 1963)

Mr Tang Kin Wah
Student Assistant

Rev Charles Grose
Pastor (Sept 1963- Dec 1965)

Mr Wong Oon Thian
Associate pastor

Mr Michael Wong
Pastor (Mid 1963 - End 1965)

Mr Lim Hua Teng &
Ms Lam Mo Chi
Student assistants



Rev Dr E Olin Stockwell
Associate Pastor



Rev Chew Hock Hin
Pastor (End 1965 - End 1970)

THE OLD GUARD

LAWRENCE AND CATHERINE PANG



by Lim Sue Yien

As Trinity Methodist Church (TMC) celebrates 60 years of God's faithfulness, we remember the people who answered the call from God to establish a Methodist church in Serangoon Gardens. They remind us what life was like in the early days, and how their service in church shaped their spiritual journey ... and to an extent, ours.

Today, Serangoon Gardens is a smart neighbourhood. Houses sit snugly on compounds safely enclosed by walls, with strips of green around the perimeter. Unless deliberate efforts are made, one may never need to interact with one's neighbours. A cursory hello a few times a year. A ring of the doorbell now and again to inform you that your car is blocking theirs.

In the 1950s, when the pioneering families of TMC gathered at 89 Cowdray Avenue in the home of Andrew and Poh Lin Lee, it was a different scene. Houses sat on plots of land surrounded by gardens, with some clusters having no fences separating one plot from the next.

It was in this community that the late Lawrence (1921 – 2004) and Catherine (1928 – 2012) Pang, numbers 6 and 16 respectively on Trinity Methodist Church's Membership Roll, raised their young family of three children. Lawrence was a Purchasing Manager at Singapore Polytechnic, while Catherine was a conveyancing clerk in a law firm. They lived at 95 Bridport Avenue, behind the cluster of houses where families would gather on Sundays. Kenneth Pang, the eldest son of Lawrence and Catherine, remembers jumping over a short fence in order to get to the house church. He and his friends would run in and out of the three houses, owned by TMC pioneers Mr Tong Kum Toh and Ruth Tong, Jo and Nancy Lee, and Andrew and Poh Lin.

Sunday was church day. In the morning, while the adults gathered for service at Andrew's home, the children attended Sunday School, taught in turn mainly by Ruth, Poh Lin, Jo and Nancy. After that, everyone stayed for lunch cooked by the ladies, where the extended fellowship of both adults and children took place over the rest of the day.



Catherine (in black pants) representing TMC at the 7th session of the WSCS Annual Conference in Penang (23 Nov 1974)



Lawrence leading worship in the old sanctuary (1980)



Catherine (middle), with Patricia Chia (left) and Mrs Chew Chin Jin (right) (1980)

Lawrence and Catherine Pang were there right from the beginning, giving their all to God in service to this church. Lawrence held many roles in the newly formed TMC. He put one of the first shovels into the newly acquired plot of land during the ground-breaking ceremony at Lichfield Road, an area which had been zoned for religious purposes by the estate's developer. As years went by, he assumed the roles of LCEC Chairman, Property Chairman, and worship leader. A quiet man who lived out his faith in works rather than words, he took to the role of Property Chairman most passionately. Kenneth remembers his father doing spot checks on the church grounds at night. Lawrence was an avid photographer, and it is his photographs that have contributed richly to our archives. He also baked bread in his spare time, which the author had the privilege of enjoying as a child.

Catherine was a people person. Through the years, she served as WSCS President and Lay Leader. More vocal about her faith, the ex-MGS student was the first adult baptised at TMC. Her caring nature was keenly remembered by all who encountered her. In the 1960s and 1970s, there was a drug problem among youths in Serangoon Gardens. TMC responded to this by creating the Coffee House Ministry. The youth at TMC underwent training with the Samaritans of Singapore for one year under Rev Christopher Smith. They then opened a "hang out" place in the space where the Prayer Chapel is now located. Over coffee, tea and biscuits, with music from bands playing in the background, they ministered to the troubled youth of the community.

