



## Joy to the World Christmas

To the startled shepherds watching the flocks by night, the angel came with an amazing message: 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord!' (Luke 2:10f)

I have often wondered whether Christmas really bring 'Good News of great joy for all people'? I know that it brings lots of fun and joy for many people in our country—both Christian and non-Christian. After all, who of us would not like a day off work? Moreover, for many Christians, there are of course celebrations and Christmas presents. And for many non-Christians too, it is a good time just to have some fun any way! But how many actually find the message of Christmas to be one of great joy? And how often as Christians do we live our lives in such a way that really brings joy?

Allow me to share one of my favourite mission stories. Born in 1870, Ida Scudder was the granddaughter of the first missionary doctor sent out by the North American church. Her father was also a missionary doctor in India but, for Ida, certainly being a missionary was the last thing in her mind. Having graduated from seminary, she had plans to go to Wellesley College, one of America's leading women's universities and from which people like Hillary Clinton would eventually graduate. And being bright and beautiful, she also had hopes of marrying a rich man!



Bishop's Christmas Message

Her mother had fallen sick in India and Ida had to go to be with her for some time. Arriving back in India in 1890 after a long absence, she did not like much of what she saw! Some weeks after her arrival, however, one night three men knocked in succession on the door of the family home. As she herself later told it, there were 'three knocks in the night.' One man was a Brahmin, the second a Muslim and a third, a high-caste Hindu. All three strangely came with the same request: Each of their wives were giving birth and having problems. Would she, Ida, go to their respective homes and help? Ida told each in turn that she was not a doctor, but that her father would be most pleased to help. From each of the three men came the same reply—in their culture, no men outside the family can enter the women's quarters in their houses. It was just not allowable!

Ida did not sleep that night. Early in the morning she sent the servant to check on each of the three homes. He finally returned.

'You were able to find all the places?'  
'I found them, Missy.'  
'And the three women who were sick?'  
'Dead ... All three of them, Missy.'

Ida fled to her room, buried herself in her pillow and cried her heart out for hours. Then came the resolution: 'I'm going to America and study to be a doctor, so I can come back here and help the women of India.'

Ida graduated from Cornell Medical School in 1899. The story goes on to tell of Ida Scudder's early work as a doctor in Vellore, India. She would drive from village to village and town to town, working especially among the women. Clearly she brought much healing and joy into the lives of many. One day when her car broke down and she could not go to a certain town, she was confronted by the request, spoken with a voice gently accusing: 'Have you forgotten us? Are you never coming again? Many died since you stopped coming.' Similar examples were repeated over and over again.

Ida's next goal was to build a nursing school to train Indian women as nurses. This was followed by the first medical school in India solely dedicated for the training of women doctors.

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## Bishop Dr Solomon re-elected for third term



**B**ISHOP Dr Bishop Solomon was re-elected Bishop of The Methodist Church in Singapore (MCS) on Dec 4, 2008 during the 9th Session of the General Conference of the MCS at Methodist Centre, Barker Road.

He will serve his third and final term as Bishop for the quadrennium 2009 to 2012 as under the Church's constitution a bishop can only serve three consecutive terms. He was first elected Bishop in the year 2000.

There was a Re-dedication Service for the bishop at Barker Road Methodist Church on Dec 5, 2008. Bishop Dr Hwa Yung of The Methodist Church in Malaysia officiated. He was assisted by

Bishop Amat Tumino of The Methodist Church in Indonesia Region 2. Bishop Dr Hwa Yung also delivered the sermon.

After graduating from the University of Singapore with an MBBS in 1980, Bishop Dr Solomon went into full-time ministry. He obtained his Ph.D. in pastoral theology from Edinburgh University in 1993.

He has pastored Tamil Methodist churches in Singapore.

He was the first Asian Methodist leader to have delivered a keynote address at a World Methodist Conference. He did this at the 19th conference in Seoul in July 2006.

## *Congratulations to Annual Conference Presidents!*

**A**t the recently concluded Annual Conferences, Presidents were elected for the next quadrennium 2009 to 2012. Our congratulations to all of them and may God's grace and guidance be with them in their life and ministry.

- Rev Boh Che Suan – Chinese Annual Conference
- Rev Dr Su Chii Ann – Sarawak Chinese Annual Conference
- Rev Steward Damat – Sarawak Iban Annual Conference
- Rev Ling Heu Uh – Sabah Provisional Annual Conference
- Rev C. Jayaraj – Tamil Annual Conference
- Rev Ong Hwai Teik – Trinity Annual Conference

## Bishop Emeritus' Visit

**B**ishop Emeritus Datuk Dr Denis Dutton and his wife, Datin Emme, paid a visit to the Methodist HQ on 17 October. They were back from the United States for a short visit. Ms Jenny Qua, the Executive Secretary, took them out for a lunch fellowship with some other staff from the office.



Denis Dutton.jpg – From right, Pauline Leong, Jenny Qua, Bishop and Mrs Dutton, and Betty Kwan, sister of Datin Emme.

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## What is Happening in our Annual Conferences?

### November

1	Sat	TAC Board of Laity Meeting
4-6	Tue-Thu	Sengoi Mission Conference
6	Thu	SPAC Ministerial Members Meeting
7-8	Fri-Sat	5th Session Sabah Provisional Annual Conference
10-13	Mon-Thu	33rd Session Chinese Annual Conference
14-17	Fri-Mon	33rd Session Tamil Annual Conference
18-21	Tue-Fri	33rd Session Sarawak Chinese Annual Conference
20-21	Thu-Fri	TRAC Board of Ministry & Pre-Ministerial Session
22-25	Sat-Tue	33rd Session Trinity Annual Conference
26-27	Wed-Thu	SIAC Pastors and Lay Seminar
27-30	Thu-Sun	33rd Session Sarawak Iban Annual Conference

### December

9-14	Tue-Sun	TRAC Youth Leadership Development Programme
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## Remember the Sabbath Day

Rev Mark Chua

Perhaps no other commandment in the Decalogue has been more misunderstood and neglected than this Fourth Commandment. This is not so surprising when you understand the historical and theological controversies surrounding the interpretation of the Sabbath day. Issues concern whether the commandment is purely an Israelite law, the fear of legalism, what is its relation to the Lord's Day, and how it should be observed.

