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Methodist Church

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SOME
TRUST
IN HORSES



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YOU TRUST?

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SOME TRUST IN IN HORSES

WHO DO YOU TRUST?



by Tricia Tong



Every Chinese New Year eve, my family ushers in the new year by watching hours of variety show entertainment on Mediacorp's Channel 8.

Just for laughs, we pay attention to what the fengshui master says about the fortunes of those born under different Chinese zodiac signs. In the Year of the Snake about to come to a close, it was said that those born in the year of the Rooster would be blessed in their careers, and that Rooster singles would meet the man or woman of their dreams. Roosters would find good fortune with the colour yellow and the number five. (So how many Roosters out there wore yellow the whole year round?)

If you are expecting a child in the Year of the Horse, you might be interested to know that it is believed that the horse is an intelligent animal and a symbol of speedy success. (Is it statistically proven that all students born in the Year of the Horse excel in their examinations every year?) Horses also like to compete with others, and pursue freedom, passion and leadership. Politicians in the making perhaps?

If you are Chinese, such stories are likely to be traded around the table as you partake in watermelon seeds and *bak gua* (barbequed pork) with relatives. In the midst of being amused, how can a Chinese Christian shake spiritual salt around the table?

God's people have their own stories to tell about horses. Like the Chinese, some of God's people treasured horses, seen as a measure of wealth. Solomon accumulated horses, imported from Egypt and from all other countries. He had 4,000 stalls for chariot horses, and 12,000 horses (1 Kgs 4:26; 10:26; 2 Chr 9:28).

Horses outrank oxen in the farmyard. Oxen do the farm jobs - a hard life for those born in the Year of the Ox like this writer - but horses are spared the farm jobs because they can help humans win battles. The northern kings deployed an army of horses against Joshua (Jos 11), as did the king of Aram against the king of Israel (2 Kgs 6:14-15). But perhaps the battle scene that Christians remember most vividly is Pharaoh's army of horses, chariots, horsemen and troops in hot pursuit of the Israelites in Ex 14:9. Indeed, these magnificent and terrible creatures were a symbol of military might and success.

What became of Pharaoh's horses?

Thanks to movies like Cecil B DeMille's "The Ten Commandments" and Dreamworks' "The Prince of Egypt", the dramatic engulfment of Pharaoh's army unfolds before our very eyes. But even without the help of the big screen, we know from the song of Moses and the Israelites that the Lord hurled horse and driver into the sea (Ex 15:1). Not using dragons, oxen, or monkeys, but simply because He was and is God and said it was to be so. These are great movies to recall or screen during the new year celebration when relatives visit our homes. They create a talking point and a chance for us to share why we obey God (and hopefully they see that we do!) instead of believing in soothsaying.

"A believing obedient trust in God and his name is the surest way both to preferment and to establishment, to rise and to stand upright, and this will stand us in stead when

creature-confidences fail those that depend upon them." (Matthew Henry's Commentary)

Our pre-believing family and friends may not put much store in astrology or seriously believe that 4D winnings are for the picking with foretold lucky numbers. However, many people continue to pursue symbols of success. Examples in Singapore abound - upgrading to a bigger home, and thus working longer hours to pay off a more onerous mortgage; seeking to climb the corporate ladder more quickly,

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may flow back over the Egyptians and their chariots and horsemen." Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at daybreak the sea went back to its place. The Egyptians were fleeing toward it, and the Lord swept them into the sea. The water flowed back and covered the chariots and horsemen—the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not one of them survived. (Ex 14:26-28)

and thus sacrificing time with loved ones. Even the amount in the red packet one gives has come to signify the level of success the giver has attained, not to mention the adornment of expensive new clothes and jewellery during the season.

The psalmist tells us that, "A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength it cannot save." (Ps 33:17) Similarly, the accumulation of earthly success might give one the feeling of being undefeatable, but as the Exodus story illustrates, the Lord made

Pharaoh's army lie at the bottom of the sea, "never to rise again, extinguished, snuffed out like a wick" (Is 43:17).

It is, after all, the Lord who gives the horse its strength, and clothes its neck with a flowing mane (Job 39:19).

So as Chinese New Year gallops in, we could encourage our pre-believing friends and relatives to turn their attention from horses to the Rider in Rev 19. This great Commander, described as "Faithful and True", rides out of Heaven as a warrior on a white horse, symbolising victory. His dominion is extensive for He is King of kings and Lord of lords - a title indicating sovereignty. This Sovereign enters with an army of angels, signalling the end of the rule of all false powers.

Who is He?

He is Jesus who first came riding on a donkey - a symbol of peace - to forgive our sins by dying on the cross. He is Jesus who will come again riding on a white horse - a king's horse and a symbol of war and power - to bring judgment.

Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God. (Ps 20:7)



华人基督徒过新年

春的气息已越来越接近，今年的农历新年是2014年1月31日星期五，身为基督徒的我们是否应该庆祝这节日呢？基督教信仰其实是不分种族的，而每一个种族都有自己的新年，以色列人也有自己的新年还有其他的节日如逾越节，住棚节和五旬节等。农历新年也称为春节，这节日始于中国殷商朝代。今天华人后裔遍布全世界，各地的华裔都非常重视农历新年这个节日，也包括华裔基督徒在内。

华人家庭都会在新年来临之际大扫除一番，把旧的都除去，换上新的。也开始办年货和买新衣裳，或许现今的人因为生活改善比较富裕买新衣已是很平常的一件事，但我记得在小时候只有在新年才有机会穿新衣和新鞋。

新年的前一天是除夕也是一个很重要的日子，特别是“团圆饭”。

尤其是家庭成员都在外地工作或读书，很少有机会和家人相聚，趁着新年佳节，大家回家团聚，可能一年就这么一次，所以除夕的“团圆饭”是华人很重视的。身为基督徒的我们也不例外，毕竟这是我们华人的优良传统，重视家庭的观念；犹太人对家的观念也很深，在圣经的记载里常提到某某人物是出自那一个家庭是谁的儿子或孙子，耶稣的家谱也可以从马太，路加这两本福音书中找到；而且在诗篇128也这么说：“你妻子在你内室，好像多结果子的葡萄树；你儿女围绕你的桌子，好像橄榄栽子。看哪，那敬畏耶和华的人，必要这样蒙福。愿你看见你儿女的儿女。”基督徒将来在天上也要一起和我们的主享用筵席。现在有好多家庭为了方便起见，或生活太忙碌了，“团圆饭”便在酒楼餐厅享用，这可能少了一些“家”的感觉。

年初一是一个喜庆的日子，在过去可以燃放炮竹的年代，年初一的一大清早就可以听到炮竹声不绝于耳，满街满地都铺满了红红的碎纸，好漂亮啊！新年华人习俗就是要到亲朋好友的家去拜年或贺年，少不了要发红包，其实发红包在我们生活里也是一件很普遍的事，每逢有结婚喜事，弥月之喜，都会包红包，其意义就是要恭贺和祝福对方。对基督徒来说，我们可以选择一些不要太俗气的或在基督教书店买一些有“恩，福”和有经文的封套。在贺年的时候我们可以用“新年蒙恩”“新年进步，身体健康”“新年快乐”对学生说“学业进步”等来代替俗气的“恭喜发财”“财源广进”“鸿运当头”等贺语。

在新年期间“捞鱼生”也成为新马华人的特别习俗，大家都想在新的一年里捞得风生水起，在捞鱼生

的时候都说些吉利的话如：（红萝卜丝）——鸿运当头啊！（青木瓜丝）——青春永驻啊！（三文鱼条）——年年有余啊！（胡椒粉+五香粉）——五福临门啊！（一碗香油）——来啊、财源滚滚来啊！（酸柑汁+酸甜酱）——大吉大利、甜甜蜜蜜啊！（干果+花生碎+碎饼）——金银满屋、遍地黄金啊！起筷捞生——捞啊！捞个风生水起啊！

Should we celebrate Chinese New Year if we are Chinese Christians?

