

C|B|S|M

Christian Brethren Secretariat Malaysia

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diakonia

ONE LORD, ONE MISSION, ONE HEART



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Editor's Note

We thank God again for yet another issue of the *Diakonia*, albeit delayed by a couple of months from our original schedule. But God's schedule is better. Due to the delay, this year's *Diakonia* is 56 pages up from 36 pages last year and contains 28913 words

In this edition, more than the activities that the assemblies are involved in, we wanted to capture the thoughts and perspectives of assembly members on current issues facing the church at large. We are very much grateful for those who are willing to share and help the rest of us think through these issues of interest to the church. We are after all "*in the world but not of the world*"; the church is not entirely dissociated from the societal events and affairs surrounding her.

This year, the editing has been a little bit easier due largely to overcoming a lot of the technical issues I had with Microsoft Word. It was a quantum leap from being a casual user of MS Word to doing some serious layout work with it. I have earned a blessing from the Lord doing *Diakonia* last year i.e. picked up a new skill which is most useful for me.

The last six months in the preparation of this issue has been pretty tough as my personal affairs turned hectic and eventful. But it has been wonderful to experience that when I am at my weakest state, I could catch a glimpse of the sufficiency of His grace and understand at an experiential level of *His strength made perfect in my weakness*.

I am also greatly encouraged with some reinforcement in the editorial process in the form of CBSM's new trustee, Michael Fun volunteering to help. However the main challenge remains as in the previous year i.e. in persuading people to contribute articles in a timely manner. So very grateful for those who contributed. May the Lord bless those of you who contributed richly as your writings reach out to the saints.

Lastly, I hope you will find something useful in this edition and your eyes open to the part of the Body of Christ called "the Assembly" and the works she is engaged in, in this part of the world.

Khong Yoon Loong

CBSM Board of Trustees, Chairman's Message

The end is nearer than we first believed (Rom 13:11). Paul was writing about loving our neighbors. At ALC2015, we had considered the "Trial of Faith", thinking much about the trials which we will be facing as the scriptures said will happen. Preparing ourselves and the flock.

Perhaps, it's also time to think of, not only making a stand for the faith, but taking an active role in our community, in making Christ known. The Lord did say that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church" (Matt 16:18), picturing a church that actively moves against the gates of hell, rather just one that is passively standing (No doubt, when Paul talks about standing against the wiles of the devil, he was referring the victory we already have in Christ – Eph 6:11).

Many other faiths have stepped up to not only to help in social needs, but also to present their faith. Not that we need emulate them but the Lord did tell us to let our light so shine before men, that they may see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven (Matt 5:16). To that end, we have taken some steps in various areas, such as the disaster reliefs, migrant ministry, education, most of which you will read about in this issue.

We praise God for brothers and sisters who have taken the initiative to begin these good works and also to sustain them. We need to pray and rally more to be involved in these vital ministries.

Additionally, we also need to look at how we can prepare and provide the platforms for the flock to step up and reach out in our community, not only with the gospel but also with good works and testimonies. To this end, CBSM trustees are exploring how we can begin to achieve this through ALC2017.

ALC2017 is now scheduled for 19th-21st October 2017 at Port Dickson Methodist Centre. We are giving advanced notice as we are aware that many assemblies are beginning to plan their 2017 calendar of activities. We feel that this a critically important subject. We strongly request assemblies to set aside this date to enable their assembly members to attend. We look forward to an exciting ALC2017.

Teo Pek Bing

From the Secretary's Desk

Greetings in the name of our Lord! It is my pleasure to share with you the activities of CBSM in the past year as well as those still on-going.

CBSM Trustees and Meetings

The new Board of Trustees was appointed at the conclusion of ALC 2015. Mr. Teo Pek Bing (Sg. Nibong Gospel Hall) and Mr. Lee Kha Kooi (Sg. Ara Gospel Hall) were named the Chairman and Deputy Chairman respectively for another 2-year term. The other trustees are: Dr. Khong Yoon Loong (Bukit Mertajam Gospel Centre), Cheah Huck Leong (Bidor Gospel Centre), Stephen Yam (Kampar Gospel Hall), Chris Tay (Bandar Puchong Gospel Centre), S. Rajasegaram (Bandar Sunway Gospel Centre), Wong Sai Weng (The Life Chapel), Peter Tan (Agape Chapel), Lian Mung Yee (Petra Gospel Centre), Jimmy Chok (Gospel Hall Kuala Lumpur), Frederick Tan (Nilai Gospel Chapel), Rodney Tan (Melaka Gospel Chapel), Dr. Stephen Chang (Skudai Joy Gospel Chapel) and Chiew Sai Kee (Temerloh Gospel Chapel). *There is a vacancy on the board to be filled.* On 7 January 2016, Mr. S. Rajasegaram was called home to glory. He was looking forward to attending the first trustees' meeting of the board and fulfilling his responsibility as a trustee nominated by the Klang Valley assemblies (KVAEC).

In accordance to the Trust Deed, CBSM Trustees are required to hold at least three meetings per year. The first Trustees' meeting was held On 20 February 2016 at the CBSM office. It was decided at the meeting that the vacancy left by Mr. S. Rajasegaram would be filled by a nominee by KVAEC. The second meeting was held on 18 June 2016 at Nilai Gospel Chapel. At this meeting, Mr. Michael Fun (Bandar Sunway Gospel Centre) was officially welcomed as a Trustee representing the Klang Valley assemblies. The 3rd and final meeting for the year is scheduled to be held in Johor Baru in October 2016.

CBSM Office

We thank the Lord for the gift of an office to CBSM. The process of registering the property in the name of the Christian Brethren of Malaysia Property Trust Berhad (CBMPTB) is still ongoing. Hopefully, this process could be completed in the near future.

CBSM is thankful for the continuous financial support from the assemblies. During 2015, CBSM received love

gifts totaling RM57,950 from 31 English-speaking assemblies. This was sufficient to meet operational expenditure during the year amounting to RM44,546. For the first 6 months of 2016, CBSM received gifts totaling RM23,550 from 20 assemblies. Operating expenses for the same period amounted to RM28,747, resulting in a shortfall of RM5,197. In part, the deficit can be attributed to the cost of hiring an Administrative Assistant, and payments and fees incurred for the registration of the property to CBMPTB. We pray all assemblies will take note of the financial needs to enable CBSM to continue its service. All gifts should be made payable to "Christian Brethren Secretariat Malaysia" and sent to the CBSM office or deposited directly into CBSM's Public Bank account no. 3172570809.

Disaster Relief

CBSM has in place two funds for disaster relief – the National Disaster Relief Fund and the Nepal Earthquake Relief Fund.

i. National Relief Fund

This Fund was originally established to help alleviate the sufferings of the victims of severe flooding in Kelantan and the Temerloh areas. Financial assistance amounting to RM48,757 was given to: a) Kota Bharu Chapel to help members and their families affected by the flood in the Kelantan. b) Pan Malaysia OA Mission (PMOAM) for the rebuilding of livelihood among the flood affected families of OA villages in Temerloh area, and c) Grace Chapel Kingfisher Park, Sabah to assist those affected by the earthquake in Kota Kinabalu in June 2015. There is a balance of RM54,386 in the relief fund and CBSM is ready to extend aid to affected families of flooding expected later in the year due to the La Nina phenomenon.

ii. Earthquake Relief - Nepal

Thousands of homes and schools especially in villages close to the epicenter were destroyed. The death toll from the two quakes surpassed 8,500. The earthquake devastated many families and individuals gathered at KMC. Many of their homes have been damaged and their regular employment and livelihood have suffered greatly. The road to recovery for Nepal will be a long and tedious journey.

CBSM launched the Nepal Disaster Relief Fund following the two massive earthquakes in April and May 2015 which caused widespread destructions in Nepal. A total of RM392,000 was raised for the Fund. Three phases efforts were envisaged – Relief, Restoration and Reconstruction. The first relief phase ended in December 2015. During this time, urgently needed materials including solar power sets, flysheet tents, rice, Dhal, sugar, cooking oil, raincoats and medicines were distributed to the affected families in the Ree villages. Financial assistance were also given to affected believers in KMC and Madi village. Funds were also utilized to rebuild houses of worship and the village school, and restoring the village clinic. It appears the Nepali government has begun reconstruction work in the Ree villages and CBSM thought it wise not to duplicate the government efforts.

Nepal Mission Project

CBSM office continues to receive and remit love gifts to support our commended worker Amar Tamang and the operations and activities of the Katmandu Mission Centre (KMC).

In May 2016, a team comprising 8 missionaries from The Life Chapel, TTDI Gospel Centre and Bandar Sunway Gospel Centre, undertook a mission trip to Nepal. Besides KMC, the team also visited Madi and Bandar Jula in Chitwan, and Dhading Besi. The trip had created an awareness of the great need in Nepal and they have a desire to share with members in their own assemblies. There was a wonderful time fellowship and getting to know one another closer, and sharing the love of God. Some of the missionaries are thinking of returning to the places visited and may be to other areas they did not have time to go.

Another team comprising brothers Lee Kha Kooi and Yap Kok Keong, and sisters Chee Siew Choo and Goh Hai Bee, are visiting Kathmandu from 1st to 5th July 2016. The purpose of this exploratory visit is to study the possibility of setting up a mission school or some form of educational institution over there. This educational institution would help the Nepalese people and enhance the mission work already started at the KMC. A report is expected from the team for discussion and prayers on the next step.

The 6th GLO Biblical Training Seminar will be held at KMC, Lalitpur during 7th–12th October 2016. The five-days teaching sessions are aimed at building up believers.

The topic chosen is “Moving from Paradise to Exile” based on the Beginning, the Fall, the Call, the Exodus, the Kingdom; and the Exile. Mr. Lee Min Choon (The Life Chapel) has confirmed his acceptance of the task to take up the teaching sessions.

Funds for the Nepal Mission Project is running low. Assemblies are requested to prayerfully consider supporting the project financially. Designated gifts could be sent to the CBSM office or deposited directly to CBSM’s Public Bank account no. 3172570809.

Opening of Bank Accounts

More assemblies and agencies have requested CBSM for assistance to open bank accounts. A local bank closed the accounts of two assemblies because they could not furnish a registration number. CBSM assisted these and other assemblies and agencies to open new bank accounts under the special arrangement worked out with the Public Bank.

Christian Brethren of Malaysia Property Trust Bhd. (CBMPTB)

At the AGM of CBMPTB held on 25th June, it was decided that CBSM take over the administrative duties of CBMPTB. Statutory matters pertaining to tax and company secretarial duties will continue to be handed by professional firms. The transfer of the administrative duties and documents will be carried out in stages. The details will be worked out between CBMPTB and CBSM.

Assembly Leaders’ Conference (ALC) 2015

The theme of ALC 2015 held in December 2015 at the Grand Kampar Hotel was “The Trial of Faith”. The keynote messages shared by Mr. Loh Ah Asiau were relevant and practical. It was timely that Malaysian assemblies be made aware of the many challenges ahead, and to be better prepared to take practical steps to cope with any crisis situation that may hit our country and impact our assembly work. In view of the soon return of the Lord Jesus, all believers were encouraged to strive to share the Gospel to those outside the kingdom.

The feedback from the 8 Discussion Groups are being compiled and will be distributed to all assemblies for consideration and comments. It is hoped that a small booklet containing guidelines in managing possible crises

situations would be published for distribution to the assemblies.

Publications, Books, Resources and Archive

The Diakonia published by CBSM is published annually and distributed free of charge to the assemblies. The monthly prayer newsletter is sent out via email. The CBSM office still have stocks of Alexander Strauch's book "Biblical Eldership" and the accompanying Mentor's Guide and Study Guide. The three books are available at RM60 per set. To encourage assemblies to use the book

for leadership training, the Trustees, at their recent meeting, decided that for every 10 sets purchased, a set will be given free.

