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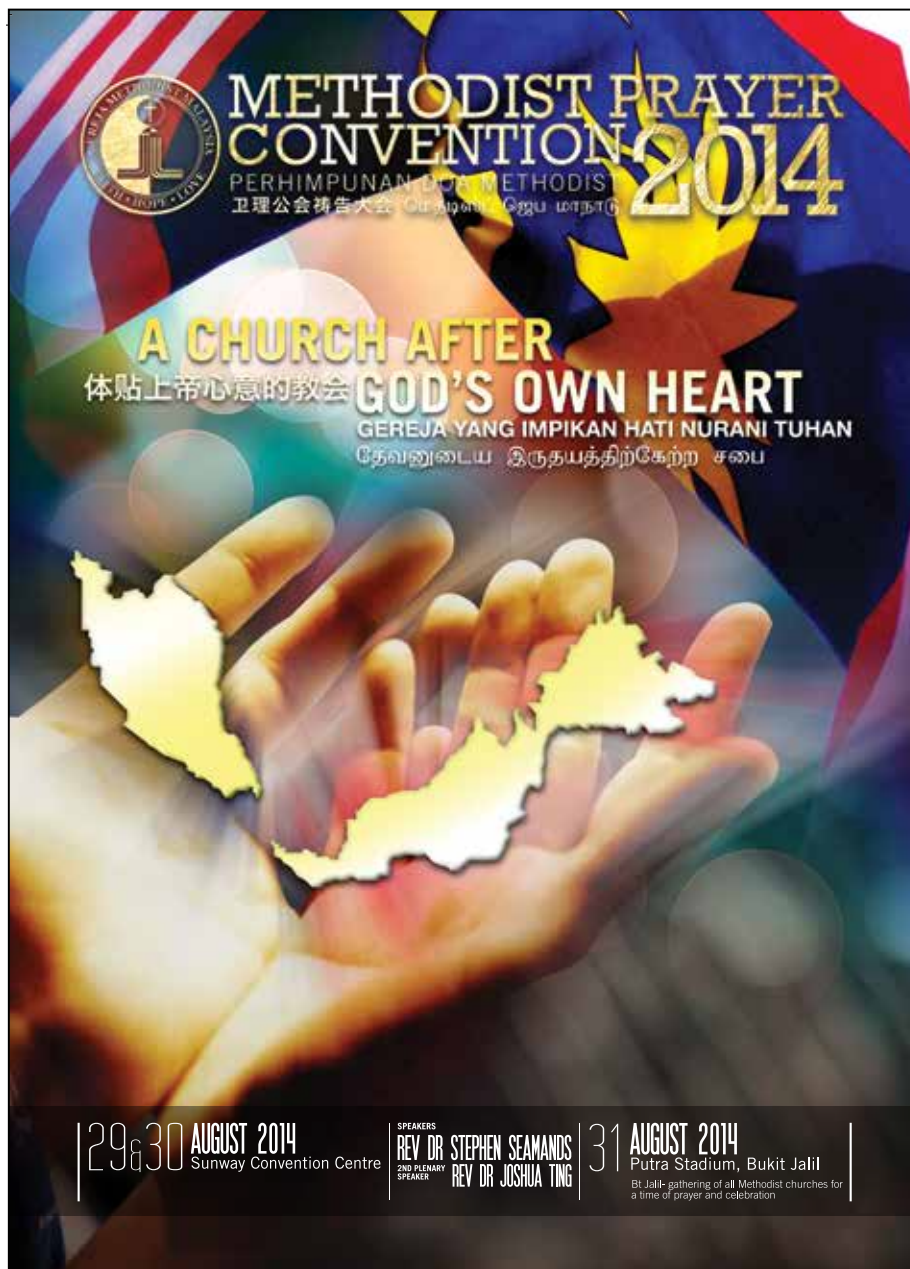
"A Church after God's Own Heart -

will
Persist
in



Prayer"

By
Bishop Dr. Ong Hwai Teik



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MPC PRAYER LETTER 04/June2014

Prayer Points

As we look forward to the MPC 2014, let us pray that by the gracious and powerful work of the Holy Spirit that ...

1. Our Methodist Family will be increasingly set free from **"Encultured blockages"** especially in the area of prayer...from lack of spiritual appetite and zeal... from scepticism... misplaced priorities... discouragement and disappointment... that we will want to come together to seek God in this gathering.
2. Our Methodist Family, *as we gather together*, will receive a greater empowerment and a deeper desire to resolutely do our part to demonstrate unity with all other believers in this nation in actualising **"Communal identity as the Church in Malaysia"**.
3. Our Methodist Family will be willing, for the glory of our Father, to endure hardship, persecution and tribulation as **"Suffering cleanses and authenticates"** us as God's cosmic witnesses in turbulent times in this nation.
4. Our Methodist Family will always know how to **"Dis-entangle the eternal from the temporal"**- and live in obedience to Ephesians 3:10 – in our individual as well as community life as God's people called Methodists in Malaysia.

Bishop Dr. Ong Hwai Teik

“A Church after God’s Own Heart - will Persist in Prayer”

By Bishop Dr. Ong Hwai Teik

^{NLT} **Luke 11:5-11** Then, teaching them more about prayer, he used this story: “Suppose you went to a friend’s house at midnight, wanting to borrow three loaves of bread. You say to him, ⁶ ‘A friend of mine has just arrived for a visit, and I have nothing for him to eat.’ ⁷ And suppose he calls out from his bedroom, ‘Don’t bother me. The door is locked for the night, and my family and I are all in bed. I can’t help you.’ ⁸ But I tell you this -- though he won’t do it for friendship’s sake, if you keep knocking long enough, he will get up and give you whatever you need because of your shameless persistence. ⁹ “And so I tell you, keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. ¹¹ “You fathers -- if your children ask for a fish, do you give them a snake instead?”