The neglect of this Fourth Commandment, however, has unfortunate consequences. We have lost our equilibrium about time, and consequently, of purpose. Life has become a rat-race for most people. Many today feel that their lives are spinning out of control. We feel that we must squeeze every moment we have to do some thing meaningful, and when we have some free time, we feel guilty about it! We have developed a culture that does not value rest and as a result, we have become restless, like fidgety, little children. The forces of modernity have shaped us to evaluate our lives according to productivity and achievements.

One result from all these is that we are simply living far more stress-filled lives. We take our work even on our holidays. And stress is affecting our health. Excessive and unrelieved stress has been related to physiological illnesses such as heart diseases, cancer, and hypertension and to psychological effects such as irritability, depression and sleep disorder. Doctors are saying that as much as 70% of our illnesses are due to our stress-related lifestyle. We have no time even to recover unless we are hospitalized, a sort of forced Sabbath, and we have to pay expensively for it!

The uniqueness of this Sabbath Commandment is that it concerns time; indeed Sabbath is a gift of time. This commandment is responsible for dividing our time (universally) into weeks of seven-day cycle. The weekend that we have can be traced to this commandment (although today we have filled our weekends with

more activities that often leave us more stressed out!) The importance of the Sabbath Commandment can be noted from the fact that it is longest in the Decalogue, and it was enforced under the threat of capital punishment (Ex 31:15). And it is also the only commandment that looks back to the creation account, and is intended therefore, to redeem God's original purpose.

Six things can be noted from the Sabbath Commandment as found in Exodus 20:8-11.

*In blessing the Sabbath day ... God has given us an important key to life itself. He has breathed into the day the powers of life. The Sabbath was the last creative act of God, a sublime apex that points humanity to find true rest in God.*

### 1. "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy" (v.8).

Sabbath means "cease or desist". The Sabbath day is essentially a day of rest. In the wilderness, Moses reminded the Israelites, "This is what the Lord commanded: 'Tomorrow is to be a day of rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord.'" (Ex 16:23). No work was done. They were to keep it holy, different, from the other days. The motive was grounded in creation, for God, having finished creating the vast array of the heavens and the earth, rested on the seventh day (Gen 2:1-3). The first man and woman who were created on the sixth day were introduced to a world that had already been prepared and a God who took time to take delight in His creation. Humanity is invited to contemplate on Him and His creation. Time is made holy by God.

In the Sabbath Commandment found in Deuteronomy, the motive for observing

the Sabbath day was to remember they were slaves in Egypt (Deut 5:15). For four hundred years, the Israelites had worked without any rest. They had no time of their own. Now that they had been delivered, they were to preserve their freedom by observing the weekly Sabbath. Are we in danger today of slipping back into slavery of some sort?

### 2. "Six days you shall labor and do all your work" (v.9)

The principle here is that one day in seven is to be given to rest and worship. Much controversy about which day is holy, whether it is the Jewish day of Sabbath or the Christian Sabbath ("the Lord's Day") need not arise, so long as one observes it as to the Lord (Rom 14:5-6). Six days are given for us to do our work. Our work, in one sense, is never completed, and there is therefore the need to commit to God what we have done in the week and trust Him to establish the work of our hands. It is insightful from the experience of the Israelites in the wilderness, that God supplied double portion of the manna on the sixth day. But on the seventh day, nothing rained from heaven (Ex 16:26-30). In this way they learned the trustworthiness of God in providing their daily bread. Did not our Lord teach us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread"? The Sabbath teaches that man must ever look to God.

### 3. "But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God" (v.10)

The Sabbath helps us center our lives on God. We keep the Sabbath not simply in order that we may have energy to produce more the following week. That's seeing life purely from a utilitarian notion. Sabbath is to be observed to the Lord – a celebration of God, and of His works. For as noted earlier, the first thing that the man and woman did was to gaze on a world that was prepared and worship His Creator. Indeed, as AW Tozer reminded us, man is first a worshipper before he is a worker.





Psalm 92 is a psalm dedicated to celebration of the Sabbath day. There is celebration of God's love (v.2) in joyful worship, enhanced by music (v.3). There is contemplation on the works of God: "I sing for joy at the work of your hands" (v.4). The works of God's hands include His creative and redemptive works in the world and in our lives. We don't ponder much on them, and so our worship is much poorer. Pastors (and I have been guilty of this) have far too often on Sunday drowned their congregation with more 'works' to do rather than guiding their people to see and celebrate the wonders of God. Of course, there will necessarily be times of repentance, prayer and contrition, but the celebrative mood of the Sabbath day needs to be recaptured. The Sabbath day is to be the highlight of the week, when God's people come to reflect on God's goodness and bring Him joyful praises and gifts.

#### **4. "On it you shall not do any work" (v.10)**

The verse continues, "neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates". The concern must go beyond ourselves, and extend to our children, workers, maids, and even animals. Talk about abuse of maids and animals! In fact, the Old Testament laws on Sabbath extended beyond humanity to the land. On the seventh year, the Sabbath year, the land was not to be tilled (Lev 25:1-7). The Israelites, however, had largely ignored Sabbath through the centuries, and instead exploited the day to make more money, and cheated on the

poor and needy (Amos 8:4-6). The land was repeatedly raped. Eventually when they were exiled to a foreign land, we are told that "the land enjoyed its sabbath rests" (2 Chr. 36:21). The Sabbath reminds us that time and creation belong to God, and there is a price to pay by ignoring them. There may be no law today about stoning those who fail to observe the Sabbath, yet, in a way, the failure to rest brings judgment because people are allowing their bodies to be abused and suffer unnecessarily.

#### **5. "For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day" (v.11)**

God who is our model did not set to work endlessly. In resting, God set for Himself and His creation a limit. Ex 31:17 tells us that "on the seventh day he (God) rested, and was refreshed" (KJV). Here then lies perhaps one vital reason for the Sabbath – finding rejuvenation. Cessation from regular work has an all-important function of rejuvenating a person, bringing restoration of life and health. We need to take breaks in order to be refreshed and to gain new perspectives. The Sabbath is a day of 'detaching' from things and 'attaching' and attuning to our inner spirits. R. Paul Stevens reckons, "A weekly experience of rest is fundamental to our regaining perspective and entering that rest that is essential to personal, social and creational survival." Without the Sabbath, life is submerged in an endless cycle of work that is repetitive, non-

creative and ultimately non-productive. A life lived without reflection is a life not worth living. No wonder, our Lord said, "The Sabbath was made for man" (Mk 2:27)

#### **6. "Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy" (v.11)**

In blessing the Sabbath day and setting it apart as special, God has given us an important key to life itself. He has breathed into the day the powers of life. The Sabbath was the last creative act of God, a sublime apex that points humanity to find true rest in God. It keeps man focused on God, with his life bound in Him. A Jewish saying has it that "more than the Jews have kept Sabbath, Sabbath has kept the Jews." In a similar fashion, Sabbath keeps us all in step with God, wrapped in His grace.