CBSM is continuing to build up an archive of materials related to assembly work in Malaysia. Assemblies and individuals with useful materials, church magazines, photos, etc are encouraged to send copies to the CBSM office.

Stephen Lew

CBSM Board of Trustees (2016)



Not in photograph

Mr. Chiew Sai Kee,
Termerloh Gospel Chapel

Mr. Chris Tay,
Puchong Gospel Centre

Michael Fun
Bandar Sunway Gospel Centre

1. Mr. Stephen Yam, Kampar Gospel Hall
2. Mr. Jimmy Chok, Gospel Hall Kuala Lumpur
3. Mr. S. Rajasegaram, Bandar Sunway Gospel Centre (Deceased)
4. Mr. Stephen Lew (Secretary General), Puchong Gospel Centre
5. Dr. Khong Yoon Loong, Bukit Mertajam Gospel Centre
6. Mr. Wong Sai Weng, The Life Chapel
7. Mr. Lee Kha Kooi, (Deputy Chairman), Sg. Ara Gospel Hall
8. Dr. Stephen Chang, Skudai Joy Gospel Chapel
9. Mr. Cheah Huck Leong, Bidor Gospel Centre
10. Mr. Peter Tan, Agape Chapel
11. Mr. Lian Mung Yee, Petra Gospel Centre
12. Mr. Teo Pek Bing, (Chairman), Sg. Nibong Gospel Centre
13. Mr. Frederick Tan, Nilai Gospel Centre
14. Mr Rodney Tan, Melaka Gospel Chapel

Assembly Leadership Conference 2015

Wong Sai Weng

Theme

The theme was "The Trial of Faith" for the ALC 2015. This theme was adopted by the CBSM Trustees after much prayer and deliberations over a period of almost a year. It was felt that the assemblies in the country needed a wakeup call with the many challenges facing our world and our nation and which in turn have a direct bearing on the work of the Lord's Kingdom. Thus the primary purpose of ALC 2015 is not only to promote and encourage fellowship among assembly leaders but also to strengthen and better equip the assemblies to face the challenges ahead.

Date & Venue

ALC 2015 was held over a period of 3 days 2 nights from 6th to 8th December 2015 at Grand Kampar Hotel. The December month was chosen to coincide with the school holidays as was done in the previous ALCs. Although CBSM had received a number of feedbacks from previous ALCs that the programme was too packed for most participants, nevertheless, the decision was taken to retain the 3D/2N programme in order to balance the difficulty of many participants having to apply for longer leave from their work place besides a costlier package for a 4D/3N stay. CBSM Trustees felt it would be better to sacrifice a bit of leisure time in order to accomplish the purposes of the ALCs which is only held once in two years. The venue was chosen in order to provide a balance of the costs, travel and logistical needs of participants coming from all over the country. The venue has always been a great challenge for the Trustees to decide upon. Maybe this whole issue could be resolved when we meet in heaven where everybody is fully satisfied!

Keynote Speaker & Topics

Having determined the ALC Theme, the Trustees' unanimous first choice for the keynote speaker was Elder Loh Ah Asiau. He was called by the Lord to serve in missions and church planting in Malaysia, China, Eastern Europe and a number of South East Asia countries. He has the full credentials to be our ALC 2015 keynote speaker. The disappointment came when he initially declined to accept our invitation citing his busy schedule in missions. It was a very difficult task for the Trustees to look for a suitable alternative keynote speaker for the chosen

theme. Out of desperation and much prayer we managed to persuade him to accept our invitation. Praise the Lord that he was such a blessing to all who attended his talks on the theme "The Trial of Faith".

Assemblies' Participation & Fellowship

Altogether we had 122 registered participants representing 37 assemblies (including 2 Chinese-speaking assemblies) in the country. It was a refreshing time to meet up with other fellow elders, ministry leaders and members of assemblies from the various parts of Peninsular Malaysia. One observation made was the fewer number of youths attending ALC 2015 compared to the previous ALC 2013 held in Genting Highlands. Perhaps this would be an important area for the Trustees to look into in planning for ALC 2017. As usual the middle-aged and older leaders had a wonderful time of fellowship particularly at meal times. The enthusiasm and participation of the sisters has been encouraging in the overall programme.

Several agencies took the opportunity to setup display booths to showcase their ministries. A selection of books was put on sale. There was also a demonstration of a handy and portable water filtration system, and a model of a solar oven.

Break-Out Sessions

In line with the Conference Theme, "The Trial of Faith", a set of challenging questions were compiled and approved beforehand by the Trustees for the Group Discussions at the Break-Out Sessions. The discussion questions were mostly centred on how the general congregation and the assembly leadership would respond in facing different crisis scenarios. There were a fair amount of serious, enthusiastic and sometimes hilarious suggestions and comments that came out from the various groupings. From the feedback received, most participants felt that the discussions went well and had benefited much particularly in areas which have not or seldom touched upon in their normal assembly settings.

The Trustees have agreed that the initial feedback from the 8 Discussion Groups would be compiled and distributed to all assemblies in the country to receive further suggestions and comments from those who

attended ALC 2015 and including others who were not present. All relevant inputs will then be compiled and edited and, God willing, CBSM will produce a booklet for distribution to all assemblies as guidelines in managing possible crisis situations facing the assemblies.

Feedback & Evaluation

From the feedback forms received, CBSM is greatly encouraged that most participants felt that the Keynote Messages shared by bro Loh Ah Asiau were very timely, relevant and practical to the assemblies. Many were greatly encouraged by his personal testimony and mission experiences both in Malaysia and countries afar. In his opening address, he emphasized that the "Doomsday Clock" is fast ticking away signalling the soon return of the Lord and he encouraged the assemblies to work even harder to bring the Gospel to the many who are still living in spiritual darkness.

Many felt that the Keynote address and the Group Discussions were more than compensate some of the shortcomings experienced as a result of a packed programme thus leaving very limited leisure time for fellowship and other activities.

Although the hotel meals served were not great, it was compensated by the renewal of good fellowship and

friendship around the table. It was also evident that a number of participants like the food and other delicacies offered in Kampar town by the amount of pre-ordered food stuffs they brought home with them at the close of the Conference.

Proposed Venue for ALC 2017

The CBSM Trustees are grateful to the Lord for the success of ALC 2015. The support and participation of the assemblies is commendable. However, it is hoped that more assemblies could continue to support and participate in the next ALC in 2017. The choice of venue would again be a great challenge again in order to encourage greater participation.

For now, CBSM would be happy to receive suggestions for the venue. Choices could range from the seaside, the hills and other possible locations and including Kampar again. The overarching consideration would be the possible level of response and participation from assemblies throughout the country. For now there are altogether 57 English-speaking assemblies in the country and only 35 were represented at ALC 2015.

Pray that the Lord will direct and grant us a venue that will help build bridges and greater fellowship among the assemblies.



FEATURE ARTICLES

Challenges Facing the Malaysian Church

Koh Gim Lam

Never in the history of the Church of Malaysia has so many challenges confronting the Church as today.

A. Exterior Challenges

1. The Majority's Faith

From the majority's faith (Islam) in Malaysia, the church initially enjoyed relative acceptability. She was allowed to function and grow as long as followers of Islam were not touched. From relative acceptability it moved to a polite tolerance. But today, there appears to be a outright hostility towards the Church. At the moment, hostility seems to be centered around Christian symbols, such as the Cross. Crosses were removed from public places. The Cross of a church in the city was taken down by force and a few churches had their walls thrown with paint and one church was set on fire.

The Apostle Paul in Galatians 5:11; calls that *'the offense of the cross'*. Why does the mere symbol of a cross cause so much offense? Perhaps, only those who are offended by the cross can answer. Other attacks (such as on 'Valentine Day') matter very little to Evangelical Christians.

However, the 'ALLAH' issue provoked a huge reaction, perhaps the Bahasa Bible which is used throughout the country uses 'ALLAH' for 'LORD God' in the English Bible.

First, there is the debate over the exclusive use of words in our national language for one particular faith. Then there is the question of rights. As the citizens of the country, why is the right to use any word in the national language an issue? This led to the banning of the Bahasa Bible and other Christian literatures that contain the word, 'Allah'.

The Evangelical Christians of Malaysia are divided into 2 camps;

1. hold on to the use of the word, 'Allah'
2. coin up another word to replace 'Allah'

I, personally am in the 2nd Camp, though I do not think it is necessary to coin up another word for 'Allah'. In my ministry with the Orang Asli, each time when the word,

'Allah' appears in the Bible text, I substitute it with **"YAHWEH"**. I explain that I don't use the word, 'Allah' for the following reasons:

i. THEOLOGICAL REASONS

- a. God is too big to be confined to one name. I chose "Yahweh" – a name God, chose for Himself, therefore confident that I am right to address God as 'Yahweh'.
- b. Is the God of the Bible and Allah of the Quran the same God? I have lots of problems trying to reconcile that. To avoid the complication, I refer to the God of the Bible as 'Yahweh', and the God of the Quran, as 'Allah'. The Chinese chose "Jehovah" for 'LORD God' in its translation. The 'Allah' issue confronting the Malaysian Church, is no issue for the Chinese speaking churches.

ii. PRACTICAL REASONS

- a. The tenets and practices of Islam and the teachings of the Bible are so different in so many areas. I think it is better to maintain that Christianity and Islam are two distinct religions. If so, the use of 'Allah' adds unnecessary complications.
- b. In the Malaysian context, we live in a strong Islamic environment – the "Allah" of the Quran is prominently presented. Christian's concept of God is side-lined. Therefore it is more straight forward not to share the same word for God.
- c. In Malaysia, religious sensitivity is held as premium. Question: *'why stir up religious sensitivity over a word, when we have so many other words in the Bible to address our dear God?'*
- d. By not using 'Allah', we will not be accused of 'hidden agenda', thus with 'open statement of faith', we declare 'Yahweh' as the unique God and the God of love who gave us His Son, Jesus Christ.

iii. EVANGELISTISM REASONS

- a. We believe that Christ is the only way of Salvation.

The Bible's teaching on Salvation is absolutely against Islamic beliefs and that of all other religious beliefs. Our 3 core teachings on Christ – His incarnation, His death on the Cross and His Resurrection are totally rejected by Islam and other faiths. But, the Word of God puts it in no uncertain term, that it is only in believing that Christ died on the Cross for our sin that we can gain an access into the presence of God (Romans 5:2). We cannot compromise on that. Teaching that Christ brings us back to Yahweh, not the 'Allah' of the Quran is more straight forward.

b. In missiology, we are always taught that contextualizing the truth of God's Word must have a long term view.

The Christians in Mongolia had to wrestle with a similar issue. When they translated the Bible into Mongolia, some chose the word, '*Burhan*' for God. This word is also used to address Buddha. Today there is a great divide among the Christians in Mongolia over the "*Burhan*" issue. Religious syncretism became a big problem, as majority of the Christians were from Buddhist background.

iv. MINISTRY REASONS

a. Deliverance Ministry

Put ourselves in a situation whereby we have to cast out demons in the name of '*Allah*' in front of our Muslim friends. It seems to me, that will be counter-productive, even if deliverance took place. It is so much more comfortable to cast out demons in the name of "Yahweh" and "Jesus Christ".

b. OA ministry

One can see the influence of Islam in so many OA villages in Malaysia. To present the LORD God, as "*Yahweh*" helps to teach about the uniqueness of God of the Bible directly to our OA brethren who knew God as '*Allah*'.

c. BM ministry

Like it or not, we have to increasingly use BM in Christian ministries. In school, '*ugama*' and moral lessons; "*Allah*" is used to refer to God. By using "*Yahweh*", it helps us to present the God of the Bible even though we are using Bahasa in our ministries.

d. Stumbling weak Christians and non-Christians

When they see and read about the atrocities done in the name of "*Allah*", I think it is more comfortable for us to stay clear of that name.

e. Our main doctrines such as '*Salvation*', '*Holiness*', '*Heaven and Hell*', "*Christ*", "*the Holy Spirit*" centered in God. By not using, "*Allah*", we avoid mixing Islamic concepts and the teachings of the Bible on these doctrines.

