

PELITA METHODIST

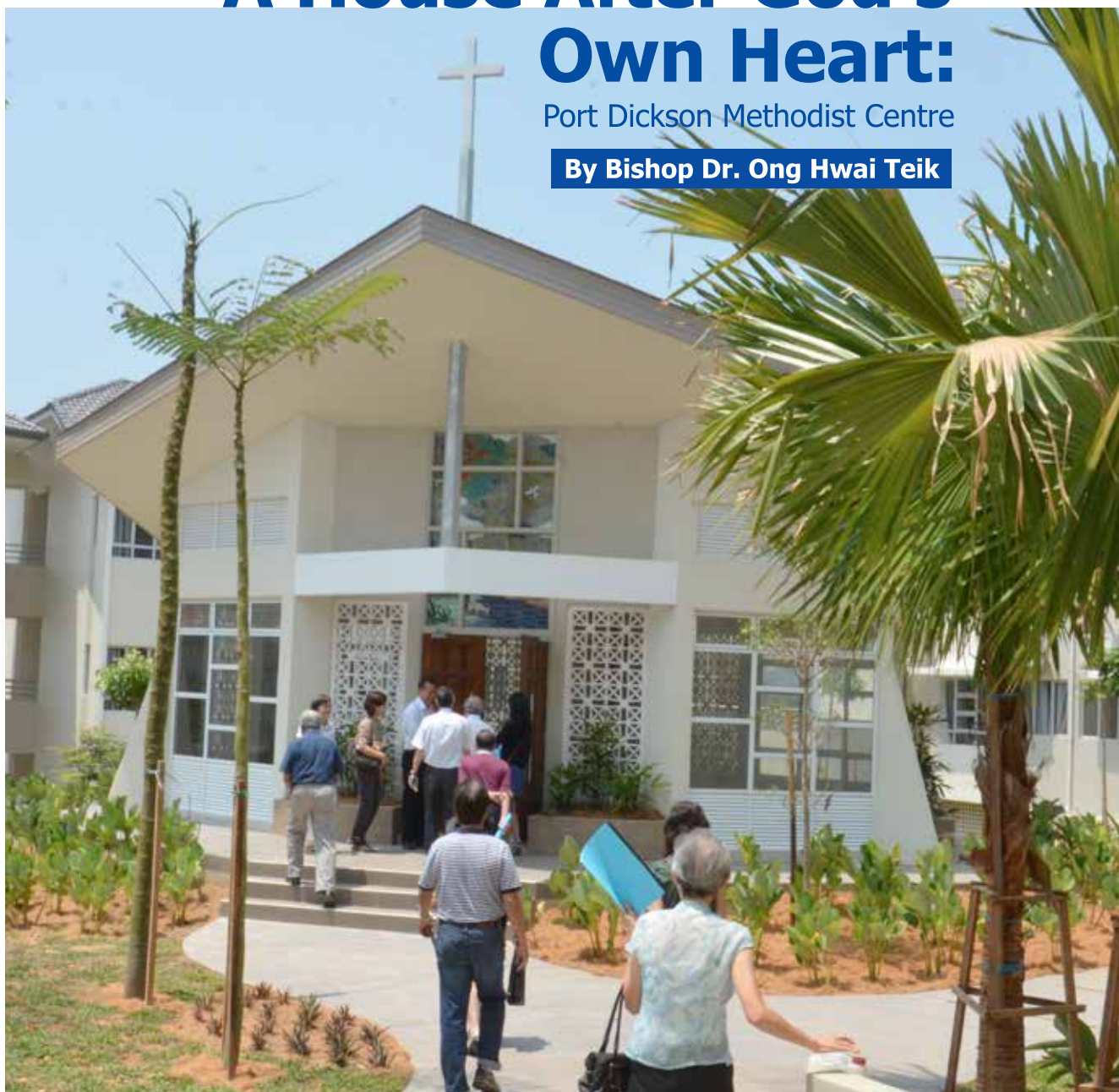
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“A House After God’s Own Heart:

Port Dickson Methodist Centre

By Bishop Dr. Ong Hwai Teik



Moment

An Episcopal Letter

To All In The Family Of The Methodist Church In Malaysia....

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ

Warm greetings.

As the **13th General Election is scheduled to take place on the 5 May 2013**, please note that the Prayer United movement will soon issue a call for a **“3-day National FAST and PRAY” to all in the Church in Malaysia**. It will be good for as many as possible in our Methodist Family, to unite and do this together with others in the Body of Christ in Malaysia, although participation is not compulsory.

It is the strategic call to humble ourselves to seek the Lord with one earnest spirit for the welfare and the needed foundational breakthroughs for this beloved nation of ours - at a very historic and crucial time. Some have even termed this GE 13 as the mother of all elections for Malaysia.

I and our leadership in the Methodist Church in Malaysia, call on all in our church family at the ground level, to do all they can to encourage each other

- **to pray** [at all levels - personal, family, workplace, local church and also combined church efforts where possible],
- **to engage in relevant and helpful roles** in the polling/ election process [eg as observers/ “pemantau” etc],

- **and to ensure that we responsibly cast our votes on the 5 May 2013** with wisdom, discernment and a good conscience.

