

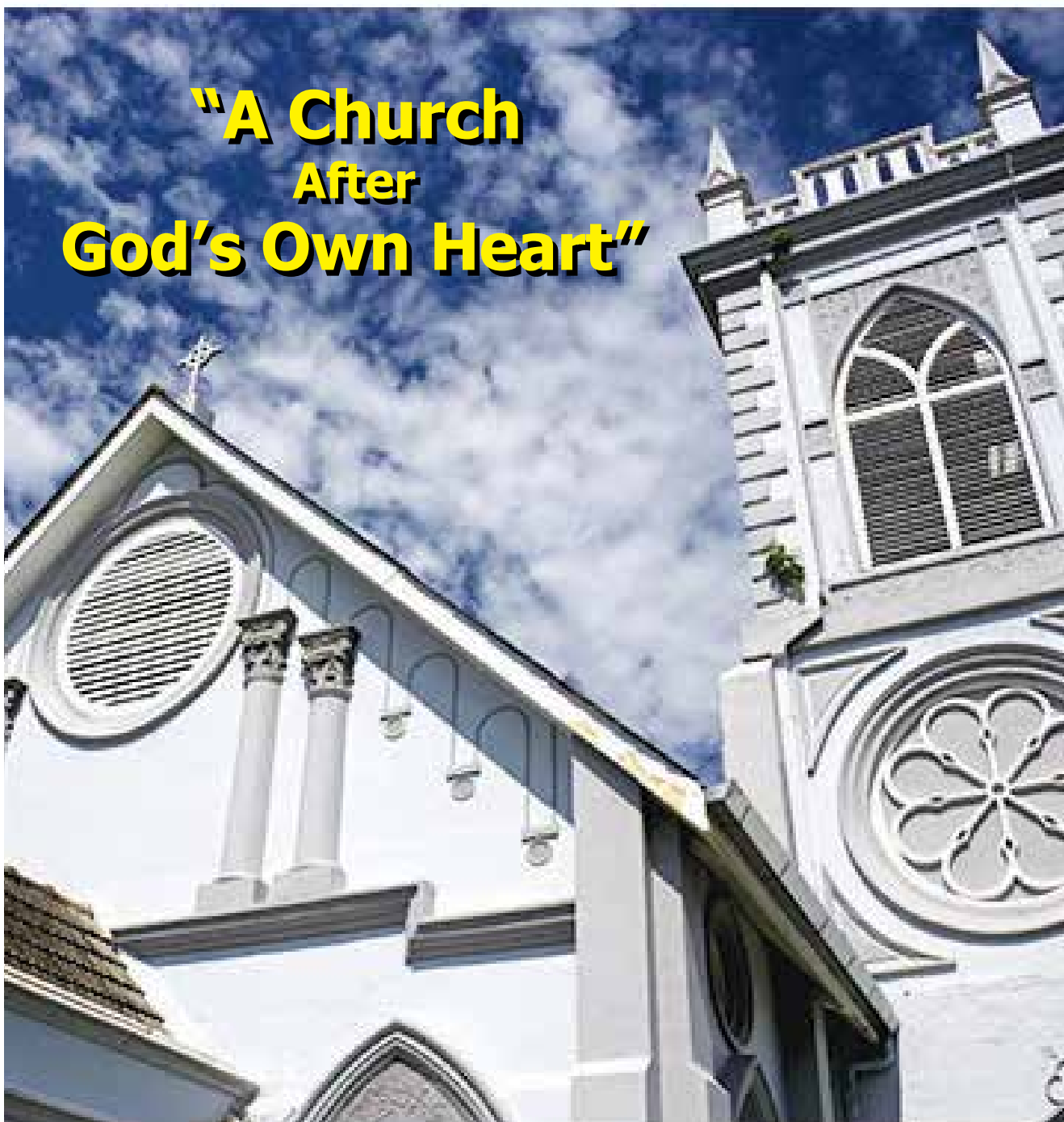
PELITA METHODIST

VOLUME 43, NO. 1&2
JAN/FEB 2017



PP 3233/01/2013 (031518)

**"A Church
After
God's Own Heart"**



Moment



The Methodist Church in Malaysia Headquarters would like to welcome Mr. Tan Swee Ann as the new Executive Secretary of our church. He replaces Ms. Jenny Qua who has moved to the Council of Education as the Director of Private Education.

Mr. Tan was a Senior manager in the Information Technology field. He had worked in the IT industry for more than 35 years. Upon his return from the United Kingdom after obtaining his B. Sc (Hons) in Computer Science, he was actively involved in the implementation of some major IT projects in both the public and private sectors in Malaysia.

Mr. Tan has also been a servant of the Lord, in the Methodist Church, serving in various capacities for many years. He served as the LCEC chairman and lay leader in Klang Chinese Methodist Church (KCMC) for many years (1989 – 2005). He was the chairman for the new building project for KCMC and had spent almost 12 years of his time managing the project till its completion in 2012.