The words in Isa 58:13-14 comes as a powerful reminder from God: "Keep the Sabbath day holy. Don't pursue your own interests on that day, but enjoy the Sabbath and speak of it with delight as the Lord's holy day. Honor the Sabbath in everything you do on that day, and don't follow your own desires or talk idly. Then the Lord will be your delight. I will give you great honor and satisfy you with the inheritance I promised to your ancestor Jacob. I, the Lord, have spoken!" (NLT).

*Rev Mark Chua  
Chinese Methodist (Hokkien) Church  
Kuala Lumpur*

# MALAYAN CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS' COUNCIL (MCSC)

## Mission Schools – Meeting The Needs of The Nation

The Malayan Christian Schools' Council (MCSC) comprises representatives from mission schools in Peninsular Malaysia. These are from the Methodist, Catholic, Anglican, Brethren and Presbyterian Churches.

The total number of mission schools that are Government aided, including those in Sabah and Sarawak, is about 410 with a combined enrollment of more than 240,000 students. Given these numbers it is clear that mission schools have a significant presence in the education system and can play an important role in building young lives and contributing to the development of the nation.

With this as the backdrop, the MCSC's theme for this year's symposium was "Mission Schools – Meeting the Needs of the Nation." Three guest speakers were invited to speak to this theme from different perspectives, and the Deputy Minister of Education, YB Dr Wee Ka Siong was invited to give the closing address to the symposium.

Ms Yin Kam Yoke, the Honorary Secretary of the MCSC, started the day with a paper on the current status and issues pertaining to mission schools.

### Background to the current issues of Mission Schools

A background to the situation will help our understanding of the current issues. Mission schools are Government assisted schools similar to schools like the Chinese Conforming Schools and Sekolah Agama Rakyat where the land and buildings are not owned by the Government. In the case of mission schools the owners are the respective Mission Authorities or Churches to which they belong.

In the Aziz Report Review of 1971 these schools were to be given assistance in the maintenance of buildings and a promise that funds raised for new school blocks would be matched dollar for dollar. However, even this partial aid was rarely given and



From left, Ms Moey Yoke Lai, Ms Yin Kam Yoke, Bishop Ng Moon Hing, YB Dr Wee Ka Siong, Sister Enda, and Mr Yap Kok Keong enjoying a light moment.

mission school heads had to source and raise funds, with the help of the Board of Governors and the local community, even for tables and chairs used by the students and teachers.

Because of this and unlike fully aided Government schools, mission schools are often dilapidated, termite eaten, leaking, in need of repairs and upgrading. Furthermore, until 2002, very high quit rents at commercial rates were charged for the land on which the Government was using to run schools and for which no rental of land or buildings was charged to the Government. It is to be noted that after much persistent efforts, these schools have been granted nominal quit rents of RM1 or RM10 by the various State Governments.

Besides these issues of funding, others concerning appointment of the Principal, extension of leases of the school land, maintaining the character and heritage of the mission schools, are ongoing matters that the MCSC is pursuing with the Government.

In February this year a 15-point appeal letter was sent to the Minister of Education, Datuk Seri Hishammuddin bin Tun Hussein Onn, highlighting these issues. Among these were:

- Existing and lapsed leases of mission schools to be renewed at nominal premiums.
- Annual maintenance grants, special

grants for repainting, upgrading and repair works, and basic furniture for teachers and students to be allocated, similar to other Government schools.

- The principle of maximum consultation in the appointment of Head Teachers to be adhered to with standard procedures and mutual agreement.
- The character, ethos and culture of mission schools to be maintained. Also that Christian Clubs and Societies be allowed in all schools where there is a Christian population, as provided for by the Education department.
- A balanced multiracial composition of students, staff and administrators to be maintained.
- Promotional posts in mission schools to reflect multiracial composition of the nation in line with the Prime Minister's call to have more non-Malay principals.

Mission schools have produced alumni who have contributed to every facet of national life and nation building, proof of the efficacy of their ethos and character. Many have an abiding affection and supportive of their alma mater.

Ms Yin ended by stating her firm conviction that "the ethos and character of our mission schools are distinct and worth preserving, a legacy to be passed on with pride."

In the closing speech by YB Dr Wee Ka Siong, the Deputy Minister of Education,

he acknowledged the contribution mission schools have made to the nation and the ethos and character of their heritage.

Dr Wee reassured the gathering of head teachers, members of Board of Governors, Parent-Teacher Associations, and alumni that the concerns and issues highlighted above will be given attention and serious consideration.

Mr Yap Kok Keong, Chairman of the MCSC, concluded the day with thanks to the Deputy Minister for his comments, suggestions and assurances. He spoke on behalf of all the educators present that they were encouraged by the positive approach shown to the concerns of the mission schools and were keen to see the impact filtered down to the schools.

## The Plenary Forum

The Forum speakers this year were Dr Lim Teck Ghee, Dr Patricia Martinez and Mr Goh Keat Seng. Dr Lim and Dr Martinez were invited to give their views from an outside and broader perspective of the nation's needs, whilst Mr Goh, no stranger to the mission schools scene, spoke on the role of the church in mission schools.

**Dr Lim Teck Ghee** took a broad look at the development of education in the country. He remarked with concern that if we fail in our education we are setting the course for our country to fail. Very serious words that need serious attention.

Before bringing some of the challenges in education to the attention of the Forum, Dr Lim pointed out some of the achievements in the past thirty years or so. Among these are the nearly universal primary education of our children, increasing lower and upper secondary education, bridging of the regional/geographical gap, the rural



Bishop Ng welcoming the participants to the Symposium.

and urban schools gap, and the racial educational gap. This can be seen in the unprecedented rise of the Malay Bumiputra middle class and as also reflected in the level of Bumiputra employment in the high occupational categories. However, he noted there was still a sizable disparity between the Malay bumiputra and other bumiputra in their educational levels.

