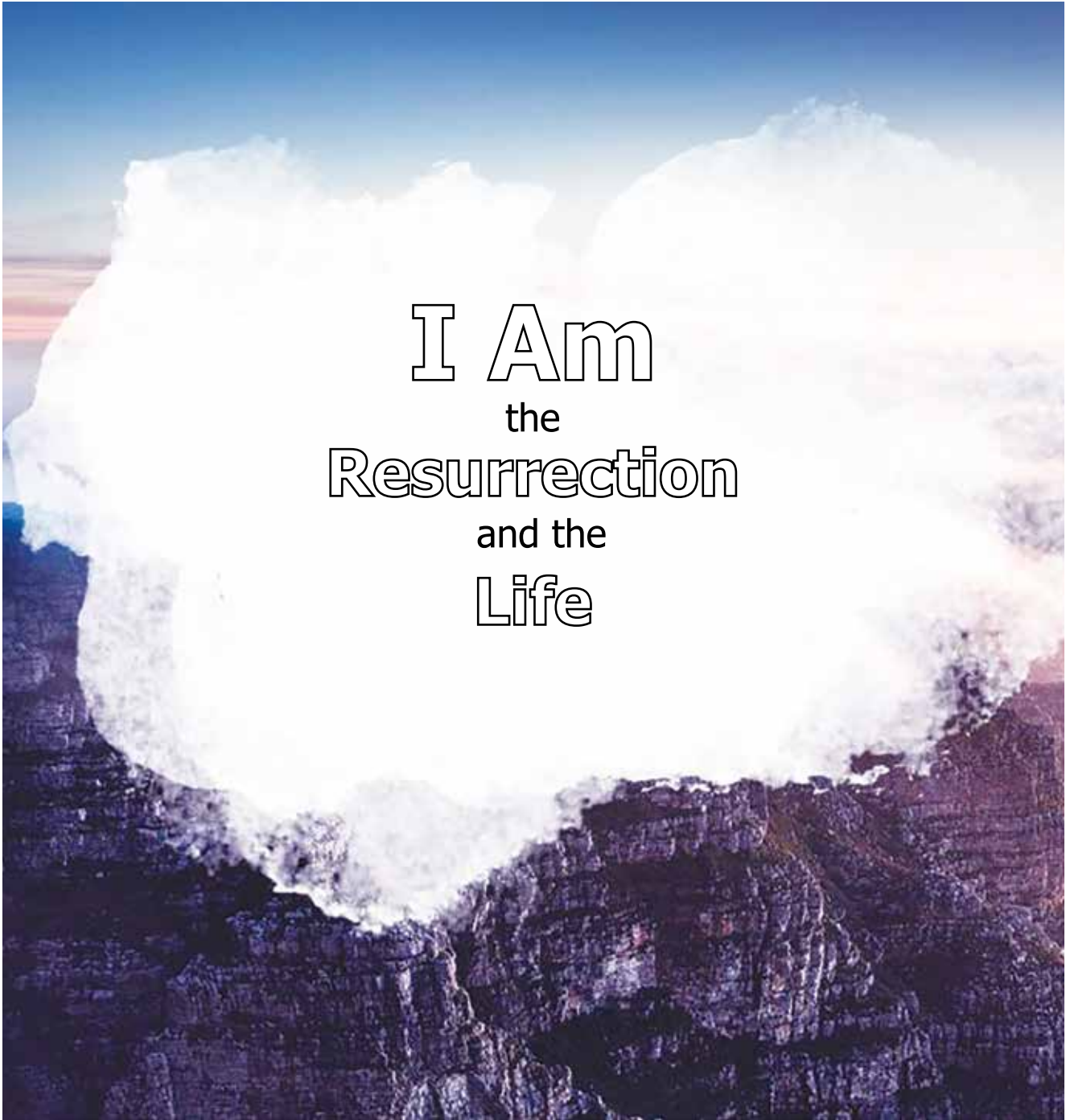


# PELITA METHODIST

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## I Am the Resurrection and the Life



## **A CALL TO THE METHODIST CHURCH TO THANKSGIVING AND PERSEVERE IN PRAYER (26/7/20)**

There is a litany of troubling news. Rising Covid-19 clusters and active cases. Distress at job hunting in a weakening economy. Fear of being evicted and made homeless among undocumented migrants. Let the Church arise. Business with Church building reopening mustn't compromise on comforting those afflicted. We must be the balm for their pain, lights shining in the darkest places, and tents of witness inviting them to come to Christ. Pray that our Father of all mercies and God of all comfort, who has comforted us throughout the pandemic, will strengthen us to bring comfort to others, who so badly need it right now. (Bishop Ong Hwai Teik)

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Modern Missionary Journey



## Psalm 147 (NIV)

- 1 Praise the Lord.  
How good it is to sing praises to our God,  
how pleasant and fitting to praise him!
- 2 The Lord builds up Jerusalem;  
he gathers the exiles of Israel.
- 3 He heals the brokenhearted  
and binds up their wounds.
- 4 He determines the number of the stars  
and calls them each by name.
- 5 Great is our Lord and mighty in power;  
his understanding has no limit.
- 6 The Lord sustains the humble  
but casts the wicked to the ground.
- 7 Sing to the Lord with grateful praise;  
make music to our God on the harp.
- 8 He covers the sky with clouds;  
he supplies the earth with rain  
and makes grass grow on the hills.
- 9 He provides food for the cattle  
and for the young ravens when they call.
- 10 His pleasure is not in the strength of the horse,  
nor his delight in the legs of the warrior;
- 11 the Lord delights in those who fear him,  
who put their hope in his unfailing love.
- 12 Extol the Lord, Jerusalem;  
praise your God, Zion.
- 13 He strengthens the bars of your gates  
and blesses your people within you.
- 14 He grants peace to your borders  
and satisfies you with the finest of wheat.
- 15 He sends his command to the earth;  
his word runs swiftly.
- 16 He spreads the snow like wool  
and scatters the frost like ashes.
- 17 He hurls down his hail like pebbles.  
Who can withstand his icy blast?
- 18 He sends his word and melts them;  
he stirs up his breezes, and the waters flow.
- 19 He has revealed his word to Jacob,  
his laws and decrees to Israel.
- 20 He has done this for no other nation;  
they do not know his laws.[b]  
Praise the Lord.

