



Completed houses at Sein Yati funded by TRAC churches.

Myanmar Mission Trip Report

23-28 Feb 2009

TRAC's Mission Statement, "Open Heavens, Global Missions" comes closer to fulfilment in the five-year partnership with the Methodist Church (Lower Myanmar) in their relief/rehabilitation work for the Delta area devastated by Cyclone Nargis and the outlying missions outreach work near Yangon-Bago.

The recent trip to Yangon-Borgalay-Bago in February 2009 had a eight member team from TRAC - Mr Francis Choo (Team Leader), Mrs Pauline Choo, Ms Winnie Siew, Ms Janice Tay, Mr Lee Ting Ung, Mr Jeff Ng, Pastor Robert Khaw and Rev Joshua Khong. It had two primary objectives:

1. To monitor the ongoing rebuilding works in four villages where TRAC has committed to a five year rehabilitation/assistance partnership (2008-2012).

2. Field study to the missions outreach work of the Lower Myanmar Methodist churches in the Bago-Yangon area and possible projects and partnership which local TRAC churches can support/assist.

The rehabilitation projects of rebuilding homes and restoring the livelihood of villagers post Cyclone Nargis are well underway and progressing as planned. The new chairperson elected for the Rehabilitation Committee is Dr Caroline Mawia, a trained medical doctor in public healthcare, the wife of Bishop Mawia. God has indeed raised up a most capable servant to lead and serve Him in this important and urgent task. The five-year rehabilitation programme also takes into account preventive measures to minimise damage to property, reduce casualties, and educate villagers on evacuation, storm shelters etc.

February is hot and dry, the crops had been harvested and the padi fields had dried up and hardened. The locals told us that the hottest period would be March-April where temperatures would reach 40-45 Celsius. The yield this year had dropped as low as 40% of its pre-cyclone Nargis harvest. Now that harvest was over and grains stored away, villagers resumed erecting and repairing houses swept away or damaged by the cyclone. Small fishing sampans were bought and distributed to villagers – their main mode for transport and work. Two bigger boats were purchased to transport goods and building material to villages in the Delta.

The scarcity of clean drinking water remains a challenge to health workers in the delta. A UNICEF doctor in one of the villages told us that he had treated more than 45 cases of diarrhoea on the day we met him, children being most



Myanmar Theological Institute.



Serving the children.



TRAC team travelled on tiller to one mission site.

susceptible. There were many young mothers with babies and toddlers in the villages we visited. Dr Caroline Mawia confirmed that there was a shortage of health workers and midwives serving the Delta area because of the vast region and harsh conditions. Many outsiders find these factors to be very challenging. Dr Caroline suggested that perhaps the villagers themselves could be trained as auxiliary midwives and health workers to meet this need.

On the last night we were in Yangon we met a Korean couple who were in Mandalay teaching water purification using the Bio Sand water filtration. The low cost, low maintenance and simple construction of the filtration system using locally available material make it a feasible and possible answer to the quest for clean drinking water.

At every village and church we were greeted with warm friendly smiles and faces of young children and villagers that are filled with joy and hope. The people had very little: homes, meals, clothing were very simple and spartan

and yet everywhere we went we saw the testimony of hope in hopelessness, joy in mourning, light in darkness because God is present. Young children were eager to gather around us to sing praises and listen to the stories that Jesus loves them; villagers generously shared whatever little they had with their Christian brothers and sisters from abroad. No lavish spread on tables but the gatherings, fellowships and meals shared were warm and rich. God reminds us again that His Family is bigger and wider ...not only beyond the four walls of our local churches. The bond of His people and body of Christ goes beyond the boundary of language and nations.

Predominantly Buddhist Myanmar is hard ground to evangelise, nevertheless God has raised up for Himself faithful servants who are willing to labour and persevere in remote villages. We met many young men and women who went into mission fields in their late teens and early twenties upon graduation from the seminary and has remained faithful in their ministry. Korean missionaries have blessed many villages with purchases

of land and building community halls and churches for them. In poverty and subsistence livelihood villagers and brethren in Myanmar need our help and financial support to continue with their ministry and outreach work. It is sad to hear of full time workers and pastors leaving their ministry because they need to work abroad to make ends meet and feed their family.

Field study to the missions outreach work in the Bago-Yangon area has linked up some of the local TRAC churches to bless and assist them in their ongoing work and church growth. I believe we who have the privilege to partner our sister churches in Myanmar are richly blessed too. Their fervour, perseverance and faithfulness to God's calling shine mightier and brighter than the golden stupas and pagodas that dot the green hills and horizon of a land crying out for hope, righteousness and justice.

Rev Joshua Khong
Wesley Methodist Church
Kuantan



Mr Diamond Rajasingam Daniel 1922 – 2009

Mr D R Daniel was called home to the Lord on 3 May 2009. His funeral was held on Wednesday 6 May in Trinity Methodist Church Petaling Jaya, packed with all who came to remember his life and service.

Four persons gave eulogies including one from his daughter Mrs Elizabeth Thomas, who shared what her father meant to her. Mr Daniel's younger brother, Vincent Daniel, gave an account of their childhood, their careers in the teaching profession and their interest in music and drama. Rev John Kovilpillai recounted Mr D R Daniel's support and service in the Tamil Annual Conference. Mr Daniel gave much encouragement to the forming of the Tamil Provisional Annual Conference in 1968, served for 12 years as Lay Leader of TAC, and was instrumental in getting their HQ, Wisma TAC in Brickfields, Kuala Lumpur.

Mrs Bhupalan shared on his service as an educator. After his teaching career and as Principal of Methodist Boys' School Klang, he served as Education Secretary of the Methodist Church in Malaysia. Besides these, Mr D R Daniel was also active in the Teachers Union and was involved in getting recognition and proper help from the Government for children with mental disability.

Indeed, as Rev Alex Thomas, his son-in-law, said in his meditation at the funeral, "Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints." Psalm 116:15.

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June

01-02	Mon-Tue	SCAC Board of Christian Education – Sunday School Teacher Training Camp SCAC Board of Family Wellness & Counselling - Pre-Marriage Camp
01-03	Mon-Wed	CAC Kindergarten Teachers Training TAC Pastors' School
03-05	Wed-Fri	SCAC Board of Laity – 9th Methodist Convention
05-07	Fri-Sun	TAC MYAF Camp
08-11	Mon-Thu	TAC “Edinburgh” 2015 Conference SCAC Methodist Junior Youth Convention
11-13	Thu-Sat	TAC Local Preachers Training Institute
12-13	Fri-Sat	TRAC Board of Ministry & Executive Board Meeting
14	Sun	Methodist Education Foundation Sunday
15-21	Mon-Sat	TAC Christian Home and Family Week
19-21	Fri-Sun	SIAC District Lay & Pastors Convention, Sarikei
19-23	Fri-Tue	CAC National Youth Camp

July

07-09	Tue-Thu	CAC Mission Camp
10-12	Fri-Sun	SIAC District Lay & Pastors Convention, Kapit
13-16	Mon-Thu	SCAC Board meetings
14-17	Tue-Fri	PADERI Conference
15-17	Wed-Fri	SCAC Board of Evangelism – Long House Ministry Forum
21-25	Tue-Sat	SCAC Board of Laity – ILI National Conference

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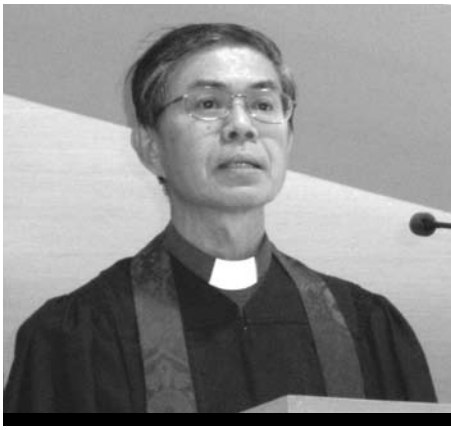
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The Waiting Father - The One Who Meets Our Deepest Yearnings

The season of Lent, which climaxes with Good Friday and Easter, is just over. What is so special about it? I would like to reflect over three articles on God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit respectively. Hopefully, they will enable us to understand better, not only the meaning of Good Friday and Easter, but also the wonders of the gospel message we have in Christ. We begin with the Father.