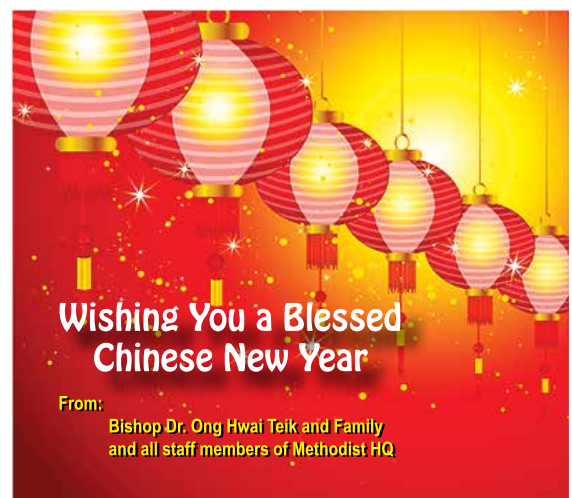
He was elected as the Conference Treasurer in Chinese Annual Conference (2005-2017) and General Conference Treasurer (2013-2016). He was also the chair-

man of the Area Executive Council (P) for the last two quadrenniums (2009-2016).

Currently he is a board member of the Beautiful Gate Foundation for the Disabled.

He is married to Susanna Kuan and they have two children Felicia and Daniel.

May God bless him and his family as he serves the Lord in this new capacity.



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Pelita Methodist is published monthly, 12 issues per year.

Malaysia: RM30.00 per year inclusive of postage.

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	B/W	Colour
Full Page	RM 600	RM 1,000
Half Page	RM 300	RM 600
Quarter Page	RM 150	RM 400



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PRAYER UNITED

A CALL TO PRAY FOR MALAYSIA

Prayer United was formed in the Year of Jubilee to mobilise Christians to pray non-stop for *the revival of the Church, and the transformation in the Nation*.

We ask that all intercessors will persevere in prayer, that God will open the heavens, reveal His glory and pour His power upon our nation. Let us claim His promise that "if my people who are called by My Name, will humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14). Let us beseech God earnestly to answer our prayers for the following:

- **A Holy and Righteous Church** – Pray that the Malaysian church will stand out as a prophetic community, impacting society, and live out authentic and vibrant Christian lives that will be salt and light in the nation, for then only can the Church act and speak with credibility and moral authority, and be taken seriously by the nation's leaders.
- **A United Church Reflecting a Malaysian Identity** - Pray that Christians will make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit, embracing reconciliation and restoration, shaking off encultured blockages and being an example in bringing together all races, languages and cultures, uniting them under the Lordship of Christ, modelling ethnic reconciliation powerfully in our nation.
- **Pursuing True Discipleship** - Pray that Christians will understand what true discipleship means, and be willing to take up their cross daily and suffer for Christ. Pray that many Christian professionals and countless university students studying abroad will return with a clear vision to build both the church and nation.
- **An Empowered and Growing Bumiputera Church** - Pray for the increasing emergence of strong and growing churches in Sabah, Sarawak and among the Orang Asli community in our land, and the rising up of bold and God-fearing leaders among them.
- **Economic Recovery** - Pray that God will continue to bless our nation by giving our national leaders the wisdom to steer our nation during this time of global economic turmoil and falling commodity prices. Pray for the equitable sharing of the wealth of this nation among all races and the fair treatment of foreign workers and refugees. Pray for improved policy making and careful expenditure. Pray against the blight of corruption, creeping Islamisation and abuse of power.
- **Independence of Government Institutions** – Pray for protection of the independence of institutions such as the Central Bank (BNM), the Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), the National Audit Department (JAN) and the judiciary against underhanded political manoeuvring to undermine the supremacy of the Federal Constitution, fundamental human liberties, the principles of democracy and the rule of law in our country. Pray for godly and upright civil servants who are able to work boldly without fear or favour. Pray for upright and clean leaders who will uphold democratic processes and institutions and revitalise good incorruptible practices and governance.
- **A Return to National Righteousness** – Pray for a powerful transformation that will result in a return to justice and righteousness in Malaysia. Pray for a recovery from a scandal-driven year. Pray that all evil in high places be exposed, and that justice will prevail.

January 2017

"A CHURCH AFTER GOD'S HEART"

- Every Methodist personally renewed in his/her first love for Jesus
- Every Methodist congregation revived as in the Book of Acts
- The Methodist Church to be refocused and reframed after the Word of God and the Holy Spirit

As we enter into the new year, we gratefully thank our God for the past and make peace with all that has come and gone in 2016, knowing that the Lord Emmanuel is with us in the present. We now look forward to the future knowing that the sovereign One, who "is the image of the invisible God" [Col 1:15] and "Who can do far more than what we can ever ask or imagine" is with us [Eph 3:20] and is ahead of us.

As we enter the new 2017-2020 quadrennium, the Lord has led the Methodist Family at the 11th General Conference session [20-23 September 2016, Sibul] to pursue the theme of *A Church after God's own Heart - with every Methodist personally renewed in his/her first love for Jesus, with each of our Methodist congregation revived as we see powerfully transformed local faith communities witnessing and doing ministries as in the book of Acts, and a widespread movement which is focused, framed and circumscribed by the Word and the Holy Spirit.*

As God's beloved children, we believe that we must **individually and personally know** the desires of God's heart so that we can, like David, *a man after God's own heart - fulfil God's purpose in his own generation* [Acts 13: 22,36]. By this we thereby accomplish the *chief aim of humankind of glorifying God and enjoying [and being satisfied] in Him forever.*

This calls for *intimacy* with God, so that we *personally* take heed of the warning given by the Lord of the Church to the congregation in Ephesus in Rev 2:4 – **"You have forsaken your first love."** We are vulnerable to the multiple forces at work each day that make us

lose the wonder, sweetness and joy of our relationship with our Saviour that "struck" and claimed us when we "first met Him" and placed Him first in life. Each one of us has to constantly renew that willing, full surrender of total love of Him that is reflected in a life of discipleship. The taking up of our cross to follow Him Whom we love will be visible as we personally put Him first - daily.