# I Am the Resurrection and the Life

## a Reflection on John 11

Most Christians would know John 3:16. It reads *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”* (NIV). Yet many struggle with what ‘eternal life’ means. Jesus helps us by defining ‘eternal life’ in His prayer to His Father – *“Now this is eternal life: that they may know you (the Father), the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent”* (John 17:3 NIV). Living eternally in the Christian context would be living in the knowledge and in relationship with the Father and the Son. *“If God is for us, who can stand against us?”* (Romans 8:31b NIV). Therefore in Christ, having a relationship with the Father, we can live as how God meant us to live. Though life may present its challenges and struggles, we know that *“I can do anything in Christ who strengthens me.”* (Phil. 4:13 NIV).

Truly indeed the greatest gift given to mankind is the gift of eternal life, if we believe in the giver of life himself, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. In Him we have life eternal.

On the other hand, with the same reasoning in John 3:16, a person who does not believe in Jesus Christ shall perish. This would be the greatest tragedy as he or she would not be able to know God the only true God and Jesus Christ. How difficult it would be for one who does not have the assurance or love, care and protection from God his Maker. We would be so unsure, insecure and worried, causing us to sometimes be paralyzed in living fully. This person would always need to be assured that everything is okay. Due to the constant challenges the world gives everyone, he or she could possibly live in fear.

Though we live, we would also not be able to live freely. Sometimes we would not be able to live at all. Thus it feels like death.

### Shattered Lives

The two sisters, Mary and Martha had their lives shattered with the death of their brother. Death brings the ultimate human separation. There is no going back, nothing will be the same again. I lost my sister a few years ago. One day she was with us, the next day she breathed her last breath. It was really devastating to my whole family, especially my parents. We always say that time would heal the brokenness but actually it rarely does. Sometimes we just have to cope with the loss.

Mary and Martha lost their beloved brother. He was their life. Living in Palestine 2000 years ago, women depended on their spouse, parents or even their brothers for their live-

lihood. And therefore apart from losing their brother, life would have also been very difficult for them.

Both sisters in separate encounters with Jesus made the same remark – *“Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died”* (John 11:21, 32b). Both of them believed that Jesus could have healed their brother if only he was there with them in the time of their brother’s illness. They wanted their brother back, alive. They wanted to live as they did before he died. Everything had changed with the passing of their brother, we can feel their hope ebbing away.

I felt the same way when Adelene passed away. I knew my Lord could heal but in His wisdom he didn’t. Life has never been the same again for me. During those early days after the passing of my sister, I also asked the question – “how do I go on living?” “How do I come out of my shattered life?” “If only Jesus was here with us, my sister would not have died!”

### Jesus Answered

The way Jesus responded to the sisters was very different. With Martha, Jesus exclaimed, *“I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe me?”* (John 11:25 NIV). From a previous encounter with Jesus, Martha was seen as the sister who took charge of things. When Jesus visited the family, instead of just sitting by the feet of Jesus, Martha did the house chores, made everyone comfortable like a good hospitable host. Yet in this encounter with Jesus, realising the finality of death, we could feel her resignation to life, the hopelessness of the situation and sense of lost-ness for the future.

Many of us would have heard this exclamation of Jesus at funeral services. The assurance of Jesus resurrecting the dead gives comfort and hope for all of us. Yet in this story, Jesus goes further in assuring Martha of his power in the resurrection. He also tells Martha that he is life itself! Martha, who just had her life shattered by the death of her brother, is assured that Jesus is the life she thought she had lost. In fact, Jesus is all of life that she needed. To prove this statement to be true, we then see the amazing miracle of the resurrection of Lazarus. If Jesus is indeed the resurrection, he is surely the life as well.

To Mary, Jesus didn’t say anything. Yet he did something as great as how he responded to Martha. “Jesus wept”. Jesus reflected in his own soul his deep sorrow of the consequence of death – the separation of loved ones. He also felt the pain



of sin – the reason for death and I could imagine he also felt himself bearing all the sin of the whole world on the cross resulting in His own death.

In His strength he showed Martha he is life. In his love he expressed his brokenness because of death.

This passage really has helped me in my own journey in life. When I think I am unable to live due to death, I cling on to Jesus who is my life. When I feel the lonely, difficult and painful periods of my life, I know that Jesus understands me and he is there with me.

Knowing Jesus in the difficult times of my life is the surest way of knowing he has given me eternal life.

### **Living eternally today**

These words – “I am the resurrection and the life” rings so strongly for us today. Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, many lives have been shattered or are in difficult places. Many do not even know or realize what the ‘new norm’ will be. And that can be stressful. Though these issues may not be life threatening or devastating, it can affect how people live. What is most disconcerting is its impact on the poor, the marginalized, the migrant workers, and many other people groups. How do they live? How do we help them? What would be good news to everyone affected?

