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Contents

4 LEADER'S
COLUMN



6 CONNECT
WITH GOD



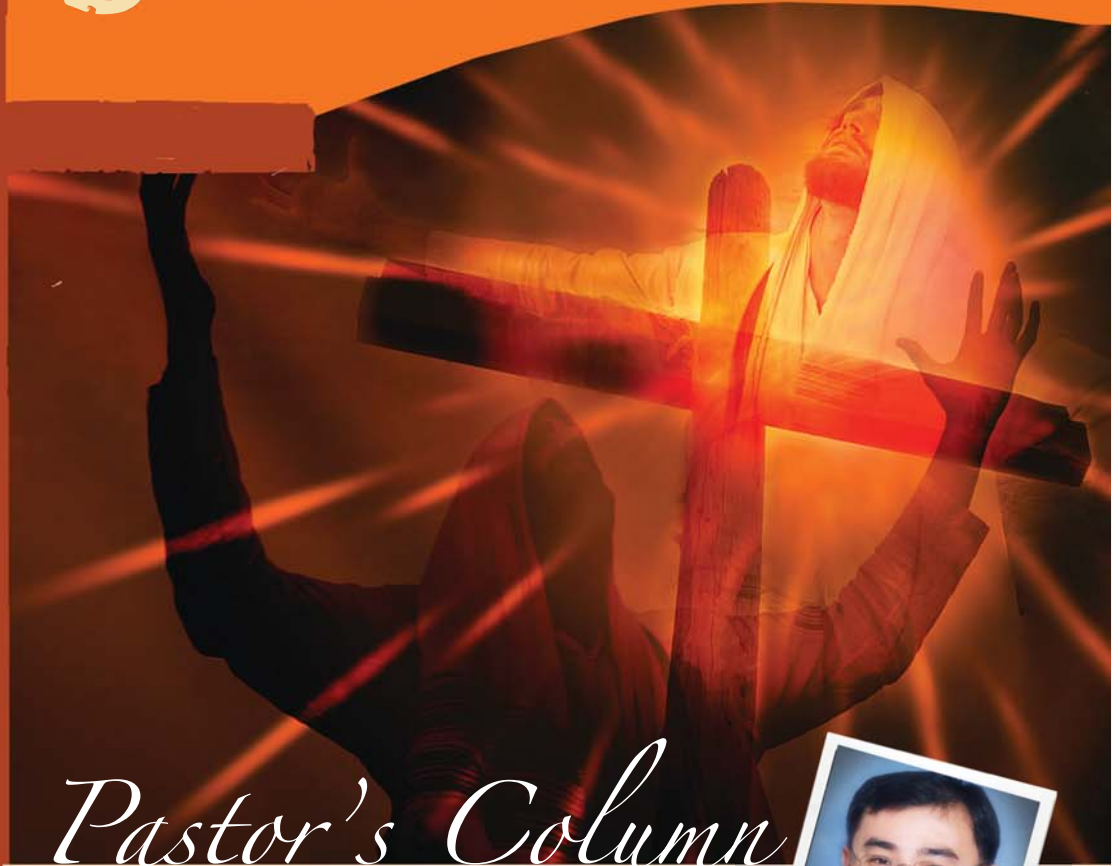
10 CONNECT
WITH EACH
OTHER



12 CONNECT
WITH OTHERS



SALTSHAKER



Pastor's Column



BABY STEPS

by Rev Bernard Chao

Six years ago, my first child, Elijah, was born on Ash Wednesday. With my baby son in my arms, and tongue in cheek, I said to all who cared to listen, that my son had been born to a repentant father. Not many understood my liturgical humour.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent. The word Lent means "spring", referring to the season which this liturgical season finds itself in, and refers to the season of prayer and preparation, totalling 40 days - excluding Sundays - before Easter.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, and culminates with Holy Week.

Ash Wednesday - still observed in many churches today - takes its name from the use of ashes, usually rubbed on the forehead, as a sign of repentance. This imposition of ashes is

based on Genesis 3:19: "Remember man, that you are dust and into dust you shall return."

Lent is therefore a period of intentional, careful and solemn self-examination, repentance, prayer and renewal. It ends with the joy and hope of Easter when the church universal proclaims: "Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!"

Historically, the origins of Lent lie in the preparation of baptism candidates. New believers being prepared and disciplined before undergoing the sacrament of baptism.

As such, it was a period of the "baby steps" of new believers. It has become a season when we remind ourselves of our own "baby steps" in Christ and consider how far we have walked along with our Lord, and how we may walk closer to Jesus.

For a baby, learning to walk begins with crawling and baby steps, when we need much encouragement and a fair amount of hand holding. As a baby matures and eagerly desires to stand and then walk, it has to take baby steps.

Emboldened, a baby then takes more steps. At first, it has to hold an adult's hand. With time, and with much glee, a baby transforms into a toddler as it begins to toddle about on its own.

Instead, let us be like the disciples of Jesus in Luke 24:35-43 who saw and recognised the risen Lord and "stood there in disbelief, filled with joy and wonder." May you encounter Jesus as you read the Bible, and wait for the Spirit of Christ to fill you with joy and wonder.

This Lent, let's consider if we are still "babes in Christ" and eagerly desire to grow up in Christ. We are taught in

1 Peter 2:2: "Like new born babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation."

If you so desire, don't reject the help that others can offer you in this body of Christ, but allow someone older and more mature in the faith to lead and disciple you to a closer walk with Jesus.

This is why the Apostle Paul said: "Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives." (Colossians 3:16) If you don't know who to approach, speak to your small group leader, or come see the pastors.

This Lent, if you are no longer a "babe in Christ", don't stop growing either! 1 Peter 4:1-2 reminds us that "if you have suffered physically for Christ, you have finished with sin. You won't spend the rest of your lives chasing your own desires, but you will be anxious to do the will of God."

Let those of us who consider ourselves mature in Christ pause to examine our lives, our thoughts, our motivations, our speech, and our actions, and see if we have finished with sin.

Let us all be finished with sin and be anxious to do the will of God!

Amen.



蹒跚学步

赵伟君牧师 翻译: 柯文灵

六年前, 我的第一个孩子宣喻是在圣灰日(又名圣灰周三)出生的。当时我手抱着孩子半开玩笑地对身边的人说: “我孩子有一个悔改了的父亲。”不是很多人听懂我话中涉及祭拜的幽默。

大斋戒期是从圣灰日开始算起的。“大斋戒期”的意思是“春天”, 指的是一段祭拜季节, 人们在这段时间, 既复活节前共四十天的时间(不包括主日), 里祈祷和进行准备工作。

大斋戒期从圣灰日开始一直到圣周为止。圣灰日(许多教会至今仍遵守此节日)是因节日时候人们表示悔改所用的灰烬(一般是涂抹在额头上)而得名。这么严格地尊用灰烬是按照创世记3章19节所记载的: “。。。你本是尘土, 仍要归于尘土。”

于是大斋戒期就成为一年中我们冥思我们永生问题的时间, 我们在日常时间里提醒警惕自己、在我们生活中各个领域里更有知觉地思考我们是否已经悔转并活得更像耶稣基督。因此大斋戒期是我们有意识地、小心地并严肃地进行自我反省、悔改、祈祷和更新的一段时间。它以欢愉和充满希望的复活节作为结束, 届时全世界的教会都要高呼: “基督复活了! 他真的复活了!”