2. Other Faiths

As all other faiths are also confronted with the influence of the majority's faith, they become very protective. There are demands made against any proselytization but because Islam is also committed to proselytize, no law has been passed. It poses a challenge to the Church to share her faith.

3. The Internet

With the internet, the world is no longer the same as what we know in the 80s. The explosion of information, and the easy connectivity through social media make the spread of God's Word a totally new ball game. Because of this explosion of information, the mind of people is left with very little space for the Gospel. How the church is responding to this situation will determine what the church will look like in the near future.

4. World Wide Economic Crisis and the Malaysian Economic Downturn

I know of para-church agencies and churches which are dependent on foreign funds struggling to sustain its ministries. How do we challenge the Church of Malaysia to be truly a giving Church in the midst of our economic downturn?

We give even when we have little is always commended by our Lord.

B. INTERIOR CHALLENGES

1. The Loss of True Spiritual Worship in the Church

True seekers of God come to church in search of the reality of God. Earnest Christians come to Church in the

hope of a spiritual encounter with God. These days, so many worship services manifest very little differences from a musical concert, except for the content of the songs. Churches that still follow traditional set form of worship can be so dry and routine. The presence of the Lord is so distant! It is no wonder, A W Tozer wrote, *“WORSHIP, is the missing jewel of the Evangelical Church”*. The greatest challenge for the Church is to seek God’s presence in its worship services. The world with all her splendour can never substitute the delightful, heavenly presence of God the Church is expected to offer.

2. The Loss of Respect for the Church

Public scandals by leaders of the church is big news. Some of the scandals were so blatant that even non-Christians were taken aback. It is so sad that many churches have adopted unscriptural tactics into the Church. Until the hall-mark of the Church is *integrity*, the Church will have very little impact in a hostile environment. False witness must not be tolerated and dishonesty must be looked upon as deplorable in and by the Church.

3. The Increase of Professionalism

Because of compulsory education, the educated has increased in our country. The demands of the educated must be met. The Church seems to be unable to meet with this challenge, as we are still unable to put our best into full time Christian services. So often our full time Christian workers are those who are failures in their professional fields or drop outs in education. Christian parents must teach our children that God wants the best in His service and help them see serving God as the highest calling.

4. The Desire for Quality Education

Our July 2015 issue of *“Diakonia”* featured Christians in the field of education. What a timely issue! Christians were fore-runners in many countries in the world in the field of Education. The challenge of the Church of Malaysia is to provide quality education. I think, especially of the neglected group of our Orang Asli. Let those who

are ministering to them take upon their education as part of their calling. Private schools organized by Christians, must seek to provide the best education. Church premises should also be transformed into educational centers as and when they are available. The best way to touch base with our non-Christian friends is through the concerned education of their children. More Christian young people should consider teaching in their career choice.

5. Being involved in Social Services

Living in an hostile environment, our relevance will be measured by our contribution to society. The Church of Malaysia must be engaged in Social Services that are:

- a) ‘trans-faiths’ – the Lord commanded us to do good to all.
- b) pursuit of excellence – many are doing social work, therefore Christian’s social work must be characterized by excellence.
- c) People before profit – it must always be done for the good of people, and never for profit.
- d) Transparency – Without transparency in all we do, we do not bring glory to God.

In Malaysia there are so many areas that are crying for help and support. To mention but a few; work among the immigrants, the poor, the aged, the single parents, people with special needs. The demand on parents living and working in the cities created lots of social problems for their children. Family ministry is another area of great need, especially in the cities.

6. Mobilizing the “Grey Power”

As the quality of medical care improves, people live longer. Available to the Church is this huge human resource of retired people. The Church must seek ways and means to mobilize this group of people for the kingdom of God.

May the Lord find us faithful through these challenging times.

The Christian and the Internet

If there is one area of innovation that has the greatest impact in our lives in this 21st century, it would be the Worldwide Web (WWW) or the Internet. The Internet started as a research tool in a military facility in the 1960's, to share information between computers in a network. Technicalities aside, when my 80 year mother is able to handle Facebook with relative ease, I know we are well and truly into the age of the Internet. Given the Internet's significance, impact and transformational capabilities, it appears the assemblies are surprisingly not giving much thought to providing teaching and guidance around this topic. In this edition, we shall provide some perspectives from two authors and it is hoped that these will spark further discussions and meatier articles to follow in subsequent editions of the *Diakonia*.

A Gen Y perspective

Samuel Lee

In an age where the printed media are becoming increasingly obsolete, we find ourselves reaching for our smartphones and tablets ever so often. As a substitute for print media, the smart device performs flawlessly—sharper screens with vibrant colors and massive digital libraries that have near-endless storage are the standard that has taken over this generation. Even as we see this digital trend envelop the church, we cannot help but marvel at the speed at which this is happening. Each new Sunday brings yet another church-goer with a new tablet or a new smartphone in place of a Bible. Overhead projectors that use transparencies are remnants of a bygone era—replaced by LCD projectors that display hymns, Bible verses, and sermon content in a high-definition format to meet the visual needs of a new generation of digitally-literate believers.

With regard to content that is available to the masses, the Internet is second to none—offering a veritable treasure trove of information that the early Christian could only dream about. However, the information age has opened up a conundrum not seen in the past. Issues that are unique to this generation follow the progress that has been made in growing our digital literacy.

This article aims to elucidate these issues, and hopefully offer some insight on the impact of the information/digital age to the current Christian generation.

Broadly, the Internet's largest impact to the Christian community at large and closer to home is intellectual empowerment. The average believer now has, in a figurative sense, the world at his fingertips—allowing him to widen his worldview and broaden his perspectives, all from the comfort of his tablet or smartphone! Wisdom and insight that once was held only by theologians and university professors is now within reach. This accessibility opens the door for all Christian, regardless of

age, gender, or social status; for them to develop a deeper love for the Holy Scriptures. This, in turn, will lead to more meaningful Bible study, and a deeper appreciation of the inspired Word of God.

The technologically-progressive Christian parades his new-found knowledge with pride—sending Christian articles to friends, posting devotional thoughts on Facebook, and even being more participative in group Bible study! However, the plethora of data that can be found on the Internet presents a dilemma to the digitally-literate believer, who asks himself, "*What sources should I read from/follow?*" A myriad of postings from various sources and parties convolute the already-confusing World Wide Web, each claiming to be "*The One True Source of Information*". It is no small wonder that the more one uses the Internet, the more questions one tends to have instead!

Problems arise when the wrong source of information is quoted—and in some cases, passed off as gospel truth! When everything on the Internet is digested without verification of any sort, we run the risk of propagating contrary "truths" and conflicting ideologies. This can only end in mass confusion. In spite of the obvious fact, this issue is fast becoming one of the main problems the local church faces today.

The society we live in now is best defined as a postmodern one—a society where objective truth has been relegated to the "subjective" category. A repercussion that stems from this adoption of a postmodern mind-set is the exaltation of the human self. The postmodern man says that, "*I'll believe in my truths; you believe in yours*", thus making truth a matter of opinion. The lack of objectivity makes everybody a god—the master of their own little domain; kings of their own castles, as it were. With this mind-set in play, it is no surprise that the local church also faces issues related to the matter of objective truth. In this case, the Internet is more of a liability than an asset.

The freedom that the Internet brings—with regard to the sharing and publishing of any form of content—encourages the freedom of expression. It is when these “expressions” supplant the sole authority that belongs to the Holy Scriptures, that these problems become all too real.

He who stands for nothing will fall for anything—Anon.

The local churches are the “linchpins” in this regard. The systematic teaching and dissemination of Assembly-held doctrinal positions and Scriptural stands to the congregation will assist in reinforcing objectivity in terms of the Holy Scriptures. Discernment on the part of the believer is also of great importance—knowing, firstly, that there are correct and wrong sources of information, and then choosing to follow the correct one will ensure that the believer progresses in his knowledge of the Holy Scriptures.

The widespread use of the Internet also brings about the danger of stumbling into indulgences that are detrimental to the spiritual health of an individual. As much as the Internet holds many inspired spiritual truths, it also holds an equal—or perhaps larger—amount of lies and deceit. Many a good Christian has fallen prey to its devious wiles, becoming addicted to the temporary pleasures that it brings. It falls to the prerogative of the believer to practice wisdom when navigating the World Wide Web, by inspiration of the Spirit and the light of the Holy Scriptures.

However—like the Bereans of old—there are those who apply divine wisdom to modern knowledge, thus clearing the “muddied waters” and wielding the Internet as a highly-effective tool to further delve into the Holy Scriptures. Influential Christian leaders and evangelists are seen using the Internet as a tool of encouragement and edification, as well as a means of propagating the gospel. Christian theologians are writing blog articles and publishing Bible study materials to assist the layman in his study of the Holy Scriptures. The reach of the Internet aids the spread of these materials to parts of the world where printed Christian materials are hard to come by, or perhaps even banned through various governmental or religious edicts.

The Internet—as a tool to further the kingdom of God—has been used in sundry ways to great effect. However, we must be mindful of the fact that the Internet is merely that—a tool. It must never be our main counsel in spiritual matters, nor can it be used to replace the inspired Word

of God as “*the lamp to our feet, and the light to our path.*” Caution is the byword in this technologically-literate generation. The local church has a responsibility to educate its congregation on the benefits and the pitfalls of using the Internet, and not to brush it aside as a “fad” or a “worldly” pursuit.

A Baby Boomer Perspective

YL Khong

The Internet is pervading practically all aspects of human endeavours. Like it or hate it, you can’t avoid it and it is here to stay. Many years ago, I remember a lawyer who told me he would not touch a computer, not even with a 10 foot pole. Today he has at least 3 computing devices he uses to gain access to the internet for work and personal use – his smart phone, his home and work computers. Of course there are many other devices which use the Internet that he interacts with in the course of the day which he is oblivious of. Here we are straying into the Internet of Things or IOT. We digress but the point is the presence of the Internet both visible and invisible to us is ubiquitous now.

I think the church has a responsibility to be watchful especially on a technological shift so major that it affects so many parts of our life, including church life. This topic is too large to cover in an article, so the intention of the author to start some discussion going and hopefully we can build some collective thought processes around this for the edification and protection of the saints.

At the simplest level, the Internet is a tool for transactions of information. These transactions follow a few basic steps i.e. generation, dissemination, archival, retrieval and application. At the surface, these have little to do with our “spiritual” life and these are purely “worldly” processes. But these transactions intercept the life of believers in so many ways that it may be worthwhile to put some thought about these matters.

For Christians, truth should be important. Part of the reason we are in this world is to stand against the Father of Lies (John 8:44). While there are a lot of good information on the Internet, it is also filled with lies.

It has always been a concern of mine that believers habitually disseminate information readily with nary a thought as to whether they are true or not. We inadvertently spread falsehood and therefore become deceivers. There are so many examples and the one that

comes to mind is the posting of a pastor being burned at stake that spread like wild fire which turned out to be false. I remember the anger and hatred generated among my Christian friends; all over a piece of information that is false. Where a spirit of love should engulf a Christian, hatred gushed out from this one posting.

The other ones I get regularly over my WhatsApp are health advice on some miracle drink or food or another. Most are benign but I wonder if some of these concoctions might be harmful to some individuals. Beware that in our vanity for health and beauty, we are not incessantly caught up with these miracle health tips. After all, the devil is out there to harm us physically as well. Now he has a means to do so in a more widespread manner.

My rule of thumb is to be highly sceptical of random pieces of information that come through the Internet. I try to resist the temptation to forward any information unless I can validate them. Do I know the original source of information? Can I reliably validate the information as true? Is there somebody I should ask or any checking I can do before I forward?