Let us heed the words of Paul in **Romans 13: 4-6** – as we pray for a clean and fair election that will give Malaysia an incoming government that is the “servant of God for your good”; a government that has a genuine fear of God that makes it do all that is good for the people but brings fear to wrongdoers.

Let us pray with fervent and expectant hearts for the GE 13 as we humble ourselves to seek and pursue God.

Psalm 123:1-2 says: “I lift up my eyes to you, to you whose throne is in heaven. ² As the eyes of slaves look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid look to the hand of her mistress, **so our eyes look to the LORD our God, till he shows us his mercy.**”

Let us sincerely keep our eyes on the Lord together – and seek His mercy and grace.

Thank you.

Bishop Ong Hwai Teik
The Methodist Church in Malaysia

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Prayer: A Call To Prayer For The Church & Our Nation Malaysia

Source from prayer4Malaysia.org

Prayer4

1. Being "Salt and Light" in Our Nation

- a. Pray that God will continue to bless our nation with strong and steady growth of the national economy so that all citizens will be blessed. Pray for the equitable sharing of the wealth of this nation among all races.

- b. Pray against the twin problems of badly formulated policies and prevalent corruption, both of which combine to adversely affect national economic growth.
- c. Pray that the smaller and economically weaker communities will not be marginalised. In particular, pray that the rights and means of livelihood of the native people of Sabah and Sarawak, and the Orang Asli in West Malaysia will be legally recognised and safeguarded, especially their land rights.
- d. Pray that the church will take the lead in reaching out with concrete acts of love and compassion to the poor, including refugees and migrant workers, regardless of race or religion.

2. Defending the Supremacy of the Federal Constitution and Fundamental Human Liberties

- a. Pray that the church, civil society and the *rakyat* in general will defend the Federal Constitution so that fundamental liberties of all citizens, especially religious freedom, will be upheld.
- b. Pray that the government will genuinely seek to uphold the principle of equal citizenship rights for all Malaysians, which had been forged originally against a diverse background of race, religion and culture. Pray against all efforts made at asserting ethnic and religious supremacy which, if unchecked, will destroy the foundations of our nation.
- c. Pray that the democratic processes and institutions will mature and, if necessary, be revitalised in our country, especially the Parliament, State Assemblies, the Judiciary and the Civil Service.

3. Electing Politicians Who Are Competent and Genuine, and Committed to Integrity and Justice

- a. Pray that our citizens will have the discernment and wisdom to elect sincere and politically competent leaders who will govern the nation with compassion, integrity, righteousness and justice.
- b. Pray that Christians will take their responsibility as voters seriously and do what is right.
- c. Pray that in the up-coming 13th General Elections that God will so overrule that governments which will be faithful to the mandate to rule for the good of the nation will come into power. Pray specially against the work of unseen spiritual powers that seek to keep the nation under their control through evil of all kinds.

4. Making Malaysia a Model Nation

- a. Pray that Malaysia, by God's grace, will develop into an advanced economy and a stable and harmonious democracy, in which all citizens are equal, with fundamental liberties protected by the Constitution and a legal framework which protect the weakest and the least. This will make Malaysia a model nation for others.

New Addition to Pelita Methodist

The Pelita Methodist is bringing in a new inclusion to its content. The page is titled "Memories". We are offering our readers a space to celebrate or remember people who were significant in their lives. Contribution could come in any form (article, photos, poetry etc) that would help our readers know a little about the person or event and cause us to pray, remember or celebrate as

one Methodist body in Malaysia. It is like an advertisement but it does not focus in selling or promoting a product. The space given is chargeable based on the advertisement rates shown in the bottom of the 'Moments' page. So do send us your items of praise or remembrance to pelita@methodistchurch.org.my

“A House After God’s Own Heart”

2 Sam 7: 1-17

By Bishop Dr. Ong Hwai Teik



Pelita Methodist is publishing Bishop Dr. Ong Hwai Teik’s message at the rededication service in Port Dickson.

I. INTRODUCTION: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT and HISTORY

THANK YOU to all for being present, especially those of you from our Methodist Churches in Port Dickson, Seremban and Jelebu. We also appreciate the many who have come from outstation to join us.

We are of course thankful to our PD MC Redevelopment Committee chaired by Mr Daniel Lim Hin Soon and Co-chaired by Mr Chiew Toh Hee. They have worked tirelessly, not only in planning and attending meetings, but have shown commitment and dedication to the task through their personal involvement, as testified by their multi-

ple site visits and dealings with a stream of trouble-shooting incidences.

We are most grateful for having able, competent and committed staff like Ms Jenny Qua and her team who have gone beyond the call of duty to facilitate the physical transformation of this beloved PD Methodist Training Centre of ours.

Our grateful acknowledgement, of course does not end there, or else our thanksgiving to the Lord would not be complete. As we trace our records, we read that the original PD MC cornerstone was laid by Bishop Hobart H Amstutz on 13 Dec 1958.