A Christian can be a person of any ethnicity, and all ethnic cultures have their own new year celebrations. The Israelites celebrate a new year that does not fall on 1 Jan, as well as other festivals like the Passover, the Feast of Tabernacles and Pentecost among others.

The celebration of Chinese New Year or the Spring Festival has its origins in the Shang Dynasty. Today, Chinese people are found all over the globe, and all Chinese, including Chinese Christians, consider Chinese New Year to be a very significant festival in the Chinese calendar.

All Chinese families give their homes a good spring clean before the new year, throwing out the old, and replacing it with the new. They would not miss out on the purchase of new year goodies and new clothes. With the affluence of modern society, the buying of new clothes may not seem like such a novelty. However, when I was growing up, I would get new clothes and shoes only during Chinese New Year.

Chinese New Year's eve is a very important day. Whether one is working overseas or studying, the eve of the new year is a day when one would try to join one's family for the all-important once-a-year reunion dinner. This Chinese tradition should be observed by Chinese Christians as it highlights the importance of the family unit.

The Jews too hold the family unit in high regard. We know this from the various genealogies in the Bible. For example, we can find Jesus' family tree from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Furthermore, Ps 128 says: "Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children

捞出运气、福气和财气啊！然后大喊三声——发啊！发啊！发啊！

我们基督徒可以捞鱼生吗？当然可以但我们不需要全盘照收，我们可以用不同的贺词如：主恩满溢，八福临门，平安喜乐，满有恩赐，事奉得力，恩上加恩，宣扬主恩，生养众多，丰盛生命，圣灵充满等等。

will be like olive shoots around your table. Yes, this will be the blessing for the man who fears the Lord... May you live to see your children's children..." And eventually, all Christians will feast at the heavenly banquet in Heaven. These days, however, most families hold their reunion dinners in restaurants for the sake of convenience, which takes away some of the "home-like" atmosphere.

The first day of Chinese New Year is a day of celebration. In the days of old, one would waken to the sound of deafening firecrackers being set off and witness streets strewn with the residue of red firecracker paper. What a beautiful sight that was! According to Chinese tradition, on this day, one visits friends and relatives to deliver new year greetings. The giving of red packets is also a must. Of course, the giving of red packets is not something that happens only during the Chinese New Year. The Chinese also give red packets at special occasions such as weddings and birthdays. Red packets also convey the giver's congratulations and blessing. Chinese Christians can make some adjustments, and opt for red packets with words that seek to bless the recipient, such as "Xin Nian Meng Fu" (God's blessings in the new year), "Shen Ti Jian Kang" (good health) and "Xin Nian Kuai Le" (happiness in the new year) instead of the usual "Gong Xi Fa Cai" (congratulations and wishes for a financial windfall), "Cai Yuan Guang Jin" (may abundant wealth roll in) and "Hong Yun Dang Tou" (may good fortune befall you).

It has become customary for Singaporean and Malaysian Chinese to toss a "yu sheng", a raw fish salad during the new year. Auspicious sayings are uttered before the salad is tossed. For example, when dusting five-spice powder onto the salad,

总之，我们华人传统有好多的节日，除了农历新年还有元宵，端午节，中秋节等，中国文化有几千年的历史，我们华人的祖先也都来自中国，虽然我们已经是基督徒，我们还是要记得我们的根，只要传统习俗没有抵触我们的基督教信仰，我想我们都依然可以去纪念和庆祝，在此顺祝大家新年蒙恩，灵命长进，身体健康，得人如得鱼！

one would say, "may you be visited with five fortunes". When pouring oil over the salad, one would say, "may wealth flow (like the golden oil) in" and when placing the raw fish over the salad, one would wish for "excesses in the year" (the Chinese word for "excess" sounds like "fish"). The crispy crackers resemble gold ingots. Hence one would say "may gold fill your house". And so everyone, holding a pair of chopsticks, will fish for all these blessings of wealth and good fortune and toss the salad ingredients complete with three or more resounding shouts of "Fa" or "Huat" (Hokkien for "to prosper").

Should Chinese Christians join in tossing yu sheng? With some suitable modifications, why not? We can deviate from the norm and substitute the usual sayings with ones of our own, such as "may God's grace be abundant", "peace and joy", "may He bless abundantly", "abundant life", and "may you be filled with the Spirit".

The Chinese observe many traditional festivals apart from Chinese New Year. There's also the Lantern Festival, the Dragon Boat Festival, Mooncake Festival and so on. Chinese culture has thousands of years of history, and the ancestors of Singaporean Chinese hail from China. Chinese Christians should be encouraged to remember their roots. As long as Chinese traditions and practices do not conflict with the Christian faith, I think we can observe and celebrate them.

Here's wishing one and all God's blessings in the new (Chinese) year, growth in your spiritual life, good health, and may you all be fishers of men!

WHEN A CHILD GIVES HONG BAO



by Vinitha Jayaram

During the festive season of Chinese New Year, the Children's Ministry takes part in the Methodist Welfare Services (MWS) Charity Hong Bao Drive.

The drive is an avenue for the children to donate a portion of their New Year Hong Baos, to help the needy who are served through MWS. **As the children are being blessed during the festive season, the MWS Charity Hong Bao Drive encourages children to think of the less fortunate in the community.** TMC's Children's Ministry is participating in this year's Hong Bao Drive for the third year running.

Alice and Kim, teachers in the Children's Ministry, explained the significance of this drive for the children. Both teachers shared from the verses in Matt 25:35-40.

Kim told the Saltshaker that the verses from Matthew remind the children that it pleases God when His people look out for the poor and the needy.

"This is even more significant during the Chinese New Year period when our children receive a lot. It's when they have a choice, to make the decision to follow Jesus' teachings to reach out and help the needy. I hope that the children will take away the lesson that during good and bad times, they should always care for the needy because this is in accordance with Jesus' teachings and it pleases God," she said.

The beneficiaries of the MWS Charity Hong Bao Drive come from many different racial and religious backgrounds, including:

Children and youth at risk who need after-school care, and preventive and developmental programmes;
Families who need counselling and programmes to help them deal with financial, marital and other family crises;
Frail elderly who need residential nursing care;
The destitute who are in need of shelter and rehabilitation; and
Those suffering from life-limiting illnesses and need home care.

If you have been moved to give towards the Hong Bao Drive, visit www.mws.org.sg or contact MWS at 6478 4700

'For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'"

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"

Alice said that this Hong Bao Drive is important for the children as it develops in the children a caring, loving and compassionate heart towards the poor and needy.

"I don't think many of our children experience the lives that these less fortunate people experience. Hence this drive raises their awareness of the less fortunate. Besides showing care and love, the children here in TMC must be aware that when God blesses them, they should seek to in turn be a blessing to others," she said.

"At a very young age, they can start to learn how to channel these blessings to the needy who genuinely need their help. They may not be physically present to serve in a prison ministry for example, but when they give a portion of their Hong Bao money, they are serving! It's one the best ways to apply what the children have learnt in their CM lessons. Through this drive, the less fortunate and poor and needy can experience the love of God through the children's act of giving. This will draw these needy people to want to know more about Jesus."

Kim echoed Alice's thoughts. She said: "For those who receive the money from this drive, I hope that they can see that the world loves them, that there are people who care and hopefully that will lead them to want to know more about Jesus too!"

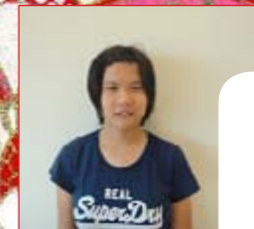
HOW DO I USE MY HONG BAO MONEY?