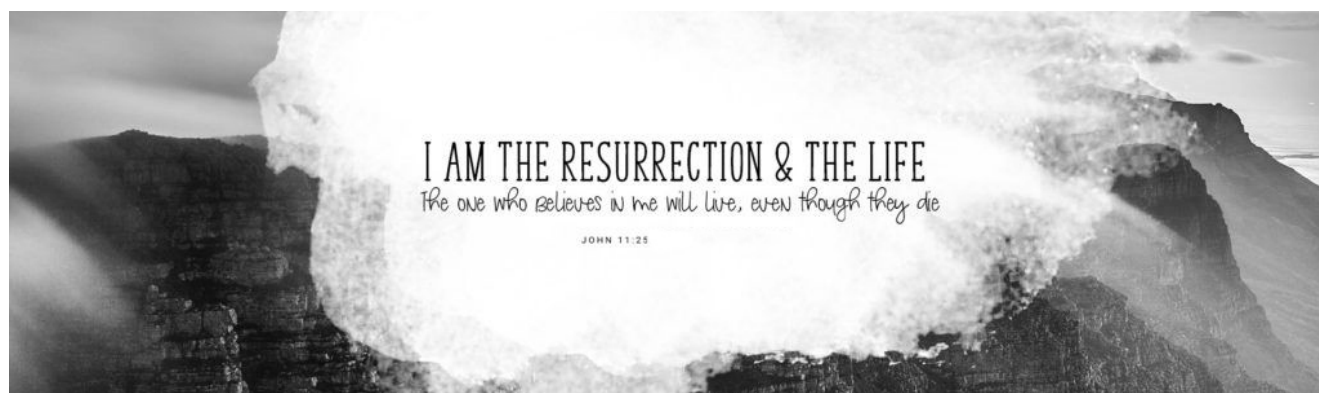
Firstly, Jesus is the giver of life. We must never forget that. One thing the COVID Pandemic and hence the Movement Control Order (MCO) has shown many our dependence on so many things. However, Jesus has to be the only person we depend on in life. One might then ask how this works out in daily living. Well it centres on basic Christian principles of seeking the Lord through our quiet time, reading and reflecting on scripture and in prayer and worship. I confess, sometimes I lack the dependence on the Lord when crisis happens. I begin to worry, think about consequences and sometimes become so stressed to the point of not being able to move forward. Yet our Lord Jesus is constantly with us. Only in a daily life building relationship would I have the confidence to trust Him in all things. Do we trust that in Jesus we have life? Once we begin to trust Him, we are open to life that we can never even imagine. As a

personal testimony, I have a degree in Chemical engineering from the University of Malaya. Yet my heart was always drawn to serving the Lord fulltime in whatever capacity. So trusting Him, I left my engineering job and moved to a Christian vocation. There has been many ups and downs but I can testify that He has carried me through all the way. It has been 22 years now and truly my life has never been the same.

Secondly, Jesus not only can empathize with everyone, he has paid the ultimate price for the effect of sin – the separation of mankind with God. And that cost him his life. Being unsure of the future can inhibit a person. Partly there seems to be a hidden sense of unworthiness in many people due to weaknesses and sometimes guilt and shame. This causes many to feel unworthy. Jesus wept when Mary showed him his brother’s tomb. Jesus feels our separation from God and he feels for us. As the bible shows us, Jesus is always able, being our High Priest as *‘he intercedes for us’* (Heb. 7:25). Paul states that *‘I resolved to know nothing while I was with you (the Corinthian Christians) except Jesus Christ and him crucified’* (1 Cor. 2:2). How marvellous and glorious is our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. It is through His death, Christ justifies our life before the Father. This is a such an assurance that even Paul resolves that nothing else is more important than the love of Christ as expressed on the cross.

And finally, we need to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to our friends, neighbours and those we are in contact with because Jesus is their only hope for life, even life today. I was once asked desperately by one young person to help witness to a relative who simply refused to believe. My answer to him was to never give up because Jesus is the Resurrection. Our Lord gives life freely to everyone and he does this through the prompting of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we always have hope in Him. Do not keep this great gift of eternal life to ourselves. It is meant for everyone. It is especially meant for our world today as we begin our lives anew from the pandemic. May God give us this ever present vision of Jesus as our Resurrection and Life!

By Mr Michael William



# 年会卫理幼教支援与咨询团队交流会

报道：张许志枫（师母）



出席交流会的全体嘉宾、园长、执事、团队及年会教育部部员：

前左起为年会教育部助理干事—巫月屏姐妹、年会教育部干事—杜奇贤牧师、曼绒区教区长—雷德瑞牧师、年会教育部主席—郭会长伉俪、卜院长与其团队队员（右三至四）、年会幼教事工咨询团队队员—黄文婉导师、年会教育部部员及年会幼教事工咨询团队队员—张儒新牧师伉俪。

2月22日（六），年会卫理幼教事工“2020支援与咨询团队、后备团队交流会”顺利在吉隆坡宜必思酒店进行，共有五十人出席，包括年会会长—郭汉成牧师（博士）、曼绒教区长—雷德瑞牧师、教育部部员—张儒新牧师和刘黄声志（师母）、吉隆坡卫理学院（MCKL）院长—卜慧芬、卫理幼儿园幼教事工委主席和园长等等。交流会由年会基督教教育干事—杜奇贤牧师主持，郭会长勉励。