Auntie Catherine was the adult supervisor in this effort. She was instrumental in providing encouragement and support to the serving youth. She may not have talked a whole lot, but when she did, she commanded the attention of the listener. She was also passionate about mission work, and would eagerly get updates from TMC's mission field in order to offer prayer support.

Even into their 70s, the Pangs would actively support many church events, trying their best to keep up with the younger folks, enjoying themselves in the company of a new generation of members of a church they had helped to build.

The Saltshaker thanks Kenneth and Sherry Pang for agreeing to be interviewed for this article. Photos from the TMC archives and by courtesy of the personal archives of Mr Kenneth Pang.



Lawrence putting the shovel in at the Ground Breaking Ceremony (10 Jun 1962)



One of the several fund fairs held to raise funds for the church building project. Lawrence and Rev Chew are standing next to the parents of Catherine Pang (19 Aug 1967)



(seated from left) Lawrence Pang, Rev Chew Chin Jin, EK Khoo. Standing from left: Kenneth Pang, Andrew Lee (July 1972)



Catherine and Lawrence Pang (facing camera) getting to the bottom of the matter (1989)

A Voice from Heaven

(excerpt from Catherine Pang's contribution to "Tapestry of Faith",
Trinity Methodist Church 1956-2006)



"I remember the day, sometime in 1955 or 1956, when the late Andrew Lee stood outside my house and handed me a leaflet containing details of a Sunday worship service held at Cowdray Avenue. Andrew had gone calling on each of the houses in the neighbourhood to invite the families there to attend the service, and my family was one of those invited.

My family shifted to Bridport Avenue in Serangoon Gardens in late 1954. I was a third-generation Buddhist raised in a staunchly Buddhist household.

My husband Lawrence, although a Methodist, was not a church-goer. In those days, my husband and I did not discuss matters of religion at all. However, I had been interested in Christianity since my days as a student at the Methodist Girls' School where I enjoyed chapel-time because I liked the hymn-singing. I had always wanted to go to church, but never knew that I could do so simply by turning up at a church service.



On hindsight, I believe that Andrew was an "angel" sent by God to lead my family into His glorious light. My family attended the service at Cowdray Avenue the next Sunday and thus began our journey with Christ in TMC. Andrew also led my husband to Christ and was our spiritual mentor..."

...Timescope...Timescope...Timescope...Tir

The Befrienders—how they provide coffee and sympathy

OLD PEOPLE often say that young people have no time just to sit down and talk. Much less think.

"Being young and giddy and on the brink of life they cannot handle their problems," some claim. "Their theories are way out and their solutions quite wanton."

But youngsters on the other hand always point out that there is the generation gap, the veneration gap and all the other gaps that separate "us" and "them."

What then — let the young counsel the young and the old do likewise?

That, in fact, is exactly what a group of young people are doing.

They call themselves the Befrienders and they run two makeshift coffee houses at their Methodist Church grounds in Toa Payoh and Serangoon Gardens.

Three aims

Their aims are threefold:

To provide good coffee; A place where teenagers can mix, mingle and make merry; and

To lend a helping hand to teenagers travelling the bumpy road to adulthood.

The coffee is just an excuse and so is the coffee house. They do not want to give the impression that they are out to evangelise. But the real purpose is to get to the nitty gritty of the problems that beset teenagers — concerning love, life, drugs, sex, school, parents and so on.

The coffee house at Toa Payoh looks like a school tuckshop. Only the lights are dim and the turntable spins pop records.

The place is usually full when the sessions are on every second Saturday. Teenagers in jeans mill around, or sit drinking coffee.

Some play guitars and sing in small groups. Every now and then someone gets up and

uses the microphone, to say a few words or just quote from the bible.

The Befrienders greet visitors at the door with a warm "hello." They seat them, serve them and smother them with attention. All very nice and neighbourly for a start.

Then they start to probe... Why, when, who, which, what, where... occupation, area of residence, inclinations, etc. They show interest, they want to know more about you. Even before you can ask about them.