The church at Ephesus was rightly concerned for the truth of the Gospel, but she forgot that at the very heart of that Gospel is love – firstly, a preeminent love for the Saviour that issues forth in obedient and zealous "works that you did at the beginning" [Rev 2:5]. In the early church, "love" was something you did, reflecting God's own self-giving love that gave hospitality and practical help in a non-ethnic way to all and sundry who were "the last, the least, the lost and the locked in."

As a **local congregation of God's people**, we must remember how the early church in the book of Acts really experienced the sovereign and powerful Holy Spirit working in the midst of a people who had a first love for the Lord Jesus. They were a people who experienced "revival" in which innumerable local and cross cultural conversions and church planting took place. In addition, the social transformation impact of their ministries to the poor, needy and sick was undeniable and was acknowledged by the people around them.

The early church *revival* not only meant that the congregations had more power to witness, they also performed miracles and made the world sit up and take notice. But they were also em-

powered to "have great endurance and patience" [Col 1:11] as they faced hostile political leaders like Emperor Nero and Emperor Caligula who mercilessly martyred many of them. *Revival* meant having the power to be resolute, "full of faith" and to remain true in the midst of fierce antagonism, persecution, prolonged disappointments, political reversals and victimisation, onslaught of setbacks, opposition and frustrations.

This early church *revival* meant that in spite of severe opposition at work against the Church, Paul was clear about respecting the authority delegated to civic rulers and authorities as established by God, the source of all authority [Rom 13:1-4]. He has emplaced civic authorities great and small so that His world remains ordered and not chaotic. Governments are meant to maintain truth and what is good, in a world where evil flourishes when left unchecked.

The **early church movement was focused on the life of Jesus Christ**, framing and enclosing their lives after the teaching of the **Living Word and the written Word**. They had a biblical view of the world and how to live in it - based on the sufficiency and supremacy of Christ - "For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him" [Colossians 1:16].

They knew that if everything is created by Christ and for Christ – then all of creation is designed to work His way. The way of Christ is not only printed in the texts of the written Word but also written into the texture of the whole of creation. His stamp is upon the whole

of creation – framing and encompassing the whole of creation.

Professor K.S. Latourette of Yale University, an expert in social ethics and mission wrote a seven-volume work on the history of the expansion of Christianity that ended with these words: ‘No life ever lived on this planet has been so influential in the affairs of men and nations as the life of Christ. From that brief life, and its apparent frustration, has flowed a more powerful force for the triumphal waging of man’s long battle than any other influence in the world.’

Hence, the more we get into a deeper relationship with Christ, the Living Word and to get God’s written Word into us - the better, the deeper, truer and satisfying will be our life. And He has given us the Holy Spirit to empower us and to “fill us with the knowledge of His will” [Col 1:9] as we live by a biblical world view as taught in Scripture.

The Holy Spirit empowers and always has more to teach us about the will and the way of God. He renews our minds after the revealed Word so that we can have “the mind of Christ” as our focus to frame every aspect of life – the family, work, environment, human relationships, politics, economy, racial issues, terrorism etc.

We then substantially “bear fruit in every good work” [Col 1:10] as the life of God flows through our Methodist Family, and we glorify our Father in heaven as a General Conference.

The Methodist Church in Malaysia seeks God’s sovereign work to be a *Church after God’s own heart*. Like the early church, we pray and proactively seek Him in a “normal church life”, one that is not trouble-free. The church today has to face persecution, problems and puzzles in the areas of money, ethics, clashes with political and religious authorities, intra-racial tension,

crises over leadership etc. Notwithstanding that things are not “plain sailing” for the church in our land, and at this time in a very troubled and uncertain world, we can experience the same energy and excitement God gave to the early Christians. They found the Sovereign Lord doing new things all over their localities and even learned to take the Gospel of Jesus Christ around the world!

May our gracious Sovereign God be with His people called Methodist, working in us so that he can pronounce the same about us as He did of David: “I have found David son of Jesse **a man after my own heart**; he will do everything I want him to do” [Acts 13:22] so that we serve God’s purpose in our own generation just as David did [Acts 13:36].

Bishop Dr. Ong Hwai Teik

Devotion

One Year at the Cross Devotional by Chris Tiegreen

Born to Serve

Our lives will harmonize best with God’s will . . .
when they serve other people best.
(John Calvin)

DEVOTION

IN WORD: You belong to other church members. That may be hard to swallow in an individualistic society, but Scripture is clear. We are not our own, having been bought by the Lord; and in His gracious return, He not only gives our lives back to us, He also gives them to other Christians. Because Jesus has a claim on us, those in Christ also have a claim on us. In Him, we are literally one.

The bottom line for us is that we were born to serve not only God but others, and to the extent we don’t, we miss our purpose. Service may take a wide variety of forms—high- or low-profile, heavily spiritual or intensely practical (or both)—but it must all boil down to an edifying role in the Christian community. More important than the form our service takes is the motive behind it. If we want to be Christians who fulfill the Word of God, we must focus our attentions, our time, our talents, and our work on others. That’s what God did, and He designed us to do the same.

That attitude begins with a proper understanding of self: “Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought” (v. 3). That’s where service begins—with an appropriate humility and a love for others. If we have that, the rest comes almost naturally.