郭会长指出，幼儿阶段是关键期，家长可在此时助孩子有效培养出个人习惯。卫理幼儿园的发展过程颇具挑战；幼儿园不是赚钱的地方，应扮演对社会发光的角色。会长鼓励出席者提出所属幼儿园面对的挑战和需要年会协助的事项。会上提出的难题，包括园长缺乏接班人、教师不愿提升专业资历、缺乏行政员、课室不足（学生激增）、缺乏师资和资金（因校园迁移）、面临注册安亲班（TASKA）的挑战……

基于现实所迫，郭会长鼓励师资充足的幼儿园短期借出资深，或过剩的教师协助其他有需要的幼儿园（以宣教事工视野进行资源交流）。其他团员的建议有五项：一、建议吉隆坡卫理学院的幼教课程设立新的学科，附加辅导知识，装备园长应对职场的挑战；二、建议年会主办园长培训营，让园长了解自身职责；三、鼓励幼儿园和学院连接，开放幼儿园，接纳实习生到幼儿园实习，从中物色优质教师；四、实践统一的卫理学前教育课程（A unified Curriculum）；五、鼓励教会实践“幼儿园主日”，让执事和会友们重视幼教事工。

在回应年会教育部将向“伙伴教会”要求奉献资金，以协助经济困难的幼儿园时，会长鼓励大家积极参与卫理学院所办的幼教专业文凭课程（其课程素质卓越），年会将协助幼儿园负担教师部分培训课程的学费。至于主办园长培训营和实践统一学前教育课程的提议，年会卫理幼教团队会进一步探讨。

吉隆坡卫理学院院长—卜慧芬，鼓励大家实践温馨感（home feeling）、重视品格教育（Character value）、创造影响力（create impact）的形式，来经营卫理幼儿园。蔡明惠博士（幼教培训主任）宣布，卫理学院将从4月起，为学生提供混合教学方式（Blended learning Mode）：学员只须在星期六到

学院上课，课余时间则上网自学（以手机浏览学院提供的网络教学视频、网上研讨和小测验等），修满幼教专业文凭学分，成为符合学历的幼教教师。卜院长鼓励卫理幼师尝试此模式，且可试读，来适应这种新颖的上课方式。

当天也进行简单的委任仪式，由会长委任2020卫理幼教事工支援团队（十二人）、2020卫理幼教事工咨询团队（四人）和2020卫理幼教事工后备团队。最后，交流会在会长的祝福祷告后，顺利结束。



2020卫理幼教事工支援团队队员



2020卫理幼教事工咨询团队队员

# Methodist Pilley Institute to conduct Online Lessons until August 2020



Mr Hii King Kai, Principal of Methodist Pilley Institute pointed out that there are still uncertainties on further developments of the pandemic. To ensure health and safety of lecturers, students and staff, the institute's online lessons will carry on until August. He said that before the vaccine is developed, the risks are still there, that is why it is not safe to return to the classroom for face-to-face learning even after the MCO is lifted. The institute will continue with online teaching to minimize physical mobility of the students and face-to-face contact. "Now there are a lot of asymptomatic cases. In case the students unfortunately take the virus home, family members, especially the elderly and children will be infected, so we must take precautions and be cautious."

## **The campus is not open to the public during MCO and CMCO**

Mr Hii said that during MCO, the basic office and administrative work of the institute are carried out as usual, especially for the implementation of e-learning and online teaching, which requires the support and supervision of personnel from relevant departments. In addition, basic administrative and document work are also handled by 3 to 5 people assigned to man the office. At present, the institute is still waiting for directives from the Ministry of Higher Education and the government. At this stage, students will continue with their lessons at home through the online learning platform, as the teaching of various courses is not affected. "It is an exam period from mid-April to May 6 and the exams are conducted in the online exam mode. In the past, lecturers in the Department of Computer Science were using online teaching and test mode, but this is the first time we are using the online mode for the final exam."

## **Students actively engaged in online learning**

Mr Hii King Kai said that the Department of early childhood education has started to use a hybrid method – online and face-to-face teaching method last year. Therefore, some students have mastered online lessons, but for most students, this is a new challenge. Since the government announced the implementation of the MCO starting on March 18th, students who are not familiar with online learning had one month to prepare for their online exams. From his observation, nowadays young people adapt to online learning fast. It is also found that compared with the learning in the classroom, the students joining online lessons are very active in asking questions and willing to share. "After implementing online teaching, the workload of lecturers has increased. Because some students do not understand how the online platforms work, lecturers must be patient to teach them in detail how to upload their reports and articles. They must also be creative in conducting the lessons, thus more time is spent on lesson preparations." He said that in the classroom, lecturers and students can communicate directly by hearing their voices and seeing their expressions. However, to make online teaching and learning smoother, sometimes they will be asked to turn off the video function, thus they cannot see the expressions but only hear their voices.

## **The next intake of Diploma and professional programmes on 9 June**

Mr Hii King Kai revealed that the diploma programmes and professional courses offered by the institute will commence on June 9<sup>th</sup>. Students in the new semester will join online lessons without knowing each other or be familiar with each other. He pointed out that the Institute's bachelor's degree



program in cooperation with other university partners started on May 5th, and May is the semester with the bigger number of new students. They do not have online learning experience at all. On the contrary, current students have online learning experience acquired during MCO. Methodist Pilley Institute has also organized the course "Mastering the Basics of Online Learning" "to allow college lecturers to share with the secondary-school leavers on how to use the Moodle, Google Classroom, ZOOM online learning platform. At present, many secondary school graduates are unfamiliar with the application of various online learning platforms, and they are troubled by online learning and have anxiety of pursuing tertiary education. Through this event, Methodist Pilley Institute has prepared them for learning online."