Love – the object of our deepest yearnings

At the very heart of the nature of God Himself is love. 'God is love' (1 John 4: 8,16)! Moreover, our Lord Jesus also reminds that the greatest commandment is 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength,' and the second is 'Love your neighbour as yourself' (Mark 12: 30 & 31). Thus not only is God love himself, but our highest duty in life is to love Him and one another! This further points to something that lies at the very heart of life, that inside each of us is a deep yearning, a desperate human cry to be loved!

Unfortunately, the word 'love' is much misused and trivialised today, although in reality we need it far more than most realise. Around the 1920s, doctors in some hospitals in Europe and North America noted high mortality rates among orphaned or deserted babies, even after they had been given the best care and nutrition. Babies would just become listless, refuse food and then gradually die. But they also noted that such babies would sometimes respond to some specific individual nurse.

These babies, when given special attention and bodily contact by such a nurse, often survive. In one New York hospital, the mortality rate dropped from 35% to less than 10%. They could only conclude that many babies were dying of grief for their lost mothers, and that when love was received through a surrogate mother, they lived!

Although many are not consciously aware of how much we need to be loved, nevertheless we see this deep yearning for love again and again expressed in different ways in life. In the 1960s, The Beatles sang, 'She loves you, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah ...' Pop songs today beat a similar tune! And when many, not least the young, go sleeping around in a desperate (and often, aimless) search for companionship and fulfilment, they are crying out for the same. Similarly, when men and women, driven by deep-seated insecurities, chase frantically after beauty, money, success, sex, power, degrees, titles and the like, they are really doing so because, deep inside them, they are afraid that they will not be respected and loved. Just watch the advertisements and see how such fears are being exploited daily, if you want to understand this better!

But the truth is that many are seeking meaning, acceptance and love in the wrong places. They do not realise that what they yearn for is found partially at best in the world around us. Only in God can our deepest longings for love be met. The great St. Augustine, after many wild and wasted youthful years, summed this up eventually in the words: 'You have made

us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you!'

The Message of Good Friday

What has all this to do with Lent, the time when we remember Christ's suffering on the cross? The answer in short is that Good Friday is about God, knowing our condition and deep longings, who loves us with an immeasurable love. Taking the initiative, He actively seeks us by sending His Son to die to redeem us. 'God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life' (John 3:16).

The Bible, especially in Gen 3, tells us that when we disobeyed God, sin broke our relationship with Him. Herein lies the root of our spiritual problems. Cut off from the source of life, purpose and love, we lost our security in God. Together with this, guilt, shame and fear (Gen 3:7-10) came into human existence. All these have led to the disintegration and brokenness of the self found in each of us. Not only insecurity, but psychological disintegration of every kind ensued—emotional hurts, sense of rejection, loss of identity and sense of self-worth, and the like. But that is not all. A proper understanding of Gen 3 and other parts of the biblical message tells us that our broken relationship with God and with ourselves led further to our broken relationships with each other and with nature. In other words, sin lies at the root of our spiritual, psychological, social and ecological problems. All these need to be healed and made whole again, and that is what salvation is all about.

Good Friday is about God taking the initiative: God sent His Son (John 3:16)! Even in the story of the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:9), we find Him searching for a lost Adam: 'Where are you?' Perhaps it is in the Parable of the Waiting Father (Luke 15:11-31) that we sense the Father's love most powerfully. The parable is often wrongly called the Parable of the Prodigal Son. But that is wrong of course, because the central character in the story is not the rascal who ultimately repented, but the Father who patiently waited for the son to come home! And though the son's actions have been most offensive to the father, and indeed had shamed him and the whole family, nevertheless the father in his love was always waiting for the son to come home!

The message of Good Friday is that God can turn things round. Sinners can be forgiven—just like the Prodigal son! Our deep-seated insecurities can be removed by our relationship with God being restored through Christ's death for us! Broken lives and relationships can be healed. As I write, I think of a friend who had lost a small fortune in gambling, as a non-Christian. The habit had enslaved him and his wife was on the verge of walking out on him. God stepped into his life, sorted him out at a rehabilitation centre for gamblers run by an AG church, and saved his marriage. Today he is happily serving God in a ministry with a church.

I think also of a Christian girl I first knew many years ago who could not get along with anyone who lives or works with her. She could even scold her own bishop! But God graciously stepped into her life and confronted her with her deep-seated brokenness. Her father had deserted her mother when she and her sister were still tiny tots. Her mother had slaved her guts out to bring both the girls up in the midst of extreme poverty. The girl herself was eaten up with anger and bitterness towards a father whom she had never even seen. But when she learnt to release forgiveness, she found healing and wholeness as the love of God flooded her heart.

Again, God's love is the only real answer to the deep sense of insecurity in each of us. Earlier I noted that our separation from God because of sin has led to our loss of the fundamental source of security in life, just as (but much more than) when a baby is separated from his or her parents. This, together with inner wounds in our lives, results in us being deeply insecure and broken persons. So often in life we end up chasing vainly after things which we hope can give us a clear sense of security, identity and self-worth. But Good Friday is about God providing us with a totally different answer: To find our security and identity in Him!

When a person becomes a Christian, he or she returns home to a Waiting Father. This is the Father who sent His Son for our salvation. He is also the same Father who affirmed His Son at His baptism at Jordan with the words, 'You are my Son, whom I love, with you I am well pleased' (Mark 1:9-11). David McKenna, one time President of Asbury Theological Seminary, commented that it is like God saying to Jesus the Son: 'I claim you. I love you. I am proud of you. Everyone needs to belong, to be loved, to be praised. When God says "I claim You," Jesus finds the strength of His identity. When God says, "I am proud of You!" He has His sense of worth. This is the unshakable identity that Jesus took as His credentials into His public ministry. We too need these strengths of personhood. These are the relational credentials we must have if our ministry is to be effective: a sense of identity, of security, and a sense of self-worth.' Do we know such a Father too?

The message of Good Friday is that salvation can come into individuals, revival to churches, healing to communities and transformation to nations, because of what Jesus has done for us! That's why the Cross—a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles (1 Cor 1:23)—always stands at the centre of the Christian faith! And all these springs from the heart of the Waiting Father, a Father

who is determined to save, to love, to heal and to transform!