There are darker sides of the Internet that believers are unlikely to stray into, hate chat groups for example. But pornography is another matter. I think many believers would have the “did God say...” moments when it comes to pornography. Have we as an Assembly dealt with this adequately and with openness and love. I believe the Internet would be a tool used by the Evil One to slowly erode the moral foundations set by the Creator. How would the church better prepare its flock to stand up against this?

What about Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other social media channels? How can we be responsible in their use? The greatest danger is so much of personal information is spread so widely and so quickly. I think we should be circumspect in its use in order not to dishonour the name of Christ. I know of an instance where Facebook has been used by Christians to express their frustrations on their churches and leaders. It is like the Corinthian Christians

dragging each other to court to the spectacle of the unbelieving public. Remember your posting is there for the WORLD TO SEE! There is NOTHING PRIVATE ON THE INTERNET despite privacy settings you think that will do the job. There is nothing to stop somebody who can see your postings in a private group, to copy and paste the information and then have them posted in a more public setting.

I want to point out also the INTERNET NEVER FORGETS. I was an early adopter of the Internet - the days of the Kermit file transfer protocol and audio modem. If you know about these, you are ancient like me. Over 25 years ago, when I was a post graduate students overseas, I was involved in a chat group regarding the society issues in Malaysia. To my horror and embarrassment, my undeveloped and clumsy thoughts shared can still be retrieved. The message is, mistakes and words expressed on the internet will be there for perpetuity. Remember, every character you typed and every website you visited is stored somewhere. Somebody, somewhere, if he wanted to and has the resources to do so, can retrieve those information.

There are many other areas for discussion but space does not permit – online games and addiction, impact of emails on work-life balance for a Christian, “netiquette”, good and bad of Christian online resources, use of social media, competition in the proselytization space, etc. Given the role the Internet plays in the lives of believers, this should warrant a more extensive discussion within the assemblies.

The Internet is just a tool; it is benign and does a lot of good. It is the application of a tool by fallen men that make the tool beneficial or harmful. I have deliberately brought up some pitfalls in the use of the internet so that hopefully, we can be thoughtful and circumspect about the way we use the Internet. I think there are several warnings in the Bible about ignorance and let us be awake and watchful to the potential pitfalls when we transact information on the Intern

Wounds in Our Society

A Christian movement for peace was born out of the most tension-filled period of Christian-Muslim relations. In October 2013, the Court of Appeal ruled that state laws which prohibited non-Muslims from using the word “Allah” was valid. The Sultan of Selangor immediately announced that Christians were not allowed to use the word in his state. Roman Catholic priests publicly declared their defiance of the ruling. At the height of the tensions, Ibrahim Ali, leader of the Malay rights group Perkasa was reported to have called for Malay Bibles to be burnt.

In the Centre of the Firestorm

On 4 January 2014, the Selangor Islamic Department (JAIS) raided the Bible Society of Malaysia, the publisher and distributor of the Malay Bible. 300 copies of the Malay and Iban Bibles were confiscated. Being the President of the Bible Society, I was arrested and ordered to go to JAIS offices to have my statement recorded as part of their investigations into a possible offence committed by the Bible Society.

The Lord Speaks

Like most Christians, I was angry. The rights of Christians was not unfamiliar to me as I had argued many cases involving rights of religion in the courts. I was egged on by opposition politicians and activist Christian lawyers to sue. I thought that God had brought this incident upon me so that I could be the one to wage the war against the Church’s enemies.

In the months that JAIS took to conduct their investigations, God brought to my mind the teachings of Jesus Christ,

“Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you” (Luke 6: 27-28).

Practicing what he preached, Jesus prayed for his persecutors,

“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34).

Paul who endured more than his fair share of persecution said the same thing:

“Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. (v14). Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: It is mine to avenge; I will repay, says the Lord” (Romans 12: 14, 17-19).

Peter said,

“Do not repay evil for evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing” (1 Peter 3:9).

Vindication and Forgiveness

On 10 June 2014, the Attorney-General announced that the Bible Society had not broken any laws and that the Bibles should be returned. Reporters wanted to know my response. The next day the newspapers carried my response where I stated that the Attorney-General’s statement meant that I had an iron-clad case to sue JAIS for wrongful arrest. However, what I said was,

“I forgive JAIS and have no intention to sue or punish them in any way. The AG’s announcement is better than any court judgment. There is nothing to be gained from a lawsuit except for revenge and a sense of satisfaction. That is unchristian. I call on Christians to forgive JAIS as they were just doing their job but had wrongly interpreted the law. Nobody is perfect, everybody makes mistakes, let us forgive them just as Jesus Christ forgave us” (The Malaysian Insider, 11 June 2014).



A New Way Forward

Forgiveness needs to be followed by reconciliation and healing. The Lord brought a few Christian friends into conversations with me. We decided that we needed to encourage Christians to make friends with our fellow citizens from the other faith communities. This vision gave birth to “Christians for Peace and Harmony in Malaysia” (CPHM).

CPHM Launched

On 2 June 2015, CPHM was launched at the Majestic Hotel in Kuala Lumpur. The launch was officiated by the Prime Minister and attended by 1,000 Christians and another 200 guests from the other religious communities.



Getting Down to Work

The launch of CPHM was followed by events promoting religious understanding and harmony during Ramadhan month. A breaking of fast was organised in Shah Alam attended by 25 Muslim leaders from various Muslim bodies and mosques and 25 leaders from Churches in Kuala Lumpur, Petaling Jaya and Klang. Christian leaders met their Muslim counterparts and observed how breaking of fast was conducted.



The Lord seated me next to the head of the Dakwah Department of JAIS. I said “you guys arrested me last year.” We laughed. My newfound friend from JAIS then invited me to contact him if I needed to organise visits by Christian groups to any of the mosques in Selangor.

During Ramadhan month, CPHM was also the special guest at Perkasa’s national breaking of fast.





CPHM also organised peace and harmony banquets in Segamat, Johor and Penang attended by local residents of different races and religions.

In August 2015, CPHM had a 2 hour dialogue with Perkasa's Supreme Council. In a joint press conference, both CPHM and Perkasa called for a halt to the raising of religious issues and encouraged the ongoing effort to improve relationships between Muslims and Christians. CPHM assembled the largest gathering of Christian and Muslim religious leaders to celebrate Christmas at the Concorde Hotel, Shah Alam on 3 December 2015. The Muslim guests included representatives from MAIS, JAIS, MAIWP, ABIM, Perkasa, government departments, mosques and Muslim NGOs. Church leaders from Klang, Shah Alam, PJ and KL including more than 10 assembly elders and leaders attended.



CPHM also sponsored Agape Chapel's Christmas Street Party on 20 December 2015 for the Muslim and Hindu residents of Kota Damansara.



The first six months of CPHM saw many firsts: the first Muslim-Christian leaders breaking of fast and the first Muslim-Christian leaders Christmas celebration. As Christians reached out their hands in friendship to our Muslim friends, they reached back to us sending a clear message that our country has a bright future where people of all races and religions can overcome their differences and live together in peace and harmony.

Recently, our brother Mung Yee shared in a CBSM meeting how Petra Gospel Centre managed to achieve significant cost savings in renovation of their building. The editor thought it might be worthwhile to disseminate this useful information to the assemblies. He shared the experience of Petra Gospel Centre in Cheras through the questions we asked below.

Describe briefly the cost saving idea that can be considered in a church building/renovation project?

Generally for a straightforward project, the total cost of labour and materials are usually less than half the price quoted by an "arm's length" contractor, especially involving very substantial masonry work as our experience have shown.

So if we can do 'the contractor's work', a lot of cost can be saved. All this is purely because of the change in the Work and Cost Dynamics between the conventional and this approach. After all, the Assemblies have been nicknamed DIY Churches.

If a church has no experience in construction, how difficult is it to implement this idea?

Ordinarily, we thought it quite impossible until we discovered our "know next to nothing about construction" neighbour and some other churches are doing it at such a low cost even when compared to our past few rounds of renovations using 'friendly' contractors who did the work at discounted market prices supposedly.

For bigger projects, it can even be done easier by asking the architect or engineer to second an experienced staff, at your cost, to supervise and manage the project.

The cost of the site staff is well worth it with the cost saving that can be achieved and better quality of work done.

Apart from the cost saving, what are other benefits of this approach?

We found ourselves absolutely sure of the quality and quantity of materials used and oftentimes, we found we can afford to do more than what we originally planned.

We avoided lots of the usual troubles encountered when dealing with contractors, especially towards the end phase. It has been a lot of work but not much more compared to dealing with a "troublesome" contractor.

We have much better control over the progress of the project. We have greater liberty to modify things as better ideas emerge, which only come along as the project progresses. Not to mention the morale fostered as church members are all chipping in with their know-how, contacts, getting special deals for the church, etc. Nothing like the sense of thanksgiving to God for the satisfaction of saving a big chunk of money especially for the "not so rich" assemblies.

How much cost have been saved from your experience?

In October 2011, when we learned this approach from our neighbour, we built what is essentially a basic 3 storey building of 20 x 40 feet, each floor with an R.C. roof, as extension to our existing structure, for RM75,000 and another RM20,000 for finishing and fittings. The best contractor's quote at that time was RM280,000! That was really such a sweet experience of saving about 66% that we didn't mind the trouble and moreover gave us the much needed extra space.

In October 2015, we decided to demolish our whole second floor and build a new worship hall (40 x 90 feet) without internal pillars and with raised ceiling height (24 feet) of a R.C. roof and together with a mezzanine loft (43 x 40 feet) can seat about 600 persons. (We were renting a hall of 700 seating capacity for the past few years for our Christmas Musicals). The hall then was about 9 feet high with four internal pillars that gave us lots of seating and visual projection problems.

The whole project involved construction of some 7,200 square feet of R.C. slab, new footing, pillars and beams. The contractors were asking between RM1.2 million to RM1.6 million because of the difficult physical working conditions; ours being an intermediate lot with adjoining buildings on both sides and at the back, with most of the renovation work to be done at the back portion of our existing structure. Messy job!

Thank God, we are 95% done and we are on target to complete our hall at below RM600,000 (masonry and

finishing costing RM460,000 and lighting, sound, audio-visual and air conditioning systems costing RM120,000).

All praises and glory to God for grace, mercy and loving kindness all along the way! It was exciting for us because it saved us burdening others for funds and so we thought we should share this experience when requested, to give other assemblies another option to have more space

based on our experience of increasing our usable space from about 6000 square feet to 16000 square feet after 5 rounds of renovations.

To those who need more information on how to save cost on church renovation, Lian Mung Yee's email address is cosmos.my@gmail.com

The Mission House, Farquhar Street Penang

Timothy Tye

My family are believers going back three generations, to the time of my great grandmother.

The oldest assembly building that I know is Burmah Road Gospel Hall. It was there that I first went to Sunday School. Then the work expanded to Green Lane, and for a short period, Sunday School was held at our home at Jalan Sir Hussein. Eventually the Island Glades Gospel Centre building was completed, and our family began attending church there. During my teenage years, the work expanded south, and we so we moved again, this time to fellowship at Sungai Nibong Gospel Hall, where I remain to this day.

I used to hear in passing from my late mother that she attended church in Farquhar Street. According to her, as a small girl she followed her mother and her grandmother taking the tram down from Air Itam to go to church. All this while, I had assumed that the church building was long gone, and it was only in recent times, when my mother was already frail and ailing, that I discovered that the original building, where my mother, grandmother and great-grandmother attended church over half a century ago, is still standing today. I also found out that there was a chapel in front of the building, but it was torn down in the 1930s to make way for the widening of Farquhar Street.