"My mother and father will put it all in the bank, so that I can use it next time. I want to use it to buy toys for my own children and buy delicious food for my family. Sometimes I will give \$20 to \$30 to the poor people during the Hong Bao Drive."
- Caleb Tay, 8 years old

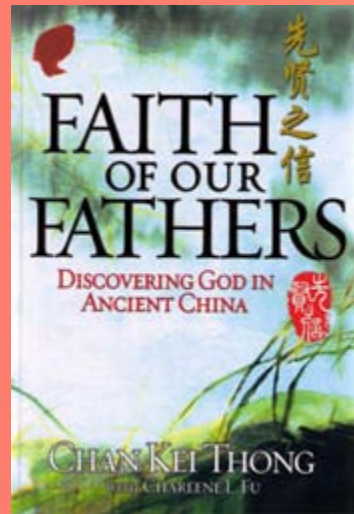


"My parents put it all into the bank. Sometimes we give it to my grandmother and we bring some to Cambodia when we go on mission trips. I want to keep the money and bring it overseas in the future, because I want to become a volunteer worker, open an orphanage and help the needy."
- Hannah Woo, 10 years old



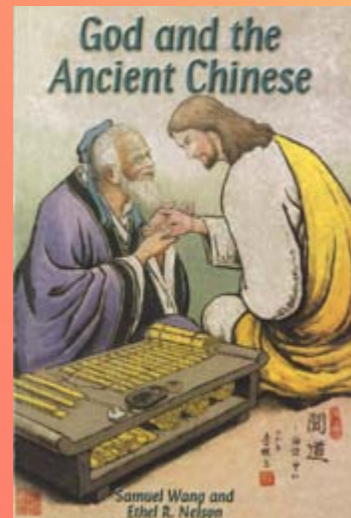
"I keep it all in my bank. My parents want me to save it for university. I give about \$10 for the Hong Bao drive. I would keep the rest for things I need in the future, like a house or a car, if I can pass the driving test."
- Natalie Chan, 11 years old

BIBLIOTHEQUE



FAITH OF OUR FATHERS
Author: Chan Kei Tong & Charlene Fu

The burgeoning growth of the churches in China is one of the most amazing spiritual movements in 21st century Christianity. What many fail to realise is that these Chinese believers are not embracing a religion that Western missionaries have attempted for hundreds of years to plant on Chinese soil, but are actually rediscovering a God who has been a constant presence in their history and culture for more than four millennia. Chan Kei Tong, in his extensively-researched Faith of Our Fathers, presents many historical gems to validate this astonishing perspective in a manner which anyone can understand.



GOD AND THE ANCIENT CHINESE
Author: Samuel Wang & Ethel Nelson

This fascinating book by Wang and Nelson shows that the ancient Chinese were very aware of God, the Creator. With exciting analysis that is based on solid evidence, this book provides readers with a systematic study of ancient Chinese writings and compares it with the Bible.



A TRUE STORY OF KELVIN SOH (VCD)

The story of Kelvin Soh is one that personifies God's work of salvation and redemption. Addicted to drugs since the age of 11, Kelvin Soh had been in and out of prison for over 24 years. The longest he managed to stay out of prison was a period of seven months. That seemed to be his lot in life to all who knew him. However his life changed when he was given a Bible by a non-Christian warden while in jail. Touched by the verses he read inside, he gave his heart to the Lord. Today, Kelvin is a celebrated singer and songwriter. This VCD contains his testimony.



BLESSINGS CNY CHINESE GOSPEL (CD)

Looking for some Christian versions of the traditional Lunar New Year songs to play this year? This album from New String Ministries contains familiar Lunar New Year melodies with lyrics that have been rewritten to incorporate a Christian aspect into them. Sung by pastors, local DJs and celebrities who are all Christians themselves, this series even has karaoke versions of the albums so you and your family can sing along to them!



SKS LUNAR NEW YEAR RED PACKETS

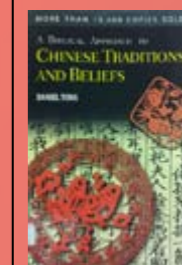
With the Lunar New Year just round the corner, check out these red packets with a Christian twist. Beautifully designed and well-crafted, these red packets with Christian verses printed on them are great for you to bless those around you during this festive season. SKS will be bringing them to TMC during the next book sale, so do look out for them and get them before they are all snapped up!



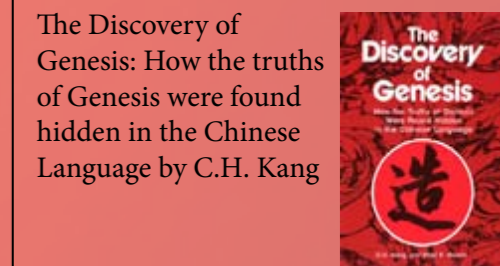
TMC RESOURCE CENTRE

You can also borrow books related to Christianity and Chinese traditions from the TMC Resource Centre on Level 2.

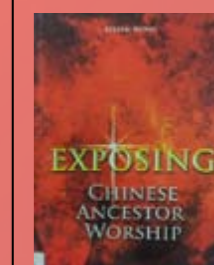
Some available titles are:



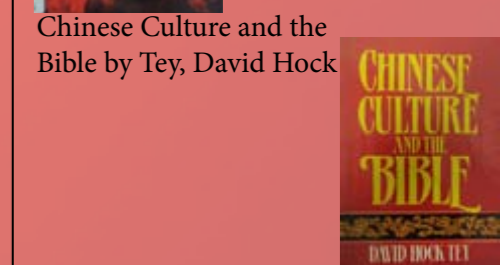
A Biblical Approach to Chinese Traditions and Beliefs
by Daniel Tong



The Discovery of Genesis: How the truths of Genesis were found hidden in the Chinese Language
by C.H. Kang



Exposing Chinese Ancestor Worship
by Steven Wong



Chinese Culture and the Bible
by Tey, David Hock



orange power



by Terri Koh

It is customary to exchange a pair of mandarin oranges, or “kum” with your host when you visit during Chinese New Year.

One version of the story behind this practice dates back to ancient China, where public officials, also known as mandarins, would pass the delectable fruits around as gifts during the festive season. It was no coincidence that the fruit matched their bright orange court robes. The word “kum” also sounds like “gold” in Cantonese. Hence the exchange of “kum” is a gesture that wishes your host an auspicious and prosperous New Year.

Did you know that you can save mandarin orange peels* and make your own all-purpose# cleaner? Vinegar is sufficiently acidic to kill the germs and bacteria that lurk in your home. The vinegar “extracts” oils from the orange peels, giving extra cleaning power.

All you need to do is add enough regular store-bought white vinegar to cover the peels! After two to three

weeks of steeping the peels in the vinegar, the essence of the orange peels will permeate the amber liquid giving you a “green” cleaner with a citrusy burst! For those of you who find the smell of vinegar too “sour”, fear not - that will disappear soon after.

I use the strained mixture (some prefer to dilute it with an equal volume of water) in a spray bottle and shake it well before use to ensure that the citrus oils are well dispersed. Now you can clean away without worrying about nasty chemical residue!

* The skins of any citrus fruit (lime, lemon or grapefruit etc.) will do just fine.

Vinegar-based cleaners are all-purpose except for use on granite and marble. Vinegar can mar the finish of porous stone countertops. These cleaners can be used for almost everything else, including glass and wood floors.

2 uses for the citrus vinegar:

Toilet Bowl Cleaner

1 cup baking soda (great opportunity to use up any expired stock in the pantry!)
1 cup vinegar

Turn off flow valve to toilet, and flush once or twice until water is drained from the bowl. Pour in baking soda, then slowly pour in the vinegar, being sure to cover as much of the bowl surface with vinegar as possible. Alternatively, use a spray bottle to ensure an even coverage. The baking soda will react with the vinegar – this is normal!
Use your toilet brush to scrub the surface and remove any rings or stains. Turn water back on and flush.

Read more at www.livingwellspendingless.com/2013/03/13/green-thrifty-cleaning-products/#oIYlAdz0BCqKiPvQ.99

Glass Cleaner

Mix equal volumes of water and vinegar together in spray bottle.
Spray on glass and use squeegee, crumpled newspaper (Tip: use newspapers that are at least two weeks old to avoid black fingers!), or a lint-free rag to get a streak-free shine.
Also works well to shine chrome and countertops after you’ve cleaned them.