In the Methodist Message of June-July 1957, we read of Bishop Hazen G Werner calling on the Ohio Methodist Youths to raise USD 25,000 to help develop a Youth Center in PD, Malaya. It goes on to say how that

sum was used. Bishop H Amstutz informed them: *“As we see now, the \$25,000 contributed by the Methodist youth of Ohio will be used for building a combination dining hall, kitchen & auditorium. There should be a very large veranda along the entire length of the lodge building, which could be used for social purposes & for lounging. Any money available after building the lodge might be used for building 2 dormitories.”*

In our records we further read of how God’s servants of an earlier generation, key among them were Revds CH Fang, Carlton Foss, C N Fang, Mr GS Arumugam, Mr T Appadurai – they were in the pioneer Seremban Committee in 1957 who supervised the building of the original PD MC.

Bishop Theodore Doraisamy wrote in *The March issue of Methodism in Singapore and*

Malaysia 1885-1980: "The dream of many generations for a conference and camp site was realized in these years (of 1956-1964) at Port Dickson. The moving spirit was MR GS Arumugam, who for his vision for great things and his experience in securing school sites, worked for several years till it came to be a reality.... The PDMC opened for use in 1958 after protracted negotiations and there were yearly additions to its facilities. In 1963 Mrs Lorraine Reinhoehl was appointed the residential superintendent and the Methodist Asia Consultation was held there. The Reinhoehls made it popular for conferences & retreats."

Before we had this present redevelopment: we had a capacity of 158 beds, with a 2-storey house, 3 chalet units, 6 units of rooms, 6 units of dorms, 1 assembly hall for 220 persons, 1 chapel, 1 football field, 1 campfire area.

Then on Oct 2006 – we managed through the assistance of Dato Dr Tan Kee Kwong, to sell about half of our 20 acres to FELDA so that we had the necessary funds to redevelop and upgrade this place. This was supplemented by the sale of the Jln Mayang land in Dec 2008.

When Bishop Emeritus Hwa Yung called for an inter-Annual Conferences leadership meeting to map the way ahead for the Methodist Church in Malaysia, 13-14 Dec 2004, I remember having the opportunity to verbalise the common thought that many in the Methodist Family, especially the leadership in W Malaysia, had felt for some time. Many had felt that the PD MC needed to be redeveloped so that one day in the near future – it would become **"The Home of our Annual Conferences in W Malaysia"**. That was the tag-line I had used then.

So in APRIL 2009 – the planning process began as a PDMC Re-development Committee was established. Then came the Ground Breaking ceremony on 2 July 2011; followed by the Topping Up/Capping of the Cross on 18 July 2012. Today, 23 March 2013, we dedicate this new PD Methodist Training Centre to our Lord's GLORY & KINGDOM PURPOSES.

On this auspicious occasion of celebrating God's gratuitous favour, I am reminded of David and Solomon, who were responsible for the beginning and ending of the building of the magnificent and unforgettable 1st Temple in Jerusalem dedicated to Yahweh, the God of Heaven and Earth in 2 Sam 7: 1-17.

II. The Offering of David: Giving Out of DEEP/BEST OF LOVE

1. The 1st Temple of the Jewish nation, was the brainchild of King David.

By that time, the shepherd boy who had lived in a TENT had become a King, enthroned in his PALACE. Three times in vv1-3 he is referred to as **"the king"** not DAVID, emphatically pointing to his journey from obscurity to prosperity and elevation in life.

He began to realise the stark contrast between his own residence and that which was designated for the Lord. He was living in a luxurious palace, whilst the "ark of God" the symbolic throne of the Divine King (1 Sam 4:4) "remains" in a mere TENT!

2. There is now the added factor that the "Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him" [vv 1, 11]:

He recognised with gratitude that he had no distractions then, no longer needing to fight for his throne; he could concentrate on larger things.

David had a DEVOUT HEART: which would NOT be content with personal comfort dwelling in a house of CEDAR (one of the most expensive and valuable of strong wood) while the ARK had but a tent for its abode.

For David, it was a most unacceptable and dreadful contrast, that he should have LUXURY at home whilst God's Ark dwelt in an inferior tent!

However, God prohibited him from being the builder of the temple. This begs the question – "why?" Firstly, we note that the proposal came from the man David, to locate God's presence in a specific place. But God had always **"moved with His people"** (vv 6,7) as symbolised by the Ark in a tent; the idea was good but it would mean the danger of making God static, an idolized monument.

It would seem that the less solid tabernacle corresponded better to the simplicity and spirituality of the worship of Yahweh; lest His people began to copy the pagans around them who seemed to think that by their elaborations, they could buy, control or domesticate their gods by their luxury. It might even lead

to a wasteful and ostentatious competition with the pagan temples around them. Alexander Maclaren puts it this way:

"A gorgeous stone temple might easily become the sepulchre, rather than the shrine of true devotion."

Another reason is given for the rejection of David for that task. This is found in **1 Chronicles 28:3** – "but God said to me, 'You must not build a temple to honor my name, for you are a warrior and have shed much blood.'