Other developments to note is the growth of private sector education and the rapid expansion of post-secondary and tertiary education. Dr Lim also noted that up to 8% percent of GDP is spent on education, compared to 4% in Singapore and Thailand. However, he questioned whether the output was just as good. The other concern is where the money is being spent and who are the beneficiaries. So while the money is there the amounts allocated to the different sectors – pre-school, primary, secondary, tertiary and other institutions – may still be lopsided to the needs and priorities of the nation.

Besides the quantitative aspects there are also the qualitative issues of education. He highlighted, as an example of national interest, the history curriculum that tends to ignore the contributions of non-bumiputras in nation building. As a stakeholder in this he challenged the mission schools to take up the issues with other civil society organizations. In addressing the mission schools specifically Dr Lim encouraged them to continue in their ethos and character of providing quality and excellence, promoting tolerance, integrity, acceptance and openness; and also to champion the underdogs, the disadvantaged and to speak up for justice and righteousness.

**Dr Patricia Martinez** focused on the role education and schools can play in building one nation and one people. She stressed the importance of integration in the unity of the country. "If we do not integrate in this country we will disintegrate." Yet, integration does not mean doing away with differences but accepting and embracing them. The unity is one of co-existence that recognizes diversity and does not obliterate cultural and racial identity. It is about a common country with a common vision.

And what can the schools do in this respect? They can be places where such co-existence is lived out. Students can experience working together and be made

aware of how they did so as different people. However, perceptions must also change in the teachers as well, as they are role models for the students. Even parents need to experience this co-existence and cooperation through the involvement of the parents teacher association. Schools can be the places where this kind of unity is forged.

**Mr Goh Keat Seng** spoke on the role of the church in the mission schools. By which he meant in what way can the church influence or shape the character and ethos of the mission schools, especially as they are channels of Christian presence in our society? He made four points in this respect.

First, Mr Goh stressed that the schools are to reflect the Christian way of life. That is to say, though schools are concerned to produce students who are successful, the core idea is that they live as Christians in the world. In this regard then, the concern is to produce an authentic faith, that we show the true face of our being instead of a false face.

To reflect such a faith Mr Goh reminded us of three of the traditions that the Church has always lived in. The Holiness Tradition that reflects a life after God's character; the Social Justice Tradition a life committed to compassion and justice for all peoples; the Evangelical tradition a life founded on the written and proclaimed word of God. When Christ is proclaimed through the way the Christian lives then the faith will have credibility in modern society.

Second, Mr Goh said, the church in education must be mission oriented. Thus the schools are to reach beyond the walls of the church into the world. In the original mission of the schools the concern was for the marginalized of society – the last, the least and the lost.

Third, the schools should be ecumenical in their approach, the churches working together in partnership to fulfill the mission of the schools. And fourth, remembering that the schools were built for all the children in the nation, they are to reflect the beliefs of the founding fathers for freedom of religious belief and worship and the teaching of the pupils own religion. We teach religion because without it education is not complete.

# Choose Teaching

Every school is crying out for good teachers but where are they coming from? They cannot just appear out of nowhere. The best of our young people must choose teaching as their vocation and go out into the great harvest fields of schools to nurture, guide and teach our children.

“The churches must see the teaching profession in the same light as local or overseas missions. Every teacher who is mission-minded is God’s powerful missionary or youth worker in our

schools.” says Mr Yap Kok Keong, chairman of the Malayan Christian Schools’ Council.

To promote teaching as a vocation and mission, the MCSC has produced a booklet and DVD. It is their sincere desire that every church concerned with the education of our young obtains a copy and disseminate the information and call to their congregation, parents and youths to choose teaching as a vocation and make a difference to the country and for eternity.



The resource is available from Malayan Christian Schools’ Council (03-79565310).

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All three speakers gave much food for thought and outlined the challenges for the mission schools in meeting the needs of the nation. Ranging broadly over many issues, it may appear a daunting, almost impossible task. But with the combined and cooperative efforts of the Head Teacher, Christian teachers, the Board of Governors, Parent Teacher Association, alumni and the Church a school can be that place where our youths are formed in character, creativity, intellect, skills and spiritual orientation that will be the backbone of our nation. And with God’s grace and enabling this vision can become a reality.

## More Practical Concerns and Issues.

In the afternoon the participants brought their experience and expertise to bear on some more immediate and practical concerns in building up our mission schools, in the face of the realities that are found in the present school scene.

Seven topics of importance and relevance were tackled. These were:

1. Sustaining a Functional Mission School
2. Sharing Best Practices in our mission schools
3. A Model Parent Teacher Association
4. The Challenge of a Breakthrough in Attitude
5. Maintaining the Ethos of Christian Schools
6. The School Christian Fellowship

Space does not allow a more detailed look at these areas of discussions. But these areas indicate the awareness and directions that mission schools need to address in their endeavour to achieve educational excellence and also to fulfill their mission in the world.

## Christopher Cheah

*This report is based on the summary report of the Symposium by Margaret Martinez, the paper presented by Ms Yin Kam Yoke, and the speech given by YB Dr Wee Ka Siong.*

>> *from page 1*

Much later, men were also admitted. Today Christian Medical College, Vellore, is recognised as one of the leading medical schools in the whole of India, having trained thousands of nurses and doctors over almost a hundred years. It was the ‘three knocks in the night’ that birthed the vision which has brought tremendous blessing and joy to millions, especially women, in India.

Christmas is about the coming of Jesus whose work of salvation for all humans would mean ‘Good news of great joy’ to all who would receive Him! But the peoples of this world can only receive Jesus and his joyful message of salvation for all if Christians, like Ida Scudder, would take it to them. Perhaps this Christmas is a good time in your life to ask God what He would have you or your children do with your/their time and lives to bring joy into the hearts of men and women in our world today.

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare Him room,  
And Heaven and nature sing,  
And Heaven and nature sing,  
And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing ...

He rules the world with truth and grace,  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of His righteousness,  
And wonders of His love,  
And wonders of His love,  
And wonders, wonders, of His love.



The Cantonese Chinese Methodist Church, KL organized an outing for its members to Gunung Rapat, Perak. Members from the very young to the seniors, together with some from other Chinese Methodist churches, enjoyed a day of games, dances and telematches.



Winning team showing off their medals.



Enjoying a tug-of-war.