Let the Little Children Come to Me



by Terri Koh

But Jesus said, “Let the children come to me. Don’t stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children.”
Matthew 19:14 (NLT)

In Matt 19:14, we read that Jesus exhorted His disciples not to prevent the children from coming to Him. Children have a very special place in the Lord’s heart, and He wants very much for them to know and love Him. He knows and loves each and every one of them.

It is with this understanding that our Children’s Ministry (CM) has decided to embark on a “Creative Prayer” programme for the young ones in our midst in February 2014.

The children in CM are already actively praying, says our CM staff Alice Lim. For example, in addition to weekly prayer during ministry time, CM also organises a yearly “Children in Prayer” programme where a particular Sunday is set aside for the children to pray in creative ways for themselves, their families and friends, and the world.

However, “Creative Prayer” intends to use intentional activities to grow and deepen the culture of prayer within CM and cultivate prayer as a discipline in the hearts of the children.

Our God is a creative God. He does not commune with us in a single manner, but through a variety of creative ways - ways that are best for His people, in this instance, His children.

That is why in “Creative Prayer”, CM teachers, and facilitators Alan Chan and Catherine Cheng will guide the children to pray through activities. For example, they will pose the relevant questions and encourage the children to wait upon the Lord as He speaks to them individually through pictures, words, Scripture, and impressions.

As an illustration, the children will be asked to pray “Father in Heaven, can You describe Your love for me?” and thereafter, encouraged to draw or write down what God says to them personally. In this way, they are uninhibited in expressing their responses from God.

Through these “Creative Prayer” activities, Alice hopes that the children will come to an understanding of how real God is to them and as the One who speaks directly into their hearts. In this way, the children can confidently grow to attune their hearts to God, and in time, develop a personal friendship with the Lord.

CM hopes that all parents will encourage their children to participate actively in “Creative Prayer”.

Photos from this year’s Children’s Camp



The Children’s Ministry aims to ground each child in the foundations of the Christian faith through Sunday classes for preschool through to Primary 6 children. Classes are held at 8.45am and 11.15am, except on first Sundays of each month when the children attend church service.

A CHURCH WE CALL HOME!



by Rev Alvin Chan

Some people treat the church like a HOTEL.

A place where you can check in and check out at the appointed times. Where one comes to be entertained by the music, the singing, the organ-playing. It is a getaway for others, from the daily hustle and bustle of a weekday routine, a staycation - where one comes to relax, to chill, to hang out.

For others, the church is like a HOSPITAL - where those who are ill come for healing.

Where the hurt come to have their wounds treated and bandaged, to hear words of comfort and assurance.

Yet for others, the church is like a HAUNT. A favourite place. Where coming has been a habit for many years, and missing it for just one week seems odd, strange. You see familiar faces and old friends and it is the same crowd. Overall, it is a very comfortable place.

A church can be all of the above. But may I suggest, that more than all that, a church must be like a HOME.

What is the one significant characteristic of a home? For me, the home must be for us, a safe place.

1. The church must be a safe place where family members are loved for who they are in Christ, not for anything that they have done, can do or will do.

Think of your own family. Family members are not loved because they can do chores well or are good-looking, intelligent or talented. They are loved simply because they are family. A foetus in the mother's womb is well-loved, even before he or she comes into this world. What has the foetus done to earn the love of the parents? Absolutely nothing. That is the kind of unconditional love that God loves us with and with which we must love others, especially those in the church.

The apostle John reminded us in 1 John 3:1 "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are."

2. The church must be a safe place where its family members can just come as they are, free to be themselves without fear of criticism and judgment.

In a home, no masks are needed, no make-up necessary. Nice clothes and ornaments are dispensed with. We are our plain selves and we are perfectly comfortable in allowing our parents and siblings to see us that way - because it is home. It is a place where we can be free to make mistakes in word and deed, yet know that we will be forgiven. In the same way, the church must be like home, where Christ's love compels us to forgive and embrace one other.

The apostle Paul told the church in Colossians to "Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive." (Colossians 3:12-13)

***3. The church must be a safe place where family members can be nurtured more and more into Christ's likeness, where members help one another, support one another and build one another up.**

It is as Paul told the church in Thessalonica. "Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing." (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

Think of your own home. It is a place where you lend a listening ear and that shoulder to cry on to your child, to your siblings. You help one another through difficult times and celebrate their joys and their achievements. Similarly, when we do that in the church, we nurture one another and help one another grow.

I recognise that just as there is no perfect home, there is no perfect church. But the lack of perfection is precisely why Christ came. Let me close with this thought from Charles Spurgeon:

"Give yourself to the Church. You that are members of the Church have not found it perfect and I hope that you feel almost glad that you have not. If I had never joined a Church till I had found one that was perfect, I would never have joined one at all! And the moment I did join it, if I had found one, I should have spoiled it, for it would not have been a perfect Church after I had become a member of it. Still, imperfect as it is, it is the dearest place on earth to us..."

"As I have already said, the Church is faulty, but that is no excuse for your not joining it, if you are the Lord's. Nor need your own faults keep you back, for the Church is not an institution for perfect people, but a sanctuary for sinners saved by Grace, who, though they are saved, are still sinners and need all the help they can derive from the sympathy and guidance of their fellow Believers. The Church is the nursery for God's weak children where they are nourished and grow strong.

It is the fold for Christ's sheep—**the home for Christ's family.**" (emphasis mine)

—Charles Spurgeon, "The Best Donation," (No. 2234) an exposition of 2 Corinthians 8:5 delivered on April 5, 1891 at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, England.

Hebrews 10:24-25 admonishes: "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."

With this in mind, I want to invite all of us to begin to see the church as a safe place, a place we can call home. I would also like to invite all of you to build this home together with the rest of the pastors and leaders of the church. That TMC would be a home to all who walk into our midst!

教会 - 我们的家



曾宝发牧师

对某些人教会就像个酒店。

一个可以定时签入和签出，有音乐、歌唱、风琴演奏为娱乐的地方。某些人却把教会当作逃离喧闹繁忙的平日例程的地方，“在家休息” — 在这儿休息、放松、游荡。

对于其他人，教会就像一个医院 — 病者来得医治；受伤的来处理、包扎伤口；来听安慰和有保障的话。

然而对于其他人，教会是他们喜欢的地方。来教会是多年养成的习惯；一个星期不来会感觉怪怪的，似乎少了什么的。你看到熟悉的面孔、老朋友和同样的一群人。总体而言，这是一个非常舒适的地方。

教会可以是上述的全部。但我建议，超过这一切，教会必须像一个家。

一个家庭的特征是什么呢？对于我来说，家必须是个安全的地方。

1。教会必须是个安全的地方，其中家庭成员被爱只因他们在基督里的身份，而不是他们的所作所为。

试想你自己的家庭，你爱家人不是因为他们会做家务或长得好看，有智能或才华。他们被爱，只因为他们是一家人。甚至在腹中的胎儿，还未入世，就备受喜爱。胎儿可有做过什么，竟赚取父母如此的深爱？绝对没有。神就是这样无条件的爱我们，因此我们要如此爱他人，尤其是教会成员。

使徒约翰在约翰一书3章1节，提醒我们 “你看父赐给我们是何等的慈爱，使我们得称为神的儿女。我们也真是他的儿女。”

2。教会必须是个安全的地方，其家庭成员可以自由地做自己，不用害怕批评和判断。

在家里，无需面具、化妆、漂亮的衣服和装饰。我们是原本的我，完全不怕让我们的父母、兄弟姐妹看到我们原本的样子 — 因为这就是家。这里我们不怕在言行上犯错，因为我们知道我们会被谅解。同样，教会必须像个家，基督的爱激励我们去原谅和包容对方。