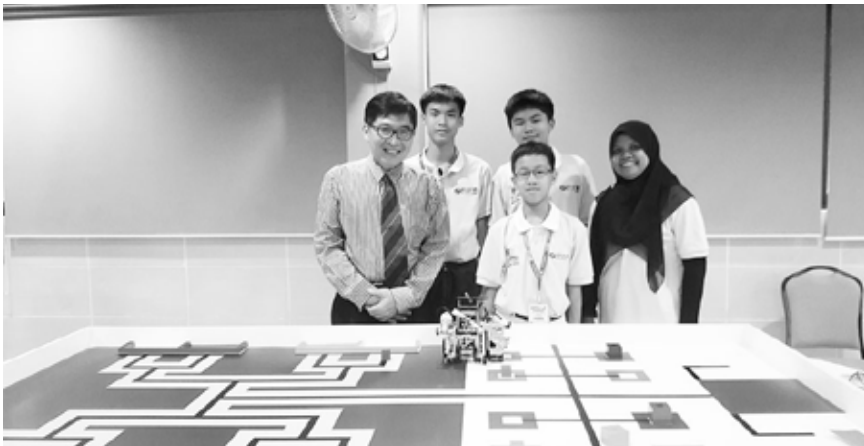
IN DEED: This passage, Romans 12:3-21, is perhaps the most comprehensive explanation in the New Testament of a Christian’s relationships. It addresses our relationships to other Christians, the exercise of spiritual gifts for the common good, our relationships with our enemies. It covers almost all the bases. It is foundational.

A good exercise would be to read the entire passage every day this week. It isn’t very long, but it is full of power. As you read, stop and meditate on each of Paul’s pithy, pointed statements. Measure your life against them, and ask God where He wants to work. The work of relationships begins deep inside. Trust Him to begin that work in you today.

In Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

Romans 12:5

National Champion and Making Malaysia Proud in the World Robotics Olympiad



Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) especially Robotics has been one of the niche areas of Methodist Boys' Secondary School (MBSSKL) since becoming a Cluster School of Excellence in 2008. Though the school is quite advanced in the ICT, robotics was a different ball game altogether. None of the teachers had any experience in this area and the school had to rely on feedback from

the primary schools to get the club started. Thanks be to God, with hard work and support of teachers and parents, the school was able to get a good trainer and thereafter, the club started on firm grounds. It became a magnet that drew students with good robotics background from the neighbouring schools. From there the club shot up to greater heights, with participation in the finals of the National Robotic

Championship (NRC) but not becoming champion. The school Under 15 team snatched the bronze in the 2015 national finals and got to represent Malaysia in the 12th World Robotic Olympiad in Doha, Qatar. Last year with hard work, support and prayers from all parties, again the Under 15 boys (Junior High Team) emerged as the national champion in the NRC. With this win, the team of 3 boys, Gilford Tang, Kua Boon Yan, Wong Weng Wah represented Malaysia in the 13th WRO from 24-28 November in New Delhi. Though the team got into the semi finals only, their position contributed to the points that enabled Malaysia to emerge as the champion from a total of 57 participating countries for the sixth time in the WRO. We have made Malaysia proud. Go Forward MBS!

Submitted by:
Mr Wong Chee Kheon
Principal MBSSKL



More photos of MBS Penang.
Article is on page 7.

National Champion

Robotic Competition 2016 (NRC)



Representing the state of Penang, our school sent 6 students, making up 2 teams, to participate in the National Robotic Competition 2016 (NRC) organised by Sasbadi Holdings Berhad in co-operation with the Ministry of Education. The venue of the event was Chancellor Hall in Universiti Teknologi Petronas located in Teronoh, Perak.

The event was held over 3 days (23rd – 25th September), the first day being the preparation day, followed by the actual competition day and finally the closing ceremony and prize presentation.

Our school teams went early in the morning of the first day to seize the opportunity of practising throughout the first day. We scrutinised various teams from other Malaysian states but we were confident in our robot and hoped for the best the next day. On the day of the competition, an additional surprise rule was announced and participants were challenged to find the solution to a given task in order to stand out amongst the fellow competitors. As a strategic move, one team decided not to alter the program while the other would try completing the additional task. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the first team did not make

the cut for the final round whereas the other team would go on. In the finals, the team was nervous as they had not managed to secure all objectives. However, through calmness and focus, the team members overcame the stress and successfully obtained the maximum points possible and emerged as champions, gaining the honour to represent Malaysia along with the 1st runner-up and 2nd runner-up in World Robot Olympiad (WRO), an international event participated by various countries from across the globe.

In 2016, WRO was held in India Expo Centre, New Delhi, India. Each participating country would send their respective national champions to compete against each other to determine the crème de la crème. Similarly the event was held over 3 days (25th – 27th November). On the first day, the Malaysian contingent arrived at the venue early in the morning and preparations were started immediately. The team from our school was extremely nervous and excited as that was their first time participating in an international event where they would meet the best of the best. During the preparations, the team noticed many countries having much better robots than theirs yet they remained hopeful.

On the next morning, another surprise rule was announced. The team decided to play safe and not bother with it until the finals. Three qualifying rounds were held. The Malaysian teams did not do so well on the first round however they remained persistent. After three rounds, all Malaysian teams managed to past the qualifiers, with our school team coming in at 8th, highest of the Malaysian teams. At night, a friendship dinner was held and nationals from all walks of life mingled around and got to know each other.

On the third and final day, the Quarter-Final and Semi-Final were held with our school team ploughing through at 2nd place while the other Malaysian team was eliminated one by one, to the discouragement of the school team members. As the only Malaysian team going into the finals, hopes and tension was high as the weight fell onto the team members. But in a twist of fate, there was a technical issue which caused the robot to malfunction, shattering the hearts of the team. The results and prizes were presented following the end of the competition with our school team coming in at 13th place overall. It was an unforgettable experience and there was no use crying over spilt milk. The team members were very grateful to all those who had helped them in their journey.