They appear to take for granted that anyone who wandered in from the streets suffered from a serious, secret sorrow and wished to talk about it.

Perhaps some people like to feel around for an atmosphere first. No one just pours out their heartaches to a perfect stranger, no matter how wide his grin or how warm his handshake.

But their sincerity is undoubtedly heartfelt. Perhaps they think that you will go away and never come back and they will miss the chance of helping you.

A group of drug addicts once walked in. They walked off two hours later laughing their heads off.

Recounts one Befriend-

er: "They were popping pills in front of us. There were MX pills all over the floor. When they found out what we do, they just laughed at us and walked off."

"It was a regrettable incident but we didn't report them. It would have defeated our purpose."

Activities

"Our MP knows about our activities and the nature of our work, and the law is aware of our clientele."

At the Serangoon Gardens coffee house the scene is quieter. A small area at the back of the church has been swept clean. Checked tablecloth gives it a homely feel.

During a visit, I found the place to be empty except for the Befrienders and other church members, who were sitting around talking about fashion, films and so on, and waiting for visitors to drop in.

There are some who say that the Befrienders are prone to preaching. But there are others who will testify to their goodwill.

One thing is for sure, they are not out to con anyone. They will do anything to accommodate you.

A girl who was sulking through a session was asked tactfully why. She replied curtly: "I'm moody, so what."

"Why are you moody" came the gentle question. "Because I take drugs," she retorted.

"Would you like to talk about it?"

"No, it's too noisy."

"We can go to a quieter corner of the church," the Befriender said. And they did.

The Befrienders counsel in a special way. Their speciality is asking questions.

The questions they ask and the answers obtained are aimed at allowing the person the chance of answering his questions himself, with a little help from the Befriender. Which is the way most psychologists would handle it.

Method

This method is believed to be used by the Samaritans of Singapore. The Befrienders are in fact a sibling of the SOS, sharing the same goals.

The coffee houses that the Befrienders run are by their very nature places that can either be used or abused. But if I were a teenager I would count the Befrienders among my friends.

For apart from providing the cheapest coffee in town — at 20 cents a cup — they give you friendship and a receptive ear — for free.

THE OLD GUARD



by Rose Tan

VIOLET KWAN

Petite, stylish, and sprightly.

And all of 88 years old. She is Auntie Violet Kwan, number six on Trinity Methodist Church's (TMC) Membership Roll.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

It all began at Cowdray Avenue in the Serangoon Garden Estate in 1956. Auntie Violet opened her family home at No. 75 to welcome children to Sunday School classes. A few doors away, there was Uncle Tong Kum Toh and next to him, Auntie Nancy Lee. They also opened their homes to accommodate children to Sunday School classes.

As for the adults, they took turns to host worship services in their homes.

They also raised funds to build the church. The goal to purchase land to build a church was achieved in 1958, when a vacant plot of land at the junction of Lichfield Road and Serangoon Garden Way – where TMC continues to reside – was acquired for \$60,000.

Auntie Violet remembers that in the early days, there was no air-conditioning in the Sanctuary (and now we sometimes complain that it's too cold!) In 1989, she donated air-conditioners for the Sanctuary, in time for her daughter Jennifer's wedding. Auntie Violet's son also grew up at TMC, but now lives and works in Japan.

THE ACCIDENTAL ENTREPRENEUR

Auntie Violet has faithfully donated her famous chocolate cake for almost every church anniversary.

But she describes herself as an accidental entrepreneur whom God has blessed richly and established in business.

Auntie Violet recounted how her sister-in-law, Lana, who lives in the United States, was an excellent baker who would bake for her friends each time she visited Singapore. Lana's cakes were so well-received that the orders started pouring in, and she soon had requests to start baking classes.

Auntie Violet's journey as an entrepreneur started when Lana insisted on passing her skills to an initially reluctant Auntie Violet. It was not long before Auntie Violet took to the baking business, which quickly expanded out of her home base to a shop unit in Greenwood Avenue, where Lana Cake Shop still stands today.