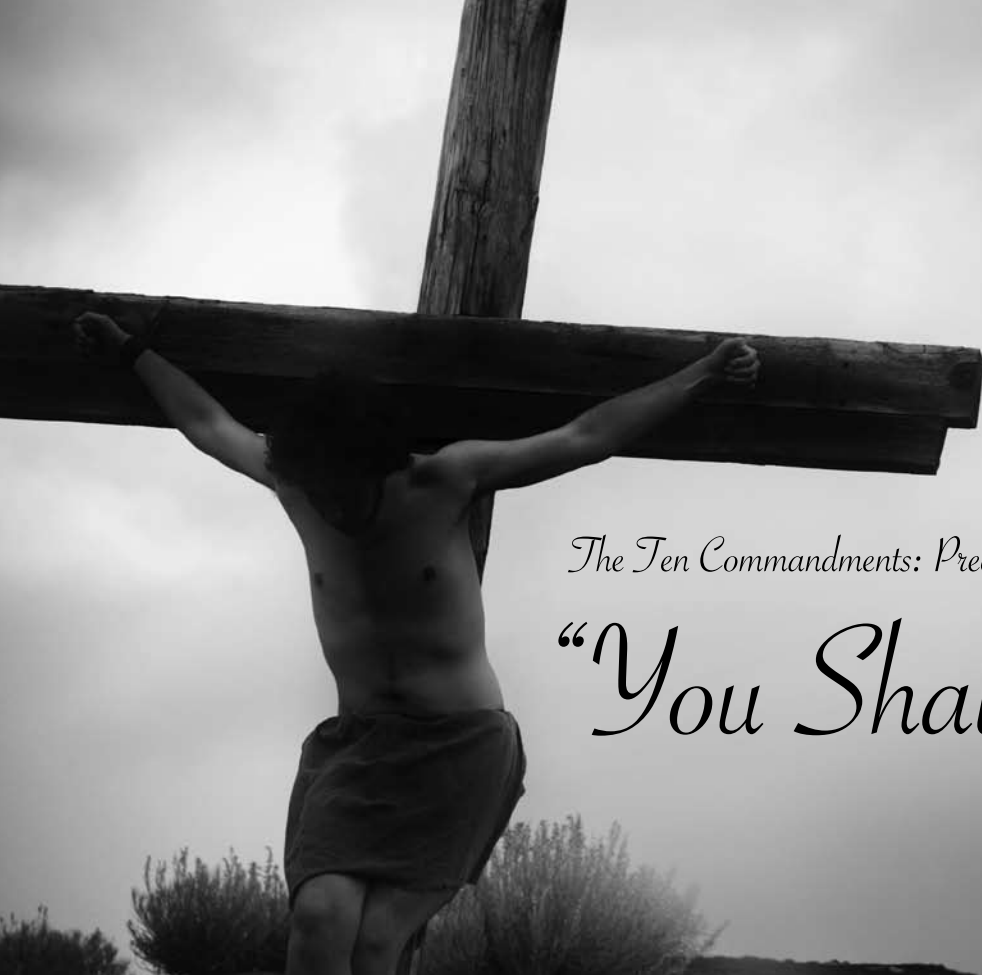
This is the glorious message of Good Friday! There is no other faith in the world which tells us of a Father like this! Nothing that we have done can make us deserve the love of God. It is given to us purely by grace, and entirely at the Father's initiative.

Do you know this Waiting Father?

In the Parable of the Waiting Father (Luke 15:11-31), there are actually two sons. There is the prodigal son, the rascal who had insulted the Father and shamed the family, but who found forgiveness, grace, acceptance and love waiting for him when he finally got home. There is also another son, the older brother. He was the good boy in the family, the dutiful one who had served the Father faithfully. But he could not understand how the Father can accept and love the younger brother and even throw a party, a *kenduri*, for the whole town to celebrate when the rascal returns home!?! Angrily he berated the Father: 'All these years I have been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so that I could celebrate with my friends' (v.29).

As we think of the wonder of the Christian message, we need to ponder this question. Which of the two sons in the parable do you really identify with? Do you see yourself as the rascal who comes home to a love that you never ever could deserve? Or, are you one of those who, like the big brother, has dutifully served God all your life, but has never really understood the heart of the Waiting Father? Indeed it is possible to have 'stayed home' all this while and yet never ever grasp the message of salvation and the gospel of grace!

May God grant you and I grace to know this Father who constantly waits for us to return, so that He can pour His love into our hearts to save, heal and transform!



The Ten Commandments: Precepts for God's People (8)

“You Shall Not Steal!”

Exodus 20:15

Rev Mark Chua

Humanly speaking, one would not have thought that this prohibition against stealing should be part of the Decalogue alongside offences which are far more serious, such as offences against life, marriage and truth. After all, stealing is manifestly wrong, even to those who are outside the faith. Alec Motyer suggests that the Decalogue does not go in for a ‘league table’ of sins, much like the Seven Deadly Sins that the church as early as the third century had enunciated, which are pride, envy, anger, sloth, avarice (greed), gluttony and lust. Yet, God knows better, that is, He knows our hearts better!

The Meaning

Rabbinic tradition and some modern scholars suggest that what the eighth commandment prohibits is kidnapping since the previous two commandments carries “capital” offences and the Mosaic law lays down death penalty for kidnappers (Deut 24:7). However, most scholars are of the view that the command is much broader and should not be limited to stealing of people.

Rob Schenck explains that the Hebrew word, “*Ganaf* – stealing – covers all conventional types of theft: burglary (breaking into a home or building to commit theft); robbery (taking property directly from another using violence or intimidation); larceny

(taking something without permission and not returning it); hijacking (using force to take goods in transit or seizing control of a bus, truck, plane, etc.); and pick pocketing and purse-snatching. The term *ganaf* also covers a wide range of exotic and complex thefts ... (such as) embezzlement (the fraudulent taking of money or other goods entrusted to one’s care). There is extortion (getting money from someone by means of threats or misuses of authority), and racketeering (obtaining money by illegal means).”

Love to our neighbour requires that we hold sacred not only the life of a person (“You shall not murder”) and his marriage (“You shall not commit adultery”) but also his property and what is due to him or her. Implicit in this commandment is the demand to respect private property, for it is an offence to take what is not rightfully one’s own. This is the matter of personal integrity. Personal integrity demands honesty, complete freedom from any form of cheating, stealing, or taking advantage of others.

Ways Of Stealing

The means of thieving comes in many forms and shapes. I remember to my shame, when I was younger, that I had stolen small amounts of money when I took care of my brother’s provision shop. Then

it got bigger until one day I was caught red-handed by my own brother! But then later I thought, I worked for him and he did not pay me a cent! How we can justify our own misdeeds!

Failure to return things that we have borrowed from others is a form of theft. The Mosaic law considers it wrong when things or property which have been entrusted are not protected or are stolen by deception or negligence, or when someone pretends that a stolen or lost article belongs to him (Lev 6:1-4). It was reported not long ago that an elderly lady in UK decided to deposit her money which she had been keeping at home. However, on the way to the bank, she forgot to take out her bag which she had left in a taxi, loaded with cash! The money had not been returned to her. That is theft too.

We break this commandment when we under-declare our income for tax purposes. In the words of our Lord, we are to give to Caesar what is due to him (Luke 20:20-25). We steal when we make false and exaggerated claims from insurance companies or from employers. Employees steal from employers when they misuse their office hours to do their own personal things or when they spend their time surfing the net, or play with computer games. Theft, therefore, is not limited to mere material

things but extends also to services and other areas such as intellectual property and plagiarism. Copyrights must be respected and illegal copying of books, CDs, VCDs or DVDs are forms of cheating.

Failure to return debts which are owed is a form of stealing. "Owe nothing to anyone," Paul wrote in Rom 13:8, "except your obligation to love one another." This verse does not mean that we cannot take loans from banks, but certainly integrity requires that we are honest in all our payments. Some may declare bankruptcy, and while this is legally possible, it can be misused and morally wrong.

Employers cheat when they withhold wages that is due to their employees (Lev 19:13) or when they take advantage of their employees and under pay them for their services. James has some harsh words against those who fail to pay their workers (Jas 5:1-4). Again, it is theft when businessmen fail to give value for money. Dishonest scales and measurement are abhorred by God (Lev 19:35f; Pro 20:23). Overcharging interests such as those involved as loan sharks or certain credit companies are guilty of breaking this command. Mosaic law requires that no interest is charged when a loan is given to fellow Israelites "so that your God may bless you in everything you do" (Deut 24:19-20). Compassion for those in need will rule the heart that fears God, and God will remember them.

Corruption at the highest level whether in the government or companies involves cheating the masses for their own personal benefit. They give false figures to deceive people. The lack of transparency on government spending (which is public money) is a major cause of concern in our country. People have to pay more for goods and services as a result. In our country, toll charges appear to be well above the justifiable amount. It is a well-accepted fact that greed, dishonesty and fraud lay at the root of the current global and national economic crisis. Huge funds amounting to billions of dollars were misreported, misused or siphoned off for personal interests. As a result, thousands lost their savings. Many more are laid off their work. Once again, it is the ordinary people who suffer.

John Calvin said, "It follows, therefore, that not only are those thieves who secretly steal the property of others, but those also who seek gain from the loss of others,

accumulate wealth by unlawful practices and are most devoted to their private advantage than to equity". Stealing is far more common than acknowledged. Martin Luther remarked, "If we look at mankind in all its conditions, it is nothing but a vast, wide stable full of great thieves."