从历史上来说, 大斋戒期是起源于为受洗者作准备的。初信信徒在洗礼前必须经过一系列的准备。因此, 对新信徒来说, 那是一段“蹒跚学步”的时间。这段时间演变成一段我们提醒自己在基督里“蹒跚学步”的日子, 并且思考我们和主共同前行了多少路程, 还有我们怎么样才能走的更靠近耶稣。

对一个婴孩来说, 学习走路是从爬行和蹒跚学步开始的, 那也正是我们需要鼓励和相当的搀扶的时候。当婴孩成长并积极渴望站立然后开步行走时, 他/她需要蹒跚学步。接着婴孩就会大胆地多走几步。开始时候, 他/她需要大人們的搀扶。随着时间的进展, 带着大人們的欣喜, 婴孩会变成一名蹒跚学步的孩子开始自己行走。

基督徒生活在很大程度上也是这样的。从我们最初带着惊讶探究上帝开始蹒跚学步, 然后慢慢地学习站立并跨出小步的信心。如果我们坚持, 如果我们继续渴望行走, 如果我们持续学习并接受已经学会步行的年长兄弟姐妹信徒的帮助, 我们最终将变得坚强, 足以自己蹒跚开步行走, 我们能够站立起来并跟从耶稣的脚步向前走。

这个大斋戒期, 让我们记得继续以婴孩般的心情寻求神。让我们不停地思考和仰望耶稣。不要在我们自己的世界和我们智慧所理解的视觉局限里停顿下来。让我们学习路加福音24章35-43节里的使徒一般地看到及承认主已经复活时“。。。喜得不敢信, 并且稀奇。。。”。当你阅读圣经时, 愿你遇见耶稣并且等候圣灵充满你, 让你充满欣喜和惊讶。

这个大斋戒期, 让我们思考我们是否还处在“基督里的婴孩”状态, 是否渴望在基督里成长。彼得前书2章2节教导我们:

“就要爱慕那纯净的灵奶, 像才生的婴孩爱慕奶一样, 叫你们因此渐长, 以致得救。”

如果你有这个渴望, 别拒绝基督肢体里其他人的帮助, 让那些在信心上更年长和更成熟的人引领和辅导你, 好让你与耶稣走得更亲密。这也是为什么使徒保罗说: “当用各样的智慧, 把基督的道理丰丰富富地存在心里, 用诗章, 颂词, 灵歌, 彼此教导彼此教导, 互相劝诫, 心被感恩, 歌颂神。”(哥罗西书3章16节)如果你不知道应该找谁, 请告诉你的小组组长, 或可以直接找牧师们谈谈。

这个大斋戒期, 如果你已经不再是“在基督里蹒跚学步”, 也不要停止成长! 彼得前书4章1-2节提醒我们: “基督既在肉身受苦, 你们也当将这样的心志作为兵器, 因为在肉身受过苦的, 就已经与罪断绝了。你们存这样的心, 从今以后就可以不从人的情欲, 只从神的旨意, 在世度余下的光阴。”我们当中那些认为自己在基督里是成熟的, 请稍微停顿下来思考一下自己的生活、自己的积极性、自己的言语行为, 省察一下自己是否已经与罪断绝了。

让我们与罪断绝并渴望遵行神的旨意!

阿们。





Leader's Column

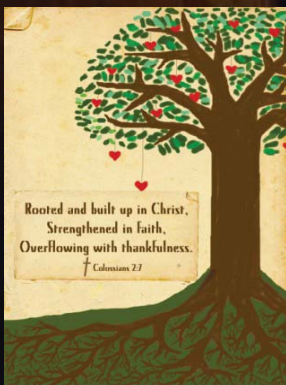


By Yip Fook Yoon,
Lay Leader

A HEART OVERFLOWING WITH THANKFULNESS

Are we a thankful people? Is our church overflowing with thankfulness?

These questions have continued to pop up in my mind ever since we chose 2 Colossians 7 as our Scripture verse for 2010.



"In everything give thanks" (1 Thess 5:18). That's a lot like "Rejoice always" (Phil 4:4). No matter what happens, whatever situations we are in, we can find reasons to thank God.

This is our faith in our sovereign God who directs all things including the tiny details of our lives.

We believe that "God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose". (Romans 8:28).

Perhaps some reflection is required before one can profess to be truly thankful.

Certainly, the moments when we feel less than blessed are the times that we need to contemplate more.

When we are feeling – unfairly - burdened, unloved or unappreciated, we should take an inventory of our blessings.

When we do this, we open ourselves to an infinite number of things for which we can be grateful. Allow me to share my personal musings.

Looking back at the year just past, I am greatly encouraged by the many thankful worshippers of TMC in our midst. It is a joy, each time I encounter them, to see them mingling with, and edifying, one another. I see smiles and hear laughter everywhere.

Indeed, as a church, we have so much to be thankful for. For one, God has graciously provided for TMC's financial needs through the generous giving of worshippers in spite of the dismal economic climate. We continue to see our church services well-attended and many new visitors grace our doors. Church membership has grown and many new small groups have been formed. Many people have been connecting with others and building relationships. We see more worshippers growing in their faith and stepping forward to serve in the different ministries of the church as the Lord calls them to do in His time.

Our experience of God's grace and goodness in the past helps us to grow hearts of thankfulness and also to trust God to guide and lead us in this new year, 2010. We shall continue to trust God to provide funds for the final settlement of our redevelopment loans and we look forward to the re-dedication of our church to Him on our 54th anniversary.

As we prepare to re-dedicate our church to God, we would do well to remember His love and faithfulness to us, and to let our hearts always be filled with gratitude to Him. God wants us to be a thankful people – His Word is full of exhortations to give thanks to Him and also to those around us.

Our theme verse for 2010, Colossians 2:7, encourages us to be "overflowing with thankfulness". Having been blessed by God, we should desire to be a blessing to others, to avail ourselves to serve God and His church and take more time to show others our appreciation for them as individuals and the things they do.