The building that is still standing today is the old Farquhar Street Mission House. The first time I visited it was in 2008. At that time, it was unkempt, and choked by a thick layer of undergrowth. I explored the forlorn structure and took some photographs. It was in an advanced stage of decay. The floorboards upstairs were missing, as was the ceiling, so I could see the rafters. Much of the roof tiles were also gone, so streams of light pierced down like

impromptu skylights. I did not know how long the building had remained abandoned, or what it was last used for. All I knew back then was that Mission House was already falling apart. Some of us who were concerned about preserving the building had a meeting on site with Puan Maimunah Mohd Sharif, the then President of then Penang Island Municipal Council, with the hope that something could be done to save it. What we desired was for the building to be bought and restored and that it does not collapse. We had hoped that perhaps it could be used for Christian activities, but none of us had the money to buy it.

Sometime after that meeting, I learned that the Mission House had been purchased. I do not know by whom. Nevertheless, the concern of it falling apart was replaced with a new concern, that it would be used for secular activities. I have heard that there were Christian organisations keen on the building, but as far as I understand, none have the funding to put their interest into action. Meanwhile, the new owner began to restore Mission House and the building next to it, which we know as 33 Farquhar Street, and today as Farquhar Mansion. When the restoration was completed around October, 2013, I learned that the owner might be keen to turn it into a museum, and was sourcing for details from various people.

For now, these are the information I have about the Mission house. As I write this, the Mission House building has been restored for over two years. Apart from an exhibition that was held there in conjunction with the George Town Festival in 2014, I do not know of any other activity being held there, or whether that rumour of it being used as a museum will eventually materialise.



The Mission House at Farquhar Street before renovation

Source: <http://www.pht.org.my/mission-house-farquhar-street/>



The Mission House in 2014 after renovation

Source: <http://www.penang-traveltips.com/farquhar-street-mission-house-and-chapel.htm>

Retirement Home for the Elderly

When the Lord Jesus Christ was on the cross, He saw His mother and told her that Apostle John was her son and to the apostle John, that she was his mother (John 19).

We just wonder why He did that when the Lord Jesus had His own siblings. She would have been in her early 50's and Jesus cared for her knowing that John, the disciple that He loved, would care for her.

This shows how the Lord Jesus took the responsibility for His mother's daily care and welfare seriously and it was important to Him.

In the Ten Commandments, the fifth commandment is to honour your parents. And the Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled that by honouring His mother.

In Acts 2: 44 - 47, we see the early church, after receiving Jesus as their personal Saviour, sold everything, lived as a community and shared their lives and their possessions with each other. This was how the church lived and God used them wonderfully.

In most of the assemblies in Penang, 70% of the saints are more than 55 years of age. There are more than 30%, who are 65 years and above. Many are staying alone, many are only seen on Sundays. This numbers could increase as time goes on. There is no proper care for the elderly people that are mobile and for those who are partially

Raju Kasimani

mobile. Often we tend to ignore the caregiving ministry as it's a long term commitment that needs patience, love and time.

In Bukit Mertajam Gospel Centre, we have a few elderly saints that are above 70's and we only see them on Sundays and we do not really know what goes on with them during the rest of the days. There are many godly grandfathers, grandmothers, fathers and mothers who live by themselves. So our heart goes out to them. We figured that we need to do something about this.

We have a vision to provide housing for retirees who are mobile, for them to stay as a community of Bible believing people, to be able to provide care, security, medical assistance and a friendly environment for them and occupy them with healthy activities.

Objectives

We seek to setup a retirement home to

- i) provide the strength in companionship for the elderly and for them to live as a community of believers; rather than spending the rest of their lives by themselves
- ii) motivate the elderly people that God still uses them in spite of their age.
- iii) raise up Christian caregivers.

The Benefits of Living in a Retirement Home

Mind Set on Things of Heaven

For the elderly, living amongst a community of believers would ensure that the residents are constantly reminded of the things above. This would be edifying and they would enjoy a higher sense of well-being. They could also have a chance to have a strong prayer life with the encouragement of others while waiting for the Lord's coming.

Better Psychological Health

The residents would be less likely to be depressed or lonely as they would be spending time with those of their age group.

Better Lifespan

The residents of the community could possibly have a longer lifespan as they would be provided with a round the clock medical care. This means that not only their spiritual health is taken care of but their physical health as well. They then would have more years to serve the Lord to the best of their capabilities.

Bukit Mertajam Gospel Centre's Ministry for the Elderly

We will form a committee comprising assembly elders and representatives of the Penang Assembly Senior Fellowship representatives to move this proposal forward.

Pray that God would provide a location to build this retirement home (25 to 30 units) with the following conditions:

- * *In the state of Penang*
- * *Land price to be less than RM20 per square feet*
- * *Near to hospitals, super markets and close to highway*

We will be looking to encourage 25 to 30 person to invest between RM160, 000 to RM200,000.

Currently we are seeking to purchase the land, minimum size of approximately 2 acres to 3 acres under the *Christian Brethren of Malaysia Property Trust Bhd.*

We are also planning to have some full time staff and train them to manage, maintain, to provide service and care to the residents.

Some possible special built-in senior friendly features:

Minimal maintenance
Minimal steps
Laundry service
Supply of meals
Housekeeping
Safety grab rails in the bathroom
Non slip tiles
Sound proof walls
Wide doors for wheelchair access (should the need arise)
24/7 emergency response system
Pest control
Activities and programs to cater for the needs pf seniors
Fully guarded with CCTV installation

The Proposal

Our 1st phase would consists of single storey 1 bedroom / 2 bedrooms villas for the mobile and independent seniors.

At a later stage, we will have an Assisted Care Residence and Complex Care Residence units. These will homes with constant nursing facilities for the residents.

We will have an excellent and beautiful landscape and paths for walking. A garden with flowers, fruit trees, vegetable plots, orchid planting, etc.

The proposed lease deposit & maintenance charges for the various units are as follows:-

Type	Area (Square Feet)	Lease Deposit - Standard Unit (RM)	Monthly Maintenance Fees (inclusive of sinking funds & 6% GST) (RM)
1 bedroom VILLA	650 TO 800	160,000 TO 200,000	150 TO 250
2 bedrooms VILLA	900 TO 1,000	200,000 TO 280,000	150 TO 280

THE CONCEPT

This project is not meant to be profit making for those developing the project or those buying into the project.

This project is meant primarily to provide Christian love and care for the elderly and thereby provide a form of witness to the community. The plan is not to sell the houses. To own a residence is not an investment for future higher earning.

The purchasers buy a property under a Lifetime Lease or Lifetime Assigned arrangement, whereby the resident will have the right to reside in the retirement residence and enjoy its facilities and services for as long as he/she wants it.

The lease can be terminated after 5 years or other nominated periods by choice or upon death and the full deposit will be refunded to the leasee or to his/her

nominees. The leasee's name will be registered in the Master Title with the Appropriate Authority with proper legal documents.

What can you do? You can participate in this ministry by praying that GOD will provide all the needs and give boldness and wisdom to the committee. Commit to invest or to provide loan to BMGC. If you are an elderly person, be ready to leave your routine life, put your life and plans into the hands of God and join the vibrant lifestyle with a community of believers.

Challenges to the Family in Malaysia

Lee Wee Min

The family provides supportive relations and connections to a community across the lifespan of all its members. It also lays the foundation for character formation and the transmission of values across generations. Family resilience is enhanced when couples acknowledge marriage as an institution established and safeguarded by God to reflect His redemptive purpose for all mankind. (Ps. 127:1; Eph. 1:10, 18-22; Eph 3:17-19). As a man and wife submit to God, they grow in intimacy, commitment to one another, reciprocal servanthood, and in their understanding of forgiveness and restoration. Christian marriage is a secure environment in which children experience God's redemptive love and grow in faith and knowledge of Christ Jesus (Deut 6:5-7; Mal 2:15; Ps 78:4).

Families in Malaysia have changed in significant ways in response to the socioeconomic environment. Data from the Department of Statistics indicates delayed marriages, falling fertility and smaller family size. The number of births has declined to 2.0 per family for Malays and 1.4 for Chinese and Indian Malaysians. The proportion of never married (single) persons aged 20–34 years continues to increase as young adults spend more time in education and training for professions. Urbanisation has resulted in the decline of the extended family as defined by residence of at least one aged parent.

As the nuclear family becomes the norm, families find it more difficult to maintain social connectedness. Children become more dependent on non-familial social ties in the

absence of grandparents and immediate kin. As family size reduces, children are less likely to have siblings for emotional support and schools replace parents as the main agents of socialisation. Similarly, social media are widely used by today's youth for social connection and entertainment and shape their emotional and moral development.

A related trend is the higher proportion of women participating in the labour force. Although women currently constitute 46% of the labour force, the number of dual income families is likely to increase with women's greater access to higher education and the dwindling of family incomes due to high inflation.

Furthermore, the rise of a new urban middle class with a life style embracing global lifestyles may have adverse effects on family well-being. Parents in dual income families may experience increased physical and mental stress in juggling work and family responsibilities. Children also may experience a higher incidence of abuse and neglect, anxiety and depression, and health challenges such as malnutrition and obesity.

Despite the wave of modernity, religious values, close family relationships and traditional marriage forms remain significant in Malaysia. The dominant model is the two-parent family in a lifelong union and non-marital childbearing and cohabitation are rare. Divorce rates remain relatively low; however the increase in divorce

rates among non-Moslems from 2.63% in 2000 to 7.19% in 2005 is a cause for concern.

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY MALAYSIA

As dynamic social forces threaten the survival of marriage, couples need God's guidance and wisdom to manage family tasks and responsibilities across their lifespan and be credible witnesses to the love of God in their communities (Prov. 11:4). The Christian community is called to be salt and light to a disoriented society. Focus on the Family Malaysia is a non-profit organization established in 1997 by Lee Wee Min to empower families in fulfilling their role as the foundation of stable, thriving communities. Today, Focus on the Family Malaysia reaches over 30,000 individuals yearly through its programs and resources that teach God's design for families as the key to understanding significance, belonging and, ultimately, eternity with Him.

Focus on the Family Malaysia has a wide range of programmes and resources to empower families at all stages of life. Through pre-marital education courses such as **SmartStart**, relationship assessment tools such as **Couple Checkup** and **Prepare Enrich** and marriage campaigns and events such as **Say, I Do** and **Date Night**, Focus on the Family prepares individuals for marriage and parenthood and equips married couples with practical skills. Bonding events and parenting workshops are designed to foster relationships between parent and child. Additionally, counselling is offered to provide support for couples and parents in crisis.

Families build resilience as they incorporate biblical principles into daily family life and become skilful in family disciplines such as positive communication, conflict management, financial management and decision making. Engaged parenting builds emotional connections between parent and children and nurtures children's growing commitment to God through simple methods such as eating dinner together, assisting children with their homework and being intentional about modelling and sharing faith.

Acknowledging families as a vital resource in nation building, the Malaysian government has developed a

number of programmes and policies to enhance family functioning and survival. Collaboration between all institutions is essential to support families in fulfilling their responsibilities. Ultimately, the Christian community needs to affirm that the family is a reflection of God's covenant with His people. Thus, it will empower family members to express Christ's living presence in the world in daily family life and transmit the gospel message to the next generation.



MISSIONS

Mission Opportunities in Kyrgyzstan

Evelyn Tan M Y



Kyrgyzstan is a land-locked and mountainous country in Central Asia. It borders with Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and China. The capital city is Bishkek.

Kyrgyzstan was an important part of the ancient silk route and the spirit and culture of those great civilizations are still being preserved among their people.

Kyrgyz (pronounced “Keer-Geese”) are the majority people group among the 6 million populations of 41 ethnic groups. Other ethnic groups that live in Kyrgyzstan are the Uzbeks, Russians and other Central Asian minority groups, amongst which 26 of them are unreached (according to the Joshua project). The Kyrgyz language which belongs to one of the Turkic languages is the official language while the Russian language is still widely spoken. Nowadays many young people in Kyrgyzstan speak fluent English and their culture has also been greatly influenced by the West.