Submitted by:
Mr Lau Chong Beng
Principal MBS Penang

采访：黄孟礼（卫理报总编）

受访者：许赞麒（卫理公会砂拉越年议会会友领袖）

记录：卢韵琴

对不义事发声、参与党团活动、脸书分享灵修心得 许赞麒省长多元身分坚持基督徒立场

生 在诗巫市区中华路，1992年檳城理科大学毕业后，年杪进入诗巫市议会担任助理秘书。2002年升任高级副秘书长，2009年成为高级秘书，2015年10月被州政府委任为诗巫省省长，诗巫省长许赞麒前后当了24年的政府公务员。

同时，因为他的省长身份关系，更是时常被邀请以主宾的身份参加活动。

除了是一名身居高位的政府公务员，许赞麒先生也是一名活跃的基督徒，更在2016年获选为卫理公会砂拉越华人年议会新任会友领袖，任期为2年（从2017年起，2018年届满）。在此之前，他已经担任年会副会友领袖长达6年，更是会友事工部“职场事奉讲座”的讲员之一，多次与人分享他的职场事奉故事，其中一个最为人熟悉的就是拒绝贿赂的“踢足球”事项。

另外，2016年，他以诗巫省长的身份受邀为一间庙宇主持开幕前彩，却因不熟悉该宗教的仪式而参与了浴佛的仪式，就这样被记者拍下照片刊登在报章上。身为一个基督徒又是教会领袖，却进行了其他宗教的仪式，因而引起众多会友的议论。

如今，他再次被选为年会会友领袖，更是从副会友领袖扶正；而且以他的多元身份，他又是如何从中取得平衡，并坚持他的基督徒立场呢？

为此，《卫理报》总编面对面的负责人黄孟礼干事有机会与新会友领袖许赞麒弟兄展开了面对面的就上述话题“掏心畅言”的茶会。（问：黄孟礼总编辑，答：许赞麒弟兄）

问：首先，为了能够让读者们对你有比较深刻的认识，可以先谈一谈你的背景吗？

答：我生在普通小康之家，爷爷来自中国福建省闽清县，父亲在诗巫王士来坡出生。后来，因工作的关系搬到中华路居住，母亲是诗巫港头人，来自一个平凡的家庭。1967年，我在中华路出世、居住，小学就读市政第四小，中学就读圣心中学。1988进入檳城理

科大学，就读城市安全与规划系房屋规划科。1992年毕业，同年杪进入诗巫市议会担任助理秘书，1997年完成我的硕士课程。2002年升任高级副秘书长，2005年自修法律课程，2009年成为市议会高级秘书，2015年10月被州政府委任为诗巫省省长至今。

问：这么说，你从大学毕业起，就直接进入政府部门工作？

答：其实也不然，政府公务员是我首个进行面试的工作，在面试后我没收到任何消息，就先在本地的福平发展商处工作，在民都鲁担任一名工地管理。半年后，我接到政府录取通知书，纵然薪金只有1千2百令吉，比起原来薪水2千令吉少了一截；但经过考虑，我决定回到诗巫，进入政府部门工作。

问：为什么愿意舍弃高薪而回到诗巫呢？

答：主要原因是在民都鲁工作是6天半制的，也就是说，我在周末时间都需要工作，这对我在教会事奉的时间有很大的冲突；让当时在民恩堂参加崇拜的我，有时连崇拜都无法参加，更毋论参加团契。所以，在仔细考虑后，我决定放弃高薪，我想有自己的时间为主事奉。

问：算起来，你在政府部门都已经24年了，这些年来都没有想过要换工作吗？

答：公务员试用期是3年，工作3年后才能算是真正的公务员。当我快要进入第3年时，一些前辈就对我说，“你要想清楚，再不走的话，就老死在里面了”，哈哈……。

其实我一直都有些困惑，不明白为什么公务员总是给人负面的印象，如贪污受贿、懒散、申请拖延、故意刁难民众等等。做为一个基督徒，我立志从自己做起，要成为一个

拒绝同流合污的公务员，发挥自己的一点点小力量，来改变这个情况。然而，当我的职位愈高、权限愈大时，诱惑愈大、压力也愈大，感谢主，在这些事上常常帮助我。

问：你所说的诱惑是著名的“踢足球”事件吗？

答：哈哈，这只是其中之一。当时那位老板先是把装钱的袋子摊开，里面有一叠叠的钞票现金，说是送给我过年买年货用的（当时正值华人新年前）。我立马表明不收红包的，他就把袋子包好，放在地上，用脚把那个包裹踢到我桌子底下。我踢了回去，他又踢了过来；我再踢回给他，和他进行了一场“足球赛”。最后，我的坚决让他收回了这个大红包。其实这种情况不是只有一次，那位老板是在尝试了很多次之后，他才真正地死心。

因此，我个人是这样认为，如果你所承包的工程是真正按照程序办事，而且是符合条件和有素质的，根本不需要用这种方式来讨好我。也以此来提醒所有的基督徒公务员，尤其是那些权限愈大的，千万不要随意耽误人家的申请程序；因为你的延误可能会引起人家误会，以为你是有心为之。然后，诱惑你犯罪的情况就会出现。