There are many opportunities available to us in TMC to express our thankfulness to God. TMC worshippers have always been very generous with their financial gifts and we thank God for that, but, more often, we cry out for people to serve and do the Lord's work in the ministries of the church. TMC is especially challenged in areas which require interaction with those outside of the church, such as our ministries in Contact 123, Outreach & Social Concerns, Hospitality, and Visitation.

Are we a thankful people? Yes, sometimes, but perhaps not all the time. We are not there yet – as a people, we are still very much a “work-in-progress”. Jesus said “... out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.” (Matthew 12:34). Let us pray that this be manifested in our lives.

**“Give thanks in all circumstances
for this is the will of God for you in Jesus Christ.”
1 Thessalonians 5:18**



Christmas Day Baptism 2009



Seniors having fun



Post-Watchnight
Service Supper

满心感恩

叶福源, 执事 翻译: 柯文灵

我们是否是个感恩的人呢? 我们的教会是否是个充满感恩的教会呢? 自从我们选定了哥罗西书2章7节作为我们2010年的主题经文后, 这些问题就一直出现在我脑海里。

“凡事谢恩” (帖撒罗尼迦前书5章18节)。这和“常常喜乐” (腓立比书4章4节) 极其相似。不管发生什么事、不管我们处在什么样的情况当中, 我们都可以找到感谢神的理由。我们相信至高无上的神主宰着宇宙万物, 包括我们生命中的所有细节 - 我们相信“万事都互相效力, 叫爱神的人得益处, 就是按旨意被召的人” (罗马书8章28节)。

或许我们在供认自己是否是真正感恩之前需要反省一下。当然, 许多时候我们觉得自己的福分比他人少, 那也正是我们需要深思的时候。当我们觉得 (不公平的) 身背重负的时候,

当我们不被人所爱或不被理解的时候,
我们就应数算神的恩典。

当我们这么做时, 就能打开自己并发现自己有无数的事情可以感恩。请让我分享我的个人心得。回首过去, 我一直都被三一堂的许多崇拜会友的感恩精神鼓舞着。每一次当我面对他们, 看到他们交流着、互相提醒着, 就感觉到一种喜悦。我看到到处都是笑容欢语。确实, 作为教会, 我们有太多需要感恩的。其中之一就是, 即使是在经济不景气的环境

里, 神通过了慷慨的会友为我们提供了重建基金。我们持续地看到会友踊跃出席崇拜、许多新朋友陆续来造访。教会成员增加了, 许多新小组也成立了。许多人与他人建立了联系关系。我们看到许多会友增长了信心并且愿意向前一步在教会不同的事工领域回应神的呼召献上事奉。

过去神赐给我们的恩典和好处加强了我们的感恩的心, 我们相信神在这新的2010年必定继续引领我们。我们应继续相信神必定为我们的再发展贷款基金提供资金, 我们盼望着我们54周年献堂典礼的到来。当我们准备再次将教会献上的时候, 我们应当纪念神所赐的慈爱和忠诚, 就应当对神充满感恩的心。神要我们成为感恩的人的话语里总是劝告我们要向神及我们周围的人感恩。

我们2010年的主题经文, 哥罗西书2章7节, 鼓励我们“感谢的心也更增长了”。既然领受了神的福分, 就当成为其他人的福分, 就当事奉神的教会, 也当花更多的时间向我们周围的人及他们所作的事表示感谢。在三一堂里, 我们有许多机会向神感恩。三一堂的会友总是在资金上非常慷慨, 我们为此感谢神; 然而, 我们也极力呼召更多的人为神、为神的教会事工献上事奉, 例如: 联系123、外展及社会关怀、款待、拜访。

我们是否是个感恩的人? 是的, 有些时候是, 但或许并不是所有时候。我们还没完全做到那个地步 - 身为一人, 我们始终处于“工作进行中”。耶 说“。。因为心里所充满的, 口里就说出来。” (马太福音12章34节)。让我们在祷告中纪念它, 让它在我们生命中彰显出来。

“凡事谢恩, 因为这是神在基督耶稣里向你们所定的旨意。” 帖撒罗尼迦前书5章18节



Connect with God



Worship Whys - Prelude & Postlude by Amy Cheong

There is a basic pattern of worship that is applicable to almost all worshipping Christian communities – the Gathering, Word, Table, and the Dismissal.

The purpose of the Gathering or Entrance is to bring the congregation into an awareness of the presence of God and to prepare the worshippers to hear the Word of God. The acts of worship in the Gathering are joyful because they express an occasion of great joy – that of coming into the presence of God. The Prelude is one such act.

The Prelude is a short piece of music - no more than three to five minutes long - which encourages the congregation to "be still", and to prepare itself for worship, in heart, mind and spirit.

People often arrive in church distracted with the interruptions of daily life. A thoughtful choice of a Prelude can provide opportunity for the working of God's Spirit to help His people settle down and regain the perspective of who God is, and our identity in Him.

A Prelude can also help recall the worshipper's mind to the Church Season (e.g. "Were You There?" in the season of Lent), and also indicate to the people that the service is commencing, and hence, to stop any unnecessary chatter.

The final movement of worship is the Dismissal. It is simple and short, sending the people forth into the world to love and serve the Lord. In Scripture, whenever God is revealed and there is opportunity for worship, there is always some kind of response. This Postlude can facilitate such a response from God's people.

The Postlude is a short piece of music - no more than five minutes - that ends the service. Sometimes an exuberant or challenging dismissal is called for – a joyous and uplifting piece. At other times, the service may end with more thoughtful reflection – a solemn and meditative piece.

There are at least two treatments of the Postlude: the first is that the Postlude sends worshippers forth joyously to do the mission of the church such that they can actually get up; and leave before the postlude is done. The second is that the service "ain't over" till after the postlude, so the congregation remains seated and perhaps in silent meditation on the Word preached.

Here at Trinity Methodist Church, we subscribe to the latter treatment, so please remain seated till the end of the postlude!

(If your interest has been piqued by this article, you may find the discussion thread "Leaving church before the postlude ends" at <http://www.choralnet.org/view/242718> interesting.)

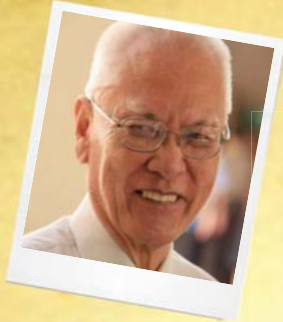
*Bibliography:
The Worshipping Church A Hymnal, Worship Leaders' Edition, © 1990, 1991 Hope Publishing Company*

Prelude – (Music) music opening a church service; an introductory voluntary¹. The Prelude precedes the Processional (if any), the Choral Introit (if any) and the Call to Worship.

Postlude – (Music) a voluntary at the end of a church service². The Postlude follows the Pastoral Benediction, Choral Benediction (if any) and Recessional (if any).