### **To ease the financial burden of parents and allow tuition fees to be paid by deferment.**

Mr Hii King Kai said that the impact of corona virus in 2019 is far beyond our expectations, and even brings a profound chain reactions. Take the tertiary education as an example. When parents' incomes are affected, their children's education plans are also affected. "The new semester is about to begin, but when the family incomes are unstable, they would think twice before deciding for their children's further studies. This also affects the student recruitment of most colleges and universities."

### **Education at your hometown**

Mr Hii King Kai pointed out that in the past, under the dream of "moving abroad", the slogan "Located in Sibu" by the Methodist Pilley Institute gave a disadvantage to the institute. With the impact of the pandemic, studying close to home now has become an advantage for Methodist Pilley Institute. The critical factor is that the tuition fees are affordable and other expenses are low, thus parents do not need to worry about their children's tuition fees and living expenses. "In order to help younger people realize the dreams of pursuing tertiary education, the board of management of Methodist Pilley Institute provides the service of paying tuition fees by various deferment. The institute will help ease the financial burden of parents and students, through study aids. "He said that in addition to applying for PTPTN loan, students can also apply for study loan from the Chinese Council of the Sarawak Chinese Year. Moreover, high achievers with excellent grades can also enjoy special discounts from scholastic awards and scholarship.

### **The construction and completion of new learning building delayed**

Mr Hii King Kai revealed that the new building of the institute which was originally scheduled to be ready for use in mid-May, has been delayed due to the pandemic. The progress of the project was affected and delayed for a month and a half. "We have already ordered the furniture for the new learning building, but it is delayed due to MCO. At this moment, the new learning building is expected to be ready for use in July.

For secondary school graduates and parents who would like to enquire about the courses offered by Methodist Pilley Institute, please visit the official website [www.pilley.edu.my](http://www.pilley.edu.my) for more information. For more information, please contact Mr. Bobo Wong (0138110323) for course counselling.

## **毕理线上教学至8月**

毕理学院院长许钧凯指出，2019年冠状病毒仍有多不确定因素，为了保障讲师、学生和教职员的健康与安全，该学院的线上教学将实施至8月。他称，在冠病疫苗未面世前，风险依然存在，因为认为解禁后仍赞时不适合回到课堂进行面对面的教学。该学院将持续线上教学，尽量减少学生的流动和面对面的接触。“现在出现很多无症状的病例，万一学生们不幸把病毒带回家，家人特别是长者和孩童就会被传染，所以我们必许多加防范，小心谨慎。”

### **行管期不对外开放**

许钧凯说，行动管制令期间，毕理学院的办公室部分工作仍须照常进行，尤其施行网络学习和线上教学，极需相关部门人员的支援和监督。此外，基本的行政和文件工作也必须处理，但每天只安排3至5人负责这些工作，且不对外开放。目前，该学院还在等待高等教部和政府的指示，学生们现阶段仍继续透过线上教学的平台在家上课，各项课程的教学也不受影响。“行管期间逢学期教学的结束，4月中旬开始至5月6日是考试，且以线上考试的模式来进行。过去，电脑科学系讲师都使用线上教学和考试的模式，但这次是首次用线上模式来进行期末考。”

### **学生踊跃发问分享**

许钧凯称，该学院幼教系于去年抄开始混合式，即线上和面对面的教学法。因此，部分学生也已掌握和熟悉线上教学，但对大部分学生而言，这是一项新尝试。政府宣布在3月18日落实行管令，对线上教学较为不熟悉的学生，仍有一个月的时间准备他们的线上考试。他说，就观察，时下的年轻人习惯线上学习的学习模式。从中也发现，与课堂上的教学相较，躲荧幕后的学生提问和发问都非常踊跃，亦比较乐于分享，在触及自我反省的内容时，也会敞开心扉。“实行线上教学后，讲师们的工作量增加，由于一些学生对电脑的操作一知半解，讲师必须依照步骤教他们如何上载完成的报告和文章，必须用创意的教学法来授课，所以讲师们要花更多的时间备课。”他称，在课堂上教学，讲师和学生能进行交流与互动，听得见他们的声音和表情。然而为了让线上教学更流畅，有时候会有要求他们关闭视频功能，就无法看到他们的表情，只听到他们的声音。小班制就不会有上述的问题，讲师和学生已有两三个月的时间磨合。

### **文凭专业课程6月开课**

许钧凯透露，该学院所提供的文凭及专业课程将在6月9日开课，新学期的学生在彼此不认识、不熟悉的情况下



参与线上教学，或将出现和面对不同的问题。他指出，该学院与其他大学夥伴合作的学士学位课程以在5月5日开课，而5月是新生人数最多最多的学期。这一批新生完全没有线上学习的经验，反而在籍学生，在行管期间或多或少都有线上学习的经验。”“毕理学院也有通过举办《掌握线上学习的基础》课程，让学院讲师们向中学毕业生分享如何应用Moodle, Google Classroom, ZOOM线上学习平台。目前许多中学毕业生因不熟悉各种线上学习的平台的应用，而产生对线上学习的困扰和进修大专课程的焦虑。卫理毕理学院通过这项活动让他们做好升学的心理准备。”

### 体谅家长经济压力，提供分期缴学费

许钧凯称，2019冠状病毒的影响远远超乎预算，甚至带来深远的连锁效应。以教育领域为例，家长们在收入受波及的情况下，孩子的升学计划也受到影响。“新学期即将开始，但在家庭收入不稳定之时，他们对孩子的升学多番三思。这也对大部分学院和大学的招生造成影响。”