## 青松迷你運動會 報導：徐曉慧

吉隆坡MBS學校操場邊，坐著上百個樂齡人士，最年輕的也有過半百了吧！當中不少是七八十歲的老人家。在觀看運動會嗎？不！他們是來參加運動會的。

這場於10月11日，由吉隆坡廣東堂樂齡團契主辦的青松迷你運動會，約有180位的年長者參加。參加者除了來自吉隆坡廣東堂，附近的大城堡堂、美佳堂、甲洞堂，較遠的芙蓉堂，還有要坐上好幾個小時車程才到達的主恩堂、崑崙喇叭堂、怡保堂以及愛大華堂的弟兄弟姐妹。他們真的是老當益壯，比他們年輕的我還真自嘆不如呢！

上午9時20分，張煥祥牧師帶領參加者禱告，將一切讚美感謝榮耀歸神。接著，主持兼策劃整個運動會的何約翰夫人作了個簡單的報告。她也提醒大家這運動會的目的，乃在乎團契、聯誼、開心，大家要量力而為，不要勉強。她更帶著開玩笑的口吻說，不可爭先恐後，不可霸位.....看來，“好勝”是人之常情，不分男女老幼。

在熟悉的《桂河橋》(Bridge Over the River Kwai) 音樂下，百多兩百人穿著同一款的衣帽，由牧者帶領繞場操步一圈。他們還操步得似模似樣，有板有眼哦！

接著進行了五個分組比賽，有傳鑰匙、踏報紙、傳米倒米、比長度及考驗分工合作的比賽。每場比賽都有金、銀、銅獎品。結果大城堡堂收穫最豐，得2金1銀1銅，愛大華堂得了2金，怡保堂得1金2銀，美佳堂得2銀2銅，芙蓉堂及崑崙喇叭堂各得1銅。

最後，由全體參加者分兩輪參加拔河比賽。不論輸贏都有獎品。不料，在進行第二輪的比賽時，拔河的麻繩竟給拉斷了！可見，老人家的力氣可不小哦！

看他們生氣勃勃，熱愛生命的態度，誰說“人老不中用”呢？讓我們為他們喝彩！

## COE Forum: No Child Left Behind

Each person is made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27) and therefore has dignity and is worthy of our honouring God in them by loving them and caring for them.

With this premise, the NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND Forum on Special Educational Needs for Pre-School was organized by the Methodist Council of Education on 29 November 2008 at the Methodist College Kuala Lumpur. It was the first time that the COE had organized such an event and so we were very encouraged that 37 people attended.



Dr Lim Boon Hock (right) addressing the participants. Ms Wong Poh Wan is second from the right.

The invitation had gone out to all Methodist churches in the Klang Valley, targeting church pastors and members, Methodist Kindergartens, Sunday Schools, Parents and anyone with a heart for this much-neglected area of education. The COE Executive Director, Dr Lim Boon Hock heartily welcomed all present, especially the group from Malaysian CARE.

Before discussion ensued, Ms Wong Poh Wan, a Special Education consultant, recently retired from Malaysian CARE, gave a presentation on the topic and the work in SPICES. Dr Moo Siew Pheng, a member of COE, from Emmanuel Methodist Church Petaling Jaya which has the Emmanuel Child Centre for Special Children, said a prayer for our endeavour in this field of special education. He also introduced Ms Angeline Lim from ECC.

After a lively discussion, several proposals were gathered. We realise that Disability Awareness is sadly lacking in our churches. It was recommended that the first three

months of 2009 be used for Disability Awareness programmes taken on by local churches. The participants had requested for training and more information. This will be taken up in the second quarter of the year.

For those who would like to pursue this area, Malaysian CARE has good work going and more information is available at [www.malaysiancare.org](http://www.malaysiancare.org). Emmanuel Methodist Church Petaling Jaya are also willing to share their experience and expertise.

It is our hope that with this forum, it will be a beginning of a new era for Special Education in our churches so that no child gets left behind, but instead he or she will be embraced in an inclusive learning environment.

**Tay Choon Neo**  
Deputy Executive Director  
Council of Education



# PADERI Conference

*This conference was held 15-18 July this year. Altogether more than 80 pastors and lay leaders from various denominations attended, with Methodist participants making up a third of the numbers. Rev T. Jeyakumar, of TRAC, shares what he learnt at the conference. Editor*

*PADERI which stands for Pastoral Development and Renewal Initiative comprises of a group of pastors, lay leaders and theologians of various denominations who are concerned for the personal spiritual formation and development of pastors and lay leaders in the Church in Malaysia. This would entail the holistic development of pastors and church leaders in their character, integrity, identity, role and relevance.*

During the recently concluded Pastoral Development and Renewal Initiative Conference held in Port Dickson, with the theme Run With The Horses (Jer 12:5), the two speakers -Dr Tan Siang Yang and Dr Bobby Sng – spoke mainly on the theme of servanthood and integrity in the pastoral ministry.

## **Servanthood**

Dr Sng, a well-known Bible teacher from Singapore, spoke from John 5:1-15: about Jesus healing (i.e. reaching out to serve) a man who cried out that he had no one to help him. As Pastors we must hear the cry of the people who want to be helped and reach out to minister to them. From another passage (Luke 19:28-44) he spoke about servanthood where like the donkey that Jesus rode into Jerusalem our privilege is to be of use to the Lord. When we forget our role as servants and when the spirit of triumphalism overtakes us, we end up uplifting ourselves rather than uplifting the Lord.

Dr Tan, professor of psychology at Fuller Theological Seminary and also Senior Pastor at First Evangelical Church, California, also emphasized servanthood. For him servanthood is primary and leadership secondary. He spoke about

servant-leadership defined as “a servant whom God has called to lead in a humble and gracious way.” Servanthood is not about serving in order to get people to follow us. It is not about serving to get people to notice us and make us their leader. Servanthood is about serving with no other motive but to fulfill the command to love the Lord and love our neighbour.

## **Integrity**

Dr Sng touched on the failure of Peter the apostle. Based on Luke 22:24-34 he pointed out that Peter’s failure was one that he had been warned about. Jesus had prepared Peter for this test yet he failed because Peter was too self-confident that he would not deny the Lord. We must learn from Peter’s life that failure can come to anyone who is self-confident and not confident in the Lord. Another lesson is even when we fail we must rise again.

Dr Tan pointed us to the need for integrity in the ministry. With statistics he impressed upon us that integrity is a great concern. He raised four points to help the pastor and Christian worker to guard one’s integrity.

1. Catch the thoughts that are unwholesome. Saturate the mind with Scripture so that we do not entertain unhealthy thoughts. Be ruthlessly honest with self-examination so that we do not excuse ourselves easily.
2. Have the wisdom to set boundaries in relationships with opposite gender. Meet opposite gender where there are people around. Guard yourself from emotional affairs.
3. There is power in the act of being accountable to someone. One’s spouse should be one’s best friend to share with.
4. Celebrate the goodness of sex and give priority to it in marriage. For those who are single find others whom you can have healthy and appropriate relationships with.