1. <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/prelude>
2. <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/postlude>





A Prayer For The Lenten Season

by Woon Wei Tuck

Almighty God,

When we think of a world without any light, sound, water or air, a world without any life, with no one to love, no one to care, we are reminded of your boundless generosity to us.

We have so much to be thankful for – life, health, family, friends, seamless skies, starry nights - wonders all around us, gifts that live in all our moments, in all our days.

All that we are, all that we have, come from you. Bless you – and thank you.

Even as we praise and thank you, in this season of Lent, we are mindful of the trials and tribulations of your journey through the wilderness, and how you emerged triumphant over all.

All too often, we live in wilderness of our own making. Some of us are lost amidst the broken shale, and the blistering heat of violence and strife. We are so set in our ways, so self-centred, so unforgiving that humility has no chance to take root or grow in our hearts.

Save us from spiritual cataracts that dim our vision of your world. Clear our sight with a laser of the spirit that we may see clearly once more. Help us turn to you afresh. Lead us beside still water, and restore our souls.

Guide us as you guided our ancestors who read your Word by candle-light, who bowed and prayed by their bed – seeking your help, searching for your healing. Let us feel a common light burning within, and around us, radiating to all we meet.

Be especially close to those whose journey is difficult – the empty in spirit, the abused and the abandoned, the weak and the weary, the feeble hands, the wobbly feet.

Bless the newborn in body. Bless the newborn in spirit. Bless us – one and all.

Let the desert of Lent prepare us for the peace of your everlasting Kingdom.

Let the wonder of life and the joy of living it keep a song on our lips, and praise in our hearts.

And, let us be with, and for one another – for we are but one.

In Jesus' name, we pray.

Amen





Youth Ministry- Surrender

by Clara Chua



Jesus Christ, my Redeemer - the One whose presence filled the entire Upper Room, as the seconds of the clock ticked by to signal the commencement of SURRENDER.

This service, which took place on 31 Dec 2009 was the start of a series of youth services aimed at providing a platform for youths to give their lives to the Lord. The prelude to SURRENDER was ENCOUNTER, which took place in June 2009.

Whereas ENCOUNTER was an introduction and an affirmation that God is real and always there for us, SURRENDER was an opportunity to pick up our crosses and follow God in 2010.

31 Dec: the final day of the calendar year that marks both the beginning and end of experiences, memories and, perhaps, change. Anyone could spend it at a countdown party but these youths with smiling and jubilant faces flocked into the Upper Room that day.

This amazing sight filled my heart with abundant joy. The mere fact that they - my friends - were more willing to spend the final night of 2009 in the house of the Lord, and not anywhere else, was the first indication that it would be an exhilarating night of worship.

As a member of the worship team, I was scheduled to play in the band that evening and every fibre of my being looked forward to that prospect. Deep in my heart, I was certain that it would be a stirring youth service, a night that would inspire both revival and surrender to the Lord.

Indeed, as the music filled every inch of the four walls, it was apparent that God Himself was in the room. At one point in time, I looked up from my keyboard to catch a glance of the singing youths. And time abruptly came to a standstill.

A breathless sight greeted me and instantly caused a rush of blood to my brain and heart. It was an indelible scene of young Christians singing their hearts out to God, hands outstretched in the air, bodies swaying to the music, the desire to give every single part of themselves to God so utterly evident.

Tears trickled down a few of the faces. It did not matter how they looked, how loudly or accurately they sang, how happy or sad they were. What mattered was how every person present worshipped the Lord with every part of himself, giving all of himself to God. A surrender of all hopes, fears, worries and joys.

For me, that night was unforgettable and will always hold a valuable place in my heart. A major contribution was the sharing by Richard Seng. The main point of the sermon could not be any more apt, so striking was the question:

"So you encountered God, how are you going to carry on from there?"

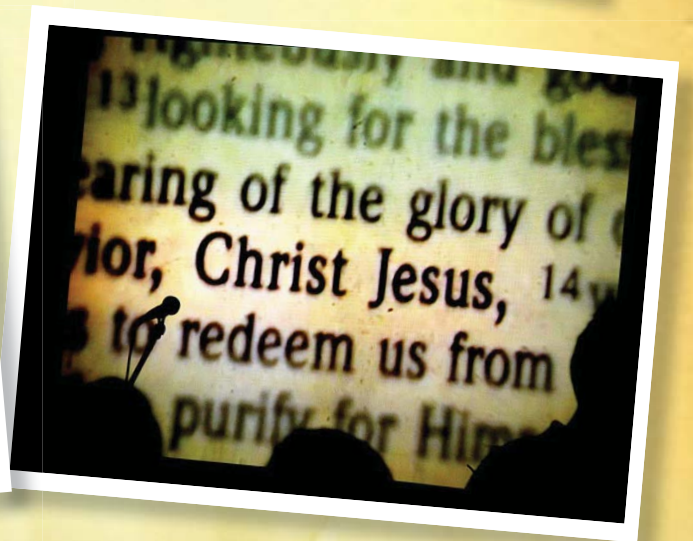
The meat of the sermon was the significance of youth - even though we are young, we can still be radical followers of God. Uncle Richard dealt with the significant difficulties, tribulations and trials that an adolescent might face, and posed this challenge to us:

"Do You Dare To Wear Jesus in 2010?"

Uncle Richard's sharing made an impact on me, and caused me to question, ponder and reflect upon my life. I felt that God's Holy Spirit was speaking through Uncle Richard, and I was completely overwhelmed.

A time came for every individual to pen down his aspirations and hopes for the new year, and commit them to Him. A calm and silence came over the room, and I strongly believe that God was touching each heart as heads were bowed and pens took seriously to paper. In my own heart, God was working in many ways, and I wept because it was then that the Lord revealed my sins to me. The end of the service approached, and all that was left was for me to surrender.

Do join the Youth Ministry for another time of SURRENDER. Look out for details in the bulletin or Saltshaker.



Dear Father, Thank you for being with me through
this tumultuous year... thanks for your guidance
your presence, your word, the friends you've placed
in my life... thanks for reminding me of my purpose.

CONNECT WITH
EACH OTHER



PROJECT LUNCH BOX!



PROJECT
LUNCHBOX

By Andrew Wilfred of the
BASIC Small Group



Project Lunch Box was pioneered and envisioned by the BASIC Small Group, to create a platform for members of the church to mix and mingle after the 11.15am English service on Communion Sundays. By providing a "sumptuous" reason to stay behind, we've been able to create a more collegiate after-service atmosphere which we've been missing out on for a number of years.

It has been a tiring and time-consuming effort for the BASIC Small Group to feed about 100 or more people every time, and we need to stress that Project Lunch Box isn't a fund-raising project.

Instead, it is BASIC's hope and deepest joy - and in a manner of speaking, trepidation too! - that we get to feed more and more people as time goes on.