A warrior perhaps stands in incongruity or inappropriateness to erect a house for the God whose Kingdom was in its essence one of PEACE. (Moreover - being a man of war who commands an entire army and its bloody campaigns – he cannot at times, control who he kills including innocent lives of children, women etc)..

We must remember that it is not everyone who is granted the CALL & PRIVILEGE to build for God, as good intention is NOT the ONLY consideration BEFORE A HOLY and SOVEREIGN GOD of LIFE and LIGHT. So David explained this to Solomon, his son in 1 Chronicles 22:7 David said to Solomon: "My son, I had it in my heart to build a house for the Name of the LORD my God.⁸ But this word of the LORD came to me: 'You have **shed much blood and have fought many wars**. You are not to build a house for my Name, because you have shed much blood on the earth in my sight.⁹ But you will have a son who will be a **man of peace and rest**, and I will give him rest from all his enemies on every side. His name will be Solomon, and I will grant Israel peace and quiet during his reign."

3. We also see another great thing about David over the matter of his rejection as the builder.

David was not JEALOUS of his son being accorded the HONOUR of building the Temple for God. Instead he made preparation for his son Solomon to fulfil that task that God had assigned to his successor.

Like MOSES – he was to bring God's people and purpose towards a CONCLUSION or FULFILMENT – but only in a supportive role. David and Moses played that role without being consumed with bitterness and anger that stem from

motives of self-aggrandizement or self-centred disappointment.

David went on to make abundant provisions and personal encouragement for his inexperienced young son to ensure his success in that task. This is recorded in 1 Chronicles 22:14 “I have worked hard to provide materials for building the Temple of the LORD-- nearly 4,000 tons of gold, 40,000 tons of silver, and so much iron and bronze that it cannot be weighed. I have also gathered timber and stone for the walls, though you may need to add more. ¹⁵ You have a large number of skilled stonemasons and carpenters and craftsmen of every kind. ¹⁶ You have expert goldsmiths and silversmiths and workers of bronze and iron. Now begin the work, and may the LORD be with you!”

We too are a “Solomon generation” – having received provisions from Bishop Amstutz, Mr G S Arumugam, the Ohio Conference Meth Youths some 55 years ago!

It is now our turn in this generation to empower our NEXT GENERATION of Solomons – which we will do, captured symbolically by the act of planting “SEEDLINGS FOR THE FUTURE” in our liturgy afterwards.

May this redeveloped PD MTC – CONTINUE TO EMPOWER THE NEXT GENERATION TO SERVE GOD ALMIGHTY and HIS CHURCH IN MALAYSIA and BEYOND.

4. If a house is to be built for the sovereign God, Maker of Heaven and Earth as a symbol of His DIVINE PRESENCE among His people, then He HIMSELF will name the time, the place and the builder [VV 5-7]. **However, God commended King David for his noble and sincere intention** in 1 Kings 8:18: “But the LORD said to my father David, ‘Because it was in your heart to build a temple for my Name, you did well to have this in your heart.’”

III. The Building of the Temple by Solomon: Building with the BEST OF RESOURCES

1. ^{NLT} 1 Kings 6:37 The foundation of the LORD’s Temple was laid in mid spring, in the month of Ziv, during the

fourth year of Solomon’s reign. ³⁸ The entire building was completed in every detail by mid autumn, in the month of Bul, during the eleventh year of his reign. So it took seven years to build the Temple. It took 7 years to complete this majestic 1st Temple of the Lord.

Solomon either dedicated this Temple on the 12th year of his reign i.e. c 958 BC; or after another 13 years i.e. at the completion of his own palace (in which case he took 20 years to complete the 2 buildings)

1 Kings 9:1 So Solomon finished building the Temple of the LORD, as well as the royal palace. He completed everything he had planned to do. ² Then the LORD appeared to Solomon a second time, as he had done before at Gibeon. ³ The LORD said to him, “I have heard your prayer and your petition. I have set this Temple apart to be holy-- this place you have built where my name will be honored forever. I will always watch over it, for it is dear to my heart. ⁴ “As for you, if you will follow me with integrity and godliness, as David your father did, obeying all my commands, decrees, and regulations, ⁵ then I will establish the throne of your dynasty over Israel forever. For I made this promise to your father, David: ‘One of your descendants will always sit on the throne of Israel.’”

Solomon had dedicated the Temple to God, **BUT ONLY GOD CAN CONSECRATE IT BY THE PRESENCE OF HIS GLORY IN THE MIDST OF THE TEMPLE.**

Solomon was further told (1 Kings 9: 4-9) that the “dedicators” i.e. those who dedicated the place to Him, had continuing roles to play i.e. to remain dedicated and faithful to GOD, never forsaking Him by turning to worship and serving other gods:

For us, the dedication of the PHYSICAL TEMPLE is inextricably linked to the SPIRITUAL TEMPLE of the heart.

In effect, GOD is saying: “Solomon, you cannot offer Me this Temple without offering Me your heart; you cannot dedicate this temple to Me without dedicating your LIFE to ME.”

We must beware that as “dedicators” today of the PD MTC, we must contin-

ually be faithful to our LORD so that He will not be absent from this place by our disloyalty.