问：你认为身为公务员最重要的素质是什么？基督徒公务员的服务心态又应该怎么样的？

答：公务员应当着服侍的心，以助人为乐，只要是符合条件且“照本子”办事的申请，就应该尽快地进行核准签批，不要耽误人家。同时身为基督徒的我们，更应该要多走一哩路，助人不要只限于自己的权限范围内，帮助别人就要从头帮到底。

让我举个例子，那是一位老人家来到政府办公楼求助，正好遇上了我，他想要去申请福利部的援助金。我就带他到福利部，帮他填了申请表格，再帮他做了翻译，完成了申请手续；之后再带他去银行开户口，这才是帮到底。

问：可以聊一下你的基督信仰成长之路吗？

答：母亲是带领我几个兄弟姐妹到教会的人，那是在新福源堂主日学，中学时参加福源堂少年团契，时任主理牧师是周永生牧师。当年的我是非常内向的人，在念中二时被选上组长，“被逼”着带领查经，顿时感到“压力山大”；只好和妹妹省吃俭用地买了一套陈终道牧

师的解经书籍，细看过后才敢上台。

在我就读中四那年，福源堂实行分堂，那就是另立新福源堂與錫安堂，我被黄巧月牧师分配必须回到所属牧区，也就是新福源堂服事。后来，新福源堂在东山路设立查经班和主日学，家住东山路的我就去查经班和青少年团契服事，还有口琴训练班与主日学。这是圣道堂前身，我也就留在了圣道堂，除了1988年至1992因求学与工作外，我都在圣道堂服事，出任过执事、执事会主席和会友领袖。

至于真正地确认信仰重生得救，应该是在我刚上中学的时期。那时我参加了从加拿大回来的严建平牧师所分享的聚会，让我确认了要一生跟随主，并参加了1983年唐崇荣博士在诗巫开办的布道会，那时的我已经是陪谈员了。

在槟城求学的期间，因学园传道会关心校园的关系，受到他们的四个属灵定律、校园布道法等等栽培与训练，灵命得到长进；並从当中结识了刘会先牧师，学习了许多东西。

大学3年级时，吉隆坡的东马团契来到槟城开设据点，就在日落洞卫理公会开始了聚会；而我也在那时候参加了槟城东马团契。

问：你认为基督徒应该如何在社会为光为盐及做更多的事？

答：除了每天的读经祷告与灵命上的成长，会友也应该在福音责任之外，也付上社会责任，走出教会的框框，与外面的世界接轨。2013年东马卫理大会的主题“启动新步伐”就是一个跨出新一步的举动。身为公务员的会友应该多多在职场上有见证，年会会友事工部所推动的职场事奉讲座就是一项提醒会友的活动，职场也是一个可以为主作见证的平台，将自己的基督徒职份延伸到每一天的生活、工作、咖啡店和学校中。

另一方面，基督徒应该参与社团和政党的活动，并在其中发光作盐，让非信徒看到基督耶稣的光，进而影响他人，灯点着不应该是放在斗底下，应该是要照亮他人的。基督徒加入社团与政党是要产生一些影响，毕竟主耶稣在当年亦是主动地去融入社会，关心穷人，医治病人。

问：你认为，教会在政治方面应该如何自处？

答：教会的立场应该是中立的，会友个人方面就请自便，因为教会要有原则，但教会不可能完全与政治切割。原则是我们应选出合神心意的政治人物。

问：一句“参与”是很简单的，但如何在其中取得平衡呢？时间上的冲突呢？又是怎么样避免被同化呢？

答：其实每一个人的时间都是一样，一天只有24小时，问题是你如何分配时间，至于被同化的问题，所以基督徒要谨慎，更要有读经祷告的生活，上帝会带领的。我相信，只有愿意先踏出一小步，才有将来的一大步。

问：你每天在面子书上的分享都是你灵修的得着吗？

答：可以这样说，这也是我给自己的激励，更是我让非基督徒看到的基督徒世界观。我们可以利用网络媒体传递福音信息的。如果你没有办法自己读经灵修祷告的话，可以采用一些辅助材料，如卫理公会自己出版的《灵修日程》就是一个很好的选择。

问：2017年是你成为年会会友领袖的第一年，对此你是否有什么工作计划呢？

答：在我和新会长商讨的结果，2017年会友事工部的主题是“合神心意的教会”，因为我们要先学习成为如大卫般合神心意的人，自己要先成为合神心意的会友——那就是有固定灵修读经祷告，与上帝有密切的关系。然后，与人也要有互动的交流和亲密关系，时时警惕自己，要回到圣经根本的原则，看看主耶稣怎么做。要活出光与盐的身份，照亮他人，若遇上不公不义的事就应该发声，只是所选用的平台必须要事先考虑。

问：在2016年身为诗巫省长的你受邀为其他宗教团体开幕剪彩，后来却被记者拍下你“浴佛”的一幕，可以讲一讲当时的情况吗？

答：我觉得这是让我上了一堂课的事件。参与其他宗教的活动并没有错，这样可以促进互相的了解，但必须事先了解他们的仪式和程序，要清楚表明自己不进行其他宗教的仪式。

那天的我原本已经向主办当局表明不拿香不祭拜，但就是不清楚原来还有浴佛的仪式，

突兀中我就按照指示做了，第二天报章就刊登出来了。其实在各种宗教场合都有机会受邀出席，不过会尽量避免进行相关的宗教仪式。

其实我身为诗巫省长，主要是协调省内各种发展及跟政府部门方面的联系，同时也是各种政府官方节庆的主席。按职方面，我是诗巫回教节庆委员会的主席，此次的默罕默德先知诞辰的大游行是我负责筹备工作，而我的办公室在诗巫回教大厦。这是一个很微妙的情况，哈哈……。