It is also our sincerest hope and prayer that diners will put greater effort into making new friends, seeking out people they don't normally talk to, and have a great time getting to know other fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

I, personally, have enjoyed the stress and strain that every Project Lunch Box Sunday has brought, and have found that it has allowed me to bond more with my small group, as well as with the people who come by to get their food.

The new atmosphere after service has been very encouraging, and the buzz from the crowd can only be described as righteous noise!

Project Lunch Box is held after the 11.15 am English service, every first Sunday of the month. Coupons go on sale two weeks before each Lunch Box. It would really help the organisers in their planning if diners purchase coupons in advance. See you at the next Lunch Box!



TMC @ YOUR FINGERTIPS

by Vinitha Jayaram



Email us

“where faith and life”

about trinity | small groups | ministries | downloads | highlights | **pulpit calendar**



TMC's web calendar is up and running! Keep up with the happenings in TMC at www.tmc.org.sg/eventscalendar.html.

In the calendar, you'll find updates and details concerning special church days, events, projects, camps and courses.

You will also find information on activities and events outside of TMC.

Check the calendar every week, and you'll find many ways to participate in the life of TMC. Do plan to involve yourself in the life of the church – each one of us is part of the body of Christ here at TMC.

The Communications Committee has also been sending fortnightly emails to keep worshippers posted on what's going on in TMC. Subscribe to this fortnightly email update if you're not already receiving it by emailing tmccomms@gmail.com with 'SUBSCRIBE' in the subject heading. We look forward to hearing from you.

Our Events

- Church Days
- Connect with God
- Connect with One Another
- Connect with Others
- TRAC and other Events
- Public and Other Holidays in Singapore

Today February 2010 Print Week

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
31	Feb 1	2	3	4	
Missions Emphasis 1pm ALPHA course 2		1pm TRAC WSCS Pr	8pm Prayer & Praise 8pm The Connection		9:15am WSCS Bib

Connect With Others



by Ong Hon Yuh,
Witness & Evangelism
Chairperson

The season of Christmas has come and gone. The glad tidings have flowed and ebbed. The gift wrappings have been crumpled and thrown away.



The bells jingled and then were silenced as the last guest left the Sanctuary on 24 Dec 2009. In all that busy-ness since November, one can't help but ask: "Have we been Herald Angels who have proclaimed His kingdom?"

During Christmas 2009, TMC and her ministries worked together to bless needy families in the community with Christmas baskets. Others were blessed through the Christmas story acted out by children, and through the singing of carols during the Christmas Eve Carol Celebration.

We thank God for the generous outpouring towards all the Christmas baskets which were delivered by "Delivery Angels" to needy families. Our "Delivery Angels" had the opportunity to interact with these families and found out more about their needs and struggles (see article on pages 14 to 15).

Their testimonies are God's reminder that "the poor will always be with us" (Mark 4:7). We certainly can do more to help those who need help to break out of their situation – financially, socially and, most importantly, spiritually.

While we continue to engage and seek ways to assist the needy with our regular and intentional visits to them, the number of people whom we can reach out to in Christian love and action, and who need to hear the good news, is sorely limited by the number of worshippers who see outreach as an important part of their Christian discipleship.

Both Pastor Bernard's 31 Jan 2010 sermon on "Holy Ground" (Joshua 5), and Andy Chew's (Missions Chairperson) message (see the January 2010 Missions newsletter) emphasised that missions and evangelism are NOT just the responsibility of missionaries or evangelists.

Heralding the good news of salvation - of which we are all beneficiaries - is an essential work for a redeemed people.

If the Christian faith were a private affair to be practised behind closed doors, or within a walled compound on Sundays, then perhaps the 11 disciples might have lived to ripe old ages.

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Witnessing (verb): To provide or serve as evidence of; to testify to

They might have "enjoyed" regaling their grandchildren with tales of the great man who could have been king (Jesus) ... an ordinary but long-lost friend with whom they merely fished and travelled with for three years before his "untimely" death. Instead, as people of the Book, we know that the 11 disciples came out of their hiding places, and lived out the Great COMMISSION by heralding the good news of the risen Christ and Saviour. Sharing the good news does not have to take place only on Christmas Eve when the church organises a carol service, or when visits to families are planned by the church.

Sharing Christ's love and witnessing for Him can take place anywhere, anytime, in any form, whether you are a student, employee, or retiree. There are no secret formulae or long speeches to memorise and/or regurgitate.

Sharing Christ with others simply involves living our lives as "salt-and-light" Christians wherever we are and whoever we are, giving clear evidence of a Christ-redeemed existence.

Do you affirm that the Great COMMISSION is much more than a nice theory or concept?

**Are you faithfully living out the Great COMMISSION?
Are you a "salt-and-light" disciple of Christ?
Will you be a herald for Christ?**

May your resounding "yes" reach the highest heavens to the pleasure of our heavenly Father.

Do you wish to be a "salt"-ier and "bright"-ter disciple of Christ?
Do you have friends who wish to find out more about Jesus and the Christian faith?

Are you interested in organizing the ALPHA course for your family and friends in your own home?

Please contact Hon Yuh at ohy76@singnet.com.sg.



Love In A Christmas Basket



**By James and Susan Tang,
Heartbeat of God Small Group**

**(L-R) Sandra, Check Ern, Lena,
Nancy, Susan, Patricia, Dunyi,
Mary, Richard, Dennis, James**

When the call came asking for help to deliver Christmas baskets to the families of the Contact 123 children, we, the Heartbeat of God small group, answered immediately.

We had helped to deliver mooncakes to the same families identified under the Operation Connect project just a few months ago and had all been warmly received by the families. Encouraged by this good response, we decided to follow up with our Christmas delivery.

Some of us also volunteered to help with the packing of the baskets and it was very heartening to see the families of group members chipping in to play a part.

Some of us were initially rather apprehensive as we had never taken part in such home visits before. Also, because of the timing, some had to visit a family all by ourselves instead of with other members of the group. With God's blessing, we were fortunate that two of our members, also Contact 123 volunteers Nancy and Richard, helped to pave the way with the initial contacts as they knew the children. To our delight, we were all warmly welcomed by the families and spent time chatting with them to find out more about their circumstances. (See testimonies on next page)

After the distribution of the Christmas baskets, we had no hesitation in following up with another visit. We brought along board games donated by one of our group members. This time, we were touched by the appreciation expressed by the families as the groceries and vouchers were a great help for their daily needs.

We felt that our small group members provided much encouragement to one other when we made the group decision to participate wholeheartedly in these outreach projects. We felt blessed that we had a role to play in the church's outreach projects and discussed among ourselves how we could help further should the families accept our Christmas Eve invitations. Working as a group strengthened our bonding and spirit of unity in doing God's work.