Auntie Violet credits her late husband Kwan Chee Yew, a banker, as the man who made it all possible. He renovated the shop and put in an industrial oven that is still in use to this day. The other person whom she is grateful for is her sister-in-law Lana, whom she regards as her *shifu* (Mandarin for master). The shop is named after her sister-in-law, as a tribute to her.

Today, Auntie Violet continues to be a hands-on boss. When I met her, she had what I thought was flour on her face. As she sat down to chat with me, she wiped it off and told me that it was egg white.

May God protect Auntie Violet and grant her good health as she continues to be a blessing to many at Trinity Methodist Church. Perhaps she might even bake a special cake for TMC's 60th Anniversary celebrations in September (hint, hint!).



Violet and Rose



One of the famous Lana Cakes



Violet in her kitchen



Note the wall fans in the Sanctuary



SEEING CHRIST IN YOU



*by Rev Dr Lorna Khoo
Pastor-in-charge, Aldersgate Methodist Church*

“I accepted Christ in 1969 at the Grady Wilson Crusade. It was more of a cerebral decision based on a fear of going to hell and wanting to get to heaven. I would describe it as detached and “transactional” in nature. I started attending TMC in 1971.

Before that, I had been attending my parents’ church’s Junior Methodist Youth Fellowship and also Sunday School at Paya Lebar Chinese Methodist Church for years. We, the youth, wanted an English-speaking service and the leaders of the church at that time were not open to it. This resulted in those of us who were of “church-going age” going to different churches.

I had heard Rev Christopher Hulse Smith (Pastor in TMC from 1959-1962; 1970-1975) speak at my school, Paya Lebar Methodist Girls’ School. I also had an opportunity to speak to him much later about faith issues. For the first time in my life, I found someone who really listened to me and I sensed that Chris had something in his faith that I sought for mine. I was very intense regarding my faith and he was more ‘relaxed in the Lord’. So I went to TMC to find out what he had that I didn’t have.

In 1972, I ‘fell in love with Christ’ through Chris’ teachings during the membership classes at TMC. I attended three rounds of his classes as I was so hungry to know more about the Lord as seen in the Gospels. I saw Christ through Chris, through his sermons and through his example.

PASTORAL MINISTRY

The call to the pastoral ministry came from the Lord when I caught the vision of what the church is called to be – God’s agents of transformation of the world that He loves. The passion for a community living by different value systems from the world, and the commitment to Christian ecumenism and social justice. All these came from my time of learning with Chris.

Rev Malcolm Tan, who was a few years my junior at TMC, told me a couple of years ago: ‘You have Chris Smith’s anointing’. I had never heard it said this way before as Chris was not considered ‘charismatic’ but I think what Malcolm meant was that Chris had so influenced me in my theology, my values and my orientation that it comes through in my ministry to others.”

As part of our Diamond Anniversary celebrations, the Saltshaker has invited former church members who are now in pastoral or full-time Christian ministry to share with our readers the impact that Trinity Methodist Church (TMC) has made on their lives.

HOW TMC CAN BE A PLACE WHERE DISCIPLES MAKE DISCIPLES

“I think more can be lived out than taught in programmes and books. Following Jesus is ‘caught’ more than ‘taught’. When people can see Christ in you - as I saw Christ in Rev Smith - they will begin to change their lives to model that which they see and wish to be like.

My birthday prayer for TMC is that people will catch a clear picture of Jesus in the Gospels, and hear Him say: ‘Follow me’. Only then will disciples who wish to make disciples move in radical trust and radical obedience.”

THE LATE REV CHRISTOPHER SMITH

From 1970-1975, Chris pastored TMC where he had served as a founding associate minister several years before. The church grew under his ministry.

What was typical of Chris was his wholehearted giving of himself to his people. A Girls’ Brigade captain recalled that when her husband died, Chris offered to stay overnight with her family in their bereavement. The Indian caretaker of the church recalled that during Holy Week when pews had to be moved for some services, Chris came and helped her carry the pews.