One can easily be caught in identifying God with the “sleepy friend”, who unwillingly answers to a cry for help. After all, it is not unreasonable for the “sleepy friend” to respond the way he did given the unearthly hour of the request made. However, do note that Luke 11:11 counters this point of “unwillingness to answer” by the willing and good heart of a father responding to the need of his children [also vv 9-10], which is magnified immeasurably in God our Father.

But the main point that the Lord Jesus is making is about a type of holy boldness that drives one to be insistent and persistent in asking, to be relentless in knocking sharply at the door even during unearthly hours and in the face of even receiving a seemingly negative reply and response.

It implies that there is an element of **struggle** in prayer which is quite apart from the weekly routine of joining in the prayers offered at the Sunday Worship Services or the more pleasant side of our devotional prayers made each day. This is beyond routine and formal praying in which we face and battle with unrelenting forces both of flesh and blood, as well as the unseen kind. This **holy boldness and persistent prayer** drives believers to continue in prayer...even though they feel dissatisfaction, desolation and disappointment in their hearts.

In Malaysia, more than ever before, the Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth calls His Church in Malaysia to enter into this phase of interceding with holy boldness and persistence as we

seek the very sorely needed **transformation for this nation and His Church** in this land. We are to boldly and persistently pray for justice, righteousness, compassion and truth to prevail both in the Church and in this land. The Word of God says in ^{NIV} Proverbs 29:4 – “By justice a king gives a country stability, but one who is greedy for bribes tears it down” and ^{ESV} Proverbs 14:34 says “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people”.

God’s people in Malaysia must continue with holy boldness and persistency in the face of the lengthening evident lack of integrity of law enforcement agencies and institutions of this land. This includes the grave lack of moral courage and fortitude of national leaders we are supposed to hold in high esteem. We are shocked, angry and disappointed when they fail “to do the obviously right thing,” including speaking up at the required time for justice, righteousness, compassion and truth. We are to interpose with holy boldness and persistency in the face of loud chauvinistic racist and religious groups that seek to claim superiority and domination over other races and religions. We are to unyieldingly intercede with holy boldness and persistency when the Constitution is selectively treated with respect, and conveniently disregarded when it is expedient to do so.

But to pray with holy boldness and persistency so that our Father’s **“Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven”**, we need to constantly cultivate and possess the following in our hearts.

- *Firstly*, we need to remember who God is and what He requires of us. We worship a sovereign and holy God Who loves the world He had created, the Eternal One Who rules history.
- *Secondly*, we need to keep an eye on the situation in our land with a heart that cares. We need to be able to weep for this land without being paralysed by despair, helplessness and hopelessness.
- *Thirdly*, we need to move beyond the “self impeding factors”, for example, we are not to be held back by a low threshold of embarrassment, (“don’t trouble God unnecessarily”), or an addiction to the comfort zone syndrome. Neither should we be held back from persistent prayers because of the wounds of our unmet expectations despite fervently praying for change in the past. We are to set aside time to pray doggedly and

determinedly for all important issues that burden our hearts, even though there is a whisper of “how long, O Lord” in our minds!

The two ending chapters of the Bible give us great assurance even as we seek an ending to “the troubles in our land”. I am deeply encouraged by Revelation 21:1-5 which tells us of that final new birth one day where there will be a new heaven and a new earth. It will then be, amongst other glorious things, a place without any “sea”. The “sea” signifies the power of evil and chaos, from which the first monster emerged. Even then it has its boundaries firmly fixed and limited. As N T Wright puts it, “Evil is only allowed to do enough to overreach itself and to bring about its own downfall. But in the new creation there will be no more sea, no more chaos, no place from which monsters might again emerge. We truly look forward to that day!

But meanwhile, God’s people, including those called Methodists, must perseveringly pray with **holy boldness and persistency**, individually and communally such as in the coming Methodist Prayer Convention 2014 for God’s will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. This we must do. As a Church after God’s own heart, we will readily collaborate with the Holy Spirit, and acclaim, “*Father, we declare that we love You, we declare our everlasting love for you*”. This acclamation will be in our hearts and on our lips come what may in the history of this land.

We lift up our eyes above the troubles in our land
And together we stand to declare You as King
In times like these we choose to praise You
For it’s You, it’s You who really matters
You are worthy of all praise

Chorus

And we will say that You are good
And all the miracles You’ve done have brought us joy
For we are changed
And all the hope we have we placed in You right now
Father we declare that we love You
We declare our everlasting love for You
Father we declare that we love You
We declare our everlasting love for You

[Isi de Gersigny]

Devotion

DEVOTION

The Vision of Prayer

God shapes the world by prayer.

(E. M. Bounds)

IN WORD:

Sometimes we pray small prayers. Is it that we question God’s ability to answer the big ones? Or do we believe we’re only worthy to receive small answers? Either way, we’re misunderstanding the heart of God. He is able to do “immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine” (Ephesians 3:20), and He doesn’t base His answers on our worthiness. When we pray small prayers, we are underestimating God.

God has big plans. His mission began with a handful of disciples and a vision as big as the world. Big prayers were essential to accomplish such all-encompassing plans. The disciples knew they were not equal to the task, but they also knew that God was more than equal to it. Those two pieces of knowledge are the fuel for any prayer life. If we understand who we are and what we’ve been called to do, and we understand the God who has redeemed us and commissioned us, then we will spend much of our time on our knees. We will ask for a lot because God promises a lot.

One Year at the Cross Devotional by Chris Tiegreen

The disciples did that in Acts 4. They asked for healing and miraculous signs and wonders in the name of Jesus. They wanted Him to be glorified and for people to believe. They wanted the Kingdom of God to cover the territory of earth. And they knew that only God could do such a thing.