With God's guidance - and patience, as some of us struggled to find the right words - the group members also managed to speak with these families in a mixture of Mandarin and dialect as we listened to their concerns.

At times, we did feel somewhat helpless as we did not have a full picture of their backgrounds and the range of assistance schemes available for them within the community. It is important for the church to integrate with the community groups in helping these families. Within the Church itself, the various groups in touch with these families can perhaps share their experiences so that all parties can understand the families better.

With God's guidance, we can do more for these families.



Testimonies of the Delivery Angels

by Sandra, Lena and Check Ern

That Sunday morning after the 8.45am service, the three of us went to Jean's* home to give her a Christmas basket. Her son, Tommy, is currently receiving tuition at Contact 123.

We were warmly received by both mother and child. Jean was overwhelmed with gratitude at the "extravagant" hamper and Tommy was delighted with his present of a toy car and a pencil case. He immediately started playing with them.

When we first arrived, Jean immediately ushered one of us to her bedroom to say that she would go ahead with divorce proceedings and her application is now being processed by the court. They are always bickering over money as her husband is not fulfilling his responsibility as a provider to the family, giving her only a meagre monthly sum of \$400. She has to frequently supplement household expenses with the rental income from the rental of one of her rooms. They have also been falling back on conservancy charges for the past half a year. She is confident she will have custody of Tommy after checking with the Legal Aid Bureau. She plans to move out after obtaining approval from the court, rent a small place and perhaps work part-time.

We spent close to two hours at her place and during this time she showed a great deal of interest in Christianity asking questions ranging from "What is the difference between a pastor and a priest", who is the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ (to which Lena explained at length about the Holy Trinity), what is baptism, and so on.

She even shared with us that she knew of a neighbour who was riddled with problems, but after she became a Christian all her problems seem to have been resolved! We could sense that God was touching her in small ways and continue to pray that she will one day accept Christ as her personal Saviour.

We then invited her to our Christmas Eve celebration and she immediately accepted. We also invited her to attend the Mandarin service at TMC. Although she did not give a definite answer, neither did she decline.

In this coming year, we plan for intentional and regular visitations to families within the community. We seek both individuals and small groups of worshippers who are called to play a part in keeping touch and ministering to families within the community. Anyone can be a "Delivery Angel" or assist in the administration and logistics of this endeavour.

Please contact Hon Yuh at ohy76@singnet.com.sg.

By Susan and James Tang

Kelvin's family was delighted with the church's Christmas basket and the three board games donated by one of our group members. Kelvin passed his Primary 3 examination in all subjects except for Chinese and his aunt is making arrangements for a China national to teach him. His mother, uncle and aunt commented that Kelvin is lazy and needed lots of pushing and monitoring. (He was practising Chinese writing when we visited.)

The after-school service provided at Contact 123 appears to be a good place for children like Kelvin to attend and do his work under some supervision. The volunteers at Contact 123 must be commended for their fine work, and reports that the children have passed their examinations and/or are responding to our outreach will no doubt be very heartening and satisfying for them.

His mother, Madam Lim, works from 8am to 3pm and again from 7pm to 11pm. She thanked us profusely for the groceries and the NTUC Fairprice voucher which we handed to her together with the invitation card to our Christmas Eve event. She said that she would check if she could take her day off on the evening of Christmas Eve and take the children to church. We also extended the invitation to Kelvin's uncle and aunt.

By Violet Khor and Mary Fu

Denise did not want us to go up to her flat, so we met at the ground floor and chatted for about half an hour. Denise is Buddhist, and her husband, who had just returned from India, is Hindu. Their son Chris, who goes to Contact 123 for tuition is 9, and their daughter Sarah is 7.

Both Denise and her husband, who are unemployed, are renting their flat for \$500 per month. Denise received financial assistance of \$300 from the CDC for three months, but that has since stopped. She had previously worked as a restaurant helper and earned \$50 per day but lost her job when the restaurant closed down. She expressed concern about her son's educational needs and we told her she could look out for free textbooks from NTUC.

She seemed willing to attend the Christmas Eve event. She said she knew how to get to our church by bus. We called her shortly after that meeting and she said she had gone for an interview and would be starting her job as restaurant helper at a pay of \$800. We told her to call if she needed help and stressed that we would try to help although we are unable to promise anything.

**All the names of Contact 123 children and their family members have been changed to protect their identities.*

NINE women from TMC's WSCS went to Phnom Penh, Cambodia, for a five-day mission trip from 19 to 22 November last year. One of them, Mrs Nancy Lim, shares her heartfelt experience. Read on to find out more...

WSCS Missionaries take to Cambodia

by Nancy Lim

It does not take long for one to realise that the Cambodians whom we were going to minister to have many needs. My tears literally flowed for them. Their predicament reminded me very much of my own when I was young.

After my previous trips to Cambodia, I began thinking of ways and means to help them. So last year, I decided to equip myself with the necessary baking and pastry-making skills in order to share this knowledge and skill with the Cambodian ladies. My prayer is that, with these skills, they will be able to make a living for themselves.



(L-R) Katherine, Veronica, Winnie, Mary, Lilian, Lucy, Lydia, Nancy, Yvonne



The WSCS missions team for this trip brought three ovens, several mixers and various baking utensils and baking ingredients. We conducted and supervised a baking class over two days, with practical sessions thrown in for good measure. We observed that the girls were very eager to learn and wished for us to stay longer or to return to teach them more things. Seeing their appreciative smiles was certainly very encouraging.

The other team that joined us on the trip was the motorcycle repair team. They came in response to a request by Norman, who runs an orphanage with his wife Fi. This team comprised of Duncan Ho of Footprints small group, his brother-in-law Seng and Seng's wife, Doreen. They were also very keen to help the Cambodians to stand on their own feet. They did a fantastic training session for the men at Norman's workshop and even "revived" Norman's old motorbike. Norman is currently in the process of setting up a proper motorbike repair shop to enable the men to whom he is ministering to earn a living.

As health costs and availability of health-care were an issue in the orphanage we visited, we also brought along some medicine for them.

The WSCS ladies also taught, shared and fellowshiped with Claire's sewing girls, the Andong villagers and several Takhmao Trinity Methodist Church members. We even brought them to the zoo!

On Sunday we worshipped together with the TMC members. This was followed by a Singapore-style chicken rice lunch prepared by WSCS for the whole congregation.

In most, if not all mission trips, finances are always an important factor. I am indeed thankful to God for He always provides not just for those going on mission trips but, more importantly, for the work in the Cambodian missions field.

I am equally glad and encouraged to be able to witness brothers and sisters of TMC giving generously of their time, effort and finances to our Cambodian "neighbours". My prayer is for more of us who are called by Him to respond faithfully to the work of ministry in Cambodia - for the furtherance of His Kingdom.