Chris noticed the “little people” in the crowd. Many in the church remembered him walking down from the pulpit during the singing of a hymn to hand his hymnal to an individual who did not have one. During a service organised by the youth of the Church for mental patients at the then-Woodbridge Hospital, a scruffy, smelly patient requested a hug from Chris. An eyewitness account reported that Chris threw open his arms and drew the man to himself, holding him in warm embrace for what seemed like a very long time. “If ever we saw the love of God in action, it was there”.

Among the fruits of Chris’ labour at TMC are two Singapore Methodist pastors for whom he was a “spiritual father” and a great influence respectively. A Methodist church, the Methodist Church of the Incarnation, started more than 10 years after Chris’ departure from Singapore, claims the inspiration for its name and vision in Chris’ foundational teaching and work with the youth of TMC as he trained them to man the short-lived “Open Door” Coffee house ministry.

(An edited excerpt from the TMC 40th Anniversary Souvenir Magazine, and written by Rev Dr Lorna Khoo)

60 WITH TMC

Me? Sixty?



by Koh Soo Yee

“It warms my heart to know that the church and I are of the same age. It’s as if we are both growing old together. It also means that when the church anniversary comes around every September, I am also reminded of how old I am too.

My Christian journey began when I was in Primary 3. I grew up in a non-Christian household, but I had a tutor who was Christian. She invited me to Sunday School at the then-Bethesda Bras Basah Church. That was my first taste of what a church was like.

Unfortunately for me, those visits were short-lived. My parents put a stop to my visits to Sunday School when they found out that I was going to church behind their backs. Subsequently, I had another opportunity to get to know about the Christian faith through Scripture Union during my secondary school years.

But my interest in Christianity waxed and waned over the next couple of years, until I experienced a personal crisis which led me to walk right into TMC one Sunday morning. It has been almost 30 years since that day, but I can still remember it very clearly. I met the then Pastor-in-charge, Rev Melvin Huang at the door. Sensing that I was alone but troubled, he encouraged me to stay and worship at the church. He also enlisted the help of one of the Sunday School teachers, Mrs Joyce Seet, to care for my daughter, Terri. I have never stopped worshipping at TMC since then. Until today, I am grateful to Rev Huang, Mrs Joyce Seet and Ms Elizabeth Lim who were instrumental in restarting my faith journey with God in TMC.

Thirty years on, my family worships in TMC with me. Through God’s grace and enabling, my husband, two daughters and I have also been actively serving the church in various capacities. Last year, for example, my husband courageously stepped up to serve as a group leader in the church camp! I was so overjoyed when he graciously accepted the call to serve in this way.

Frankly, it worries me that I am sixty. Turning sixty seems to bring me even closer to my sunset years and causes to me wonder whether I can complete the unfinished business of my life: seeing my two daughters settle down and bringing my unsaved family members to Christ. Yet, as I reflect on the past 59 years of my life, I am so thankful to God who has seen me through all the ups and downs. He has provided me with a supportive husband and two lovely daughters. As each year goes by, He has proven Himself to be faithful to me again and again.

As part of our Diamond Anniversary celebrations, the Saltshaker is inviting worshippers who turn 60 this year to share their faith journey with all readers.

One of my favourite verses from the Bible is Phil 4:6-7 which reads: “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” I know that there are many things in my life which are out of my control, but this verse continues to remind and encourage me that God always hears my prayers and gives me His peace in every situation even as I grow older in the years ahead.

TMC is home to me. It’s my prayer that the church will stay united as a body of Christ, and be a light to everyone in the community as it has been to me these past 30 years.”

Our birthday prayer for Mom

Dearest Mom,
As you turn sixty,
May the Lord bless you and keep you;
May the Lord make his face to shine
upon you and be gracious to you; and
May the Lord lift up his countenance
upon you and give you peace.