## **Conclusion**

Besides the above let me present some of the lessons I learnt at this Conference, by way of conclusion.

First, servanthood is not something that comes naturally. It is easy to serve with vested interest. If the servant is not careful he/she will be carried away by his own ego and position in the church. A true servant is one who models on the sacrificial love of Jesus. We must be like Jesus who tied a towel and washed the feet of his disciples. True servanthood means being like the donkey that Jesus rode that went unnoticed.

Second, the spiritual disciplines of fasting, prayer, meditation, solitude etc. are necessary to the spiritual growth and maturity of every Christian. The pastor must cultivate them and not neglect them. These spiritual disciplines are means of grace; in and of themselves they are nothing. The discipline of the quiet time for instance is about being with God to cultivate a relationship with Him. The activist pastor must remember that the quiet time is not a time he does something; it is a time when he is with God.

Third, in order to serve the Lord better we need to give the body sufficient rest. It impressed me greatly to hear Dr Tan say that “God will not cheat for you. He may not help you cope with less sleep.” Exercise, sleep and a good diet are all necessary for effective ministry.

I am glad for the privilege of being a part of the first PADERI Conference and for the many lessons learnt which are not all captured in this brief write-up. I am happy to have met with those from my seminary days, catch-up with friends, and make new acquaintances.

**Rev T. Jeyakumar**  
*Trinity Methodist Church  
Penang*

# Pakistani Christians, service in the midst of conflict

By Henrik Hansson (\*)

Pakistani Christian communities confronted with the presence of the Taliban and Al-Qaida serve their Muslim neighbours in an unfriendly environment.

Christians in the North Western Frontier Province of Pakistan find themselves in the midst of a complex conflict involving regional and global powers. With Pakistani government security forces fighting Taliban from within the country and Al-Qaida militants from beyond it, the border to Afghanistan is not much more than a demarcation line on the map. In the mountainous landscape extremists can roam freely. Add in cross border strikes from US military based in Afghanistan and it is hard to know who is who in the very tense situation.

"We deem it a privilege that we as a church are present in perhaps the world's most hostile and vulnerable areas at the moment", said the bishop of Peshawar, Munawar K. Rumalshah, from the Church of Pakistan, speaking to a Living Letters team from the World Council of Churches (WCC).

"Living Letters" are small international ecumenical teams traveling to locations around the world where Christians strive to overcome violence. At the end of November one such a team made of representatives from the United States, Armenia and the Netherlands visited Lahore and Islamabad. The team met Rumalshah at the triennial Synod meeting of the Church of Pakistan in Lahore.

The capital of the North-West Frontier Province, Peshawar is the administrative centre for the Federally

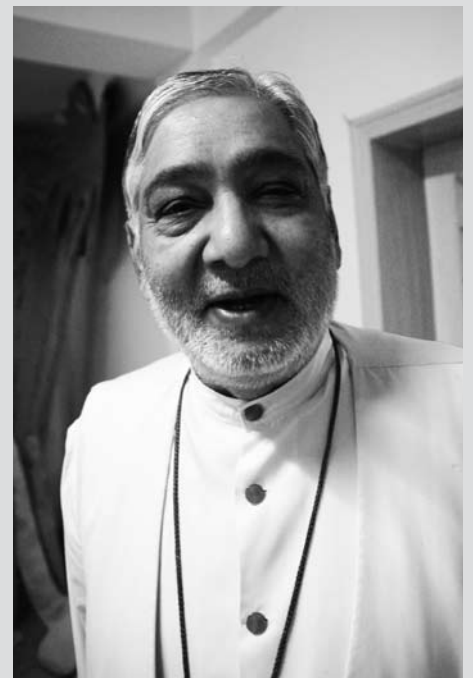
Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan. As the head of a diocese based there, Rumalshah explained what it means to be "neighbours of the Taliban and Al-Qaida" in what he defines as "literally a battle ground".

"God has allowed us to be there, in his name. To serve humanity, especially people who despise and hate us by cleaning their wounds and nurturing the children" the bishop said. That may be, he thinks, why the diaconal centres run by the diocese have not been attacked. It is perhaps in the most difficult of circumstances that churches show the most generous form of Christianity.

The church centres are "not exclusively for Christians, in fact 95 percent of those benefitting from our education, development work and health care are Muslims", Rumalshah explained.

For Rumalshah and his community, trying to live the gospel is about being accepted as a minority, at least to some extent as different. In this unstable region it is probably also a matter of sheer survival. But Christians in other countries do not always help in the communities' struggle for existence.

Pakistani Christians are often perceived as representatives of the West. When caricatures of the prophet Mohammed were published in Denmark a few years ago Christians in Pakistan faced violence and harassment. The second time the drawings were published, Christians themselves demonstrated against them. "You people sneeze in the West and we get a cold," the bishop said.



Bishop Munawar K. Rumalshah © Henrik Hansson/WCC

Knowing that most of the new recruits to the extremists are young, the Diocese of Peshawar also works with young people. Just as in so many other churches around the world Christian young people in North Western Frontier Province gather for prayer and for learning.

There are youth groups in all 25 parishes doing bible study, capacity building around issues such as HIV and AIDS and drawing young people away from areas where extremists recruit.

Creating the awareness that there are other possibilities in society "is essential for the church", claims Rev. Insar Gohar, a church youth coordinator in Peshawar. However, he also added that young people "sometimes feel some kind of discrimination, or when the Western world does something against Islam ...then we suffer a lot and sometimes extremist Muslims attack our institutions and churches."

As a struggling minority in sometimes harsh circumstances, Christians in Peshawar have to remain strong in their faith, committed to their church and to each other. That is what keeps their families and communities together.

(\*) **Henrik Hansson**,  
WCC Communication intern,  
is a member of Church of Sweden.