Stewardship

Philip Graham Ryken notes further that, "By saying, 'You shall not steal,' God indicated that people have a right to own their private property. Otherwise, the whole concept of stealing would fail to make sense. Only something that belongs to someone can be stolen from him.... This brings us to the positive side of the eighth commandment. What the Bible means by ownership is not possessing things to use for our own purposes, but receiving things from God to use for his glory. So at the same time that we are forbidden to take things that don't belong to us, we are required to use what we have in ways that are pleasing to our God. To put it simply, the eighth commandment isn't just about stealing; it is also about stewardship."

J.I. Packer expands on this, "Behind the commandment lies the Bible's view of property; namely, that ownership is stewardship. By human law, my property is that which I own and may dispose of as I wish, as distinct from that which I am merely allowed to use as borrower or trustee, under conditions which the owner imposes. Bible-believers, however, know that what human law says I own – my money, goods, legal rights and titles – I actually hold as God's trustee. In the terms of Jesus' parable, these things are talents, lent me by my Lord on a temporary basis to use for him. One day I shall be asked to give account of how I managed those of his resources which I was given control."

Stewardship means that we are to work hard for our own living. Laziness is sinful because we are laying to waste God's given resources which are to be used creatively for the benefit of others. But beyond honest labour and providing for our own, the scriptures urges us to work in order that we may share with others who are in need, particularly with those in the household of faith (Gal 6:10), but also to a wider, hurting world (see Eph 4:26).

We are stewards when we gladly give of our tithes (Mal 3:8-10), our time and our service to God. A spirit of generosity is a mark of those who have been touched by the grace of God, aware of the sheer generosity of

God who has given the indescribable gift of His very own Son. But giving is also a sign that money does not possess its damning power over us. As Kent Hughes has said, "Every time I give, I declare that money does not control me. Perpetual generosity is a perpetual de-deification of money." The consequence of such generosity will last forever. As A.W. Tozer once said, "Any temporal possession can be turned into everlasting wealth. Whatever is given to Christ is immediately touched with immortality." Jesus has commanded us to lay treasures in heaven (Matt 6:19-21), and giving to the poor and needy and for the furtherance of His kingdom is an amazing means of converting our temporal currency to eternal ones (Matt 6:33; Mk 10:21)!

Contentment

The eighth commandment further bears out the truth about being contented with whatever that God has provided for us. The tenth commandment strengthens this thought further. For many, contentment is foolishness because the aspiration to get rich is so entrenched in our world's economic system. But surely if there is one thing the global economic crisis ought to teach us, it is that greed and discontentment does not pay. The system will just collapse, and billions of dollars can take its wings and disappear (Pro 23:5)! Better still to take hold of opportunities and invest in the eternal.

Contrary to common perception, contentment is not a dull, insipid spirit that kills all adventure. Rightly understood, it drives a person to live in robust spirit knowing the goal of one's life is to glorify God through all that one has, thus enabling him to make godly choices (so the prayer in Pro 30:8-9). John Wesley understood that in his time, giving all he had for the gospel's sake while keeping only to his basic needs. Robertson McQuilkin rephrases his famous words in this context of stewardship, "Earn all you can (with integrity), save all you can (toward meeting known future obligations), give all you can (in sacrificial love and faith in the God who provides)."

Rev Mark Chua is the Associate Pastor of KL Chinese Methodist (Hokkien) Church and KL Methodist Vineyard.

TRAC MSF ANNUAL CAMP 2009



The TRAC Methodist Seniors Fellowship held their 18th Annual Camp from 10th – 13th March, 2009 at the Bayu Beach Resort, Port Dickson. The Seremban MSF chapter was selected to host this camp because it was the only MSF chapter in the southern district that had yet to host such an event. Coincidentally, it might interest you to know that the first such camp was held in 1992 at the Port Dickson Methodist Centre, as we were informed by Mr. Peter Fung, a former TRAC MSF President. So holding this camp once again in Port Dickson was a homecoming of sorts for the MSF. In choosing the venue the Local Planning Committee had to bear in mind the cost in relation to food and accommodation as well as its suitability for seniors.

The Local Planning Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Michael Goh and his team did a splendid job of organizing this camp, which in my view was by far the most challenging and difficult to organize, in terms of logistics, program and participation by chapters. A total of 12 chapters participated in this camp. Our Singapore counterpart from the Glowing Years Ministry (GYM) also sent a delegation of 22 people. In the past, they used to come in one or two busloads. The smallest chapter was from Taiping with 1 participant and the largest was, of course the host chapter, Seremban, 36 participants. We were also pleasantly surprised with the

participation of 8 seniors from Johor Baru Wesley Methodist Church, which has yet to form an MSF chapter. It has been the hope of TRAC MSF to see a new chapter being formed in J.B. Wesley. As usual there were more new faces each time around and this speaks well for our camps. We had approximately 170 participants this year although at our recent camps the attendance had never fallen below 250. Perhaps the global economic down-turn might have also taken a toll on our annual camp.

Since Port Dickson had practically no tourist spots of interest the organizers had to plan for activities such as ‘telematches’ and ‘karaoke’ sessions and line dancing to keep the participants occupied. As it turned out, these activities proved to be very entertaining to all who participated in them. Our seniors really showed their hidden talents at the Karaoke and Fellowship nights.

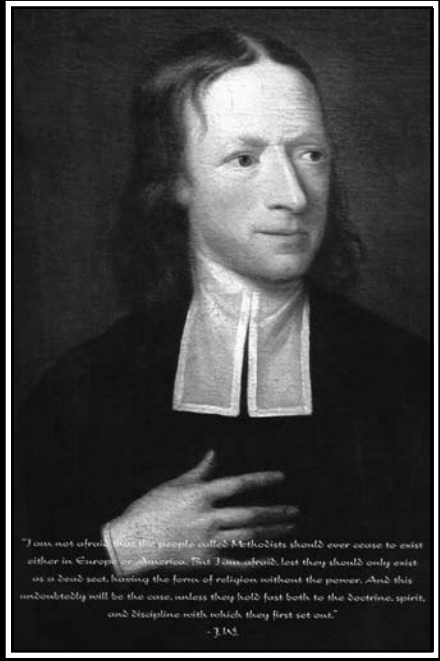
Besides the fun and fellowship there was also a talk on Diabetes, a panel discussion on “Road Map of the Methodist Church in Malaysia for the next 20 years” and also a promotional presentation on the work of “Persatuan Berdikari Seremban Negeri Sembilan”. One of the most important activity at the Camp was the AGM as well as the election of office bearers for TRAC-MSF which proceeded very smoothly, under the supervision of Rev Hwa Jen. We

welcome the re-election of brother Daniel Chan for the post of President and also other members, including some new faces, to the new Board of Management.

The theme speaker for the camp was Rev Khoo Cheng Hoot, pastor of the Hakka Methodist Church, Singapore. He spoke at the opening worship service led by the chapter from KL Wesley and also at the following two morning worship services. Judging from the results of the evaluation of the camp, it was without a doubt that his three messages were well received by all present. His messages for the three days were, “Renewed Day by Day”, “Methodist Covenant Discipleship”, and “The Best Is Yet To Be” in that order. The closing worship was led by the Seremban chapter with the TRAC President, Rev Ong Hwai Teik, bringing the message “The Life That God Blesses”. He also conducted the service of installation of the newly elected MSF Board members and the Holy Communion for all present. The offering taken during the closing service was designated for the Sengoi Kindergarten development in Kampar. With Rev Ong’s closing message, it brought a fitting close to the camp – with all returning home feeling renewed and recharged to take up the challenge to do God’s work among the seniors.