问：最后谈谈对诗巫的展望。

答：诗巫过去的发展有被边缘化的事实，同时又因为地质问题在道路建筑方面有许多的困难。但其实私人界是可以在某些项目投资留住人才，如过去的木材业、造船业及农业等不能单单倚靠政府的。

明年是诗巫旅游年，可以加强人文及生态旅游的。谈到升格为市时，现在的各种条件已经更加严格了，恐怕不是短时间内可以实现的。



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STATEMENT ON PROTECTING STREET CHILDREN

The Council of Churches of Malaysia wishes to congratulate the Police for busting a human trafficking syndicate and rescued 21 victims, including 13 children, who were forced to beg at busy public areas in the city of Kuala Lumpur (the Sun, 7th February, 2017 p.3)

The churches are sad to learn that children have been exploited to engage in immoral activities.

The churches in our country have constantly raised concerns about the exploitation of children and will continue to organize and administer programmes to provide children a safe environment and opportunities for a proper moral upbringing.

We call on all authorities to further strengthen surveillance of street children throughout the country, who are victims of unscrupulous people who destroy the lives of innocent children.

Rev. Dr. Hermen Shastri
General Secretary
8th February 2017

Member Churches: Anglican Diocese of Kuching - Anglican Diocese of Sabah- Anglican Diocese of West Malaysia- Basel Christian Church of Malaysia- Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malaysia- Lutheran Church in Malaysia & Singapore- Mar Thomas Syrian Church- The Methodist Church- Chinese Annual Conference- Sabah Provisional Annual Conference- Sarawak Chinese Annual Conference- Sarawak Iban Annual Conference- Tamil Annual Conference- Trinity Annual Conference- Orthodox Syrian Church- Presbyterian Church in Malaysia- Protestant Church in Sabah- The Salvation Army-

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Affiliate Member: Coptic Orthodox Church .

Wesley Methodist Church, Penang - 125th Anniversary Celebration



A bright and golden Sunday morning ushered in the 125th Anniversary celebration of Wesley Methodist Church, Penang on 21st August 2016. Forgotten was the heavy downpour the day before. God granted sunshine and blue skies for His three congregations to commemorate this special event together. There was a quiet sense of buzz as early birds resplendent in red, burgundy or white (the theme colour for the anniversary celebration) arrived at 8.30am in excited anticipation of the events tailor-made for the day! The limited seating in the Sanctuary was an added impetus. It was heartening to see the Sanctuary filled up in no time. By 9.30 am there were no empty seats in the Susannah Room and the Hannah Hall, where there was a live feed of the service from the Sanctuary.

The Church Choir accompanied by the symphony music of the string ensemble comprising Penang Wesley members and friends from our sister Methodist Churches filled the Sanctuary with melodious and joyous thanksgiving and

praise. Ms Juwita Suwito a renowned gospel singer rendered the anthem "To God be the Glory".

Bishop Dr. Ong Hwai Teik shared the Word from Judges 2:6-15 and Deuteronomy 6:4-9. The congregation was reminded of the legacy inherited from the hard work of the early pioneers and faithful servants of the Lord who came in 1891 to establish the Wesley Methodist Church, Penang. He challenged the congregation calling them to ensure that this rich heritage was passed down to the future generations. The Bishop made reference to Eli and his sons. He urged the people not to sit on their laurels, lest their complacency led to a generation who would grow up not knowing the Lord nor what He had done. He emphasized that the home should be the bastion of faith, not merely rituals or festivals. He reminded parents that they were commanded to be prime movers of the faith to their children who would be the bedrock for the church's future. Bishop Ong was invited to lead in the consecration of the

newly renovated Sanctuary and the replaced slate roof tiles, followed by the unveiling of a plaque.

The service ended at 11.30am and the congregation took a short walk to the restaurant at the Penang Plaza for a sumptuous lunch. Pastor Paul Santosh Christie led everyone in the anthem "To God be the Glory" and our President Jeyakumar gave a short speech. After grace was said the lunch commenced.

A handbook publication of testimonies from church members was handed out during the lunch to members and their guests. The celebrations culminated with the cutting of the anniversary cake. Everyone had a wonderful time blessed with warm fellowship, good food, door gifts and the great singing by Ms Juwita Suwito.

As part of the 125th Anniversary celebrations the following events were organized:-





- a. Discipleship Training Seminars - Teaching and instruction in the Word by distinguished teachers and Bible scholars like Bishop Emeritus Dr. Hwa Yung, Dr. D.A. Carson and Dr. Paul Barker;
- b. Introduction of a Graduate Diploma Foundation Course in collaboration with the Malaysian Baptist Theological Seminary;
- c. A Community Day event which brought the church family (from 3 congregations) together on 23rd July 2016. Teamwork and co-operation were required for the many activities reminding one of 1 Corinthians 12:14-20. There was much fun and good fellowship.



Included in the above 125th festivities was a Vacation Bible School for children between the ages of 5-11 years of age held from 30th November to 3rd December 2016.

With the ambitious program drawn up for the Anniversary celebrations by the organising committee, substantial financial support was required from the church's coffers. Help came from gentle hands of the hardworking ladies of the Methodist Women whose 'Project 104 Slate' transformed the 104-year-old roof slate tiles into unique crafts and beautiful paintings.