使徒保罗在歌罗西书告诉教会“所以你们既是神的选民，圣洁蒙爱的人，就要存怜悯，恩慈，谦虚，温柔，忍耐的心。倘若这人与那人有嫌隙，总要彼此包容，彼此饶恕。主怎样饶恕了你们，你们也要怎样饶恕人。” 歌罗西书3章12-13节

3。教会必须是个安全的地方，其家庭成员能受培育以致越来越象基督；互相帮助、支持和建立对方。使徒保罗告诉帖撒罗尼迦的教会：“所以你们该彼此劝慰，互相建立，正如你们素常所行的。” 帖撒罗尼迦前书5章11节。

试想你家里，你倾听孩子、兄弟姐妹诉苦和让他们在你肩膀上哭泣。互相帮助渡过难关，并庆祝他们的欢乐和成就。同样，在教会里我们也当如此，我们互相勉励、帮助对方成长。

我承认世上没有完美的家，没有完美的教会。但由于缺乏完美，所以基督来了。让我以查尔斯·司布真 (Charles Spurgeon) 的名言终结：

“把自己给予教会。你身为教会成员发现它并非完美，我希望你因此觉得高兴。如果我要找到个完美的教会才肯加入，我永远都不可能加入了！如果真给我找着了，一旦我加入，它就不再完美。尽管不完美，它是我们世上最亲爱的地方。

正如我已经说过，教会即使有缺陷，如果你是主的门徒，你没有理由不加入。也不要让你自己的过失阻止你加入，因为教会不是一个属于完美人的机构，而是一个罪人蒙恩得救的避难所。虽然已得救，但仍是罪人，需要各方面的帮助，主内弟兄姐妹慰问和指导。教会是主弱小孩子的育儿室，供他们培育使强壮。是主羊群的垒羊圈 — 是主家庭的家园。”

- Charles Spurgeon, “The Best Donation,” (No. 2234) 于1891年4月5日在英国伦敦大都会幕中发表的哥林多后书8章5节的阐述。

希伯来书10章24-25节告诫：“又要彼此相顾，激发爱心，勉励行善。你们不可停止聚会，好像那些停止惯了的人，倒要彼此劝勉。既知道那日子临近，就更当如此。”

鉴于此，我邀请大家视教会为安全的地方，一个可称之为家的地方。并邀请你同教会的牧师们、领袖们一起建立，使凡来到三一堂的人都有家的感觉！



KNOW YOUR CHURCH

LOCAL CHURCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (LCEC) 2013-14



(Front row L-R) **Denisa Chin** (Church Administrator*); **Seah Gek Khee** (Lay Executive Staff* – Communications; Archives); **Judy Yip** (Honorary Steward); **Ang Poh Kit** (Associate Lay Leader); **William Goh** (LCEC Chairman; 1st Lay Delegate to TRAC); **Albert Yeo** (Lay Leader); **Hum Sin Hoon** (Discipleship & Nurture); **Lee Park Ming** (Lay Executive Staff* - Small Groups; Discipleship & Nurture; Missions); **Rev Peter Goh** (Pastor); **Pamela Woo** (Kindergarten); **Lee Hui Ling** (Girls' Brigade)

(Middle row L-R) **Kelvin Tan** (LCEC Vice-Chairman; Missions); **Victor Seah** (Archives); **Patricia Tan** (Worship & Music); **Tricia Tong** (Communications); **Lim Sue Yien** (Recording Secretary; 4th Lay Delegate to TRAC); **Rev Dianna Khoo** (Pastor-in-Charge until 2014); **Woon Tai Keat** (Treasurer); **Rev Dr Kang Ho Soon** (Pastor); **Andy Chew** (Associate Lay Leader); **Richard Seng** (Associate Lay Leader)

(Back row L-R) **George Sathiasingam** (Children's Ministry); **Rev Alvin Chan** (Pastor-in-Charge from 2014); **Ong Hon Yuh** (Finance); **Colin Yip** (Small Groups); **P Sathia** (Honorary Steward); **Paul Ng** (Outreach & Social Concerns); **Sim Cher Khee** (Prayer & Intercession); **David Lee** (Property Management); **Khor Tong Hong** (Honorary Steward); **Paul Chong** (Governance; 3rd Lay Delegate to TRAC); **Jestyn Koh** (2nd Reserve Lay Delegate to TRAC; Lay Executive Staff* - Outreach & Social Concerns; Young Adults)

LCEC Office Holders not in picture: **Chew Kim Ling** (Associate Lay Leader); **Terri Koh** (Youth Ministry); **Lim Choo Siang** (Boys' Brigade); **Katherine Loh** (WSCS President); **Keegan Ong** (Mandarin Service; Associate Lay Leader); **Norman Ng** (Glowing Years Ministry); **Robert Yeo** (Associate Lay Leader; Asst Treasurer; 2nd Lay Delegate to TRAC); **Timothy Yong** (1st Reserve Lay Delegate)

Church Staff not in picture: **Calvin Ang** (Sr Facilities Assistant); **Francis Chew** (Admin Asst); **Eddie Goh** (Lay Ministry Staff - Mandarin Service; Witness & Evangelism); **Dawn Gwee** (Admin Asst); **Alice Lim** (Lay Ministry Staff - Children's Ministry; Prayer & Intercession); **Cathrine Sunitaa Mathew** (Sr Operations and Admin Assistant (Contact 123)); **Jenny Seow** (Snr Accounts Executive); **Julie Sim** (Kindergarten Principal)

* denotes church staff who are not members of the LCEC unless they are also office holders within the LCEC.

The LCEC has many functions in the local church under the Discipline of the Methodist Church in Singapore, which governs our principles, practices and procedures. These functions include but are not limited to:

- having oversight of and responsibility for the administration, organization and programme of the church;
- initiating and executing the planning process, establishing objectives, adopting goals and programme plans, authorising action, determining policy, providing ongoing and regular evaluation and review of the mission and ministries of the church;
- making proper and adequate provision for the financial needs of the church, etc.

PASTOR-PARISH RELATIONS AND STAFF COMMITTEE (PPRSC)

The PPRSC is not part of the LCEC. It looks after all matters with regard to the appointment of pastors and staff employed by TMC.

(L-R): **Albert Yeo**; **Debbie Tng**; **Caroline Lim**; **Rev Peter Goh**; **Robert Yeo** (Chairman); **Rev Alvin Chan**; **Rev Dr Kang Ho Soon**; **Rev Dianna Khoo** (posted to Methodist Missions Society from 2014); **William Goh**.

Not in picture: **Chew Kim Ling**; **Pang Khang Chau**



LOCAL PREACHERS

A local preacher is a lay member of The Methodist Church who has been granted a licence to preach according to the Discipline of the Church. A local preacher has authority to preach and to conduct divine worship.



(L-R) **Kevin Lowe**; **Kwa Kiem Kiok**

Not in picture: **Jacob Cheng**; **Eddie Goh**; **Violet Khor**



SG CONNECT

JOHN 15:5

Praying, Growing and Serving, Together

John 15:5 is one of the newest small groups in TMC. Formed in September 2013, it consists of both young and mature Christians who were looking for a group where they could grow in their faith together.

THEY MET THROUGH PAT...

Every member is linked to the leader Pat in one way or another. Denisz and Desmond moved from another small group, as Pat happens to be their neighbour.

Jasmin and Sam and their three children were baptised in TMC in 2012. Jasmin met a mutual friend of Pat's at a parent-teacher association meeting. With a two-year-old baby boy, they needed a child-friendly small group that could be fit around the children's schedules.

Emily's elder son Jayden sat next to Raphael (Pat's son) on the bus to Kuantan. The two boys got along so well during the church camp that Emily was allowed to transfer to Pat's group.

ON PRAYING...

The praying started even before the group was formalised. Pat prayed and actively sought God for a name for the group. The verse John 15:5 came to from her devotions and was repeated in the sermon on a Sunday. It was also a simple verse to recall. Most of all, it would be a constant reminder to her group members of their identity in Christ and relationships with one another.