Michael Goh
Chairman, Planning Committee

Aldersgate 24 May 1738



John Wesley was almost in despair. He did not have the faith to continue to preach. When death stared him in the face, he was fearful and found little comfort in his religion. To Peter Böhler, a Moravian

friend, he confessed his growing misery and decision to give up the ministry. Böhler counseled otherwise. "Preach faith till you have it," he advised. "And then because you have it, you will preach faith." A wise Catholic once made a similar statement: "Act as if you have faith and it will be granted to you."

John acted on the advice. He led a prisoner to Christ by preaching faith in Christ alone for forgiveness of sins. The prisoner was immediately converted. John was astonished. He had been struggling for years. Here was a man transformed instantly. John made a study of the New Testament and found to his astonishment that the longest recorded delay in salvation was three days--while the apostle Paul waited for his eyes to open.

The Moravians assured him their personal experiences had also been instantaneous. John found himself crying out, "Lord, help my unbelief!" However, he felt dull within and little motivated even to pray for his own salvation. On this day, May 24th, 1738 he opened his Bible at about five in the morning and came across these words, "There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, even that ye should partakers of the divine nature." He read similar words in other places.

That evening he reluctantly attended a meeting in Aldersgate. Someone read from Luther's Preface to the Epistle to Romans. About 8:45 p.m. "while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."

It took him some time to learn how to live the life of faith, for he was not always possessed of joy and thought he had fallen from salvation. It took time for him to see that it is not Christ and good works, but Christ alone who saves, resulting in good works.

As time went on, John Wesley was mightily used of the Lord to reform England. His Methodists became a national force. John rode thousands of miles (as many as 20,000 a year) preaching as only a man filled with the Holy Spirit can preach, telling the gospel to all who would listen. He acted "as though he were out of breath in pursuit of souls." Wherever he preached, lives changed and manners and morals altered for the better. It is often conjectured that his preaching helped spare England the kind of revolution that occurred in France.

From *Glimpses of Christian History*

Majlis Gereja-Gereja Malaysia
Council Of Churches Of Malaysia

CCM Media Release The Perak State Assembly sitting of 7th May

The Council of Churches of Malaysia (CCM) is deeply troubled and concerned at the events that unfolded at the Perak State Assembly sitting on the 7th May.

The unruly scenes, the scuffles and the removal of the Speaker of the House by force, have all violated the dignity of the State Assembly and made a mockery of basic democratic principles that citizens have come to expect from a nation that champions human rights.

The power and authority of the Speaker have been undermined.

The police had overstepped its authority by the harassment of duly elected representatives, and of peaceful protestors exercising their rights of free expression guaranteed under the constitution. The police must remain above politics to have integrity and the confidence of the people.

The CCM realizes that the political crisis in Perak is a great worry to all just and peace-loving citizens of our country.

The CCM feels that it is time for the government to uphold its commitment to building a democratic and peaceful Malaysia by returning power to the people to decide by whom and how they should be governed.

To this end, the CCM joins civil society in calling the Sultan to exercise his sovereign power by calling for fresh elections in the state.

This is the only way to resolve the current

political impasse.

As Christians, we believe that justice will have its day, because God expects that the nation is governed by principles of righteousness and justice.

As churches pray for the speedy resolution of the political crisis in Perak, we remember the words of the Bible:

"To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice... The violence of the wicked will sweep them away, because they refuse to do what is just" (Proverbs 21: 3, 7).

REV. DR. THOMAS PHILIPS
PRESIDENT

REV. DR. HERMEN SHASTRI
GENERAL SECRETARY

11th May 2009

At the 9th Session General Conference in September 2008, four papers were presented on the topics Discipleship, Evangelism & Church Planting, Missions and Church & Society. These provided the basis for group discussions with the view of drawing up a roadmap for the Methodist Church in Malaysia. These papers, in abridged form, will be published in the coming issues of Pelita Methodist. Editor.

Rev Dr Siew, from Chinese Annual Conference, and Rev Dr Komar, from Tamil Annual Conference, are on the faculty of Seminari Theoloji Malaysia.

Evangelism And Church Planting For The Methodist Church In Malaysia

By Rev Dr Philip Siew

The sense of urgency and passion for evangelism has always been at the heart of Methodism since its founding days. So declares John Wesley,

You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. And go not only to those that need you, but to those that need you most... It is not your business to preach so many times, and to take care of this or that society; but to save as many souls as you can; to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance.

Although by no means we should see people as "bodyless souls" and need to reach out to them in a holistic manner, we need to view the task of evangelism as a non-negotiable priority of the Methodist Church. It must be taken as the mandate that Christ has decreed the Church to obey and accomplish (Mt.28:19, 20; ML 16:15). In fact, we need to have the vision and passion to see that the "whole church takes the whole gospel for the whole person in holistic way to the whole world."

While the concrete and actual evangelistic work will be carried out practically at the local church level, it is pertinent that theological reflections, vision setting and strategy of the task be done collectively at the General Conference level so that the whole Methodist Church in Malaysia will be able to know the what, why and how of evangelism and accomplish the task in a systematic, strategic and synchronized way in our present context.

(I) WHAT is Evangelism?

The Constitution of the Methodist Church in Malaysia defines Evangelism in the following words:

Evangelism is the winning of the lost to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord through the agency of the Holy Spirit.

It is an attitude, a spirit, and a living faith which find expression in the continuous co-operative effort on the part of the Holy Spirit and humankind to bring individuals into vital relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ His son. It results in a definite personal experience of salvation and a progressive building of Christ-like character. It seeks to bring man into complete harmony with the Will of God and into the fellowship of the church. It helps him to grow spiritually through the means of grace and to serve God in daily living. {Para 529.7 (b)}

(II) WHO should do Evangelism?

The Methodist Constitution declares that Evangelism is the task of the whole church. Every minister, department, agency, local church, and member of the Methodist Church is responsible for its accomplishment. {Para 529.7 (b)}

While all Christians should always be ready to share the gospel with others, those who are gifted in evangelism in the church should be released from other responsibilities of the church and be set aside specifically for the task. Therefore, truth about spiritual gifts should be taught, and members are to be helped to discover their gifting. Those found to be gifted in evangelism should be given in-depth training and be allowed to focus on the evangelistic task without distractions.

(III) WHY do Evangelism?

The motivation for evangelism should be the love of God for the world (Jn.3:16) and his will "not wanting any one to perish, but every one to come to repentance" (2 Pet.3:9). God "wants all people to be saved and to come to knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim.2:4). So the love, passion and

compassion to see that the lost be reached with the gospel of Christ and be reconciled to God through him should motivate us to the honorable and glorious task. Since the mandate to "preach the gospel to the whole world" (Mk.16:15) and "go and make disciples of all nations" (Mt.28:19) is given by our Savior and risen Lord who holds "all authority in heaven and on earth" (Mt.28:18), obedience is the only option. The goal is to see that "the name of God be hallowed; his Kingdom come; his will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Mt.6:9,10).

(IV) HOW to implement Evangelism?

The task of evangelism should not be seen as just a program or one-time event. It should be seen as a process, involving preparation of the sowers and harvesters and the soil, sowing, watering, fertilizing, caring, and finally reaping or harvesting which also continues with nurturing and equipping of the harvest thus reaped. For the purpose of this paper, the process has been described as follows.¹

(1) Prayers

There must be constant fervent prayers by all Methodists and Methodist churches for the Church - all ministers, preachers (ordained or lay), and members - to be filled with vision, passion and compassion for and the strength and power to reach the lost, and also for the liberation and salvation for all the lost.

(2) Passion, Vision & Compassion

The whole church must have the passion and vision to be obedient to the commission of the evangelistic mission decreed by our risen Lord (Mt.28:18-20). This is the prerequisite for the Church to engage in effective and fruitful evangelism. "No

vision, (God's) people cast off restraints." "No vision, people (of the world) perish." (Prov.29:18) We must be passionate about having compassion for the lost and the vision to see that they be saved and transformed by the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (Mt.9:35-38). The vision and passion of reaching the lost for Christ with His gospel must be so captured by the whole Methodist Church, from the leadership in General Conference, to all Annual Conferences, Districts, and local churches; from Bishop to all Presidents, District Superintendents, elders and deacons, preachers lay or ordained, lay leaders, stewards and members. We must receive from God the compassion for the lost, and that we will give our soul no rest until every lost one in Malaysia and beyond is reached with the saving grace of our Lord Jesus the Christ.