Every Saturday afternoon from 2 to 6 p.m. continuously for 4 months, the Methodist Women scrubbed, dried, crafted and painted the 104-year-old roof slate tiles. Every Sunday morning commencing 5th June 2016, the ladies manned the stall set up to offer for sale the crafts and God-inspired paintings. God moved the hearts of the congregation to buy the paintings and the crafted roof slate tiles. The support from the congregation was overwhelming! At the end of the 3 months 'Project 104 Slate' sale, money was counted and the proceeds were more than sufficient to cover the cost of the programmes!

Every minute detail was planned and carried out by the organizing committee which started planning and meeting almost a year before the grand event. God has revealed to us that as we rely on Him, He is faithful and He provides all that's necessary. To God Be the Glory!

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

Submitted by Mrs. Joan Lim and Tan Suan See

Dr. H. L. Emil Luering

October 14th saw the passing of another of Malaya's great missionaries, Dr. H. L. E. Luering, at Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany, where he was professor at the Frankfurt Theological Seminary.

Born December 9, 1863, at Delmenhorst, Oldenburg, Heinrich Ludwig Emil Luering was the second son of a Methodist pastor, Adolf H. L. Luering. His early education he received in Bremen, Strassburg, Pforzheim and Schaffhausen. Two semesters at the University of Zurich were spent in the study of natural science, but after a long and serious talk with his mother young Luering decided for Christ and went to the University of Strassburg to study theology. There he also studied oriental languages and in 1887 received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy on a dissertation "A comparative Study in Medical Knowledge as found in old Egyptian Papyri and the medical writings of the Greek and Roman authors". The opportunity for a brilliant career as a scholar seemed open to him when he was called to the Methodist Publishing House of Bremen as scientific worker. Luering, however, had gradually come to the decision that he must follow his father in the ministry. He had served as pastor in Kiel for three years when a letter came from Bishop Thoburn asking him to go to Singapore as a missionary to help Oldham in the newly-founded mission. When only a boy he had longed to be a missionary, but he told no one except his sister, who kept his secret. Now he felt that Bishop Thoburn's letter was a call he could not refuse, so without hesitation he accepted, and sailed for Singapore on September 16, 1889.

Soon after his arrival Luering was sent on an exploratory journey to Dutch West Borneo. The following year he went to British North Borneo to open work among the Dyak head-hunters. In December 1891 when he returned to Singapore it was decided that he was needed in Singapore.

Dr. Luering's unusual talent for learning languages was a great asset. While in Borneo he had become proficient in Malay and he now applied himself to the various Chi-

nese dialects spoken in Malaya. Years later at a General Conference of the Methodist Church he found two Chinese delegates who could not converse because they came from different parts of China and he obligingly acted as interpreter. He took joy in learning a new language and never let an opportunity pass. Thus when malaria forced him to take a three months vacation in Amoy he learned the Hokkien dialect.

In 1899 Dr. Luering was appointed to Ipoh, where he was a great help to the Chinese churches, for he already knew the Foochow and Hokkien dialects and he soon learned the Cantonese and Hakka dialects. He was the first of our missionaries to be interested in the jungle people and he even baptised one Sakai woman. He was probably the first European to be able to speak the Sakai language.

In 1902 after conversation with officials Dr. Luering was commissioned by the Perak Government to go to China to bring 1,000 colonists from Foochow to settle Sitiawan, a then practically unpopulated section. He naturally chose as many Christians as he could find for the new city. Sitiawan of to-day should remember its founder.

During his furlough in 1906 Dr. Luering made an extensive tour of the United States, where he lectured on Missions in Malaya. On his return in 1907 he was sent to Penang where he served as District Superintendent until 1909 when he received a call from the Methodist Seminary at Frankfurt-am-Main. He taught first at Roderburg and then for twenty five years was acting director at Ginnheim. His special fields were dogmatic theology and ancient languages, but he never lost his interests in missions, and especially in Malaya. Even in recent years when missionaries from Malaysia visited him he would speak in Malay. Practically every Methodist preacher in Europe has studied under Dr. Luering, and many from America have come under his instruction as well. All look upon their old professor with love and admiration, for he possessed not only an amazing knowledge but a magnetic personality. He was deeply spiritual as well

as warm hearted and friendly.

In addition to his other activities Dr. Luering wrote many articles and monographs in various languages. While in Malaya he wrote and translated hymns into Malay, besides contributing to important works by other Malay scholars. He wrote many philological and ethnographic articles on the Dayaks, Malays and Sakais, which appeared in the journal of the Royal Asiatic Society. In later years he wrote several monographs in German, and was a frequent contributor to the missionary magazine "Der Missionsbote."

Dr. Luering retired from his professorship at the age of seventy but continued to lecture and travel in the interest of missions, until a year ago when he underwent a serious operation. To the last he kept his live interest in other people and cheerful outlook on life. His was a life full of adventure and worth, and his death was one of hope and victory.

Dr. Luering is survived by his wife, who was Violet Marie Beins of Singapore, six of their seven children, and seven grandchildren. A host of friends in Malaya, Europe and America also mourn the passing of this great soul.

His great love of nature, his deep sympathy for all living creatures, his genuine piety and child-like simplicity of character were impressive marks of his personality. He combined a big heart with a brilliant mind, an ardent love of Fatherland with a glowing love of Christ and a desire to share the riches of the Gospel with all humanity.

At the funeral service in Frankfurt, on October 18th, Bishop Dr. Melle, who gave the address at the graveside, fittingly chose the text from Philippians 1:21—"For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain."

The Malaysia Message
Vol. 48 No. 1
January 1938



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