2. To the interesting question of “HOW MUCH DID IT COST TO BUILD THE 1ST TEMPLE?”

William Deal (Pictorial Introduction) – quotes one source called the Architect Association of Illinois which made an estimate some 83 years ago (1930’s) – that in modern times it would cost about USD 87 billion primarily because it was overlaid with gold or have gold parts! It’s costs in terms of actual money, and actual time of 7 years – **REFLECT the worthiness, the greatness of our GOD!**

When one loves GOD as both DAVID and Solomon did – it is all worth it, it is never too costly in terms of time and money.

Conclusion

As we dedicate the PD Methodist Training Centre to the Lord this day, we do so with a DEEP LOVE for God that longs to put God’s interest first. As David said – “**See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent.**” [2 Sam 7:2] In the same way, we must have that attitude of always wanting to give God the best, in terms of our time and resources, because of God’s GREATNESS, and our GRATITUDE to HIM.

In any DEDICATION – the heart of the matter is a matter of our heart – so King David devotedly provided the dream and the drive, and King Solomon caringly, patiently and perseveringly laboured to honour GOD for 7 years.

A house after God’s own heart is a building offered from a continually and wholly devoted heart.

Let us ask God to graciously grant us His PRESENCE in this place as we offer Him our whole hearted devotion – to be a place after His own heart.

NAS 1 Kings 8:18 “But the LORD said to my father David, ‘Because it was in your heart to build a house for My name, you did well that it was in your heart.’”

Easter

around our churches



- 1 Who has believed our message
and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?
- 2 He grew up before him like a tender shoot,
and like a root out of dry ground.
He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him,
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.
- 3 He was despised and rejected by mankind,
a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.
Like one from whom people hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.
- 4 Surely he took up our pain
and bore our suffering,
yet we considered him punished by God,
stricken by him, and afflicted.
- 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was on him,
and by his wounds we are healed.
- 6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to our own way;
and the Lord has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.
- 7 He was oppressed and afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;
he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,
and as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.
- 8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away.
Yet who of his generation protested?
For he was cut off from the land of the living;
for the transgression of my people he was punished.
- 9 He was assigned a grave with the wicked,
and with the rich in his death,
though he had done no violence,
nor was any deceit in his mouth.
- 10 Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer,
and though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin,
he will see his offspring and prolong his days,
and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand.
- 11 After he has suffered,
he will see the light of life and be satisfied;
by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many,
and he will bear their iniquities.
- 12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great,
and he will divide the spoils with the strong,
because he poured out his life unto death,
and was numbered with the transgressors.
For he bore the sin of many,
and made intercession for the transgressors.

Features

Snapshots of the Port Dickson Methodist Centre



1. The children's march to begin the service.
2. Children's choir from Mambau Chinese Methodist Church.
3. Children's choir from Seremban Wesley.
4. Bishop Ong's address to the congregation.



5



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8



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- 5. The Unveiling of the rededication plaques.
- 6. “Seedlings of the future”.
- 7. Praying for the different areas/rooms of the Centre.
- 8. Residential Building
- 9. Dormitory



**PORT
DICKSON
METHODIST
CENTRE**

Vote Wisely, Vote for a Better Malaysia

In the first two chapters of Genesis, the first book of the Old Testament, we read of two separate accounts of God giving to Adam rule and authority over the earth and all that live in it. In the first book of the New Testament, the Gospel according to St. Matthew, chapter 5 and verses 13 to 15, Christians are told that they are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. ... These two passages and the collective message of our Holy Scripture point to the inescapable conclusion that Christians have a duty to protect and safeguard the earth, and all that live in it. Christians have not only been granted rights of leadership, but also the responsibility of stewardship. ... In the context of the nation state, Christians, like other citizens, have been granted certain rights, including the right to participate in the democratic process of a country. This right to participate must be balanced with the responsibility of exercising that right, and doing so wisely. ...

The Christian Federation of Malaysia (CFM) therefore invites and encourages all Christians to be conscious of their political rights – to vote, and to use the power of the vote to elect a government that will ensure justice with equity and the well-being of our nation.

The CFM is not politically motivated nor is it endorsing any one political party. It is of fundamental importance in a democracy, that citizens actually exercise their right to vote. Having the right to vote without utilising it is of little use. ... Voting ensures that every Malaysian citizen participates in bringing about a more just and equitable Malaysia for succeeding generations to come. ...

Therefore, it is important that as Christians, we undertake our duty as citizens and exercise our right to vote and express our preference for a political coalition that will best achieve our vision of a better Malaysia. ...