I pray that the Lord would work powerfully in the lives of our Cambodian brothers and sisters and for them to persevere despite their difficult circumstances. My parting shot: if you feel that God is calling you to serve him in the mission field, do not hesitate for the harvest is plentiful and the workers are few. Come, join us.

To God be the Glory!



After attending Sunday service at Takhmao Trinity Methodist Church, the children fellowshiped over delicious Hainanese chicken rice lunch cooked by our Khmer sisters.



At Andong Village School, the team gave out goodies and toys to the children there.

TMC Children in Cambodia

by Sunitha Jayaram



The Children's Ministry led a team of 8 families, comprising 6 children, 6 youths and 13 adults to Cambodia during the December holidays last year. During their 5 days in Cambodia, the team visited Takhmao Trinity Methodist Church, Andong Village School, Care for Cambodia Orphanage and the Methodist School in Phnom Penh. From fellowship over lunch, to songs and dance to games, read on to find out what the children experienced and learnt during their stay in Cambodia.



I learnt that I am very fortunate to live in Singapore. I wanted to bring this memory back to Singapore to tell the children here how fortunate they are to be able to have shelter over their heads and have food laid on the table for them." Tay Jia Eenn, 13 years old

The children in Cambodia don't have such privileges. They appreciate little toys so much. They don't even have food or clean water whereas we waste what we have." Tay Jia Hui, 10 years old

A trip to Cambodia is like a season of giving and receiving!" Tay Jia Eenn, 13 years old

After the trip, I felt that God had reminded me that I have to be grateful for the life I have, and that I have to go and help spread the word of the Lord to those who are not as privileged as us." Raynard Yu, 13 years old

Thinking back, I had a lot of fun with my friends and the children in Andong & Care for Cambodia. I was sad that we had to come back to Singapore so quickly." Gladys Yu, 9 years old

After the trip, I felt that God had reminded me that I have to be grateful for the life I have, and that I have to go and help spread the word of the Lord to those who are not as privileged as us." Raynard Yu, 13 years old

Come 11-15 December 2010, the Children's Ministry will be going back to Cambodia again to do God's work. Will you be there to partake in that season of giving and receiving?

If God is prompting you to find out more, call Kim @ 91903998

"When we were about to leave, they prayed for us, I held 2 girls' hands, they were probably 9 or 10. Whoa, the way they pray aloud! The power of their prayers hit me like a bullet, I was overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit and that day, I knew that He was truly present! I was very impressed with the way they prayed. From them, I learnt that God is truly very real..." Tay Jia Eenn, 13 years old

Visiting the children [at Andong Village School], playing games with them, dancing with them and making balloon sculptures for them was a great pleasure. When I handed the balloons out to the kids, they were very happy and played with the balloons as if it was their only toy." Tay Jia Eenn, 13 years old

一个充满爱与 喜乐的营会

作：伍显芬传道及曾淑芬姐妹



感谢主！

8月中间就开始筹备的福音营，终于在11月27日开锣了。

三一堂华语崇拜的弟兄姐妹与英语崇拜的3个家庭的成员，带着极其喜乐的心，前往在马来西亚迪沙鲁举行4天3夜神的爱宴。

51位上帝的精兵陪同5位未信主的新朋友浩浩荡荡地抵达普来度假村。从我们的团体照你可以感受到我们集聚一堂的喜乐。上帝子民所到之处都因开怀的笑声打破了一切的沉静，加添了生命的色彩。

这一次的营会是为了撒种子，将福音传给这5位新朋友。让神的爱深深地感动他们，“因为上帝就是爱。。。。。不是我们爱神乃是神爱我们，差他的儿子为我们的罪作了挽回祭，这就是爱”（约翰一书4：10）

每早晨我们从优美的赞美操在大自然中与上帝亲近，用全人来赞美他，开始新的一天。4天3夜里我们有唱不完的爱的诗歌，甚至于因我们的歌声籍着圣灵的感动使主内的弟兄姐妹再次地寻得起初的信，望和蔼可亲，心灵得满足，眼睛得医治，属灵的生命得提升与三一真神的关系更密切。

委员们精心制作有创意的话剧，极风趣又有意义的情节，使观看的人清楚地看到“一般的爱”，“不平凡的爱”，“牺牲的爱”与“基督徒的爱”；剧中的人物个个都是栩栩如生。这可是华语崇拜的处女作，希望能以VIDEO有连贯性地播放一次，好让不能参与的弟兄姐妹也能观赏，所谓有福同享。（哥前13：13）如今常存的有信，有望，有爱这三样，其中最大的是爱。感谢主！这一次的营会确实有神的爱不断的浇灌在每一个人的身上。神的灵带领主内弟兄姐妹勇敢为主作见证，传扬主，荣耀神。

餐桌上的团契，游戏时的互动精神，不分年龄不分国籍诚心敬拜使我们对属灵的大家庭增添了浓厚甜美的归属感。看着浩瀚的大海，萤火虫在黑夜里本能地绽放着一闪闪带有生命的亮光，对着上帝伟大的创造不得不发出赞叹的声音，心中畅流着感恩地热能。难怪当摩西带着以色列百姓国际江海后他说：耶和華啊！众神之中谁能象你？谁能象你 - 至圣至荣，可颂可畏，施行奇事？（出15：11）

这次参加福音营的5位朋友虽然没有在营会接受耶稣，但相信藉着我们的话剧所带出的信息，主内弟兄姐妹几天相处的生命见证，已经让他们感受到耶稣的爱，这福音的种子日后在他们的心中必会长出幼苗来。

回途总是依依不舍，不是舍不得度假村的舒适，更不是佳美的菜肴。而是那在基督耶稣里，大家一起享有的喜乐与平安，深深地吸引我们，这一份爱将我们联系在一起。当我们回到三一堂，这份爱将持续不断地承付延继。

我们下一次的营会你千万不要错过哦！因为这可是重金都难买得的，而是每一个参与者爱的付出与领受。

爱是永不止息。

华文事工在每个主日，11时，在圣殿里举行崇拜，过后一起享用午餐。欢迎您或您的家人及朋友来参加。



Training Up Our Children In The Way They Should Go



by Cheryl Sim

As someone sagely observed, it takes a village to raise a child – not least in today’s rapidly evolving society.

Thankfully for many parents, TMC Kindergarten provides that safe and nurturing environment for their children in their formative years.

TMC Kindy has a long history, but its mission has remained essentially the same all these years: to provide a holistic pre-school education grounded in Christian values to reach families with young children so that they will experience the love of Jesus.

I know this for a fact – I was once a TMC Kindy child myself. But more on that later.

Many kindergartens exist today, each boasting a different pedagogy and approach to bringing out the best in their young charges. So it’s no surprise that parents may find it difficult to decide which kindergarten to enroll their children in.