Kyrgyzstan was under the Soviet Union regime until her independence in 1991. Since its independence, Kyrgyzstan remains the most open and democratic nation among all the other Central Asian countries. The country generously gives 60-day free entry visa for more than 45 countries (including Malaysia).

Though Islam is the dominant religion, the Kyrgyz have never been very religious. However, the influence of Islamization can clearly be felt nowadays within its society.

After the collapse and the withdrawal of Russian power, Kyrgyzstan has yet to rebuild a strong and stable economy. Poverty and high unemployment rate in the country have created more and more opportunities for corruption and vice versa.

Mission opportunity in Kyrgyzstan

Openness

The Kyrgyz people are known for their hospitable and friendly nature. They welcome guests and are especially glad to see someone from other countries. Their

openness to other nationalities can be an open door for mission.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, many Kyrgyz found themselves lost, as if they were abandoned by their parents. Many people tried to redefine their identity and to find peace and hope through practicing religion (mainly folk Islam) and also material satisfaction. Most of the Kyrgyz are happy to listen when someone tells them about God and spiritual things. They often listen with spiritual hunger and they also ask many questions to find the truth.

Opportunity for long term visa

The government welcomes outside investors and humanitarian aids. Compared to other Central Asian countries, it is relatively easier to obtain a long term working or business visa in Kyrgyzstan. Many mission agencies have made use of this convenience to set up their coordination office in Kyrgyzstan. We do not know how long more will we enjoy this openness; may God call more people to work among the Kyrgyz while the door of the country as well as the heart of the people are still wide open.

Teaching English

Generally people in Kyrgyzstan (especially the young people) are still very eager to learn English, as having English proficiency would provide them greater opportunity to study abroad and getting jobs in multinational companies.

In the past 20 years, many missionaries from the west have used teaching English as a platform for outreach. The locals have identified the English teachers from the West as missionaries and that come with a religious agenda. Though the young Kyrgyz people still love to learn English from the white people from the West, it has become harder for the western missionaries to share the gospel due to this prejudice.

Asian faces are more natural in terms of building relationship with the local people and they also don't

generally have prejudice towards the Asian people. It is also easier for us from Asian background to understand them as we share similar worldviews. Therefore, teaching English is a natural and effective platform for making friends and reaching out to the young Kyrgyz.

Setting up business or tent-making

Business visa is one of the easiest ways to stay in the country for a long period of time. It is not complicated to set up small business such as travel agency and trading company. Kyrgyzstan is also called as the Switzerland of Central Asia because of its glassy lakes, snowy mountains and spectacular canyons. Setting up a travel agent would be apt to bring in tourists and also missionaries who are interested to explore the beauty of the country.

Christian professionals can also consider working in Kyrgyzstan as tentmakers. There are many multinational

companies in Bishkek, the capital that brings in expats and workers from other countries to work in the country. Working in Kyrgyzstan would give you an opportunity to make friends with the local people, build relationships and impact their lives as light and salt.

Pray for Kyrgyzstan

Pray for the Kyrgyz to find true hope in the Word of God. Pray for the local church to be more mature and to be strong when faced with persecution. Pray that the Lord may call and send more workers to labour among the Kyrgyz people who are spiritually hungry.



Source <https://www.inf.ethz.ch/personal/michahel/MTB/kirgis/kirgis.htm>



Source: http://3.bp.blogspot.com/_ik7T0xGbvSM/Rrsz-qmb7_I/AAAAAAAAACHc/BuaY8r2aR5k/s400/Kyrgyz%2Bpeople2.jpg



Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy_of_Kyrgyzstan



Source: <http://www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?t=387085>

Days of Refugee Migrants

An update on Malaysia Myanmar Ministry

Jimmy Chok

A Recap of “Mission At Our Doorsteps”

John 2:4-6

“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.”

John 9:4

“We have to do the works of Him who sent me: the night comes when no work may be done.”

At the Pentecost, many nationalities, many ethnic groups, many people of different languages and dialects, heard the Gospel! People and language barriers were broken! Such is the work of the Holy Spirit from the very beginning!

Today, by God’s mercy, we see yet again a surge to be aligned to The Work and the surf of The Holy Spirit! The migrant presence in our midst is in a way akin to The Pentecostal situation and we call it “Mission at our Doorsteps”!

Our attention is being drawn to DIASPORA MISSION as follows:

1. Scriptures

The Great Commandment

" Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself. "

Matt 22: 37-39

The Great Commission –

" All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of age."

Matt 28: 18-20

Both are a pair of legs of The Church! One without the other cannot be whole!

2. Discovering the Mission of God

(a) “Diaspora” means “Dispersion” or “Scattered”. Apart from the aborigines of Malaysia, the rest of us are actually the diaspora.

(b) One major reality affecting Christian mission today is the global diaspora of peoples. That is, people on the move through immigration (for work or study) or displacement because of war or extreme poverty.

In our increasingly shrinking, globalized world, some such as international business people or students are "winning", while others (refugees, displaced peoples) are just trying to survive.

It is pertinent to consider how these realities impact our calling to “make disciples of all nations” here and now.

3. “Mission” means “Mission at our Doorsteps”

Now, the Definition of Mission is: “Fulfilling The Great Commission by practicing diaspora missions locally with global significance.”

4. Opportunities and Challenges of “Mission at our Doorsteps”

Opportunities

Golden opportunity for cross-cultural evangelism
Golden opportunity for diaspora mission

Challenges

- (a) Awareness of Opportunities:
To reach-out, interact with, serve and love
- (b) Breaking out of our “shell”:
BEING INCLUSIVE, NOT EXCLUSIVE
- (c) Overcoming our Preconceived Notion of How Mission is done:

Global + Local = "Glocal"
Genuinely Relational

Latest from MMM Mission Field

Myanmar Chin Refugees at a Crossroad

Turning to the Myanmar Congregations whom MMM has served over the last 10 years, the following points highlight the challenging situation being faced:

UNHCR Policy on Refugees

Over the recent year, the refugee situation in Europe has overtaken the focus on Myanmar Chin Refugee and much support resources have been diverted away. For MMM, this aspect has impacted the Myanmar Refugee Children School 3 and 5 which we operate in conjunction with NGO Shelter (Home for Children). The allowances for teachers have since late last year been withdrawn.

Myanmar General Election

We are told that last year's General Election has yielded good results for Myanmar minority tribal groups. According to international news and that from UNHCR, the operation of the new Myanmar Government has since been very encouraging. As a result, Chin Refugee Resettlement in 3rd countries has virtually stopped for those not already in the pipeline. So, for the many thousands of Chin Refugees on Malaysian shores, the search for a "new home" has to start all over again! This situation presents many challenges, including emotional, spiritual, and of course, social and financial burdens!

Refugees Returning to Myanmar:

With the hope of resettlement dwindling, the hard decision to return to Myanmar may be inevitable (although, it is suspected, most may try to stay here as long as possible to earn few more Ringgit.) Other than having to adjust emotionally and spiritually, the next big burden would be financial. Previously, on fleeing Myanmar and choosing to be refugees, all assets were disposed of. Now, returning to Myanmar will mean having to start from zero! Few members of our Myanmar Congregations and a School-5 teacher have returned to Myanmar over the last few months. The thought of them facing a lot of challenges and hardship to rebuild

livelihood (let alone Churches and Ministries), can be heart wrenching!

A hundred years ago, our fathers were migrants too and, by the Grace of God, built a home that we have inherited today. We ought to be thankful and seek to bless others in their hours of need, even as part of DIASPORA MISSION!

Sports Evangelism

In Q4, 2015, Shah Alam Gospel Chapel (within the scope of IBAYD) has stepped up to practically help the Myanmar Christian Assembly to embark on Sports Evangelism with similar format as the COPA-IBA. The Myanmar congregation in Kepong has started playing Captain Ball together with some local Malaysian friends. Much help is needed from local Assemblies to motivate and facilitate the launch of this reach out effort in 2016!

It is our prayer that through Sports Evangelism, many Myanmar migrant workers will be reached before they return to their home country.



Learning to play Captain Ball with brethren of Shah Alam Gospel Chapel. Oct 2015 (Shah Alam)



Myanmar Brethren at the burial of late Bro Choi Yaw who left behind a young family. April 2016 (Seremban)



Source: Google Map

Please direct any enquiries to:
Jimmy Chok (Chairman, MMM Board)
at jchokkh@gmail.com or call +6012 3078 117

For participation in the Ministry financially, these are the relevant details:

Bank: Public Bank Bhd

Account No. 3181 9349 03

Account Name: Malaysia Myanmar Ministry

Sports Evangelism - COPA IBA

Dexter Ng



Copa IBA is a sport tournament that has blessed many participating assemblies and personal lives since its inception on July 10th, Saturday, 1999, at the Rubber Research Institute, Sungei Buloh, Selangor. Since then it has grown from strength to strength.

Copa means Trophy or Cup in Spanish. IBA is an acronym for Inter-Brethren Assemblies (Youth Development). The sports industry and its related activities is valued at about

RM 248 billion in 2015. This is a huge sum of money. One wonders what is it in sports that governments, advertisers,

organisations, etc. are so willing to invest so much of their resources, time and energy? Is there something they know that we Christians don't? Do we believers know what they are thinking? Should not we as Christians be "... as wise as serpents..."?



Sports do what other concerns and enterprises often find difficult doing. It is a universal language that build bridges and tears down barriers. It is a cultural phenomenon that provides unique access to all people. For the church, it means sports is a strategic vehicle for evangelism across diverse demography.

Sports has the ability to interest people. It has the power to cause people to congregate and through this, sports can position one's products, messages or whatever one has to offer to one's audience. In other words, sports is where people who need the Lord can be accessed. And lost souls can relate to sports as a neutral activity and hence it is a good platform for the Gospel.

Copa IBA embraces the spirit of the Great Commission (Matthew 28: 19, 20) - "Go therefore ... ", the last words of our Lord Jesus before He ascended to heaven (Acts 1:8) - "... and you shall be witnesses to Me..." and Jesus calls His first disciples (Matthew 4: 19) - ... I will make you fishers of men."

The recently concluded Copa IBA 2016 was her biggest ever with 92 teams from 26 assemblies across Malaysia.



The venue, Real Sports Arena, was packed with over 1300 participants and spectators. The Gospel was preached, with some having indicated their decision to accept Christ and many others possibly hearing the Gospel for the first time.

But here's the challenge. Youth today is not the same as the youth of yesteryears. Technological advancements have seen their activities and interests shifted from being more outdoor to more individualized indoor virtual platforms on their mobile phones and computers. These pose challenges to assemblies' youth groups in their approach towards evangelism via sports. The 'fishes' are increasing hidden, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to reach them.

However, IBAYD's statistics have shown that with the right approach, some assemblies have grown and have integrated sports into their youth programmes, intentionally. Furthermore, the participation and attendance at Copa IBA has doubled since 2 years ago, and tripled since 5 years back. Through God's guidance, some assemblies are affirming sports as their biggest source of outreach to youths.

Here's some brief tips on how to get sports evangelism started in your local assembly.

Gather your youth for a casual sport, say, captain ball. A nice captain ball game will require 10-12 people but it doesn't matter if you don't have the numbers yet. (Shah Alam Gospel Centre started with 3 persons). Start from where you are and at the same time encourage everyone to bring one other friend to the game. A good time to kick-start playing captain ball would be in 4 or 5 months before Copa IBA@July every year.

In time, one may organise a mini captain ball tournament. Divide your own church youth into groups of 3-4 people per team. Thereafter, get them to form a team of 10

players from among their unchurched friends to participate in the tournament. If you have 5-6 teams participating, you would have doubled the numbers.