Steve, Terri & Jill



60 WITH TMC

60 is the new 40



by Victor Cheong

“When I was a teen, 50 was considered old. Someone of that age would be nearing retirement. Scientists now say that 60 is the new 40. So having just turned 60, I still feel young at heart and harbour no thoughts of expiring any time soon. Well, at least what I buy now is unlikely to wear out, my eyes won’t get much worse than they are currently and I can be sure my friends can keep my secrets... because they probably can’t remember them either! But I thank God for His faithfulness and for always watching over me all these past years.

One of my greatest joys upon reaching 60 is to personally witness my 95-year old mother-in-law (MIL) accept Jesus as her Lord and Saviour several months ago. My family had been praying for her conversion. I thank my sister Daisy for never giving up on my MIL, persevering unwaveringly and with patience to bring the message of salvation to her whenever she visited us. Praise God that He has answered her prayers and ours too.

As TMC turns 60 this year, it is my great privilege to be sharing this significant milestone with the church. I was born the same year TMC started as a house church. As such, I will always have this privilege of sharing TMC’s birthday milestone celebrations in the years to come.

The seeds of my Christian belief were sowed during my 12 years studying in mission schools. But I was lukewarm to the faith, and didn’t take any serious step to grow in my faith. In December 1978, when the Billy Graham Crusade was held in Singapore, I attended it at my brother’s invitation. When the call was given to say the sinner’s prayer and personally accept Jesus, God must have spoken to me. I readily stood up from my seat and invited Jesus into my life. I felt then that my life had been turned over and become anew. In 1980, I chose TMC to be the church I would regularly attend as my home was then in Serangoon Gardens.

I have devoted most of my entire life in TMC to the Resource Centre (RC). My involvement started back in 1981 when the late Victor Han approached me to help out in the cassette library. That ignited my interest in serving in this ministry. The library then consisted of only two cabinets at the back of the main sanctuary. In the mid-1980s, my wife and I together with Sin Guek, Joy Seah and their respective spouses, set up the Resource Centre. In 2005, when TMC shifted back to the new church building, I was also involved in setting up the new Resource Centre in the Benjamin Room. Besides being a librarian, I am the resource person in-charge of several types of media. I also maintain the RC’s online system and do graphics and publicity for the RC. (Editor: Victor also designed this month’s Bibliotheque – see p.38)

Where personal spiritual goals are concerned, I have little discipline in putting down on paper very specific, measurable goals which call for actions within a specific timeframe. Nevertheless I continually seek to use the spiritual gifts God has given me to do His Kingdom work and be a better disciple for Christ. I also strive to mature more spiritually, so that I can become a Christian that God can use more effectively.

TMC does play a role in my pursuit of personal spiritual goals. The vision and values TMC embody help in my discipleship journey, and offer opportunities for me to grow and contribute to God's work. My interactions with the church community here help me mature in my Christian faith.

For me, TMC is my home away from home. I sense God's presence and His love at work here. I have found much warmth and acceptance among the many brothers and sisters whom I have crossed paths with and I am thankful for them. Thirty-five years after stepping into TMC, I am still faithfully worshipping here... my home away from home!

My birthday prayer for TMC is for her to grow deeper in Christ, to build on the vision of making disciples through the pray, grow and serve strategy, that will realise TMC's mission of sharing the life-changing love of Jesus with the community all around us."



Victor and Doreen with his mother-in-law Lillian and her caregiver



Victor Cheong (standing) in the Resource Centre (1990 circa)

A special birthday wish to Victor from his family:

Dear Victor,
A very happy birthday to you. May the Lord bless you with peace, love, joy and good health.

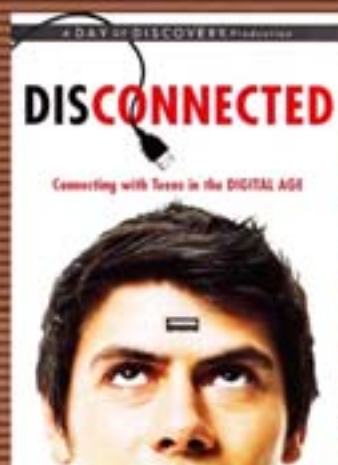


We thank the Lord for your great patience and understanding in taking care of mum. As you celebrate your birthday, we pray that the Lord will provide your needs and grant you gifts to serve Him in the coming years.