Instead of praying for themselves, the group finds greater joy praying for friends and family. They run a whatsapp prayer chat, where all can be updated on current prayer needs. The way that God has answered their prayers has assured them that God is indeed walking life's journey with them. A friend of Jasmin's was diagnosed with stage four cancer, and even though the prognosis sounded poor, the group felt that God wanted them to pray boldly for healing. Healing did come.

Denisz and Desmond faced a problem of not being able to hire employees, and here God provided too. They pray regularly for unsaved family members, and even here they are encouraged that God will answer in His own perfect time.



ON GROWING...

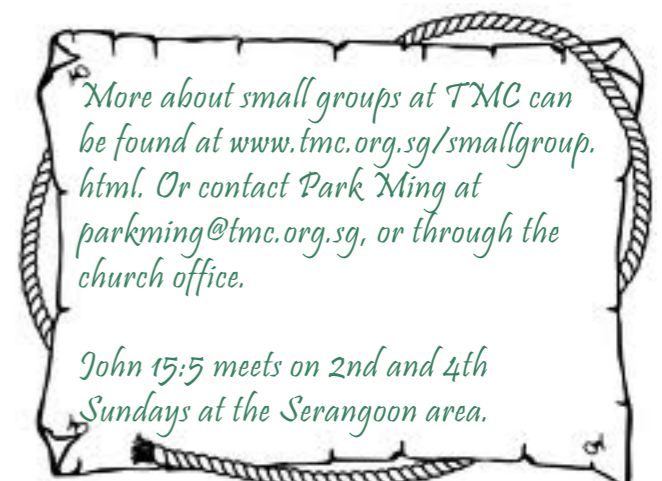
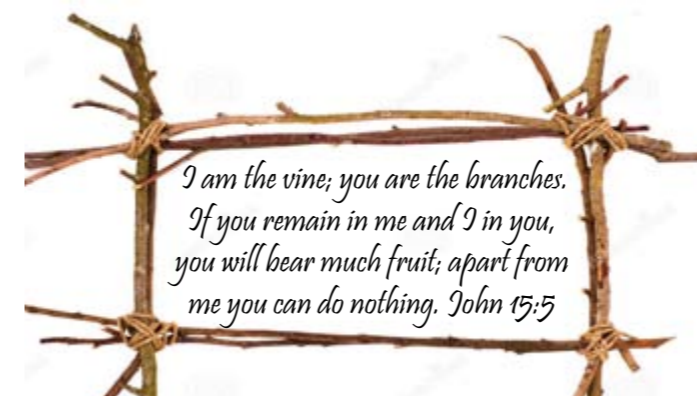
Two Sundays a month, two small groups meet in the home of Sam and Jasmin. In one group, four ladies and three men fellowship, pray, share their lives and study the Word together. In the other group, six active boys aged two to seven, play together in the retrofitted living room made to look like a kindergarten, with tables, chairs, toys, lots of space for children to play in, and not a sharp corner or breakable item in sight!

The first thing that the group wanted to do was to ensure that everyone shared the same spiritual fundamentals. Each member wanted to deepen his or her relationship with God. Even though they had different levels of spiritual maturity, all had the same basic questions such as "How do I speak to God?", "How do I hear God?" As a result, they decided to work through the "Designed for Discipleship" series developed by the Navigators. Jasmin has been encouraged to "think deeper" about her faith, while Emily is pleasantly surprised to "find something new" every time even though she's not a young Christian. Being in a similar age group, everyone tackles the issues with the same energy and enthusiasm. Pat observes that although the series is simply written, Christians of all maturity levels can apply what they learn from studying the material. After all, every Christian needs to know his or her identity in Christ and who he or she is in the eyes of God.

ON SERVING...

For this group, bearing fruit is about service. And it comes from a heart filled with gratitude, not obligation. When the urgent call was made for children's clothes for Cambodian children affected by the floods, bags were deposited in the church premises within 24 hours, including several bags from the members of John 15:5. The group also volunteered themselves and their children as choir and cast members for the Star of Christmas stage performance.

Though still feeling their way as a new small group, these disciples of Christ act and speak as one life linked together by praying, growing and serving.



IN AND ABOUT TMC



GRADUATION
& CONCERT

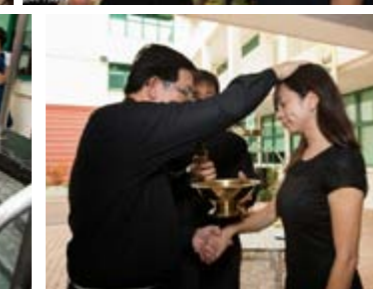
TMCK



GYM
SUNDAY



BAPTISM SERVICE





Growing in the Old Ways in the New Year



by Kwa Kiem Kion

I changed my handphone recently. I was actually quite happy with my old handphone, but the touch screen did not work well and it would have been expensive to replace. Since I was eligible for a new handset, I got a new handphone. But my biggest concern was that the messages in my old handphone could not be transferred into my new handphone.

Some messages are administrative run-of-the-mill communications – what time and where to meet, or students who may be late for class because of a traffic jam.

But I also have some deep conversations via messaging. With these friends, while we have face-to-face time, we also talk and share much via our phones. I wanted to keep these messages (and they can be long, involved conversations) to remind myself of what we have been talking about and so know how to pray with and guide these friends in the path of Christian maturity.

The fact that it is so difficult to keep messages on our phone is an indication of how much of our communications and conversations these days are really not worth keeping. We talk fast and perhaps frivolously and then delete those messages. And it's so easy to bring this attitude of cheap talk and meaningless words into our discipleship and community life.

But for Christians, the Word is central to our faith and belief, and as People of the Book, we spend time reading and studying the Bible. Furthermore, the Word became flesh in Jesus Christ, so He must always be our guide and standard. Even if the world around

us goes on a different path, we should follow these ancient paths, the good way and walk in it (Jer 16:6).

Therefore, as Christians, let us be more thoughtful in what we say, and make sure that our words are meaningful. Yes, there is a place for jokes and the cheerful comment. But let our conversation be always gracious and seasoned with salt (Col 4:6). This means that what we say should be flavourful and enriching, encouraging the ones to whom we speak.

This does not mean that we cannot be critical, because as Christians we have standards and ethics which are derived from the Word. I have friends I deeply appreciate for making the effort to "speak the truth in love" (Eph 4:15) to me. They may have spoken hard words, pointing me to do something which I did not want to do but was the "right" thing to do as a Christian.

Another lesson on easily-deleted messages is also the notion that what is said is not important. Hence the current trend to always look forward and not look back. But looking back at what we have said and done is an important part of our discipleship and growth. I practise spiritual journalling, where I handwrite my deepest thoughts and experiences, and try to make sense of them before the Lord. Keeping a record of the words we say means that we can revisit them, mull over them and learn and grow from our past.

In this New Year, let us decide to change the way we have been using words. Our church theme is Pray, Grow, Serve. As we seek to grow, let us focus on what we say verbally, in messages, and on social media. May we speak words which are worth keeping and remembering. And as we remember our own words, dwell on them and reflect deeply, we can grow more to be like our Lord, the Word made flesh.

ANSWERED PRAYERS

Be Thou My Vision



by Albert Yeo

I wake up every morning to look up at three lamp shades hanging over our bed.

Except that on 2 Apr 2013, there weren't three. I could see six! I had suddenly developed double vision.

After a church leaders' retreat in Batam, Indonesia, and a long business trip the following weekend, I had hoped to revert to my routine in Singapore. After two weekends without exercise, I was keen to return to my swims, bicycle rides and runs. I had been banking into my fitness account for a few years now and had hoped to cap it with the Ironman in Dec 2013. But God had other plans for me.

Upon my return to Singapore after the business trip, I had a successful tooth implant (my third). Two days later, I felt a little irritation in the throat, but not enough to dissuade me from cycling on the Saturday of that week. The next week, a bad cough disrupted my sleep for a few nights. A cough suppressant helped me get a few nights' sleep and I thought I had things under control. By Good Friday, I was feeling better.