### 靠近家成优势

许钧凯受询时指出，过去，在大多数人抱着“往外发展”的想法下，“处在诗巫”是毕理学院的劣势。在疫情的

冲击下，如今矗立诗巫、靠近家，反而成了毕理学院的优势。最重要的是学费不昂贵，家长亦不需要担心孩子在外的生活费。“为了让更多孩子完成大学梦，毕理学院的董事部提供分期缴付学费的福利。在抗疫之时，体谅家长和经济压力，学院也将依据每个学生的经济能力增加分期付款的次数，希望能帮助减轻家庭的负担。”他说，除了申请政府的贷学金，也可申请砂拉越华人年议会的教育贷学金，成绩优秀的学生还能享有特别优惠。

### 新校舍工程延缓

另一方面，许钧凯透露，该学院的新校舍原本预计在5月中旬启用，但因冠病疫情，建设工程的进度受到影响，工程延缓一个月半。“我们也已经订购新校舍的家具，惟遇上行动管制令，这期间无法运抵。目前，我们估计新校舍有望在7月份正式启用。”

为了给中学毕业生及家长提供升学咨询和辅导，卫理毕理学院在官网<https://www.pilley.edu.my>发布各项关系学院的资讯。打算报读毕理学院的学生受促浏览以上官网以进行报名程序，或请直接联络课程辅导黄中吉先生(0138110323)。

## Devotion

One Year at the Cross Devotional by Chris Tiegreen

## A Sure Thing

God is the God of promise. He keeps His Word, even when that seems impossible; even when the circumstances seem to point to the opposite.

(Colin Urquhart)

**IN WORD:** God has given us a multitude of promises in His Word. Some of them are for the biggest issues of all—eternal life and a relationship with Him. Others are for the prayers we pray or the blessings we seek. But regardless of the scope, the truth is unwavering. Whether we're talking about a big-ticket promise like eternal life or a smaller promise during this age, the principle is the same. God can't lie.

Those who have clung to a promise of God know where our minds take us at this point. Sure, God can't lie, but we can misunderstand Him. We can hear a promise that isn't there. We can misinterpret what He has said. We can make assumptions about what His will is. We know *He* is infallible, but we certainly aren't. So underneath all His promises in Scripture, we mentally fill in the blanks with fine print and legal caveats just so we'll have a good theological explanation in case

we get let down. The result is a God who cannot lie trying to communicate with people who won't let themselves accept His truth.

It's true that we can misunderstand God, but the theological gymnastics we go through to explain why His promises mean something other than what He said are completely unnecessary. What He said is true. The promises He has given us for eternal life are inviolable. The assurances that He will answer our prayers of faith are rock solid. The God who expects us to have unwavering faith would not give us wavering covenants. When He has spoken, we can trust that we have heard and that He will do what He said.

**IN DEED:** God isn't like us. He doesn't say one thing and mean another. He doesn't waffle on His plans. He doesn't change His mind with every shifting circumstance. He speaks and then waits for those with real faith to step into the truth He has spoken. The question is whether we will take His words as the reality they are.

*It is impossible for God to lie.*

Hebrews 6:18

# Sadhu Sunder Singh in Malaysia

## the early Missionary work

The itinerant Sikh evangelist, Sunder Singh, awakened an interest on his former tour through the Malay Peninsular that was commented upon in the reports of every part of our work at Annual Conference. From here he went to China and Japan, returning to Singapore, April 24th for five days only on his way back to India. His fame rests not on any remarkable tactics that he adopts, but on his simple yet forceful presentation of the gospel message, backed up by illustrations that appeal to his auditors. The fact that he is himself an Asiatic summoning his fellow-continentals to faith in Jesus Christ, carries its own weight. His work has attracted interest even in America as will be seen from the following excerpt from the "Record of Christian Work".

"There is a new personality who is awakening wide interest in India, a Sadhu, or wandering Sikh preacher named Sunder Singh. He is of wealthy and high caste antecedents, and was educated in an American Presbyterian Mission School. Cast off by family and friends at conversion, he took up the career of wandering evangelist, moving, winter and summer, across India from Kashmir to Madras, from Bengal to Gujrat and even into Thibet. He wears a saffron robe, goes barefoot and carries a New Testament. Remarkable stories of widespread movements toward Christ, which are gathering momentum

in the recesses of Hindu society, are related by him. "The day is soon to come and is almost at the door, when every tree and every twig will shout praises to the Lord Jesus, and there will be one flock and one shepherd." Sunder Singh believes that this imminent turning to the Lord is a sign of the Second Coming of Christ. The movement seems to have connection with early Christian movements, and is described as the secret Christian Sanyasi Mission. The converts, scattered all over India, are working quietly until the time shall come to announce themselves. Sunder Singh tells of falling into the hands of a mob in Thibet, who brought him for execution to a local official. This man, after listening intently to Sunder, told him that he too was a follower of Christ, – at one time student in Calcutta University, and had received the baptism of the Spirit. He took Sunder to a place of worship, where 250 people met weekly. Mr Saunders of the Madura Mission writes that Sunder preached in the Victoria Edward Hall in Madura, to an audience which packed the building to the doors, telling in simple and earnest way what Christ had done for him personally."

*The Malaysia Message*

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*May 1919*



*Every good and perfect  
gift is from above*  
*James 1:17*

# Essay

## Hari Ini Dalam Sejarah Methodist

*Pelita* is beginning a new series of rediscovering some of our Methodist roots and history.