# RENOVATION OF THE HEART

(Dallas Willard, Navpress, Colorado Springs, 2002)

**Book Review by Lim Yew Foo**

The book courageously and confidently throws some light and points the way out of some of the frustrations, pains and perplexities that a Christian experiences in his life and in his community the Church:

- Why is my Christian life so unlike that portrayed in the Bible? (pg 10)
- Why do Christian leaders cause so much division and pain in the church? (pg 47)
- Why are Christians so dogmatically focused on the ‘vessels’ (of our denominational distinctives and practices) rather than on the ‘treasure’ (which is Christ) and are so mean and angry to other Christians ‘different’ from us? (pg 236)

Dallas Willard asserts that a major reason contributing to the above state of affairs is that we have not clearly understood what it means to be a Christian, what it is to be saved by Jesus Christ. Many come to Christ when their felt needs or problems are met by Christ. But after these needs are met their need for Christ also ends. He has no more relevance in our life. That is how the message of the Gospel is often understood.

Most new Christians are not told or do not understand that the reason they have problems in the first place is that their life is not right, that self is the god of their life and not Jesus Christ. They are not told that becoming a Christian is a process of making Christ Lord of their life and of dethroning the Self. As Willard puts it, our souls are ruined by the rule of SELF and now it needs to be transformed and renewed by Christ as the REDEEMER and KING. This is a life-long process. We need therefore to learn from Christ and enroll as His disciples; to put off the old and put on the new in Christ, to die to SELF but alive in Christ. The goal of this spiritual reformation is to put on the character of Christ in our life in a moment by moment, day to day basis being transformed from one glory to another until Christ is formed in us.

For most of us, discipleship and growing in sanctification unto Christ-likeness is nothing new. But what Dallas Willard brings into this subject is truly profound and insightful. He is like a good doctor who diagnoses correctly our malady, explains its ramifications and prescribes a medicine suited to the problem. To me, his key contribution to our understanding of being Christlike disciples is his exposition on the ‘process

and mechanics’ of the transformation from a SELF-centred to a Christ-centred life. To take his medicine, we must have VIM, a Vision of what a Christlike life is, possess a resolute Intention to attain it and the Means (or practice) to bring about change.

To change or transform ourself we need to understand how complex a being we are. The human being has been variously described in the field of psychology, psychiatry and behavioral science. For his purpose, Dallas Willard describes a human being in six dimensions, namely the mind, the feelings, the will, the body, the social dimension and the soul. To grow in Christlike discipleship, we must work on all six aspects of our being and each will affect and influence the others. Eight out of the thirteen chapters of the book are devoted to this transformation process.

Christian spiritual formation has been described variously in the book.

‘Spiritual formation for the Christian basically refers to the Spirit-driven process of forming the inner world of the human self in such a way that it becomes like the inner being of Christ himself’ (pg 22)

‘It is the central point of this book that spiritual transformation only happens as each essential dimension of the human being is transformed into Christ-likeness under the direction of a regenerate will interacting with constant overtures of grace from God. Such transformation is not the result of mere human effort and cannot be accomplished by putting pressure on the will (heart, spirit) alone’ (pg 41).

‘Spiritual formation in Christ is the process by which one moves and is moved from self-worship to Christ-centred self-denial as a general condition of life in God’s present and eternal kingdom’ (pg 77).

What does the six dimensions of our being look like when they are transformed by Christ?

- The great God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is a constant presence in our mind, crowding out every false idea or destructive image, all misinformation about God, and every crooked inference

or belief. ‘We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.’

- Right feelings follow right thinking. Our emotional responses become the most appropriate to the given circumstances or persons. We truly exhibit the signs of growing emotional well-being.
- Our will takes a single-minded and joyous devotion to God, and wills what God wants for us – to serve Him and others for His sake. We become the kind of person who just does not want to do the things we did before in our old life.
- Our body is presented as a living and holy sacrifice, very pleasing to God. As

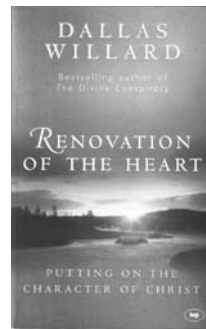
every part of our body is yielded to God, the very tissues and muscles are inclined toward God and godliness, and are vitalized in action by the powers of heaven. As our mind is renewed it breaks all conformity with the worldly life in this age, our powers of thought, imagination and judgment are transformed and become deeply rooted in our body. (page 170)

- The social dimension is healed and we can truly love the brethren, when we can deal with our woundedness that was inflicted by others through assault or withdrawal to be transformed in our social interaction. (page 181)
- Our soul rests in God. Our soul is at peace when it is with God, as a child with its mother. Let God rule and abandon all outcomes to Him! (page 209)

Once the vision of what a Christlike disciple is clear and the intent to get there is set, then the means, the spiritual exercises and disciplines, are readily available. A friend shared how unfit physically he was after laying off badminton for a year. It took him about a month of practice to enjoy the game again. Likewise, we seldom realize how spiritually unfit we are when we lay off spiritual exercise and discipline. Let us pick up the book then and do some spiritual ‘gymnasium’ (1 Tim 4:7). Soon we will enjoy the fruit and joy of Christ-likeness.

**Lim Yew Foo**

*Faith Methodist Church Cheras*





# CCM Building Project: GROUND BREAKING SERVICE



“Today marks a new beginning for the Christian leaders and the faithful to commit themselves to the shared vision, a vision of an ecumenical movement to encourage and strengthen the churches in Malaysia. ... Today, we stand here, at the pinnacle of the Council’s existence, to continue on this faith and conviction.” So declared Rev Dr Thomas Philips, CCM President, in his address delivered at the Ground Breaking Service for the CCM HQ/Ecumenical Centre held on Thursday, 9 October 2008 at the CCM land at No. 26 Jalan Universiti, 46200 Petaling Jaya. He further emphasized that “To lay the foundation of this building is to lay the ground, the roots of our conviction and faith.” He also paid tribute to church leaders, donors, well-wishers and staff members, past and present, for their services and contributions to the CCM building project over the years.

The ground breaking service was conducted by Bishop Tan Sri Dr Lim Cheng Ean, Immediate Past President of CCM, during whose term of office the formal application for the building project was first submitted to the local authority. About 45 heads of churches, church leaders, donors and friends of CCM attended this brief service, specially arranged to tie up with CCM Board of Management meeting to be held on the same day. As part of the service, Dato’ Dr Tan Kee Kwong, Chairman of the Building Board, said a special prayer for all those involved in the building project, especially the



From left, Bishop Tan Sri Dr Lim Cheng Ean, Bishop Dr Hwa Yung, Rev Dr Thomas Philips.

contractors and their workers who would undertake the physical construction works in due course. After the service, attendees were invited to a reception at the CCM temporary office just nearby.