What parents of TMC Kindy tots can be assured of, however, is that TMC promises a “whole child” approach to development, and is committed to delivering on that promise.

What is this “whole child” approach?

- **Supportive teachers who encourage an enthusiasm for learning through first-hand experiences to guide children in their intellectual development.**

- **A focus on physical development ensures that all children participate in outdoor experiences that develop muscle coordination and motor skills.**

- **Emotional and social development - children engage in big group discussions, taking turns, working cooperatively and soon develop a feeling of security and belonging.**

- **Children are reminded through daily devotion that each child is created and loved by God. They are encouraged to be thankful for the world that God has created and to learn about the character qualities of Jesus. In this way, children also grow spiritually.**

These children have opportunities to play the handbells, dance, act, sing, tell Bible stories, and much more.

This is a testament to the immense efforts made by principal Mrs. Melina Chen and her group of teachers to work towards the Kindy’s Vision - for each child to grow in wisdom, in stature and in favour with God and men. (Luke 2:52)

Mrs. Chen, herself a dedicated mother of two girls, has been involved in pre-school and early childhood education for a long time now. She said: “My initial purpose of taking up the Early Childhood course was to be a good mother... Looking back, not only did my two daughters benefit from what I acquired – the preschoolers and parents (did), too.”

She maintains that every child is an individual with his or her own learning style, pace and temperament, and thus firmly believes in giving each one the right environment and stimulation to learn and grow. She sees to it that teachers facilitate this process of engaging each child.

Concerned parents need not fear being left out of their child’s development - the school keeps parents informed and provides opportunities for them to be involved in their children’s education.

My memories of TMC Kindergarten have always been fond: listening to Aunty Janet’s Bible stories, practising walking on stilts for sports day, watching the painting of murals on classroom walls, cradling baby Jesus in a nativity play, going on excursions with my friends...the best part is that kindergarten life is no less enjoyable for TMC children today than it was for me, so many years ago.

I had the privilege of spending time with Mr John Hong and his wife, Josephine, at our Christmas Eve event last year. Their daughter, Cherylene, was performing a dance together with the other Kindy kids.

Said Mr Hong: “We have really seen the difference in our daughter, Cherylene, after we transferred her to TMC Kindergarten. She is happy here and has many friends, and we are pleasantly surprised that she can speak such good English now.

“She enjoyed practising for the Christmas Eve dance very much and would dance at home all the time. Sometimes after Kindergarten class, she would even tell us what ‘Jesus says’ she must do!”

A kindergarten whose aim is to nurture pre-schoolers in every aspect of their development by providing a stimulating, safe and happy learning environment with an emphasis on the Christian faith - TMC Kindy is all this and more. And by God’s grace, our Kindergarten will continue to be an enormous blessing to many pre-schoolers in the many years to come.



EVENTS

WSCS

"FEAR : Not Just An Emotion" by Joyce Seow

6 March 2010, 2.30pm to 4.30pm

For all ages

Fees charged - \$5 (incl light refreshment)

Miss Joyce Seow holds a franchise for INTESOL Worldwide and is an Institutional Member of the College of Teachers in UK. She has been involved in counselling, training and programme development for consumers and MNCs. Committed to the healing ministry and convinced that 80 per cent of diseases are psychogenic and they have spiritual roots, Joyce now teaches on spiritual pathways to wholeness including the spiritual dynamics behind diseases. Contact Diana (beldavid@singnet.com.sg)

General Conference WSCS Leadership Programme

20 Mar 2010

Speaker: Rev Dr Naomi Dowdy
(www.naomidowdy.com)

Look out for more details in the bulletin or WSCS notice board (next to pantry).

Esther Wong's Bible Study on the book of Ruth

Every 1st and 3rd Friday of the month
9.15am to 11.00am, TMC Chapel

Contact Diana (beldavid@singnet.com.sg)

WSCS Visitation to Homebound

Every 3rd Sunday after the 8.45am English service

Contact Veronica (SST@sas.edu.sg)

WSCS Line Dancing

Every Saturday, 3pm
Resuming in March 2010

Contact Eunice (yeo48sgw@gmail.com)

MANDARIN MINISTRY OUTING

The Mandarin Ministry has a day outing planned for 17 Apr 2010. Look out for details in the bulletin and on the website.

SENIORS' MINISTRY GET-TOGETHER

Date: 25 Mar 2010

The seniors will get together for a time of worship, sing-a-long of oldies, games, quizzes, and, of course, a meal. Sign up at the Seniors' Ministry notice board, or invite senior friends and family to do so.

YOUTH MINISTRY EASTER PARTY

Date: 3 Apr 2010

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SERVICES REQUIRED

WSCS

Calling all ladies!

The Women's Society of Christian Service welcomes all ladies to participate in their ministry.

Contact Eunice yeo48sgw@gmail.com)

- if you wish to share your gastronomic labour of love by donating towards WSCS Food Sales; or
- if you want to teach or share your gift of handicraft with other ladies.

TMC KINDERGARTEN

The Kindergarten needs an Assistant Teacher

Criteria:

1. Preferably Christian
2. Able to start on 1 April 2010.
3. Able to speak English and Mandarin.
4. Have compassion and love for children.

Interested candidates, please e-mail

kindergarten@tmc.org.sg

Read about the work of the Kindergarten at

<http://www.tmc.org.sg/kindergarten.html>

The **Communications Committee** enlists the services of the following persons for God's work in TMC.

WEB MASTERS and DESIGNERS

to keep the church website current and user-friendly. Knowledge of Dreamweaver or equivalent essential.

PHOTOGRAPHERS

to capture TMC life on digital media.

Monthly roster.

Possession of own digital camera and internet ability preferred.

DESIGNERS

to lay out articles and photographs, and to design the TMC newsletter / flyers

Once in four months or more.

Knowledge of InDesign or equivalent essential.

WRITERS AND EDITORS

to write / edit articles for the TMC newsletter, Saltshaker
Once in two months. Journalists or budding ones welcome.

ADMINISTRATORS

to attend to various administrative tasks within the Communications Committee.

Must be able to use email.

Please email tmccomms@gmail.com if you would like to serve with us.

CONTACT 123 REQUIRES VOLUNTEERS

whether individuals, e.g. retirees, homemakers, vacation students or groups e.g. Small Groups, WSCS, Chinese Ministry, Seniors Ministry, Youth Ministry

- to man the reception counter
- to supervise primary school children in their homework
- IT troubleshooting and maintenance
- Befriend families and the elderly

Time: 1-2 hours in the afternoon on Tuesdays, Thursdays or Saturdays

Contact **Cho Mei Chan** at 6282 4443 / meichan@tmc.org.sg or **Eric Cheong** at 6282 4443 / eric@tmc.org.sg or leave your name and contact number with the InfoDesk