IN DEED:

How big is your prayer life? That’s not a question that asks how long or how passionately you pray. It’s a question that asks how much faith is involved when you talk to your Father. Do you seek Him with huge tasks and for huge answers? Or do you ask only for a small, personal victories that will make your life easier but do little to further His Kingdom?

Develop a vision for the Kingdom of God. See how enormous and sweeping His mission is, and ask accordingly. Be prepared for Him to use you far beyond your capabilities. Why? Because a God of miracles delights in making a miracle of His people.

Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.

Acts 4:30

“布道我行!” 2014年布道营

报道/图文:甘慧仪 摄影:甘慧仪/余国铨牧师



莫会长鼎力支持布道之心表露无遗

4月22至24日,年会在波德申卫理中心举办“布道我行!”2014年布道营,共有三百十六人报名。

22日下午二时三十分,会众敬拜赞美后,布道营主席钱本华弟兄在开幕仪式上简介办布道营的宗旨。他说,基督徒要常常更新自己布道的心志,保持热诚使命、提升布道素质和实践之,如保罗所说的,“务要传道,无论得时不得时,若不传福音,我便有祸了”。接着,钱主席向会众介绍讲员——来自澳洲的杨温柔牧师和洪南明牧师(皆马籍)。

布道营人数突破原定三百人的目标,西马华人年议会会长莫泽川牧师为此感谢父神,也感谢以钱弟兄为主的筹委会。莫会长直言,生命极其脆弱,饥渴的人群亟需认识福音。当世界各地的天灾人祸频起,MH 370坠机、韩国客轮沉船、备受尊敬的国会议员卡巴星因车祸骤逝等意外,都让人们措手不及,哀痛难当。

莫会长透露一个不为人知的细节。在追思随卡巴星命丧车祸的助手迈克(Michael)时,卡巴星的女儿作此见证:“他(迈克)为我父亲终有一天能够站起来而祷告、禁食,每天都随身携带圣经。”伟



杨温柔牧师果真人如其名,智慧、恩慈兼具。

大的政治家卡巴星能否进入天堂,须端视其心中是否有主耶稣基督?撇此不谈,莫会长认为,迈克的生命是行动的福音,是强而有力的布道见证。

随即,莫会长公布2015/2016年为“年会布道年”,主题:靠主圣灵布道我行。语毕,莫会长奉父、子、圣灵之名,宣布布道营正式开始!

温文儒雅的主讲杨温柔牧师先读一段经文:“……我又听见主的声音说:‘我可以差遣谁呢?谁肯为我们去呢?’我说:‘我在这里,请差遣我!’”(赛6:1-8)在“营造布道的气氛与使命感”的课题上,杨牧师说,每个圣徒皆有神的呼召,所以,信徒要成为奉献、服侍、传道之人,为主作见证,“无论如何总要救些人”(林前9:22下)。

“此外,教会的宣教与布道不是事工的一部分,而是所有事工的导向,渗透事工的每一个层面。传统的事工模式以这六种活动并重,即祈祷、教导、崇拜、团契、关怀和布道;但在圣经的模式里,布道是最重要的事工。牧者和领袖必须身先士卒,带动他人,一起促进教会圣工的发展。布道是从个人‘我肯、我愿意’的态度开始的;再者,每一次活动是装备、差遣大家向外宣传福音的好机会。故,在圣灵的感动和更新下,信徒认识布道的重要性、知道如何做和愿意一再去布道事工,就能使教会流露出浓厚的布道气息。要使更多人归主,就有赖于每一个爱上帝的人昼夜思想和奔跑传道。”

杨牧师感慨地说:“对神要单纯,对人要理性”;传福音的结果不在人为,传道者只要忠心、尽心,把结果交给主即可。无论对方有没有信主,传道者末后的赏赐是大的。杨牧师也指出,主留给我们的大使命有赖于布道与教导,须建立更多教会才能达成目标。植堂的好处是可进行更多的牧养、让人更依靠主、发掘到人才的乐趣、可应时所需,改变布道的方向;但,凡事要以圣灵指引,传道者还须不畏艰辛,找到适合的福音伙伴和传福音的地点。

洪南明牧师在三个专题“吾爱邻舍”、“听道敬拜——布道与栽培的经验

谈”和“植堂的经验谈”中,则有独到见解。他的开场白相当别开生面,先是请来自莎亚南卫理教会的罗慧贤姐妹上台,示范向个人传福音的过程后,才进入主题。他表示,惟有信徒明白“好撒玛利亚人”的比喻后,才能实际行动,看顾我们身边的邻舍。“爱的最大反面是冷漠,最大的快乐是帮助人。”(德雷莎修女名言)

“有效的布道法与跟进”的方法包括街头布道、逐家布道、电话布道、网际网络(以文字或个人对个人布道)。主耶稣是福音的核心内容,他本身也是传扬者。布道是主的命令:“父怎样差遣我,我也怎样差遣你们”,所有信徒应当顺服。



洪南明牧师擅长于个人布道,讲题内容有新意。

个人布道的威力影响深远、巨大,亦能完成大使命;每个信徒都可这么做,其渗透性大,能满足不同人的需求。总而言之,有效的布道法与跟进,是教会增长之秘诀。布道是一个长线的过程,不是一次过的短线行动,并非讲了一次道、作了一个见证、提出一个邀请等等就结束了。布道者必须抛出长线,是具有目标的投资,为要把众人“完完全全地引到上帝面前”(西1:28)。

洪牧师在最后一讲中强调,好的领导层,对植堂的成功是非常重要的。好领袖必须深信教会是充满能力和潜力的,他必须能实现异象、必须有团队配搭和能培育人才。洪牧师也播放一则激励短片《韩国世界路金兰教会从十人到七千人之神迹》,观者无不动容,感触良久,深信这短片能为会众打开不一样的布道渠道,从此更新。