In terms of our vision for a better Malaysia, CFM encourages Malaysian Christians to think about the following priorities: ... A nation guided by the ethics of respect for human dignity. This means a nation where its citizens are engaged fairly as equals, and their rights respected in accordance with the provisions as guaranteed under the Federal Constitution. Such a nation treats its citizens with understanding, honesty and mutual respect. ... A nation where extremism of all kinds is rejected and quickly curtailed. Racial and religious bigotry, manipulation and lies that have now come to de-

fine the social sphere, the print media and political posturing must end immediately. ... A nation free of corruption, putting in place strengthened state and public institutions whose members conduct themselves with integrity, transparency and accountability. ... A nation that works towards the fair and equitable distribution of wealth and ensuring well-being for all, regardless of citizenship status, ethnicity or creed. Every citizen and every community should be empowered and enabled to pursue economic activity and achieve advancement duly and fairly supported by the government where needed and necessary without favour or discrimination and without being overly or unfairly supported by the state. ... A nation where care for the environment is privileged over self-seeking capitalism and where its political leaders weigh all decisions with ecological interest and sustainability as an essential aspect of development. ... A nation where language and education are de-linked from political expedience. A nation where elitism and inequality is not rampant and people are recognised and respected as human beings and not discriminated against due to social position, educational attainment, political beliefs, gender, race or religion. ... A nation where religious freedom to profess, practice and propagate one's religion is allowed to flourish without undue curtailment from the law, restrictions or even prohibition. ...

The CFM encourages Christians to pray that good leaders will emerge from the 13th general elections who will not only fulfil the above criteria, but who have the interest of our beloved nation and its people as their first and only priority. ... Malaysians today are better educated, politically and socially more aware, and geographically more mobile than at any time in our history, and these have led to a citizenry that is more knowledgeable and experienced. ...

Churches have a responsibility to help guide their congregations to use their wisdom in the exercise of their right to vote in order to bring about a nation where all Malaysians, and those who choose to make their living in this country, can live in harmony and prosperity, peace and justice. ...

May the grace and the peace of God be with you.

Bishop Datuk Ng Moon Hing
Chairman and the Executive Committee
The Christian Federation of Malaysia



Statement by the MCCBCHST on the 13th General Elections

In view of the upcoming General Elections, the Malaysian Consultative Council for Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism and Taoism (MCCBCHST) which covers a significant segment of the Malaysian population, calls for the following:

- That the Election Commission ensures clean and fair elections without favour to any person, party or coalition;
- That every Malaysian is free to exercise their right to vote without fear or intimidation;
- That all Malaysians, peoples of all faith, will exercise their civic

- and moral duty by coming out to vote on polling day;
- That every individual will cast their vote responsibly based on their good conscience as endowed by God.

Most of all, the MCCBCHST hopes fervently that the government that is elected will serve responsibly for the common good of all Malaysians irrespective of race, religion, and ethnicity. It is further hoped that the new government would abide by Rule of Law, respect supremacy of the Constitution and ensure Independence of the Judiciary.

Daozhang Tan Hoe Chieow, AMS
President
MCCBCHST

Sardar Jagir Singh
Deputy President
MCCBCHST

Venerable Sing Kan
Vice President
MCCBCHST

Reverend Dr. Thomas Philips
Vice President
MCCBCHST

Y. Bhg. Datuk RS. Mohan Shan, PMW, JMW, AMK, BKM, PJK
Vice President
MCCBCHST

Mr. Prematilaka KD. Serisena
Hon. Secretary General
MCCBCHST

DEVOTION

God is Always First and Will Surely Be Last

God is always first, and God will surely be last!

In the plan of God, man is never permitted to utter the first word nor the last. That is the prerogative of the Deity, and one He will never surrender to His creatures.

Man has no say about the time or the place of his birth; God determines that without consulting the man himself. One day the little man finds himself in consciousness and accepts the fact that he is. There his volitional life begins.

Before that, he had nothing to say about anything.

After that, he struts and boasts, and encouraged by the sound of his own voice, he may declare his independence of God.

Renewed Day by Day by A.W. Tozer

Have your fun, little man; you are only chattering in the interim between first and last! You had no voice at the first and you will have none at the last!

God reserves the right to take up at the last where He began at the first, and you are in the hands of God whether you will or not.

Adam became a living soul but that becoming was not of his own volition. It was God who willed it and who executed His will in making Adam a living soul. God was there first!

And when Adam sinned and wrecked his whole life, God was still there. Adam's whole future peace lay in this – that God was still there after he had sinned.

It would be great wisdom for us to begin to live in the light of this wonderful and terrible truth: God is the first and the last!

Stage 2

The “Pillar of Salt of Retrospection” Motif

The Significance and Role of Retrospection

Retrospection or looking back to inspect on what has happened is another basic human function. However, retrospection can be positive or negative.

If retrospection is negative, it will lead us to cling on to the bad past due to some pleasurable feelings which the memory surfaces. One begins to loathe and yet long for the past bad. God described such people as stubborn, of vile heart, walking in their own counsel, looking backward to the old life rather than go forward to His new life for them (Jeremiah 7:24).

In Genesis 19:17, 24-26, tells us that the angel came to rescue Lot’s family from God’s judgement on Sodom and Gomorah. They were commanded,

“Flee for your life! Do not look back or stop anywhere in the valley! Flee to the hills...”

However, Lot’s wife looked back and was instantly turned into a pillar of salt, a monument of disobedience for her longing for and yet loathing the luxuries of Sodom. Sodom was indeed comfortable but bad. We need to notice that our Lord considered this lesson significant enough to remind us about it in and Luke 17:32-33.