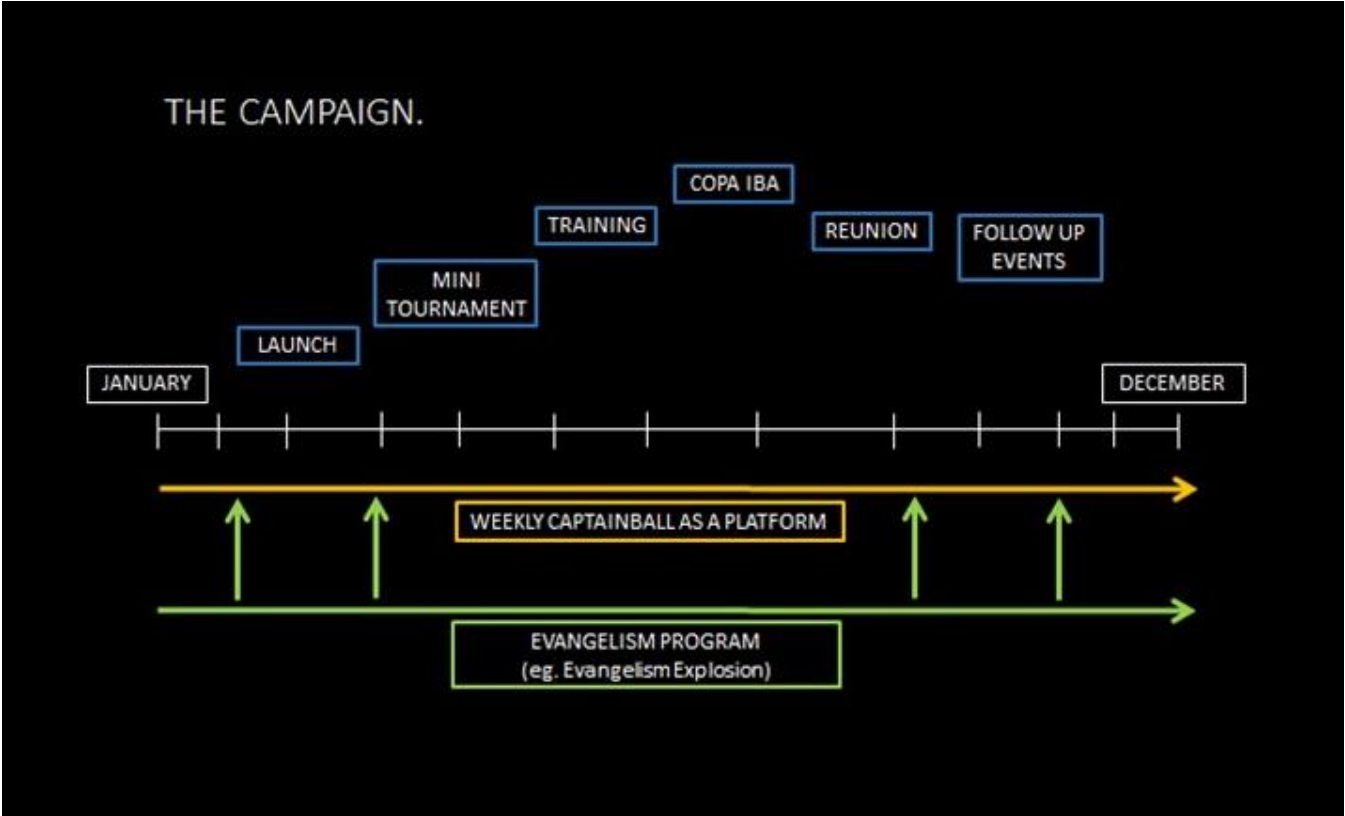
After the tournament, decide to join Copa IBA. Get team-members to continue playing, practice and train for the tournament. Along the way, stronger bonds of friendship and fellowship would have been formed among church players and their non-Christians friends. This provides invaluable opportunities for your assembly youth to reach out for the sake of the Gospel.

In essence, Copa IBA is an 'excuse' where youth from local assemblies are 'positively-forced' to reach out and connect to their unbelieving friends if they wish to participate in the tournament. Other requirement is to

have a certain quota of non-Christians in a team. So, sports is intentionally used as a tool of evangelism. Leadership plays an important role in the development of sports evangelism in a local assembly. There are questions of selling the vision, philosophy of ministry, facilities, finances, building of ministry team, etc, to consider and implement.

To God be the praise and glory

We are most willing to be of assistance to local assemblies on how to start a sport evangelism programme for the unchurched. We can be contacted at 012-2035112 (Dexter) or 012-5880565.



Looking back over the last 6 years of my involvement in this ministry, I can see moments when we (those in Pan Malaysia OA (Orang Asli) Mission committee) struggled, faced challenges and discouragements, and felt that the work in some areas are not growing. And I can also see moments when we pushed forward and stood up for the vision God had given us. Those are the moments when growth happened. Thinking through, just like many ministries and missions, we all face our many ups and downs. Serving the Lord wherever He calls us brings with it much joy and challenges. I pause to think - "What is it that keeps me going? What is it that will keep me going for many years from now?" As the saying goes, the heart of the matter is the matter of the heart. So I will simply put 3 things relating to the matters of my heart:

1. My heart's desire is for many OA to cherish the beauty of the glory of the Lord.
2. My heart's desire is for many in urban churches to appreciate the uniqueness of the OA people.
3. My heart's desire to leave a legacy that will outlast my life

My motivation

1. My heart's desire is for many OA to cherish the beauty of the glory of the Lord.

Jn 1:14 - And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

It has always been my desire for the OA to see, savor and shine in His glory. When they see His glory, they see the truth, beauty and value of what they really are in Jesus Christ. And when they see the beauty of Lord Jesus Christ, the OA will savor, treasure, cherish, admire and prize His true worth.

What happen when they see Him and savor Him? They become what they see. They become like what they treasure enough, to spend time focusing on Him.

2 Corinthians 3:18 says, " But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Together with the OA leaders, we will rise and shine in order for OA communities to see and savor the Lord.

2. My heart's desire is for many in urban churches to appreciate the uniqueness of the OA people

The OA are the original settlers and oldest inhabitants in the peninsula. They are distinct groups with their own unique identity, languages, cultures, practices, governance and all else that makes them who they are.

They want to enjoy the same rights as all other citizens of Malaysia without discrimination. They want to be regarded as full and equal human beings. They want to enjoy their rights to the lands and resources that they have traditionally owned, occupied and used.

We believe that to reach out to the OA, we must through our own limited ways help the OA to be more organized, united, educated and empowered. We believe that we must have the perseverance to learn more about their cultures, practices, languages, in short, their 'OA-ness'. When we know more about them and put our hands in helping them, we will love them more and would want to embrace them as God's people. You will discover to your amazement their uniqueness as God's children.

3. My heart's desire to leave a legacy that will outlast my life.

What we offer to God is an expression of who we are and what we value most in life. Each person has an opportunity to do something that may be more spiritually significant than anything else we do this year. That is to come before God, the center of our worship and devotion, break ourselves open—our time, talents, treasure and trust...our best...and pour them out for Him for the sake of His kingdom and His church! Serve and live to its fullest and to His glory!

That's the legacy I want to leave behind to the OA. I want the OA to be proud of their identity in the country. I want the OA to be proud of their spiritual heritage and blessings in the Lord and safeguard their faith. I want the OA to be confident and bold to reach out to their communities and be more independent.

*O LORD our God, masters besides You have had dominion over us;
But by You only we make mention of Your name. Isa. 26:13 NKJV*

Reaching & Enriching OA

PMOAM is in a mission to spread the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ to the OA. Our mission is to share Christ and to love the OA communities in every way we can. It's what we're passionate about, and it defines who we are.

PMOAM is inspired by a belief that we can make a difference to the OA. That's why we do what we do. Even if it takes many generations to realize it, we achieve much more for OA by having this inspirational vision. We make a real difference to OA across the country, helping them to transform their lives. We reach out to the OA, touching their world and living in their world.

We are concentrating our limited resources to make the greatest possible impact whilst effectively reaching out to the most vulnerable groups in Peninsula Malaysia.

Why the need to have a new vision?

When facing many challenges, we may moan, groan, complain and cry. We complain when we see more of them convert to another religion that is foreign to us and we claim they use unfair means or the OA are naïve. We see the OA losing their native lands & we ask why they are so gullible. We see young children die young and we blame their parents. We see their children stop going to school because they could not understand what the teachers are doing. We see their distrust of middlemen that do business with them. And we see all this around us and say that nothing can be done. Or we can have a positive agenda.

We at PMOAM believe we cannot help the OA by ourselves. The OA must help themselves. At the same time, we believe that they need assistance to help themselves. That is why we work together with SIOA (Sidang Injil OA) in effecting change. We must be a catalyst for change, working with others and through others.

That's why we come up with a new and simplified vision – Reaching & Enriching OA.

Our new vision focuses on ways to make the difference and prioritizes what need to be done. It also places even more emphasis on passing on what we learn to others to create much bigger spiritual & social change. We believe that this vision will resonate in all the assemblies and we will work together making the most and greatest change possible with limited resources.

The OA do not just want to believe in the Lord for salvation. For PMOAM, "Enriching Lives" means helping them to know what they could do, how they could live, how their communities and future generations could be impacted with the Lord at the center of their lives. For us in PMOAM, it's a privilege that the Lord has entrusted this responsibility and it's really a good feeling that the Lord could use us to enrich lives and teach them, to connect with the OA and to make a difference in their lives.

The Challenge

Is there anything impossible with God? No. Are all things possible? Yes. So, let us begin to see the invisible and believe the unbelievable.

Is the light getting brighter or dimmer? Thank God, in many parts of the forest, the light is getting brighter.

We are one team and believe in brothers and sisters combining gifts, skills and experience collaborating together in every area of our work in order to create positive change for OA.

Without our supporters, many of our activities wouldn't be possible. Many assemblies partner with SIOA in assisting the work. Many individuals tirelessly provide English tuition, provide medical care to the mothers, to the olds and young children. Others make a difference raising funds and sacrificially giving to cover the allowances of OA workers. Many go often to visit the OA, helping in Sunday school, equipping the teachers and comforting the sick. The enormous range of skills, experience and expertise, that the volunteers and helpers bring makes a lot of difference to the work.

We are developing and learning from one another to shape our work. We encourage the enthusiasm and ambition of our volunteers so that, together, we can create lasting and eternal change for the OA communities.

And they sang a new song, saying:
*"You are worthy to take the scroll,
And to open its seals;
For You were slain,
And have redeemed us to God by Your blood
Out of every **tribe and tongue and people and nation**,
And have made us kings and priests to our God;
And we shall reign on the earth."* Rev. 5:9-10 NKJV

What do we have to lose? We are determined not to miss opportunities to bring more people into His family!

If you would like to support this mission, you can deposit directly to "Pan Malaysia OA Mission" Public Bank Bhd Acct no 3192916101, Bandar Puchong Jaya branch,

Selangor, Malaysia and email the advice to pmoam1@gmail.com or whatsapps to +60143386141.



9th Pan Malaysia OA Mission Conference

Date : 29 October 2016 (Saturday)

Time : 8.45am - 4.00pm

Venue : Petaling Jaya Gospel Hall

PMOAM SIDA

Keistimewaan Orang Asli Sebagai Anak-Anak Tuhan The Uniqueness of Orang Asli as God's Children

The poster features a green background with a central white circle containing the text "Keistimewaan Orang Asli Sebagai Anak-Anak Tuhan The Uniqueness of Orang Asli as God's Children". Surrounding this central circle are several smaller circular images showing various people, including children and adults, in different settings.