钱弟兄在“2015布道年活动讲解”中,指出当前的布道实况和布道年可进行的



《南钟》大事记:筹划已久的八十周年纪念丛书系列最后一书(第八本)《卫理运动到西马——从约翰·卫斯理到华人年议会》终于出炉!23日晚在台上进行简单隆重的推介礼。左起为年会文书黄约辉牧师(博士)、莫会长和《南钟》主编简永裕牧师兼本书主编。

各项布道行动及事工,希望来年可推动年会、教区、堂会结合的三合一力量,推行“爱吾邻舍”活动,促使全体教会以合一步伐,向亲友(邻舍)传福音,以落实莫会长在2012年年议会《会长演辞》中推展的“大吉隆城市布道与植堂事工”。钱弟兄再三嘱咐,即使完成布道爱筵后,信徒接下来的跟进工作非常重要,取决于其带领邻舍归主的决心与委身。

在最后一天的闭幕与差遣礼上,方既志教区长证道。他说,除了主耶稣迫切传福音的态度,使徒保罗也是我们学习的对象。主看见许多的人,走遍各城各乡,怜悯困苦流离者,宣讲天国福音,医治各样病症。保罗也以<罗马书>1章13至16节来宣告自己的信念。他“不以福音为耻,愿意尽力得些果子,福音本是上主的大能,要救一切相信的”。保罗的心志、决心、宣告与爱人的灵魂是肯定的:“我传福音原没有可夸的,因为我是不得已的。若不传福音,我便有祸了。我若甘心做这事,就有赏赐;若不甘心,责任却已经托付我了。”(林前9:16-17)方教区长也强调,传福音不是我们的选择,因我们是蒙主呼召。

周隆捷教区长为会众作祝福祷告后,莫会长在台上赠礼给两位讲员。午餐后,会众在偌大的食堂继续高谈阔论,对“爱吾邻舍”事工似是摩拳擦掌、迫不及待了。看来“2015/2016布道年”还没正式展开,这里就先炒热气氛了,希望大家能积极炒到最高点,“道声”鼎沸!

“Everyone can evangelize” CAC Evangelism Camp

Date : 22nd - 24th April 2014

Place : Port Dickson Methodist Centre

Participants : 360 people

Organiser : Board on Evangelism

“Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season...” (II Timothy 4:2)

News Release from Bishop B. Michael Watson

President of World Methodist Evangelism



The Reverend Doctor H. Eddie Fox, World Director of World Methodist Evangelism, has decided to retire after having served in this position for 25 years. He began serving as World Director on January 1, 1989, following the service of Dr. Alan Walker of Australia, who was the first person to serve in this global Methodist/Wesleyan evangelism ministry. Dr. Fox made his intention known during a recent meeting of the officers of World Methodist Evangelism in Nashville, Tennessee.

World Methodist Evangelism encourages unity in witness in the member churches of the World Methodist Council and develops the ministry of evangelism in the World Methodist communion, which is the family of Methodist, Wesleyan, Nazarene and all churches with roots in the Methodist/Wesleyan tradition. World Methodist Evangelism is dedicated to advancing the gospel of Jesus Christ by means which include evangelizing, training leaders to evangelize, connecting congregations in the World Methodist family, relating to evangelism leaders in denominations of churches in the Methodist/Wesleyan tradition and developing evangelistic resources for the purpose of multiplying the witnesses of Jesus Christ. The ministry is committed to spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world so THAT THE WORLD MAY KNOW JESUS CHRIST that more and more persons will come to saving and transforming faith and live as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ in the reign of God.

Bishop B. Michael Watson, on behalf of the officers of World Methodist Evangelism, expressed deep appreciation for Dr. Fox's many years of effective evangelism ministry and leadership in the World Methodist family. Bishop Watson acknowledged that Eddie Fox may very well be the most well known Methodist preacher in the world. He said that “Dr. Fox has offered the gospel of Jesus Christ to people on every continent and in over 90 countries around the world. Few people have made a greater evangelistic impact since the Wesleys. We will be eternally grateful to God for the remarkable ministry of this outstanding Christian leader.”

Bishop Watson said that plans will be made to celebrate the lifetime ministry of Eddie and Mary Nell Fox at an appropriate time in the future. He also announced that the search for a successor to Dr. Fox will begin immediately, and appreciates that Dr. Fox has agreed to continue serving until his successor is in place.

World Methodist Evangelism encourages unity in witness in the member churches of the World Methodist Council and develops the ministry of evangelism in the World Methodist communion, which is the family of Methodist, Wesleyan, Nazarene and all churches with roots in the Methodist/Wesleyan tradition. World Methodist Evangelism is dedicated to advancing the gospel of Jesus Christ by means which include evangelizing, training leaders to evangelize, connecting congregations in the World Methodist family, relating to evangelism leaders in denominations of churches in the Methodist/Wesleyan tradition and developing evangelistic resources for the purpose of multiplying the witnesses of Jesus Christ. The ministry is committed to spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world so **THAT THE WORLD MAY KNOW JESUS CHRIST** and more and more persons will come to saving and transforming faith and live as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ in the reign of God.

Please refer to page 6 for Chinese version

The Chinese Annual Conference held an Evangelism Conference at the Port Dickson Methodist Centre. The main speakers for the conference were Rev. Yong Wen Rou from Australia and Rev. Hong Nam Ming.

In the opening ceremony, Bro. Ching Poon Hwa, the chairman of the Board on Evangelism, made the call that Christians ought to “renew their spirit of evangelism, sustain the zealotness of the Great Commission and always equip themselves with the technique of evangelism”.

The President of the Chinese Annual Conference, Rev. Boh Che Suan, in his opening address used the examples of the MH 370 Crisis, the Korean shipwreck and the death of renowned politicians YB Karpal Singh to illustrate the pain and grief of many people these days and also vulnerability of the life of human beings.