I went to work on Tuesday as usual. I sent my daughter, Su-En to school and my wife, Ling to work. At my desk in the office, I didn't feel good. It wasn't anything specific. Just a nagging sensation. I thought having an early lunch would help. I had some noodles, went back to the office and after completing some work, decided to do get some shut-eye during lunchtime.

When I opened my eyes, I had a shock. Everything was now split. Everything I saw had two edges. It was like looking through one of those toy prisms. You can see the objects but you can't quite make out the edges. I thought it was a temporary thing and ignored it, putting it down to my tiredness. Evening came and the phenomenon still didn't go away. Su-En had taken a train to my office. But I could not drive to pick Ling up. Instead, she came over and drove us home. It seemed a long ride home as we tried to make sense of what it was I was experiencing, why and how to handle this. Later at home, we searched the internet for some answers. The most optimistic (self-)diagnosis based on our online search was that I was reacting to stress or depression. The most pessimistic was that I had a tumour or stroke. I went to bed early that night, restless and worried, and praying that when morning came, the double vision would go away.

It did not. It got worse. Everything was completely double. I saw two of the same faces, two television sets, etc. I started panicking. I contacted my friend, a brain doctor, certain that my double vision was probably a brain issue. I went for an MRI test immediately. I sought the Lord's peace desperately and it was with resignation that I steeled myself for the results. When the scans were completed, stroke and brain tumours were ruled out. But there was severe congestion in the sinus. I was referred to an ear, nose and throat (ENT) doctor who could not figure out the cause either. However, the preliminary diagnosis was for surgery to de-congest the sinus.

My doctor friend wasn't very sure that was necessary or helpful. He felt it was a case of post-viral inflammation causing sixth nerve palsy that would take between three to six months to recover. I was put on a course of antibiotics. Every day, I had to visit the ENT to check on whether the sinus was draining. I went for a further CT scan which was inconclusive. Ling and I prayed hard that the sinus would drain and that there was no growth in the sinus so that I need not go for surgery. The weekend came and went, and the sinus drained but the double vision remained.

Meanwhile, I also saw a neuro-eye doctor who concluded that I had myasthenia gravis, a chronic disease in which the body's immune system mistakenly interferes with the muscle receptors causing the affected muscles to tire easily. If this was the correct diagnosis, I would no longer be able to exercise at the intensity I was used to. I was given a tape-like patch to wear over my glasses. Would this be my permanent visage? This was sad news. I began to take the medicine for this condition. After two weeks, my vision still didn't improve. I was still wearing the eye patch. I was beginning to panic more. A sense of hopelessness began to descend upon me.

Many brothers and sisters came alongside me to pray with me. They prayed for me through Whatsapp and SMS. Some came to my house and prayed for me. Some forwarded me prayers for me to pray for myself. Ling and I even bought a book on praying for illnesses. While I was anxious, I also had a sense of peace. If God is for me, who can be against me? I began to ask God what He was trying to teach me.

One night, my daughter Su-Min came into my room. She felt that there could be a message for me - maybe God wanted me to give up something. I thanked her and said I would pray about it.

As the weeks dragged on, one day as I was working out on my stationary bike, I said to God, "Do you want me to give up cycling?" The thought that passed through my mind, as well as Ling's, was "what if this is permanent?" As I cycled, I prayed to God that if it was His will, I would give it up. From that moment on, I had a sense of peace. I had surrendered one of the biggest loves of my life.

Someone from my office spoke to me and asked me to try acupuncture. I had taken my stroke-ridden mother for treatment multiple times. It had never really helped her. So I was sceptical and adverse to it to say the least. A Christian brother talked to Ling after service one Sunday. He prayed for me and suggested acupuncture. I told Ling thanks but no thanks.

The next Sunday, I went to Queensway to re-string my other daughter Su-Wen's tennis racquet. Eric, the owner of the shop, asked me about my eyes. I told him about the double vision. He said he had a friend who had double vision and recovered after going for acupuncture. This was the third time someone had encouraged me to go for acupuncture. I was reminded of the story of the man stuck on the rooftop in a flood who died after God sent three lifeboats to rescue him but he refused to get into any of them and he perished. I wasn't going to be that man. I asked the owner for the contact details of the acupuncturist.

As it turned out, she lived nearby and operated out of her home. While it was convenient, I was even more sceptical when I visited her "home clinic". My scepticism did not go away after I talked to her. After two sessions, there was no major improvement. She knew we were uncertain, but she was always encouraging and reminded us to have more faith. She meant faith in her skills, but we prayed for more faith in our mighty and all-knowing God. Surprisingly, after the third and fourth treatments, my vision was restored but only for half a day each time. By afternoon, I was back to experiencing double vision.

During this time, while I felt peace with God, I was also quietly preparing myself mentally, physically and emotionally that I might just have this double vision condition for the rest of my life. However, with the restoration of my vision for even half a day, I felt a deep sense of gratitude and thankfulness to our Father. I began to truly experience hope in our Lord. After the fifth session, my sharp vision continued to last till late afternoon. At the sixth session, I had a new experience.

When I met her at 8pm, my vision continued to be split. After the session, my eyes could see sharply and perfectly. I was amazed! To me, God was my healer and He was there through the acupuncture journey when each needle was poked into me. My vision nevertheless split slightly from time to time.

Before this malady started, my family had signed up for the church camp. I had talked about the coastal route and all the great food along the way. No good deed goes unpunished and I was duly appointed the convoy leader for the cars. My double vision put this and the entire road trip into jeopardy. I continued to pray and still believed that not only would my family be able to go for the church camp, I could still be the convoy leader.

I was in Hong Kong for three days before the church camp with my vision still giving me trouble. It still wasn't sharp occasionally. I sent an SMS to Ling to ask her to arrange for a session with the acupuncturist at 8pm right after my scheduled arrival in Singapore at about 6pm. I wanted to be sure that I would be well for the drive up to Kuantan.

The most amazing miracle happened when I woke up on the day of my flight back to Singapore (it was also the day before the camp). I was overcome with a strong sense that I had fully recovered. As the day progressed, my conviction grew. Upon landing in Singapore, the first thing I did in the taxi was to send an SMS to the acupuncturist to say that I had recovered and would not require the session after all. Truly God had healed me and made me well right on the eve of the church camp! It took two months and ten days which was much quicker than what the doctors expected.

Praise the Lord! The next morning, I dumped the eye patch and drove the family along with a convoy of cars to Kuantan for the church camp.