(3) Presence

All Methodists need to live a Christ-like living to bear an authentic witness for Christ and his gospel with our words and deeds in our day-to-day living in the various arenas of lives including the marketplace. We are to live out the "scriptural holiness" in our various daily dealings before we could spread it to others. It is when our lives, personally and individually, are transformed daily by the grace, Spirit and Word of God that we are able to bring about transformation in our families, churches, communities, societies, nations and throughout the world. We need to let our light shine before the lost and allow them to see the Gospel through our good deeds (Mat.5:16). If we wish to bring authentic changes to the world with the gospel, we must not be like the world that we seek to transform or let it creep into us. We need to always repent to be transformed to the image of Christ daily in our words and deeds. We need to grow in our Christian maturity constantly to see that our presence in the world reflects holiness, love, kindness, justice, truthfulness, and humility and to be able to bear forth the fruit of the Spirit (Gal.5:22,23).

The Church, as a community of faith, has to lead a life of love and unity to bear an authentic presence as the people of God that will glorify God in the world (Jn. 13:34, 35; 17:20-23).

(4) Preparation

"...Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give a reason for the hope that you have..." (1 Pet.3:15) All Methodists need to be mobilized and be

regularly trained on how to share the gospel with relatives and friends and others clearly and effectively as a constant preparation for the evangelistic task. It is through regular training in effective evangelism that we will be properly equipped and thus be ready to "preach the Word in season or out of season" with confidence and integrity. In this regard, we might want to seek cooperation with Christian organizations that provide such special training. No particular tool or method is sacrosanct or indispensable. To be equipped with as many tools and methods as possible is to be ready to reach as many and different people with different and possible ways appropriately and effectively as possible.

We need to especially seek out those who are endowed with the gift of evangelism and release them from the burden of other tasks but to allow them to focus on doing evangelism as mentioned above.

(5) Proclamation

We need to use "all wisdom" (Col. 1:28) and appropriate and effective ways and methods to proclaim Christ and his gospel. This can be in the form of personal evangelism to evangelistic meetings and mass evangelism. However, members need to engage in a day-to-day witness, and keep in touch with and express care for their relatives and friends so that they will be able to share the good news with them when opportunity arises in every possible and appropriate way. This can be in the form of using personal testimony, evangelistic booklets or gospel tracts, CDs, VCDs, DVDs, and other creative evangelistic tools.

As a redeemed and redeeming community, local churches must also be ready to engage in on-going authentic evangelism as a whole, reaching people in and around the vicinity of the church in every possible and appropriate way.

(6) Persuasion

While our responsibility is to faithfully and authentically proclaim the gospel in our words and deeds, we need to give our hearers opportunity to respond to the gospel. Nevertheless, while people must not be coerced, forced or manipulated to accept Christ, it is our obligation, with humility, gentleness, sensitivity and integrity, to persuade them to repent and be reconciled to God through Christ Jesus (1 Cor.5:19,20). At the same time, results should not be used to determine the value, success or failure of our evangelistic efforts.

Our mission is to engage in authentic Christian witness for Christ, and trust the work of the Holy Spirit and thus leave the consequence to Him.

(7) Preservation

Once people have come to repentance and accept Christ, they should be assimilated into the church and be nurtured to grow in Christ to be his faithful disciples.

(8) Propagation

All Methodists should be trained and equipped to be disciple-makers for Christ for future generations (2 Tim.2:2).

(9) Power

While we have the responsibility to do what we ought to do, we can only accomplish what has been entrusted to us by trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit who alone convicts the world of sins (Jn.16:8), glorifies Christ (Jn.16:14), empowers the gospel (1 Thess.1:5), and regenerates people (Jn.3:5; Titus 3:5). Therefore, the attitude of constant humility in reliance of God in fervent prayers is essential for effective evangelism to take place. Although sometimes the Holy Spirit will accompany the proclamation of the gospel with signs and wonders, it is not to be overemphasized to miss the focus of evangelism which is for transformation of lives, from genuine repentance and true faith in Christ, to reconciliation with God. As much as signs and wonders are helpful, they are not ends in themselves. They are the work of the Holy Spirit as he wills and leads, and should not be seen as a must in evangelism.

(V) WHO needs the gospel?

"All people everywhere" need to hear the gospel, repent and be reconciled to God through Christ (Acts 17:30). All Methodists must be encouraged and equipped to reach both acquaintances and non-acquaintances for Christ with the gospel.

(1) Acquaintances: Members are to be challenged, motivated and trained to reach out to the people in their relationship network - family members, relatives, friends, neighbors, colleagues, employees, employers, customers, students, teachers and so on.

(2) Non-acquaintances:

(a) those living in their neighborhood;

(b) the community in the vicinity of a local church. The local churches should also have the vision, planning and action to reach the people who are

living in the vicinity of the church in a systematic way.

As for the nation as a whole, we need to quantify our evangelistic task so as to know more clearly how much we have done and need to be done. As a nation, Malaysia has a population of 23.3 million people according to the census taken in 2000. There are 2.1 million Christians which is 9.1% of the total population.

Sabah has a population of 2.6 million. There are 725,000 Christians which is 27.7% of the population in Sabah. There are 1,465 Methodist confirmed members in Sabah (SPAC) which occupies 0.05% of the population of Sabah and 0.2% of Christian population in Sabah.

Sarawak has a population of 2 million. There are 882,000 Christians which is 42.5% of the population in Sarawak. There are 51,947 Methodist confirmed members in Sarawak (SCAC 24,615, SIAC 27,359) which occupies 2.6% of the population of Sarawak and 5.9% of Christian population in Sarawak.

Peninsular Malaysia has a population of 18.7 million. There are 493,000 Christians which is 2.6% of the population in Peninsular Malaysia. There are 47,556

Methodist confirmed members in West Malaysia (CAC 23,124, TRAC 13,866, TAC 8,120, SMC 2,446) which occupies 0.25% of the population of Peninsular Malaysia and 9.6% of Christian population in Peninsular Malaysia.

Relevant data for every state in Malaysia including Wilayah Persekutuan of Kuala Lumpur and Labuan can be found in the appendices. The statistics provided aim to give the reader a concrete picture of how many have been reached and how many are yet to be reached for Christ among various ethnic groups in Malaysia.

Furthermore, evangelism needs not only be done in cities or urban areas. It needs also be carried out in towns, villages and rural areas. Plans and strategy need to be developed for evangelism to be implemented in both urban and non-urban areas.

To translate what has been discussed above into concrete steps and goals, the following will be suggested. Every local church

- Should have regular prayer meetings to pray for vision, passion and compassion for the pastors and church members to reach the lost for Christ, and also the salvation of the not-yet-believers;

- Should establish a good relationship with the community in which it is located by making significant contributions for the well being of the community;
- Should have on-going short-term and long-term evangelistic plans to do evangelism in a systematic way;
- Should help church members to discover their spiritual gifts;
- Should release those with gift for evangelism to focus on the task;
- Should hold evangelism training for members at least once a year;
- Should conduct "Andrew Movement" to mobilize church members to do evangelism among their acquaintances;
- Should encourage members to do evangelism at least 52 times a year (once every week) among acquaintances and non-acquaintances;
- Should hold evangelistic meetings on Sundays regularly;
- Should conduct "Evangelism Explosion" in the community where the church is located at least once every two or three years;
- Should identify existing or new residential areas around the church vicinity which have large population yet without a preaching point or church, and pray, plan, and begin evangelistic work in the areas regularly.²

Evangelism and Planting Churches of the Methodist Tradition in Malaysia

By Rev Dr Joseph Komar

Evangelism has an objective: to win people to become followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. That through Jesus humankind may be set free from the penalty of sin and redeemed for eternity. Therefore conversion is a chosen imperative where people are encouraged to move from any faith, philosophy or ideology to Christianity. This ethos pervades the Methodist Church and therefore every possible means is employed so that this desired objective becomes a continuing reality. Hence the mode or method to make evangelism effective has evolved over the decades to be very much seeker centered. When people turn to Christianity they are incorporated into a fellowship (a church) to be disciplined and trained to become fishers of people. Christian maturity is not possible outside a community of believers. A planted church is the direct result of evangelism is also an agency from which the gospel goes

out. A visible community of believers in each community living and articulating the faith is indispensable. Through church planting every man, woman and child have the opportunity to know Christ. The church must be visible in every community. However, most evangelism and church planting is taking place in an urban or semi urban milieu, resulting in some communities especially villages and rural communes being neglected.