In emphasizing the importance of evangelism, President Boh used the example of the late Michael who was the personal assistant to the late YB Karpal Singh. Both of them dies tragically in a car accident a few months

ago. In YB Karpal’s memorial service, his daughter testified that “Michael had always prayed and fasted that her father (who was crippled in a previous accident) would one day be able to stand up again. Michael was a strong believer that carried his bible wherever he went. Michael’s life was indeed the “Gospel in action”- a strong testimony of evangelism.

Rev. Boh then while declaring the opening of this evangelism conference, announced that 2015/2016 shall be the year of Evangelism for CAC.

The speaker, Rev. Yong Wen Rou, read from Isaiah 6:8 saying “Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying ‘whom shall I send? And who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I, send me!’” Rev. Yong stressed that “as every saint had the calling from God, they should offer themselves to the preaching of the word and witness for the Lord.”

Evangelism and Mission were not only a minor part of ministry but rather ought to be the focus of every ministry. Since according to the Bible, evangelism has been the most

important ministry, every pastor and church leaders should be involved in it and lead others to the area of evangelism. Evangelism begins with the attitude of “I am willing” and followed by the equipping in evangelism as we carried out the task of evangelism. Through the renewal by the Holy Spirit, every believer will know the importance of evangelism, learn the knowledge and skill of evangelism, and together evangelize to lead many to Christ.

Rev. Hong said, in his message, that “only when believers understand the parable of “the Good Samaritans” then they will be able to take care of their neighbor with action. The most effective way of evangelism includes street evangelism, home evangelism, telephone and evangelism through the cyber world. Jesus himself is the message of evangelism and yet he was also the preacher of the Gospel. Evangelism is the commission of our Lord, therefore we should submit to his sending as he said “Just as the Father had sent me, so send I you.”

Translated by
Rev. Ong Chin Hin

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Testimony

Testimony at Grand parents Baptism

(March 2014)

Zachary :

Last year in May, mummy, my sister Rebekah and I went for a seminar about 'How to share the gospel with your friends' in our church. It was very difficult to understand. So mummy told us to start with the ones closest to us. Jie jie and I thought about our family members especially 'mama' and 'yeye' who were not going to church. So mummy told us to pray for them.

Clareen:

When the children decided to pray I confess that I feared their prayers might not be answered as it been many years that I tried to talk to them about God. But God is good and the children's faith were rewarded. When my mother in law was diagnosed with cancer in August last year, it was the beginning of a very challenging journey for our whole family. She battled the disease fiercely, and sometimes disagreed

with us just as much. She collapsed in September after chemotherapy and as I witnessed the nurses resuscitating her, I cried to God that I didn't want her to go then as I was not sure if she knew Jesus yet. God spared her. Then, I cried to God that I didn't know how to share the gospel with her. God sent a long line of people to pray for her and to share the news of eternal life with her, from our church, and our circle of friends in other churches- some of whom are here today to witness the fruition of what God has moved. Beginning with two children's simple prayer.

So our family is grateful to God first and foremost for His grace on our lives and now on Beckie and Zak's grandparents! Chen Swee Huang and San Yuen Hun. We are also grateful to all of you who have helped them move forward towards God's Kingdom and Life Eternal. All Praise to God in

heaven.

God gave my mother in law another few weeks to spend with her family. During this period she shared that she had seen a bright light and two persons inviting her to move on. The children continued ministering to her in their own little ways by singing to her songs and we told her more about Jesus using the children's Bibles. We believe that she learnt enough in that short time to know that the bright light held something beautiful for her. On April 26, she took her final step in her earthly journey and moved into our Heavenly Father's eternal home.

This testimony was prepared and delivered by Rebekah and Zachary Chen at their grandparents' baptism.

Clareen C.
18th June 2014

Notice

PELITA METHODIST would be trying out something new in the next 6 months. We are checking out the feasibility of expanding our publication to the cyber world through providing e-copies of the Pelita Methodist. Our aim is always to be able to have every Methodist member to have a copy of our magazine. Thus far since its inception, we have only been using the print medium.

Therefore for the next 6 month, we would also make e-copies available for anyone who wants it. Please email us at pelitamethodist@gmail.com if you want us to send you an e-copy of our magazine. You could also give us feedback about this idea or comment on any matter regarding Pelita Methodist at the same email address.

Michael William
Acting Executive Editor
Pelita Methodist



Living Stone Methodist Church Cova Square, Kota Damansara.

Inaugural Service 16th February 2014

HISTORY UNFOLDS

In September 2011 Trinity Methodist Church, PJ, was offered “ready-made” premises in a three-storey shop-lot rent-free at Kayu Ara Business Park near Bandar Utama for a three-year tenancy plus two years option. That was the beginning of the birth of a new preaching point – Bandar Utama Methodist Centre (BUMC). The church grew from a humble beginning with fewer than 20 worshippers to an average weekly attendance of 45 worshippers today.

Of course there were challenges in terms of the lack of manpower in the outreach ministry and in church growth. Though BUMC is a small congregation, many worshippers find warmth, care and fellowship in the church. The bond of friendship, care and unity among worshippers has become the hallmark of BUMC.

In April 2013 the TRAC President, Rev Dr T Jeyakumar, preached at a BUMC service and he “revisited” the idea of planting a church in Kota Damansara (an idea that existed even before settling for Bandar Utama). Thus he re-ignited the fire on the original mission mooted. He shared with the BUMC Committee members that the new location could come under the auspices of TRAC and TMCPJ because BUMC had limited experienced manpower.

All things being equal, some worshippers in BUMC felt sad to move from its current location as BUMC was a small growing preaching point and the worshippers were closely knitted. Therefore, their sense of separation and the proximity of the church to their residence could be possible contributing reasons to their sadness. Consequently, some members questioned the rationale and wisdom in the move. “*Quo vadis, quo vadis?* – why are we moving?” Giving them space to air their feelings of sadness on the proposed move and their sentimental attachment to BUMC after two and a half years worshipping there was understandable. But only God has the answer to answer their question “Why?”