Turning sixty may be the beginning of the sunset period of your life, but don't be disheartened ...for sunsets are some of the most beautiful, spectacular and breathtaking scenes of nature. So, don't let the thought of turning older affect you. Don't slow down! Forget your age! Go out there and just live each day to the fullest!

With love,
Doreen, Mum, Linda, Victor, Matthew and Vanessa

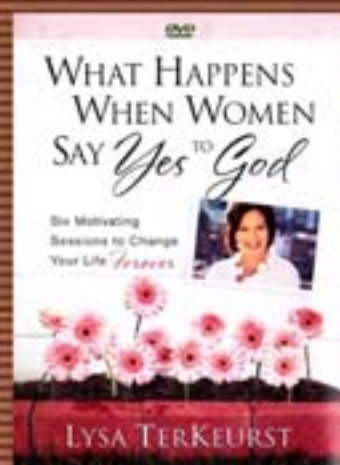
BIBLIOTHEQUE



DVD533
Disconnected: Connecting with
teens in the digital age



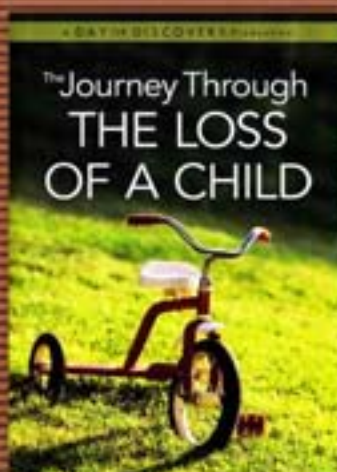
DVD534
Hillsong United - We're All In
This Together



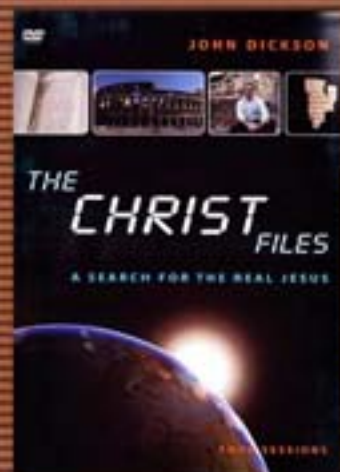
DVD535
What Happens When Women
Say Yes To God



DVD536
Hiding In Plain Sight
Homeless doesn't mean hopeless



DVD537
The Journey Through The Loss
Of A Child



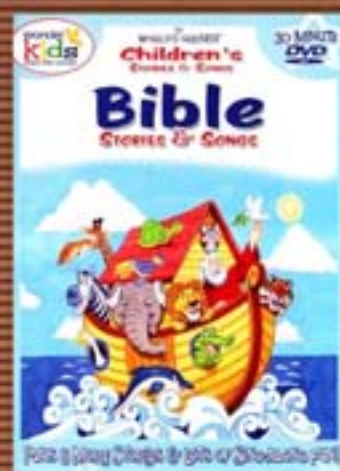
DVD538
The Christ Files
A search for the real Jesus



DVD539
Friends and Heroes, Episodes
14 and 15



DVD540
Friends and Heroes, Episodes
16 and 17



DVD541
Bible Stories & Songs

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

Marriage Preparation Course (MPC)

(Biblical Portrait of Marriage)

TUESDAYS 1 MAR – 26 APR (EXCEPT 22 MAR)
(8 SESSIONS)

7.00PM-10.00PM
TMC (THE UPPER ROOM, LEVEL 3)
COST OF MPC: TBA

Facilitators, Pastors Paul and Mee Hee Nga – married since October 1981 – recently joined the ranks of “in-laws” when their daughter Dorcas married Eugene on 28 Nov 2015.