Tim Stafford a senior writer with *Christianity Today* says that "church planting is the default mode for evangelism."³ He draws this conclusion from the Southern Baptist Convention of North America which has become disillusioned with the traditional modes of evangelism like mass rallies, the four spiritual laws and even Evangelism Explosion. Stafford quotes George Hunter of Asbury Theological Seminary

that "Churches after 15 years typically plateau. After 35 years, they typically can't even replace those (members) they lose. New congregations reach a lot more pre-Christian people."⁴ Peter Wagner says, "The single most evangelistic methodology under heaven is planting new churches."⁵ New congregations definitely foster church growth. The planting of churches has made tremendous strides in evangelism. Hence the theory that the cutting edge of evangelism is planting churches. More churches would equate to more people coming into the Christian faith.

This conclusion while addressing deficit growth in the North American scene was also drawn from researches of growing churches in third world nations especially China and Africa where the planting of churches (worshipping congregations) has espoused evangelism and therefore resulted

in more conversions to the Christian faith. The way to church growth is planting churches.

The church is multi dimensional in her focus to reach the world for Christ. She cannot abandon her centripetal (attraction) thrust in favor of a centrifugal push (to go). The church is a sign of the Kingdom of God in every community and therefore people are drawn towards her, and yet at the same time she moves out into every crevice of society to impact with the good news of the Lord Jesus Christ. Roger Greenway an urban missiologist says that the planting of churches with the intention for church growth must be clearly defined. In a large urban milieu there is much transfer growth which only leads to big rich and famous churches. He says biblical growth is “winning the unsaved, the unchurched and the uncared-for” by legitimate means.⁶

However, conversions though taking place are becoming increasingly difficult and dangerous in pluralistic contexts. In such contexts a triumphalistic perspective of the Church accomplishments in regards church growth has negative consequences. Churches need to be discreet in how they account for growth especially in regards conversions from other faiths to Christianity.

There are different complexities that the Malaysian Methodist Church needs to be cognizant of. Rapid urbanization has affected Malaysia due to push and pull factors. More than 60% of her more than 27 million citizens and residents live in urban centers. There is a tendency to minister in areas that are receptive and have the numbers. Paul moved from one urban center to another, planting churches and therefore we conclude that the church today also needs to give priority to urban centers. A church very much dependent on numbers both as a sign of well being and her continued sustenance is definitely to be biased to starting congregations where the most people are domicile and that is the urban context. Theological, sociological and economic biases of the church give less priority to a rural congregation.

When churches use numbers as a benchmark for a growing church then rural areas are bound to suffer with inadequate facilities and personnel. Churches that once had congregations in rural areas have had their numbers drop drastically and their continual sustenance as a congregation becomes difficult. The Methodist church

has established criteria in the forming of local congregations (conferences). There is a need for able leadership, finance, a place of worship and the necessary numbers before a local conference can be constituted. Urban churches are definitely at an advantage in forming congregations. This criteria needed to form a local conference has definitely to be relaxed when it comes to rural congregations.

Urban centers have grandiose and beautiful structures or buildings. Churches in wanting to be complementary are also into expensive and grandiose structures with the latest in audio visual equipment. In contrast many orang asli communes still try to make do with bamboo huts as churches with those nearer urban centers having only slightly better facilities like electricity and water. This disparity has to be addressed with a Christian rhetoric that challenges our biases. Jesus gave importance to the poor. The early church also had clear directives and goals in regards overcoming poverty. However today’s church is not known as a community to champion the cause of the poor. Most of the time rural churches get “hand me downs”.

Rural churches cannot afford a clergy/pastor. Sharing a pastor over two or even three congregations spreads the work of the pastor too thinly. Leadership potential in the laity has to be tapped. Churches in the rural areas also need to be more heterogeneous to compensate for shortfalls of leadership and finances.

A cluster of rural worshipping communities under lay leadership comes under a pastor or personnel whose primary purpose is to equip the lay (Fig 1). This equipper does not have a congregation of his/her own. He/She is a traveling coordinator/trainer. Lay people need to be empowered to be more effective in contexts where the ordained clergy are not able to serve.

While there is a need to recover ministries and the planting of churches in a rural setting, the challenge of an urban church is to develop holistic ministry. The church is the only organism that can be holistic in theology and practice. Therefore it is imperative for her to develop ministries in urban contexts where communities are hurting or in risk situations. While a planting of a church can facilitate church growth, however the church as a community not only stands in solidarity with the broken but also works towards change in society. Planting of churches must affect social

realities of the community; if not the church will continue to be seen as a community that is only interested in conversion. All churches planted in risk communities within an urban milieu must have personnel that are cognizant with social welfare and laws relating to it.

In urban centers there is already a practice of creating satellite congregations. This definitely has the advantage to facilitate growth in numbers and also greater participation and commitment from the lay people. However churches still mirror the mother church or their conference. There is a greater need for partnership not only with sister congregations but also with other denominations. While working together has many difficult complexities yet initiative has to be taken by churches to work together in creating witnessing congregations.

The planted church embodies the very nature of Christ, the living hope for a broken world. Her responsibility is tremendous; however she has also been imbued with power from on high to become a credible witness and this she must never loose. John Wesley said “In every act reflect on the end.” Every minister, every member must consider the effect of their efforts towards God.

Footnotes

- ¹ Since there will be a paper on Discipleship, the present paper will only focus on the other aspects of evangelism with greater details and touch on discipleship only very briefly.
- ² Please see Appendices 17 & 18 for evangelistic plans and work carried out by SCAC & CAC for reference.
- ³ Tim Stafford, “Go and Plant Churches of All Peoples,” *Christianity Today* September 2007, Vol.51, No. 9
- ⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵ Aubrey Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century: A Comprehensive Guide for New Churches and Those Desiring Renewal.* (Michigan: Baker Books) 2000:25.
- ⁶ Roger Greenway in *Planting and Growing Urban Churches: From Dream to Reality* by Harvie M. Conn (Michigan: Baker Books) 1997:20.

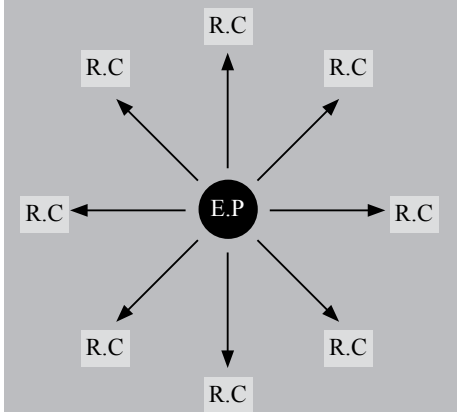


Fig. 1 EP - Equipping Pastor RC - Rural Congregation

Appendices have been omitted.



Run with the Horses II

"If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you run with horses?" (Jeremiah 12:5)

14-17 July 2009 (4D & 3N, Tues - Fri) • **SELESA BEACH RESORT** (5th mile, Jalan Pantai, Port Dickson)

Speakers: **Rev Dr Sam Kamaleson** and **Dato' Dr David Gunaratnam**

Organised by: **PADERI** (Pastoral Development and Renewal Initiative)

INTRODUCTION

Our annual PADERI conference for pastors and Christian leaders in pastoral ministry calls us to seek the Lord as we reflect on pastoral ministry development and renewal in Malaysia.