Perhaps some words of wisdom from my former teacher, the late Mr Khoo Kay Hock, can provide some solace for them:

“The road that leads to Christ my Lord is one that I should take,
The road to serve my fellow men seems tiresome and long
The road to sacrifice is fraught with danger and with woe
The road to joy is promised me when all my work is done
Quo vadis, quo vadis? Twill be wherever You be.”

BIRTH OF LIVING STONE METHODIST CHURCH (LSMC).

Towards the end of October 2013 a possible building site was found at Cova Square Mall in Kota Damansara. Some LCEC members of TMCPJ together with the TRAC President went to view the locality and were in favour of the place. After all the necessary nitty-gritty and red-tape were completed, and the LCEC gave approval to sign the tenancy agreement with the owner for two years’ duration, the budget for renovation of the place was passed, and things started to move in earnest to get the place renovated to beat the CNY closure disruptions by contractors in January 2014.

If there is anyone deserving praise or congratulations who diligently organised and got all the renovations done almost single-handedly (with some assistance from brother Steven Ooi), it is none other than our brother Loo Kau Fa. I bear witness on how these brothers laboured tirelessly to bring the renovations to its finality within the given time frame. Due to their unflinching efforts, the inauguration service was made possible on 16th February 2014. Praise the Lord for His faithful servants.

ADIEU TO BUMC.

The last worship service at BUMC was held on 9th February 2014. Subsequently all services would be held at the new church LSMC. The preacher for the closing service in BUMC on that day was Rev Ting Moy

Hong who spoke on “An Invitation to partner God in His Good Work.” God is good all the time. For He calls upon His people to follow Him and at the same time He gives them a choice whether to accept or reject His calling.

A righteous man who walks in fear of the Lord will not be afraid of evil tidings for his heart remains steadfast, trusting in the Lord and all evil shall perish before him. The glory of God shall be his rear guard and the Lord will answer his call. Even though he suffers from personal insufficiency, the Spirit of the Lord will empower him to overcome his inadequacy. The Spirit of God searches all things, even the deep things of God. Therefore, be the salt of the earth and the light of the world so that others who see your goodness will glorify the Father in heaven. “Hineni--Here I am,” O Lord. The peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. (Phil 4:7)

To bid adieu to BUMC brings some degree of sadness but it ended with joy as we celebrated brother Steven Ooi’s birthday. So instead of having an emotional parting in the sanctuary, it turned into a joyous occasion for the birthday boy. The congregation sang “Happy Birthday” to him with a blessing by Rev Ting Moy Hong, followed by the cake cutting ceremony. The dual contrasting occasions reminded me of what David said in Psalm 30: “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.” How true it is in our walk of faith with God.



Congregation praying for Birthday Boy Steven



Happy Birthday Boy Steven

THE INAUGURATION SERVICE OF LSMC.

Sunday 16th February 2014 was an auspicious day in the dedication of the new church to honour the Lord. The TRAC President chose the name “Living Stone” in its metaphorical sense — “spiritual and eternal life in fullness in Jesus Christ.” In 1 Peter 2: 4-12, Jesus Christ is the precious Cornerstone which the builders rejected that has become our Chief Cornerstone. Jesus Christ is the Leader of His church.



TRAC President preaching on a Model Church

The preacher for the service was TRAC President, Rev Dr T Jeyakumar. His sermon was on “A Model Church” based on 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 on what constituted a perfect church which many Christians are searching for. Theologically speaking, there is no “perfect church” but definitely an “exemplary church” like the one referred to in Thessalonica by Apostle Paul. The believers in Thessalonica were remembered for their examples in faith, love and hope in God through Christ Jesus.

- Their faith in Christ led them to ceaseless good work knowing that their effort was not in vain in the Lord;
- Their love for God prompted them to labour for God without counting the cost, and
- Their hope with patient endurance through the Holy Spirit until the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

A model church lives out the gospel and spreads the good news. How can LSMC become a model church?



Listening to sermon on a Model Church

Conclusion

An idealistic mission to plant God’s vineyard in Kota Damansara has now become a reality. The spiritual journey begins with the first step of encouraging more members of TRAC churches who reside around Kota Damansara to come forward to serve God in Living Stone Methodist Church.

Finally, I would like to share the “Prayer Hymn” composed by the late Mr Khoo Kay Hock on the faithfulness in God’s people:

What the future has for our church
Lies with every stalwart one,
Let us all be faithful and true
Till the final victory’s won.
God’s grace be with every Christian
May God richly bless his life,
Keep him safe and ever guide him
Free his days from fruitless strife. Amen.

Submitted by:
James Teh Swee Huat.

Psalm 15

A Psalm of David

- 1 LORD, who may dwell in your sacred tent?
Who may live on your holy mountain?
 - 2 The one whose walk is blameless, who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from their heart;
 - 3 whose tongue utters no slander, who does no wrong to a neighbor, and casts no slur on others;
 - 4 who despises a vile person but honors those who fear the Lord; who keeps an oath even when it hurts, and does not change their mind;
 - 5 who lends money to the poor without interest; who does not accept a bribe against the innocent.
- Whoever does these things will never be shaken.



CALL TO ACTION

PART II

FOR THE WORLD WE SERVE

The Cape Town Call to Action

INTRODUCTION

Our covenant with God binds love and obedience together. God rejoices to see our ‘work produced by faith’ and our ‘labour prompted by love’,⁵⁶ for ‘we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.’⁵⁷

As members of the worldwide Church of Jesus Christ, we have sought to listen to the voice of God through the Holy Spirit. We have listened to his voice coming to us from his written Word in the exposition of Ephesians, and through the voices of his people around the world. Our six major Congress themes provide a framework to discern the challenges facing the worldwide Church of Christ, and our priorities for the future. We do not imply that these commitments are the only ones the Church should consider, or that priorities everywhere are the same.