The service was held in faith with the hope that the final approval from Majlis Bandaran Petaling Jaya would be granted soon. The final submission of the building plans was duly made in July 2008 under the one-stop-centre approach. In so doing, we have committed and dedicated the building project to God Almighty whom we trust will lead us to a successful completion of the project.

We solicit your earnest prayers for, and financial support to this building project.

**CCM Building Board**

## OBITUARY



Yip Kok Choong

Life Member LMF2707  
General Secretary of YMCA Kuala Lumpur 1983-1999  
General Secretary of the Asia and Pacific Alliance, Hong Kong

Mr Yip Kok Choong, passed away peacefully on 31 October 2008 at 12.25am at the Kwong Wah hospital in Hong Kong. His body was flown back to Malaysia and the funeral service was held on 10 November at the Xiao En Centre. He leaves behind his wife, Lucy.

Mr Yip was a prominent Methodist lay member, beginning from his youth in the Methodist Youth Fellowship. He was at one time the National Youth Director for the Trinity Annual Conference. A teacher by profession, Kok Choong taught for 11 years before taking up the position of general secretary of the KL branch of the YMCA. From 2000 he joined the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs until his demise.

## *Demise of Rt. Rev. Julius Danaraj Paul*

The Council of Churches of Malaysia is shocked and deeply saddened by the tragic news of the demise of the Rt. Rev. Julius Danaraj Paul, the Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Malaysia on 22nd November 2008 at a boat mishap on Lake Atitlan in Guatemala. He was 63 years old. Bishop Paul was there to attend a Lutheran World Federation Conference.

The CCM mourns the loss of a devoted servant of the Gospel who had given his life for the cause of ecumenism. Bishop Paul, as one of the long-serving ecclesiastical leaders in our country, had offered outstanding leadership to the Council of Churches of Malaysia, and other ecumenical

organizations in the region (CCA) and globally (LWF). He participated actively in the formation of the Seminari Theoloji Malaysia and the Christian Federation of Malaysia and served in important positions in those organizations.

Bishop Julius had enjoyed great respect and admiration from other church and government leaders as he was a passionate and relentless advocate of justice and peace in the country. As an ecumenist he had always sought the common ground so that churches could effectively impact social change in society.

Although it is sad that he has left us so

suddenly, his life and contribution will be remembered and cherished by all.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family and relatives, particularly his wife Alice Paul and children Surenthiren, Naveenthiren and Lalitha.

Jesus said, “ My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish.”

(John 10: 27-28)

**Rev. Dr. Hermen Shastrri**  
General Secretary  
24th November 2008

# Wesley Methodist Church, KL

## Position of Administrative Director

Applications are invited from suitably qualified applicants for the post of **ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR** in Wesley Methodist Church, Kuala Lumpur. Applicants must satisfy the following prerequisites:-

- Malaysian Citizen who is of the Christian faith
- Preferably below the age of 50
- Preferably possesses a graduate degree
- Working experience in a similar capacity
- Computer literate
- Able to work independently and as a team member
- Good interpersonal and communication skills to harmoniously work with staff, church leaders, members and the public
- Able to work beyond normal working hours and weekends when the need arises
- A sound knowledge of financial procedures relating to financial management

### Job Description

- Administer and supervise the implementation of policies and procedures to support the programs and Christian activities of the church
- Supervise the accounting function of the church relating to the collection, disbursement and banking of church funds
- Plan and organise the resources for all programs of committees and church organizations

- Perform the human resource management and development functions
- Manage and supervise all church office employees
- A resource person for all activities of the church

### Emoluments

An attractive salary package is offered and it will commensurate with experience.

Interested applicants are requested to send their detailed resume with the names of 2 character referees and a recent passport size photograph not later than 15th January 2009 to:

The Chairman,  
Staffing Committee,  
Wesley Methodist Church,  
No. 2 Jalan Wesley,  
50150 Kuala Lumpur.

## WANTED

### Manager, Wesley Home for Senior Citizens

Applications are invited from persons not less than 45 years of age with nursing background, valid driving licence, able to manage and look after the welfare of residents, and willing to live in, for the above post.

Salary is commensurate with qualifications and experience. Please write to:

The Chairman  
Wesley Home Management Committee,  
2 Jalan Wesley, 50150 Kuala Lumpur  
or call tel. 03-20705003 (Ms Natalie)  
**not later than 31.12.2008**

## Grace Methodist Church Sentul Administrative Secretary

Applications are invited for this position, with the following conditions:

- Malaysian Citizen who is of the Christian faith
- Experience in a similar capacity
- Computer literate
- Preferably able to work on weekends when necessary

Salary will be commensurate with qualification and experience.

Applicants can write or email to:

The Chairman  
Grace Methodist Church  
Peach Cottage  
22 Jalan Sentul  
51000 Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: 03-40436384  
Email: [gracemc@streamyx.com](mailto:gracemc@streamyx.com)



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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.



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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  
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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.

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Children from the tadika



Rev Ong Hwai Teik with Rev Yew Nieng Song (8th from left) and Ps Tan Chew Mae (extreme right) with members of the LCEC and some long standing members of the church, including Datuk Dr Tan Kee Kwong (7th from left).

## GMC Sentul Gets More Space

Grace Methodist Church Sentul had cause to rejoice with the addition of a renovated building to its existing ones. This was previously the workshop used by the secondary school for its classes in industrial subjects. By mutual agreement it was handed over to the church while GMC helped to build another workshop in the school compound.

The building was dedicated by Rev Ong Hwai Teik on 26 October 2008. It was given the name "Life Training Centre: An Oasis of Life." The church kindergarten will occupy most of the building but it also gives much needed additional ministry and office space for the church.

In conjunction with this GMC held a Sentul Community Carnival the

following Saturday to introduce the centre and the kindergarten to the community. The tadika held its annual end of year concert and graduation that day too, thus giving parents the chance to see the new premises. There was also a blood donation drive, medical screening by the Kidney Foundation and eye test and screening provided by the Lions Club, besides the usual food and games stalls.

The occasion was honoured by the presence of both the Deputy Minister for Federal Territories, YB Datuk M. Saravanan, and the Member of Parliament for Batu, YB Tian Chua. It is hoped that the church will truly be a light and oasis for the surrounding community of Sentul.



Colourful food stalls

*Christmas is . . .*

self-giving  
**love**  
 hope  
 for the  
**world**

**Christmas Greetings**  
 From Bishop Hwa Yung & Family and all the staff at Methodist HQ