If retrospection is positive, it will help us to give thanks rejoice always, pray constantly and also give thanks in all circumstances. Having done that, we move ahead with God who will handle the past for us. It shows us how He has been with us even without our knowing it and how He has turned bad into good according to His purpose (Genesis 50:20 & Romans 8:28). We see this process in Joseph’s pilgrimage...

In Genesis 42:7, Joseph was still bitter, angry, resentful and revengeful. He had suppressed his emotional wounds for more than 20 years. He could not make himself be reconciled with them

yet. He thoughts about them and feelings for them were not reconciled yet. He probably had not yet forgiven them deep inside. He suppressed his pains by focusing on his successful palace roles at hand.

In Genesis 43:30, when Joseph saw his playmate brother Benjamin, he wept for joy because he had good memories of him and felt safe in his presence. Further, something positive was definitely emerging in his other brothers’ lives. At least, Judah had cared enough for Papa Jacob by standing as guarantor for Benjamin’s safety. His dam broke and he could not hold back his tears of joy any longer; the whole palace community heard his cries! His negative retrospection had been replaced by positive ones.

This part of the story also shows that sometimes, when we suppress our painful memories, the beautiful ones are hidden too. In my own life, there were more happy times than unhappy ones; yet, for many years, the happy scenes were hidden...I could only automatically review the painful scenes when I recalled my childhood. But as the Lord healed me stage by stage, I realised one day, that the happy scenes of childhood freedom and joy were spontaneously coming to my conscious mind while the sad ones had disappeared when I recalled my past.

“Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me; I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see!”

In Genesis 45:1-15, Joseph could not contain his freed emotions any longer; he went out of control and expressed his having forgiven his older brothers by warmly embracing each one. God’s compassion flowed through him to them.

In Genesis 50:15-21, after Papa Jacob died, the older brothers feared Joseph’s possible revenge. They had not really understood him yet. But Joseph calmed their fears with the reassurance of his forgiveness, made possible because of God’s sovereign grace to each of them. He

who had received grace was able to give the same grace to others. The vision of Genesis 50:20 enabled Joseph to simply state: *“God cares, therefore Joseph cares”*. Indeed, God makes everything work for the good of those who love Him, to those called according to His purpose, not ours.

This perspective implies that after a particular sin or wound has been dealt with, we need to move on with God’s power and promises.

But how do we move on?

We shall continue this discussion in the next issue.

Reflection

1. Use one word to describe your childhood (e.g. happy, sad, confused, fearful, trapped).

Why was that so? Share with a trusted brother or sister in Christ.

2. Ask the Lord to help you forgive those who you think have broken your dream(s).
3. Seek His forgiveness where necessary.
4. When you are ready, ask Him to take you forward with your hand in His.

Do not let the past prevent you from anticipating His future good for you.

If you are unable to process the above one your own, seek out a ‘pastoral’ friend to walk with you (i.e. listen and pray with you) till you can walk with God alone.

5. Believe that because Jesus lives, we can face tomorrow...

By Dr. Lee Bee Teik

Features

Inauguration Of Sarawak BB House

By James TC Wong



BB Sibiu Band

SIBU - Under the sunny skies of Sibiu, Boys' Brigade founder Sir William Alexander Smith couldn't have been more proud with the historic event taking place at Sungei Merah on Mar 9.

Three hundred Officers, Helpers, Boys and Girls from the 34 Coys throughout Sarawak were present to witness the opening and dedication ceremony of the new Sarawak BB HQ building nestled in the serene suburbs of Sibiu.



The new BB House

Costing RM1 million, the three-storey building was collectively funded by generous donors and all the Coys in Sarawak. The proposal to own a new state building was tabled and approved two years ago during the State AGM. In January last year the property was identified and acquired. Following that in April, a Building Fund was launched whereby all Coys were tasked to raise the funds prorate to each Coy's strength.

To grace the occasion was the Guest of Honor, Sarawak BB Chaplain Rev. George Wong Hin Hung.



Inspecting the Guard of Honor by State Chaplain Rev. George Wong

Other distinguished guests included Methodist Sibiu North District Superintendent Rev. Dr. Tiong Chung Tiing, Chaplain Rev. James Chin (Wesley MC, 1st Sibiu), BB Sarawak State Commissioner Hon. Capt. Lo Hoi Fook, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Juby (United Kingdom, Founder of 2nd Penang and BB Malaysia Hon. VP), Mr. Sunny Wu (Hong Kong, BB Asia VP), Mr. Wesley Lo Wing Ching, (BB Hong Kong), Mr. and Mrs. Lim K. Tham (Singapore, BB Asia Secretary-General), Mr. Tham Leong (BB Malaysia Hon. President), Mr. Michael Moorthy (former BB Malaysia and BB Asia President), Hon. Capt. Joseph Tin Kiew Seng (1st Sibiu) and Mdm. Katherine Chan (2nd Subang).