IIA BEARING WITNESS TO THE TRUTH OF CHRIST IN A PLURALISTIC, GLOBALIZED WORLD

1 TRUTH AND THE PERSON OF CHRIST

Jesus Christ is the truth of the universe. Because Jesus *is* truth, truth in Christ is (i) personal as well as propositional; (ii) universal as well as contextual; (iii) ultimate as well as present.

A As disciples of Christ we are called to be people of truth.

1. We must *live* the truth. To live the truth is to be the face of Jesus, through whom the glory of the gospel is revealed to blinded minds. People will see the truth in the faces of those who live their lives for Jesus, in faithfulness and love.
2. We must *proclaim* the truth. Spoken proclamation of the truth of the gospel remains paramount in our mission. This cannot be separated from living out the truth. Works and words must go together.

B We urge church leaders, pastors and evangelists to preach and teach the fullness of the biblical gospel as Paul did, in all its cosmic scope and truth. We must present the gospel not merely as offering individual salvation, or a better solution to needs than other gods can provide, but as God’s plan for the whole universe in Christ. People sometimes come to Christ to meet a personal need, but they stay with Christ when they find him to be the truth.

2 TRUTH AND THE CHALLENGE OF PLURALISM

Cultural and religious plurality is a fact and Christians in Asia, for example, have lived with it for centuries. Different religions each affirm that theirs is the way of truth. Most will seek to respect competing truth claims of other faiths and live alongside them. However postmodern, relativist pluralism is different. Its ideology allows for no absolute or universal truth. While tolerating truth claims, it views them as no more than cultural constructs. (This position is logically self-destroying for it affirms as a single absolute truth that there is no single absolute truth.) Such pluralism asserts ‘tolerance’ as an ultimate value, but it can take oppressive forms in countries where secularism or aggressive atheism govern the public arena.

A We long to see greater commitment to the hard work of robust apologetics. This must be at two levels.

1. We need to identify, equip and pray for those who can engage at the highest intellectual and public level in arguing for and defending biblical truth in the public arena.
2. We urge Church leaders and pastors to equip all believers with the courage and the tools to relate the truth with prophetic relevance to everyday public conversation, and so to engage every aspect of the culture we live in.

3 TRUTH AND THE WORKPLACE

The Bible shows us God’s truth about human work as part of God’s good purpose in creation. The Bible brings the whole of our working lives within the sphere of ministry, as we serve God in different callings. By contrast, the falsehood of a ‘sacred-secular divide’ has permeated the Church’s thinking and action. This divide tells us that religious activity belongs to God, whereas other activity does not. Most Christians spend most of their time in work which they may think has little spiritual value (so-called secular work). But God is Lord of *all* of life. ‘Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men,’⁵⁸ said Paul, to slaves in the pagan workplace.

In spite of the enormous evangelistic and transformational opportunity of the workplace, where adult Christians have most relationships with non-Christians, few churches have the vision to equip their people to seize this. We have failed to regard work in itself as biblically and intrinsically significant, as we have failed to bring the whole of life under the Lordship of Christ.

A We name this secular-sacred divide as a major obstacle to the mobilization of all God’s people in the mission of God, and we call upon Christians worldwide to reject its unbiblical assumptions and resist its damaging effects. We challenge the tendency to see ministry and mission (local and cross-cultural) as being mainly the work of church-paid ministers and missionaries, who are a tiny percentage of the whole body of Christ.

B We encourage all believers to accept and affirm their own daily ministry and mission as being wherever God has called them to work. We challenge pastors and church leaders to support people in such ministry - in the community and in the workplace - ‘to equip the saints for works of service [ministry]’ - in every part of their lives.

C We need intensive efforts to train all

God's people in whole-life discipleship, which means to live, think, work, and speak from a biblical worldview and with missional effectiveness in every place or circumstance of daily life and work.

Christians in many skills, trades, businesses and professions, can often go to places where traditional church planters and evangelists may not. What these 'tentmakers' and business people do in the workplace must be valued as an aspect of the ministry of local churches.

D We urge local church leaders to understand the strategic impact of ministry in the workplace and to mobilize, equip and send out their church members as missionaries into the workplace, both in their own local communities and in countries that are closed to traditional forms of gospel witness.

E We urge mission leaders to integrate 'tentmakers' fully into the global missional strategy.

4 TRUTH AND THE GLOBALIZED MEDIA

We commit ourselves to a renewed critical and creative engagement with media and technology, as part of making the case for the truth of Christ in our media cultures. We must do so as God's ambassadors of truth, grace, love, peace and justice.

We identify the following major needs:

A Media awareness: to help people develop a more critical awareness of the messages they receive, and of the worldview behind them. The media can be neutral, and sometimes gospel friendly. But they are also used for pornography, violence and greed. We encourage pastors and churches to face these issues openly and to provide teaching and guidance for believers in resisting such pressures and temptations.

B Media presence: to develop authentic and credible Christian role models and communicators for the general news media and the entertainment media, and to commend these careers as a worthy means of influence for Christ.

C Media ministries: to develop creative, combined and interactive use of 'traditional', 'old' and 'new' media, to communicate the gospel of Christ in the context of a holistic biblical worldview.

5 TRUTH AND THE ARTS IN MISSION

We possess the gift of creativity because we bear the image of God. Art in its many forms is an integral part of what we do as humans and can reflect something of the beauty and truth of God. Artists at their best are truth-tellers and so the arts constitute one important way in which we can speak the truth of the gospel. Drama, dance, story, music and visual image can be expressions both of the reality of our brokenness, and of the hope that is centred in the gospel that all things will be made new.