# Modern Missionary Journey

H.B. Amstutz

*A first hand view of the hardships and dangers of mission work among the Ibans*



An evening service held in Sibat's longhouse on Sunday, August 20th. In front of the cross are baskets containing samples of earth and padi seed, as well as a pig and a rooster

After our week in Kapit with the Chinese Pastor's School, we started out on the morning of August 18 for Nanga Mujong, our newest school site, where the Rev. and Mrs. Lucius Mamoera are already settled in their comfortable little residence. There were eight missionaries in our party, a number of the Methodist Iban School children on their way home, our luggage (we white people always seem to have a tremendous amount compared to that of our primitive Iban friends), and the necessary boatmen, at least two to a boat. Thus we had to take the large mission longboat plus two other small ones, all propelled by outboard motors.

We had our lunch of rice and curry on a huge rock and sand bar at a bend of the Baleh River, some hour after leaving the Rejang River. At the Mission station called Nanga Mujong, the juncture of the Mujong and the Baleh Rivers, we ate some delicious durian fruit.

That night some of us stayed with the Mamoeras and the rest of the party were the guests of Penghulu Jinggot in his longhouse a mile down the river above the swift-flowing Baleh River. After dusk our Iban missionaries, Burr Baughman, Lucius Mamoera and Djaleb Manoeroeng, conducted a Service of Worship in the Iban language, which was followed by an hour's slide and filmstrip lecture. All around us sat the Iban people listening.

At five the next morning we got our belongings together, ate porridge and drank coffee before we were off for the major part of our long journey. Soon the rapids began to give trouble, for the river had fallen during the night and there was no longer sufficient depth at most of the rapids to allow us to use

the motors to take our heavy laden longboats over them. This meant all men overboard, jumping into the very swift water, trying to walk on the rolling stones that seem to cover the river bed at the rapids, and at the same time pull our longboats through to the deep, quieter water beyond. After you have done this, say five times, in an hour, the unaccustomed hard work begins to tell on you, and you fearfully ask how many more rapids lie ahead before you are home.

By mid-afternoon we had left our third river, the Mujong, and had entered the Melinau. As we progressed we found the going much worse, so that we often had to take a long chain and rope of rotan to help pull the longboats through the rapids. Even the school girls (two of the chief's daughters, aged 11 and 13, were with us) got out at the worst places and helped pull the boats. The sky had darkened and soon a heavy rain added to our troubles, drenching those of us who were sitting outside the little attap-roof shelters. The girls tried to comfort me by saying we had only two more rapids to cross and then we would be at their home—but as the two stretched into more than that number I said they obviously did not know where their home was, but they smiled and said, woman-like, "Oh, we meant two more bad rapids." And, sure enough, soon we crossed the last one and there around the bend stood the longhouse of Penghulu Sibat on the bank high above the river.

### Iban Hospitality

Penghulu Sibat and his wife Dayang (a Malay word meaning "Princess") had removed their bed mats from their large room and had it all ready for their guests. How wonderful it was finally to be out of the longboat and under shelter and in a warm room again! For it was really cold sitting in the rain in wet clothes. This large room was filled with at least



A longboat negotiating dangerous rapids on a river in Sarawak



fifty women, girls, and little children, girls, and little children, who had come in to see us and to welcome us. Soon the rest of our party arrived; the large Mission longboat was longer and heavier and therefore took longer to get through the rapids and the men in it were nearly exhausted from the hard work. After a little polite visiting we set about to arrange things for the night, all of us missionaries, men and women, fixing up our mats in one end of the room, hanging our bed-nets and getting out fresh clothing to wear after we had had a quick bath in the cold river far down below. Dressing was a bit of a problem with no privacy, but one soon learned how to manage. In a surprisingly short time, Mrs. Baughman and one of the boatmen had steaming rice and other items of food ready, plus delicious coffee, and how good it all tasted!

Mrs. Henry V. Lacy and Mrs. Amstutz enjoyed it all greatly—special arrangements had been made for their convenience in the matter of a bathroom and sanitation—and the Iban women and girls made them so welcome that they felt very much at home. All of us went to bed early that night, and as the rain fell on the shingles above us we slept well in spite of the usual noises of a longhouse at night: people talking, babies crying, pigs and their litters just below us every now and then setting up a terrific squealing, dogs howling, and then from about 5 a.m. onwards dozens of roosters crowing and announcing the new day that was still hidden in the rainy darkness. Every man awoke with many aches and pains, for our bodies had been badly bruised by the river the previous day but we all felt better than we had dared to hope.

Sunday morning we spent visiting with the people, examining the ways of living common in the longhouses, taking a look now and then at the clusters of skulls that hung from the rafters in three places, playing with the children, and when the sun came out, taking some photographs. In the afternoon we visited the site of our newest Iban school.



Residents of Sibat's longhouse enjoying a film-strip lecture being given by the Rev. Burr Baughman.

Mr. Baughman and projector on extreme left.



Penghulu Sibat, the Rev. E. McGraw and Burr Baughman, together with members of the longhouse on the site of the new school to be erected at Nanga Meluan.