Singing of Hymn Underneath the Banner

More than 500,000 Boys and Girls worldwide have joined the Boys' Brigade which is an inter-denominational Christian youth organization founded by Sir William 130 years ago in Glasgow.

From its humble beginnings in 1961, Sarawak BB today has grown to a strong membership of more than 2,700 Boys and Girls, and 350 Officers.

At 5:00 pm sharp, State Commissioner Hon. Capt. Lo invited Chaplain Rev. Wong to inspect the Guard of Honor consisting of 52 members denoting the number of years of the BB establishment in Sarawak.

This was followed by the opening prayer by the Chaplain of 1st Sibiu.

Guided by Psalm 127:1, "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who built it labor in vain ...", Rev. Chin prayed to God to be with the Boys' Brigade in building the "house" together. The good Chaplain also asked God to continue to use the BB to advance His Kingdom, and glorified God for His blessings upon the youth movement.

In his opening speech, Hon. Capt. Tin welcomed all the guests and thanked God for His provisions. He also expressed his deep appreciation to fellow BB Officers coming from

abroad to witness the auspicious milestone in the annals of the Sarawak BB.

"When we first mooted the idea of buying our own building, it was by faith because we didn't have enough funds. Thank God for the generosity and love from our donors and the conscientious effort put in by all our Sarawak Coys to bless all with this building," said Hon. Capt. Tin, who was the Organizing Chairman for the event and also the Building Fund.

State Commissioner Hon. Capt. Lo in his speech praised all those involved in the fund-raising. "After 52 years we can now call our own building 'BB House' because you

have made it possible," he said.

Congratulatory messages and words of encouragement were also delivered by Mr. Paul Juby, Mr. Sunny Wu, Mr. Lim K. Tham, Mr. Michael Moorthy and Mr. Tham Leong.

Among the highlights of the day's event were splendid dance performances from the BB Methodist Children's Home and 3rd Sibiu. 1st Sibiu Band also performed a medley of two songs much to the delight of all present.

Rev. Dr. Tiong Chung Tiing said the closing prayer and table grace before a buffet dinner was served to all.

BB Sarawak State Chaplain Rev. George Wong Hin signs the plaque



This story was first published at gmc.org.my on Mar 15.

Ohio Youth Have Accepted the Challenge to Help Build a **Malayan Youth Center**

Read what Ohio, U.S.A., is going to do to help Malayan Methodism get started on its long-wished-for Center at Port Dickson. We are indebted to the Reinoehls for the use of this publicity news sheet which very well illustrates how generous giving from people separated by thousands of miles can demonstrate Christian goodwill and faith in all lands and among all peoples. Thank you, Ann Reinoehl and Ohio Methodists. – Editor.



Our own Bishop Hazen G. Werner, after returning from Malaya last year, expressed the need for help in developing a Youth Center at Port Dickson, Malaya. We are even more conscious of need after reading Ann Reinoehl's letter addressed to the Methodist Youth of Ohio. Our help in developing this youth center has been presented to both the Ohio and the Northeast Ohio Youth Councils, and a goal was set to raise \$25,000 - \$15,000 by the Ohio Conference MYF and \$10,000 by the Northeast Ohio MYF – during the remainder of the present quadrennium. We hope our goal can be reached by June, 1959.

You may be asking, "How will the \$25,000 be used?". Our answer comes from Bishop Amstutz of Malaya. In a recent letter he states, "As we see the need now, the \$25,000 contributed by the Methodist Youth of Ohio will be used for building a combination dining hall, kitchen and auditorium. There should also be a large veranda along the entire length of the lodge building, which could be used for social purposes and for lounging. Any money available after building the lodge might be used for building two dormitories."

This is our story, and we need the help of every concerned Ohio Methodist Youth. It is our project. It is your project. Give generously. Contact your conference or district

youth leaders for additional information, if needed.

All contributions should be sent to your conference treasurer, earmarked "For the Malayan Youth Center."

OUR BISHOP SAYS



We in Ohio know of the vast usefulness of our camps and Youth Assembly Grounds. It is thrilling to reflect that the youth of Ohio are helping to provide just such fine facilities for the youth of Malaya at Port Dickson. May I express my appreciation for all you are doing to make this dream come true.

Bishop Hazen G. Werner
Resident Bishop
Ohio Area, Methodist Church.



**SPEAKING FOR
N.E.O. CONF.,
MYF**

Counting the number of fine camps in the Ohio Area, Methodist Youth cannot help but be grateful. But, too, and equally im-

portant, we cannot help but feel a responsibility. The Malayan Youth Camp is a way in which we can fulfill this responsibility. The words of our Master command us to "Give unto others..."

Ruth Mae Mountz
Pres., N.E. Ohio Conf., MYF



**SPEAKING FOR
OHIO CONF., MYF**

The Malayan Youth Camp Project is one of the greatest challenges that the Methodist Youth in Ohio have ever received. It is our chance to reach out personally with our faith. As youth, it may be a bit too soon, perhaps, to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations," but we can from our own individual efforts "give" to make those disciples, and in so doing find that "He is with us always."

John Rainbolt
Pres., Ohio Conf., MYF

Methodist Message
June/July 1957



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