In the world of mission, the arts are an untapped resource. We actively encourage greater Christian involvement in the arts.

A We long to see the Church in all cultures energetically engaging the arts as a context for mission by:

1. Bringing the arts back into the life of the faith community as a valid and valuable component of our call to discipleship;
2. Supporting those with artistic gifts, especially sisters and brothers in Christ, so that they may flourish in their work;
3. Letting the arts serve as an hospitable environment in which we can acknowledge and come to know the neighbour and the stranger;
4. Respecting cultural differences and celebrating indigenous artistic expression.

6 TRUTH AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

This century is widely known as 'The Biotech Century', with advances in all the emerging technologies (bio, info/digital, nano, virtual reality, artificial intelligence, and robotics). This has deep implications for the Church and for mission, particularly in relation to the biblical truth of what it means to be human. We need to promote authentically Christian responses and practical action in the arena of public policies, to ensure that technology is used not to manipulate, distort and destroy, but to preserve and better fulfil our humanness, as those whom God has created in his own image. We call on:

A Local church leaders to (i) encourage, support and ask questions of church members who are professionally engaged in science, technology, healthcare and public policy, and (ii) to present to theologically thoughtful students the need for Christians to enter these arenas.

B Seminaries to engage with these fields in

their curricula, so future Church leaders and theological educators develop an informed Christian critique of the new technologies.

C Theologians, and Christians in government, business, academia and technical fields, to form national or regional 'think tanks' or partnerships to engage with new technologies, and to speak into the shaping of public policy with a voice that is biblical and relevant.

D All local Christian communities to demonstrate respect for the unique dignity and sanctity of human life, by practical and holistic caring which integrates the physical, emotional, relational and spiritual aspects of our created humanity.

7 TRUTH AND THE PUBLIC ARENAS

The interlocking arenas of government, business and academia have a strong influence on the values of each nation and, in human terms, define the freedom of the Church.

A We encourage Christ-followers to be actively engaged in these spheres, both in public service or private enterprise, in order to shape societal values and influence public debate. We encourage support for Christ-centred schools and universities that are committed to academic excellence and biblical truth.

B Corruption is condemned in the Bible. It undermines economic development, distorts fair decision-making and destroys social cohesion. No nation is free of corruption. We invite Christians in the workplace, especially young entrepreneurs, to think creatively about how they can best stand against this scourge.

C We encourage young Christian academics to consider a long-term career in the secular university, to (i) teach and (ii) develop their discipline from a biblical worldview, thereby to influence their subject field. We dare not neglect the Academy.⁵⁹

NOTES (Part II)

56. 1 Thessalonians 1:3

57. Ephesians 2:10

58. Colossians 3:23

59. For 'The university is a clear-cut fulcrum with which to move the world. The Church can render no greater service to itself and to the cause of the gospel than to try to recapture the universities for Christ. More potently than by any other means, change the university and you change the world.' Charles Habib Malik, former president of the UN General Assembly, in his 1981 Pascal Lectures, *A Christian Critique of the University*.

Bicentennial of the Sunday School Movement

Untold numbers have come to a knowledge of Jesus Christ and received the blessings of His salvation through the Sunday School. Yet very few have any idea of how the Sunday School, which is an important part of the programme in almost every Church, got started. This year is the bicentennial celebration of the Sunday School movement. The man who launched the movement was Robert Raikes of England. He lived during the time of the Industrial Revolution, the bloody revolution of the peasants in France, and the war of Independence in America. Mr. Raikes was deeply concerned about the poor and oppressed people who were neglected and despised by so-called “decent society”.

His first efforts to improve the lot of the poor and the oppressed were directed towards prisoners. He tried to rehabilitate them and help them find a place in society. But the society was harsh on them, and they were often not willing to change. So Mr. Raikes decided to try to work with children and mould their lives from the young and tender years. This, too, was difficult because the

children were exploited in the factories, and behaved wildly when released for the weekend. But Mr. Raikes had a strong and persistent faith that Christian teachings for the young would sooner or later make a change in their conduct and in their lot. He got the help of some poor, respectable women who would teach. They were paid a small sum for their services. Many difficulties had to be overcome before the children were ready to receive Christian teachings. Before even a lesson could be taught, the children had to be civilised and their wild spirits tamed. Within three years, on the day his eldest son was born, Robert Raikes, could announce to the world the success of his experiment. The movement spread like wild fire throughout England. Although there was strong opposition from those who objected to anyone teaching the poor for fear that they would “rise above their station, the movement grew and thrived.”

The Sunday School movement received a tremendous boost from John Wesley who introduced the practice of volunteers as teachers and used the Sunday School format in all the Methodist societies. From that

time on, the Sunday School has been a vital part of the Christian Education programme in our Methodist Church. This is a fitting time for us to consider the importance of our Sunday Schools in the life of the whole Church. We recognise with appreciation all those who have served and are still serving faithfully as teachers. Most of us are indebted to Sunday School teachers who loved us and taught us, and lived a Christian life before us. We also desire that our children today still have such worthy examples to follow, such teachers to lead them. To this end, we need to take seriously the need to send our teachers to training courses provided through the Annual Conference, the District, or on the local level. To be sure, we are not lacking in opportunities to sow the seeds of the Gospel among our children. If we can rise to the occasion and show the same self-giving compassion for children which we see in Robert Raikes, surely God will reward us with an abundant harvest and a growing and vital Church.

By Bishop C.N. Fang
Pelita Methodist
September/October 1980



Trust in the Lord with all your heart

and lean not on your own understanding;

⁶ in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight.

Proverbs 3:5-6

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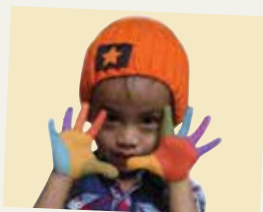
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