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Our speakers Rev Dr Sam Kamaleson and Dato' Dr David Gunaratnam will minister to us God's Word on the subject of the spiritual and character formation of pastors and Christian leaders.

Rev Dr Sam Kamaleson asks :

"How does one practice 'servant leadership' and live deep within a world of shallow values? What is the difference between competent, confident leadership and a destructive, feeling of indispensable importance that is weakness? From the Letter to the Ephesians, Dr Kamaleson will speak to us over 4 sessions in the series, "Prayer for Spiritual leaders!"

Dr David Gunaratnam will speak of the "Integrity and Spirituality of the leader" in two sessions. He will look to the Beatitudes and passages from the New Testament to help us in our considerations of this matter.

WORKSHOPS :

Workshop A - The pastoral care giver and family life

Our 2 sessions with Mr Franklin Morais provides an opportunity for participants to bring out challenges faced by pastoral care-

givers on the home front, and learn ways to cope and overcome them.

Sub-topics covered :

Personality & Development of the Individual; Emotional wellness/ Self-care; Intra-family relations and Abundance & Deficit motivation.

Workshop B – Silent Retreat

This workshop of two sessions is led by Rev Dr Chew Tow Yow who will highlight for us a specific spiritual discipline of contemplative spirituality, given our common practice of devotional spirituality that is action-orientated in ministry. Silent retreat provides the time and space for the disciplines of silence and solitude for the care of our souls. Rev Dr Chew will introduce us to the nature and practice of silent retreat as a means to spiritual renewal, in order to run long and well in serving God.

PERSONAL SESSIONS :

Participants can also choose to have time-off to reflect on their lives OR to have personal sessions with a senior Christian leader who is available to speak with them. Please sign-up if you are interested to speak to one of our panel of senior Christian leaders.

These one-on-

one personal sessions are held in strictest confidence.

(NB – WORKSHOPS A and B and PERSONAL SESSIONS are to run concurrently)

HO SENG ONG SCHOLARSHIP LOAN FUND

Applicants are invited from those interested in pursuing teaching as a career for study loans from the Ho Seng Ong Scholarship Loan Fund. Applicants must have obtained admission into courses leading to a degree/diploma in education in local universities.

Applications Forms may be obtained from:-

**The Chairman,
Ho Seng Ong Scholarship Loan Fund,
Methodist Council of Education,
67, Jalan 5/31, 46000 Petaling Jaya.**

Please enclose a stamped (50cents), self-addressed envelope with your written request for application forms.

The closing date for the submission of application is:

31st May 2009.

Shortlisted applicants only will be called for interview at a date to be fixed by the Chairman of the Fund.



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Nilai Memorial Park

One of Malaysia's most beautiful memorial park, Nilai Memorial Park is situated just 30 minutes away from Kuala Lumpur. Surrounded by lush natural greenery, the Park successfully combines the best of oriental traditions and architecture with western planning and design. Set amidst all this is a series of tastefully designed and crafted memorials and niche columbariums, which not only provide a serene final resting place for our departed loved ones but also for others to pay their respects.



Professional Arrangements
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Xiao En Bereavement Care Packages

There is peace of mind in being able to fulfill your final act of filial piety and assurance knowing that every detail will be taken care of conscientiously. There is dignity in a meaningful ritual well planned and well performed. A Xiao En Bereavement Care Package ensures that the warm memories of your departed loved one will endure for generations to come.



Xiao En Centre, Jalan Kuari, Cheras
孝恩館，吉隆坡蕉賴



Multi Function Halls
多元用途礼堂

Xiao En Centre

Xiao En Centre, as a complex for social education and life ceremony, is complemented with function halls for memorial services and funeral rites. We are also equipped with facilities to hold cultural & community events including art exhibitions & seminars. The centre's design, which combines the modern sensibilities & traditional concepts which appraise human values represents our unflinching commitment towards celebration of life excellences.

NILAI MEMORIAL PARK • XIAO EN BEREAVEMENT CARE • XIAO EN CENTRE • XIAO EN CULTURAL

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Synopsis

Ministry among students in schools is a strategically significant work because the health and future of our nation rest on our youths.

This ministry is fragile, with many uncontrollable variables — education policies, school authorities, teachers' availability, parental involvement and church support — which are important factors that can make or break the work!

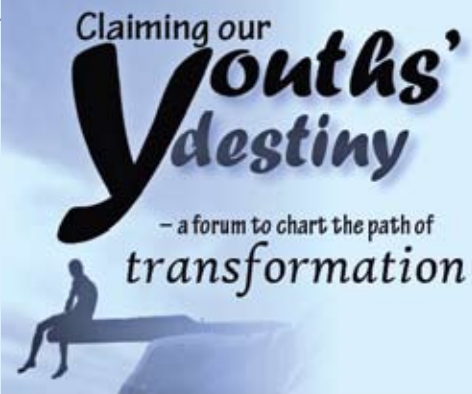
It is therefore vital that Christian leaders in Malaysia appreciate and passionately support Students' & Schools' Ministry.

Nevertheless, reaching and touching the lives of youths in our schools cannot be done in isolation — that is, by the teachers alone or by parents alone or by churches alone. In order to have far-reaching impact on our nation and churches, effective Students' & Schools' Ministry requires the synergic partnerships of teachers, parents, churches and para-churches.

It is in this light that several key organizations concerned with Students' and Schools' work in this country are joining hands to jointly organize this forum with the following theme: "Celebrating Students' & Schools' Ministry — A Partnership between Parents, Teachers and Churches."

It is our earnest prayers that all stakeholders — parents, teachers, pastors, youth workers will participate in and contribute to this forum to help chart the path of transformation for our youths' destiny.

Students & Schools' Ministry Forum '09 Presents...



Date	7 Sept. 2009 Monday (public holiday)
Time	9.00a.m. – 6.00p.m.
Venue	Canning Garden Methodist Church, Ipoh
For Whom	Parents, Teachers, Pastors, Youth Workers



Objectives

- ♣ **To bring together** parents, teachers and churches to synergise their roles as agents of transformation through PTAs, Christian Fellowships, Boys' Brigade, Girls' Brigade, etc.
- ♣ **To re-look** at schools as an important mission-field and long-term strategy towards developing our youth as nation-builders of tomorrow.
- ♣ **To dialogue** on what's been done thus far, what is lacking and what needs to be done to transform Student's & Schools' Ministry.

For enquires and registration, contact **Larry Lee** at the NECF Office (Tel: 03-7727 8227) or email Youthnet@necf.org.my



2009 World Methodist Peace Award Recipient Announced

On July 31, 2009, the 2009 World Methodist Peace Award will be presented to Jeannine Brabon at the Biblical Seminary of Colombia in Medellin, Colombia.

Jeannine is the daughter of the Seminary's founders, grew up in Colombia, studied in the United States, and currently teaches Greek and Hebrew at the Seminary her parents founded. In addition, she is the founder of the Biblical Institute of Colombia which teaches Bible in Colombia's prison system.

She began teaching the Bible in the infamous Bella Vista prison in 1991, a year in which Medellin's homicide rate exceeded 10,000, and 30,000 homicides occurred in Colombia. At that time the prison culture reflected the outside world. In 1991 there were 30-50 homicides per month inside Bella Vista prison. Since the Biblical Institute began inside the prison, the prison homicide rate has been reduced to less than 10 in the last 18 years. A Church has formed within the prison walls, and the lives of many inmates and their families have been transformed by the presentation of the Gospel there.

Jeannine has exhibited courage, creativity and consistency in her ministry to students and to inmates. Jeannine grew up with first-hand knowledge of the persecuted Church, and has committed her life as a teacher and prison chaplain to helping people understand the transforming power of the Gospel. The presentation of the Peace Award will be made by Bishop Paulo Lockmann, The Council's Vice-Chairperson

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