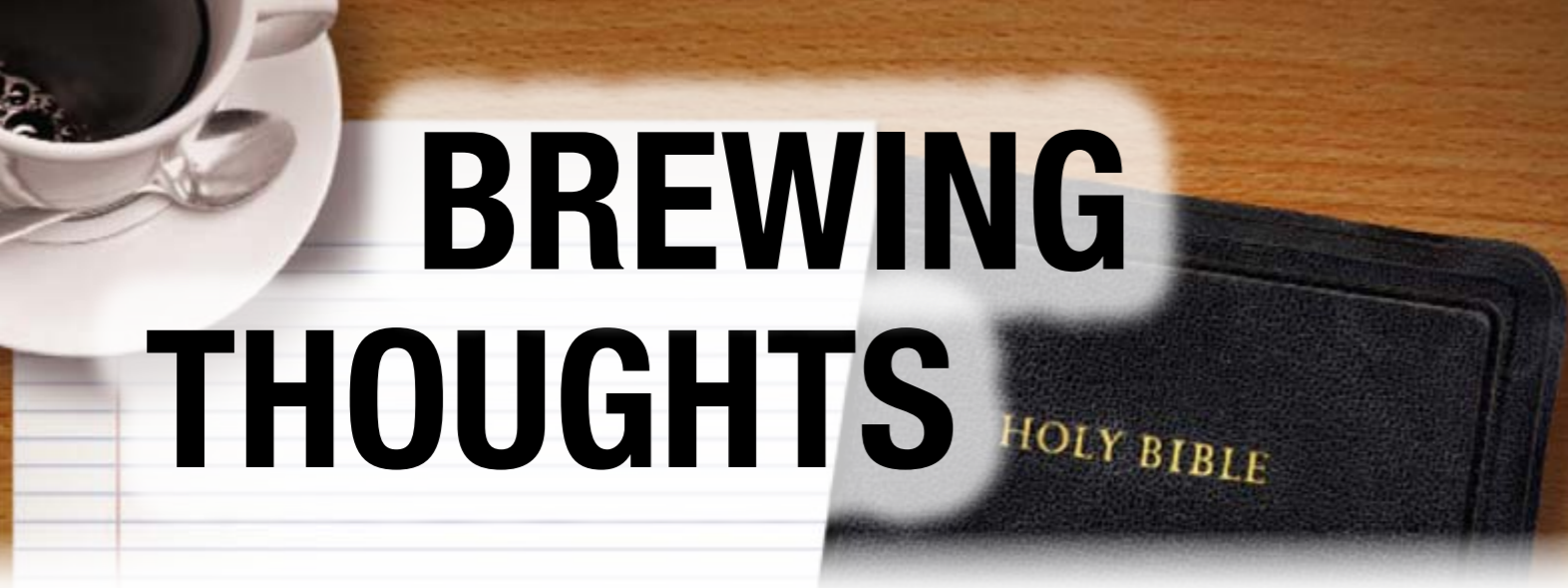
What did I learn from this episode?

Firstly, God is my refuge and strength. He brought me to the state where I was totally dependent on His grace and mercy. There was nothing I, my doctors or even the acupuncturist could do on their own. The night before I was healed, my human mind told me to seek out the acupuncturist so that I could go for the church camp the next day. But that night as I lay down to sleep in my hotel room in Hong Kong, God came to restore my vision and not for half or three-quarters of a day. He healed my sight completely and perfectly. I was humbled by His act. I am so thankful everyday as I put on my glasses that I do not need to stick on a patch. I am reminded of His mercy and grace!

Secondly, it is the power of prayer with a community of believers. My family prayed and pleaded with God every day. But alongside our immediate family was the family of God. Our friends' constant encouragement and prayers gave Ling and I a glimpse of heavenly love, a love that binds and unites and is in turn to be shared.

The Bible says:

"Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."
(Matthew 18:19-20)



BREWING THOUGHTS

Bible App – an in-depth Bible study series – has been going on for a few months now.

Read what some of the more than 50 attendees have to say about the current book study on Hebrews.

Good exposition with some depth but not too “academic”. – Syn Wun

I appreciate the amount of effort that the instructor makes in preparing for every session. He is able to intersperse the lectures with stories. It helps a lot to follow the lectures by reading the textbook which we bought at the beginning of the course. The instructor has a very approachable manner and shows tremendous energy and enthusiasm. – Alice

An in-depth look into specific topics, drawing from the whole of Scripture. – Colin

Lots of context and background. Broad coverage of entire Bible. – Shuwen

The cross-references to different verses in the Bible have made the most impact on me so far. – Sharon

What I most appreciate is the book that was recommended and which I bought as it helps me to follow the instructor’s teachings. – Anonymous 1

Very detailed study of every verse. – Anonymous 2

I acquired Bible knowledge on angels. Many would not even attempt to touch on this topic. – Anonymous 3



Bible App is an in-depth no-frills Bible teaching series. The first run of the teaching series, looking at the Book of Hebrews, is taught by Rev Peter Goh. The sessions are conducted in an expository style. This is for those looking for “meat” in their Bible study, and for leaders who want to be equipped to better lead their groups.

***Every 2nd and 4th Wed | 8.00pm-9.30pm
Classes are in recess until January 2014 when it starts with Hebrews 3.***

Join in by signing up at www.tmc.org.sg/de&n.html#bibleapp or contact Park Ming in the church office.

Services

Contact 123

at Blk 123 Serangoon North Ave 1

provides a safe environment for youths to meet and engage in wholesome, meaningful and fun activities. The centre is a place for fostering relationships with youths and their families. It also conducts tuition for children.

www.tmc.org.sg/osc.html#c123

www.facebook.com/Contact123

Contact 123 is now seeking volunteers to tutor children in 2014.

Day	Time	Subject	Level
Monday	3.00 to 4.00 PM	Science	P4
Monday	3.00 to 4.00 PM	Science	P5
Monday	4.00 to 5.00 PM	Chinese	P4
Monday	4.00 to 5.00 PM	Science	P6
Monday	5.00 to 6.00 PM	Science	P3
Tuesday	3.00 to 4.00 PM	Maths (NA / NE)	Sec 1
Tuesday	4.00 to 5.00 PM	Maths (NA / NE)	Sec 2
Tuesday	5.00 to 6.00 PM	English	P6
Tuesday	5.00 to 6.00 PM	Chinese	P3
Tuesday	5.00 to 6.00 PM	Maths	P4
Wednesday	3.00 to 4.00 PM	Chinese	P5

Volunteer with, and/or obtain more information from,
Cathrine at 6285 8450 (C123) / cathrine@tmc.org.sg

You can also volunteer at www.tmc.org.sg/servegod.html#c123

Volunteers required to do basic

SOUND-EDITTING

and uploading of files onto web portal.

This is a less-than-30-minute task
that can be done from home.

Contact Tricia / tmccomms@gmail.com

EVENTS

Tues, 7 Jan
8.00pm

First Local Conference 2013/14

Wed, 8 Jan, 5 Feb and every 1st
Wed of the month
10.00am – 12.00pm

Yum Cha@10 is an opportunity for people to come together for fellowship, and serves as a platform for TMC-ers 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

Sun, 12 Jan

Children's Ministry Orientation
www.tmc.org.sg/cm.html

Sun, 16 Feb and every 3rd Sunday
thereafter

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

Sun, 19 Jan

WSCS Sale of Lunar New Year Goodies

Sun, 26 Jan, 23 Feb and every last
Sunday 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

Thurs, 23 Jan, 27 Feb and every 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 in the church office / eddie@tmc.org.sg.
www.tmc.org.sg/osc.html#slec

Sun, 2 Feb

Children's Ministry "Hong Bao" Drive
www.tmc.org.sg/images/Downloads/Saltshaker/jan14.pdf

Sun, 9, 16, 23 Feb, 2 Mar
2.00pm

Baptism Class
www.tmc.org.sg/baptism.html

Sat, 8 Feb
10.00am

Small Group Leaders' Gathering
www.tmc.org.sg/sglmeeting.html

Sun, 16 Feb

Children's Ministry Creative Prayer P1-6
www.tmc.org.sg/images/Downloads/Saltshaker/jan14.pdf

Every 2nd and 4th Sun
7.30 – 8.30am

Church Prayer Meeting in Sanctuary
www.tmc.org.sg/prayer.html

Every 2nd and 4th Wed
8.00 – 9.30pm

Bible App – Book of Hebrews
www.tmc.org.sg/d&n.html#bibleapp

Every 3rd Wed
10.00am – 12.00pm

God's Masterworks: A Concerto in 39 Movements
www.tmc.org.sg/regular.html#masterworks

Every Fri
8.00 – 10.00pm

Healing Ministry in the Prayer Chapel

Every 1st and 3rd Fri
9.15 – 11.15am

Bible Study on Genesis
www.tmc.org.sg/regular.html#genesis

Every Sat (not 25 Jan and 1 Feb)
9.00 – 11.00am

Fellowship of Ukulelians meet to worship, fellowship, receive coaching and of course play a wide repertoire of Christian hymns and contemporary worship songs with the ukulele.
www.tmc.org.sg/regular.html#ukulele

2.00 – 4.00pm (not 1 Feb)

Contact 123 - Soccer Training at Blk 143 Serangoon North Avenue 1.
www.tmc.org.sg/osc.html#c123

Further details on TMC's events can be found at www.tmc.org.sg

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