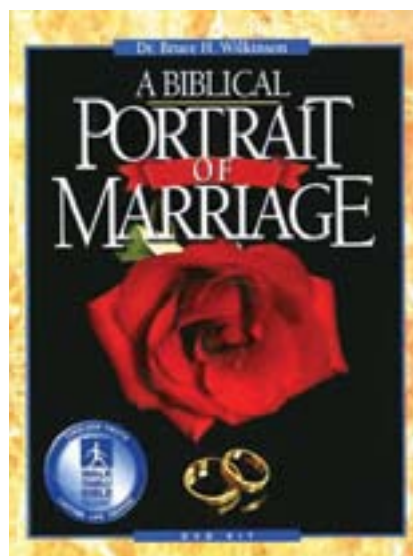
Both Mee Hee and Paul continue to work at their relationship – getting to know and to love each other more, growing in acceptance and affirmation – so as “To Be the Best for the Other, and To Bring Out the Best from the Other”. They are God’s “Work-In-Progress-Master-Piece”!

This course is for couples who are considering the path of becoming life-long partners within the covenant of God’s love and plan – in particular those who are planning to be married

anytime from May 2016 to June 2017.

Our basic resource will be “A Biblical Portrait of Marriage” developed by Dr Bruce and Darlene Wilkinson. The first six topics cover the partnership-relational aspects (principles) of marriage: the roles and responsibilities of husbands, wives, and couples: “Leave” and “Cleave”; “Head” and “Helper”; “Love” and “Submit”. The second six topics tackle the toughest challenges couples may face in their marriage: “In-laws” and “Money”; “Sex” and “Romance”; “Communication” and “Loyalty”.

More information from flyers at the iSunday Counter / www.tmc.org.sg/highlights.html#mpc (including registration forms). Register by 21 Feb.



EVENTS

Sat 6 Feb, 5 Mar

9.00am Small Group Leaders' Discipleship Group

Wed 10 Feb

Ash Wednesday – Start of Lent

Sat 13 Feb

Youth Ministry Outreach Event

Sun 14 Feb

Baptism of Adults

Thurs 18, 25 Feb, 3, 10, 31 Mar, 7 Apr

2.00pm / 7.30pm Precept Upon Precept Bible Study – Genesis (Part I)
www.tmc.org.sg/d&n.html

Sun 21, 28 Feb, 6, 13 Mar

2.00pm Membership Classes
www.tmc.org.sg/baptism.html

Tues 23 Feb

(and alternate Tuesdays)
10.00am Companions in Christ
www.tmc.org.sg/d&n.html

Fri 26 Feb

7.30pm Orientation session for DISCIPLE I
www.tmc.org.sg/d&n.html

Tues 1, 8, 15, 29 Mar, 5, 12, 19, 26 Apr

Marriage Preparation Course – Biblical Portrait of Marriage
www.tmc.org.sg/highlights.html#mpc

Every Fri 4 Mar – 18 Nov

7.30pm DISCIPLE I course
www.tmc.org.sg/d&n.html

Sun 6 Mar

Boys' and Girls' Brigade Enrolment Service

Sun 20 Mar

Palm Sunday – Start of Holy Week

Fri 25 Mar

Good Friday

Sun 27 Mar

Easter Sunday with Baptism of Infants and Children and Reception of New Members

Every Sun

9.30am Mandarin Service Prayer Meeting

Every 2nd Sun

After the 11.15am service:
Young Adults' Lunch Fellowship

Every 2nd and 4th Sun

7.45am
Church Prayer Meeting
www.tmc.org.sg/prayer.html

Every 3rd Sun

10.00am
WSCS Visitation to Homebound. Those interested to bring the church into the homes of the homebound, please contact Lucy Chan at 9748 2733.

Last Sun of the month

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

Every 1st Wed

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

Last Thurs of the month

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

Every Fri

8.00 – 10.00pm
Healing Ministry at the Prayer Chapel

Every Sat

9.00 – 11.30am
Fellowship of Ukulelians
www.tmc.org.sg/regular.html#ukulele

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