### New School at Nanga Meluan

Penghulu Sibat and his people, including the residents of three other neighbouring longhouses, had some months earlier asked Mr. Baughman if they might have a school right there for their children, instead of having to send them far down the river to Kapit. Sibat said they would give the land for the building and a garden and a playground, and would cut the heavy timbers themselves, and make the iron-wood shingles, if the Mission could provide a teacher and help with the building and equipping of a school-room and living quarters for the teacher. Our Batak teacher, now working at Kapit, Mr. Manoeroeng, volunteered to go and work there, and so that problem was solved. At the same time an unassigned gift had come from the home Missionary Society of Switzerland, through the hands of Dr. F. Sigg, their president, and that money will help to complete the school. When we were taken to the site we found long hard-wood timbers already cut and squared, most of the roof and timbers ready, and the Penghulu said the other wood was cut in the jungle upriver and would soon be brought onto the site. They had engaged a local Iban 'master-carpenter' to cut the timbers, and then when all was ready the men from the four longhouses would assemble and erect the building.

### Worship in a Longhouse

Sunday night we had a wonderful Service of Worship. A cross had been set up on a box and the boys and girls from the Methodist Iban School in Kapit sat nearby. Lacking a church bell, Mr. Baughman, in his strong baritone, led the students and others who knew them, in one hymn after another, and hearing the singing, most of the two to three hundred residents of the house assembled, making a large group seated around us on the floor. Following the lead of the Agrecultural Missions, Mr. Baughman had suggested to the people to get samples of earth from their padi (rice) fields and some of the seed, and then to present them for God's blessing at this Service. Many did so but the great excitement of the evening came when one man brought a big fighting

cock and another a squealing pig. The pig, evidently used to human beings, soon quieted down and so far as we could gather enjoyed the Service. The teacher who was coming to live there, Mr. Manoeroeng, preached a very vivid sermon telling the people how they must put away their superstitions and follow the way of Jesus. I was asked to give the benediction, after which Mr. Baughman, using a kerosene projector, showed slides and films. It was an evening that the missionaries present will long remember. Rain was again falling and this time very heavily, so that we began to worry about the possibility of returning home on the morrow, for these jungle rivers rise and fall very rapidly and if the river was too turbulent and high we would not be able to return to Kapit the next morning.

### **A Dangerous Return Journey**

The next morning the river could be heard roaring down below us and we, going down for our morning ablutions, were amazed to find that it had risen between twelve and fifteen feet overnight, and was now a mad, rushing, swirling mass of brown water hurrying to the ocean far away. Our Iban boatmen said we would have to wait to let it subside some but when, after 8.30, it did not seem to show any signs of doing so they decided to risk it. Willing hands picked up our bags and the heavy motors, and carried them down the long, wet, slippery, log-ladders to the river's edge and loaded the longboats. My wife and I were told to go with the chief in his boat, accompanied by an elderly Iban who sat in the prow. With a roar our motor started, and off we went down that raging torrent. What a thrill that was! Soon we came to the first rapids, the huge stones of which were far below us, but which nevertheless made much commotion on the surface of the rushing river. After a hasty shouted consultation between the two Iban men the motor was run full speed and we went through safely. This same method was adopted at each rapid that was dangerous, sometimes using the motor, sometimes just trusting to their paddles to guide us through the safest place.

Half an hour down the Melinau we saw ahead at a bend a very tumultuous mass of waves and dashing spray several hundred yards long, and one could actually see how the surface of the river went down several feet as it dropped through the rapids.

### **Shooting the Rapids**

Our boatmen surveyed the scene from a quiet place above and then decided to shoot the rapids on the opposite side. My heart came up to my mouth as we approached the mad waters and I realized that we were going over one of the largest dips. There must have been a huge rock down below, for the water fell away alarmingly as it went over. About ten feet of the front of our longboat was completely out of the water as we hung over the fall, and then with a splash that thoroughly soaked me and threw gallons of water into our boat, we hit the next crest and somehow came through, our motor roar-

ing at high speed and the two boatmen working for dear life with their paddles. To the left of us, as we came into a calm spot on the side, we could hear and see the dashing waves often throwing the water and spray high into the air. I asked why we were stopping and Penghulu Sibat laconically said, "Many people have been drowned in these rapids and we must wait until the other two boats come through." My heart sank as I thought of the other six missionaries, besides the Iban men and boys, who had come on this visit at my suggestion. I got my cine camera ready and we waited.

Suddenly around the bend we saw the large Mission longboat coming fullspeed, their 22 hp. motor roaring above the sound of the dashing river waves, and going right through the longest and, evidently to our boatmen, the most dangerous part of the rapids. I heard our two men groan as they saw them. All I could do was to pray while I ground away with my camera. I shall never forget the sight of that heavily loaded longboat dashing through those waves and safely riding them out. The river was carrying much debris, and even whole trees, which made navigation by small light longboats extra dangerous. Had any of our three boats struck a log in those rapids it would have been all over, and if any had capsized most certainly some of us would have been lost, for not even a strong swimmer could have held his own in that mad torrent. It was with thankful hearts that we continued down the river. We were all safe, and apart from splashes and wet clothes, we were none the worse for the experience.

The remainder of the journey was uneventful, for after having passed this worst of the rapids, the others that were still to come seemed tame in comparison and we rode them out without any particular fear. Noon found us again at Nanga Mujong, where Lucius had half a dozen delicious durians for us; hot rice and sardines and coffee were soon ready. How we ate as we compared notes on our several experiences that morning! By 3 p.m. we were back in Kapit again, a total of five travelling hours as compared to the eleven or twelve that it took us to go up.

Now we know what our missionaries to the Iban people have to face as a part of their work among these people, and we also know what gallant, brave and loyal men our Iban hosts are. I am sure the Methodist Church will stand back of our work among these fine people—with our prayers, your interest, and your gifts, and before long, volunteers to assist our missionaries there.

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All information above is current as of Feb 2020 and subject to change without notice

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