About the Conference

The theme for this year's conference is "Keistimewaan Orang Asli sebagai anak-anak Tuhan" (The Uniqueness of Orang Asli as God's Children). The objectives of this year's conference are:

- 1. For the Orang Asli**
 - To encourage them to be proud of their identity as OA in Malaysia
 - To highlight their spiritual heritage & blessings in Christ & to pass these to the next generations & their communities
 - To encourage greater participation & involvement
 - To provide opportunity for them to meet those who support the mission
- 2. For our partners, supporters & fellow believers**
 - To interact with the OA & to understand them better
 - To see the marvellous work the Lord is doing among the OA
 - To encourage them to continue supporting the work
 - To discuss on how they can better help as individual/assemblies

This year's conference is different from the previous 8 conferences in that the bulk of the conference is conducted by the OA themselves. You will hear first hand testimonies of their faith in the Lord. You will be mesmerized by their traditional musical instruments and unique presentations. Let us stand together with the OA as they rise and shine as God's children. Come & learn more about our very own indigenous people of Peninsula Malaysia. Come & witness the marvellous things the Lord is doing in their midst. Come & worship together with the OA as one in the Lord. We believe this is an experience you will never forget.

Registration details

You can register for the conference by sending an email to us at pmoam1@gmail.com, whatsapps to 014-338 6141 or fax to 03-8065 3466 providing us with the following details:

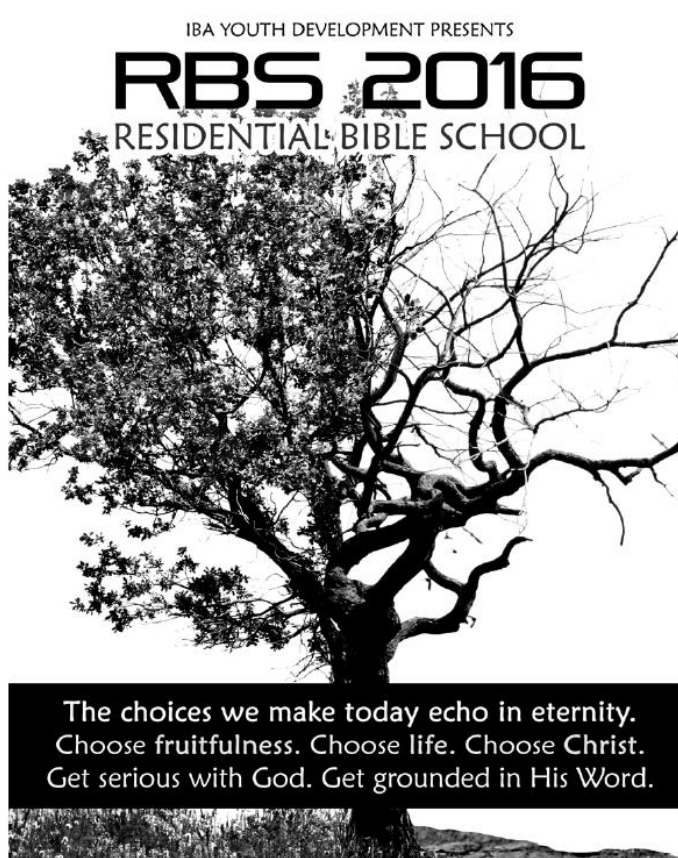
- 1. Name :** _____
Mobile : _____
Email : _____
Assembly/Church : _____
- 2. Name :** _____
Mobile : _____
Email : _____
Assembly/Church : _____

Registration is free. An offering bag will be passed around that day.
 Closing Date: 30th September 2016

For further information, kindly contact : Ong Hock Chye (012-222 1762), William Yeong (013-368 7411) or Chris Toy (012-396 2232)

YOUTH

What RBS meant to me.



RBS 2016 has helped me see a lot about myself that I didn't previously see. I feel that God is slowly peeling off the masks that I put on and He wants to deal with the "real me". It's the beginning of the process of finding my identity in Christ.

Joshua Law Zhu Jun, Full Gospel Assembly Kuala Lumpur

It has been a journey of discovering God personally all over again, and as I've found Him, I realize I still have so much to discover, especially through His Word. I've also learned that growing in faith leads to a greater love for the people around me. Faith only grows when I'm grounded in the Bible and is demonstrated through actions to the community around me.

Chua Jing Yong, Subang Jaya Gospel Centre

RBS has made me realize that I really need to find a specific time and place every day to spend personal moments with God. I have grown so much in knowledge, wisdom and most importantly, in spirit. God has also blessed me with good Christian friends who will keep me accountable in my journey with Christ.

Timothy Ngiam Tien Yi, Revival Centre Kuala Lumpur

RBS is a turning point in my life. God has not been personal to me before this. God is my Abba Father who will go all out for me; He knew me before I was even born. He loves me. God also placed 47 other students and new family members in my life, and I thank God for them.

Nicholas Leong Kah Weng, Shah Alam Gospel Centre

A well of information and experiences which never dry up, to help prepare us to be mature Christians. An examination room where I tested and questioned myself. An army barracks to prepare me for spiritual warfare and constant vigilance! An opportunity to serve and glorify God's name. A place which opened my mind to more possibilities. A family of love, where our bond will never break. RBS means that and so much more to me. There's not enough room for all the words that I want to write about RBS!

Kuah Yi Hui, Subang Jaya Gospel Centre

RBS 2016 has allowed me to experience God in many different ways. It was a journey of discovery about myself and God. RBS also gave me friends and memories that I will keep and cherish for a long time. I wouldn't undo anything from my RBS experience. RBS FTW! :)

Sarah Kwai Cheng Yi, Subang Jaya Gospel Centre



An eye-opener. A place where I was really able to reflect on myself as well as my faith in God. A place for me to step out of my comfort zone and also build me up in character. And finally, a place for me to find an accountability partner that will run this race faithfully with me.

Derrick Ng Hon Fung, Shah Alam Gospel Centre

RBS has provided me with people I can go to for advice and help. I'm not naturally a people person, but as I was in a community here, I had to improve my communication and this has helped me a lot. RBS has also helped me get closer to God and taught me lots of things about God and my life that I've never considered. Hearing how God works in others' lives comforts, prompts and encourages me to reflect on my own life. Basically, RBS is a community of people I can turn to who believe in God and are like me: growing in faith.

Rachel Chuah Hui Beng, Petaling Jaya Gospel Hall



Through RBS, God has really taught me not to find confidence in myself, but to find confidence in Him alone. Through that, I learnt to allow and avail myself to be used by the Lord in situations He has called me to be in. I also grew a deeper love and appreciation for God's Word and realised how important it is to develop a good habit in reading His Word daily.

Rachel Ho Kitt Yeng, Shah Alam Gospel Centre

A training ground to break me, mould me and shape me to become the person that God wants me to be (alongside my other RBS comrades!). A fire-starter that sparked various passions and desires for God in different ways. A stepping stone to unveil my inner-self and be vulnerable before God, to lay down my burdens and sins at His feet. A fresh opportunity for me to choose Christ.

Oh Hui Ling, Setapak Gospel Centre

I found out what it's like to know God instead of just knowing about God.

Terrence Chong Wern Yew, Shah Alam Gospel Centre

Through RBS, God has showed me the importance of working together with others from the household of faith as the Body of Christ. To love one another as Christ the Lord first loved us by sacrificing His own life. For God desires unity in the church and love is our testimony to the world before us.

Joshua Ng Jin Ho, Kledang Community Chapel

RBS has been a platform where God really revealed Himself to me, opening my eyes to see things I wouldn't have normally seen. Through the many different and unique experiences I had in RBS, He also helped me mature mentally, emotionally and spiritually. God was very real to me here at RBS.

Sean Lor, KL Wesley Methodist Church

RBS has been a great journey for me. I can really see God at work in my life and the plans He has for me. I feel my heart being remoulded by the Potter once again and I'm ready to surrender everything according to His will, although it can be challenging sometimes.

Olivia Dania Gabriel, Metro Tabernacle

RBS has changed me as a person by making me more forgiving, loving, confident and self-disciplined. Through RBS, I've regained my faith in God and rebuilt my relationship with Him - which was what I was looking for before I came to RBS.

Cheryl Law Qian Tong, Melawati Gospel Centre



A turning point in my relationship with God. I got to know Him more as a father, and not just as a higher being. I also realized that all my trials brought me closer to Him eventually. God works mysteriously but also beautifully. RBS FTW!

Esther Yap Li-Huei, SS Gospel Centre

RBS has grown the desire within me to equip myself using the Word of God. It has given me a chance to try out many new ways of serving God and find out my strengths and weaknesses. RBS also reminded me of how God has been faithful to me. I've learnt to trust in God's plans for me and that He will give me strength and guidance when I'm rooted in His Word.

Joey Chan Bee Yee, Shah Alam Gospel Centre

RBS meant a lot to me; it changed my life! I have put aside many of my bad habits and I'm able to see God's work in

me, shaping me into the person I should be. I'm grateful that God has given me friends who are loving and will keep me accountable, and also for giving me great classes to learn more about God. My hunger for Him is stronger now. Thank God for that!

Glen Johnson Taylor, Grace Chapel Luyang

The RBS experience cannot be expressed through mere words. God shaped, guided, healed and touched me. When I compare day one and now, I can see that I've changed a lot; changes that God pushed me to make and needed to happen. God has touched me through RBS. It is my first step among many to continue walking through this odd thing called "life" with God.

Jamie Yong Ming Wei, Subang Jaya Gospel Centre



RBS has meant so much to me. It has taught me things about myself that I've never known. It has redefined my passions and interests. It has really encouraged me and pushed the boundaries of my comfort zone. I have done so many things that I never would have planned on doing in a million years. RBS has also given me the opportunity to meet and be friends with so many amazing people!

Kimberly Ching Kit Lyn, Glad Tidings

I am now way more dependent on God, as well as my brothers and sisters in Christ. I learnt that my Christian brothers and sisters are worth relying on and learning experiences from. Finally, I now know that God made me special, just like He did everyone else.

Benedict Chin Wen Leang, Grace Chapel Luyang

RBS has stirred up my passion for various aspects of Christianity and has brought my focus back to God alone.

Adrian Ong Soo Loke, Temerloh Gospel Chapel

A turning point; though I still struggle, I just really hope and pray that the time I spent with God here at RBS is not wasted and not in vain.

Max Low Qi En, Gospel Hall Kuala Lumpur

Who can say if I've been changed for the better? But because I knew you, I have been changed for good. These lyrics from the musical Wicked reflect my own RBS experience. I do believe I have been changed for the better, by His love.

Miriam Hew Shi En, Petaling Jaya Gospel Hall

RBS has changed me inwardly and helped realign my heart back to God. It has made me learn from my past life and I've discovered gifts and abilities that I never knew I had. I have new experiences, from being a leader to being a servant. With the community and friends I have made, I have been assured that I'm not alone with my struggles and that I can give everything to God.

Aaron Chew Soong Ern, Setapak Gospel Centre

Over the course of RBS, I've learnt a lot about God and myself. I've built relationships with new friends that I pray will last forever. I hope I'll be able to continue to do what RBS has taught me and be a better Christian. RBS FTW!

Zachary Devan, Agape Chapel

It's been an out-of-this-world experience. I feel so much closer to God and my friends here. Everyone has taught me so much and opened up to each other. I'm so glad I made the decision to come here - no regrets! RBS is a turning point in my life and I am determined to follow this new path.

Joel Mark Marcus, Grace Chapel Luyang

RBS helped me grow in my spiritual life and draw me closer to God. I learnt a lot of things about Christianity that I didn't know before. It is an important school, and I recommend it for every believer!

Vivian Tye Wen Wei, Temerloh Gospel Chapel

RBS has been another stepping stone for me to become a better and more mature Christian. I also learnt how to trust God and step out of my comfort zone. It also allowed me to discover my spiritual gifts and weaknesses. I made many great friends and experiences that I will cherish. Finally, I thank God for giving me this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Wong Kit Sern, Petaling Jaya Gospel Hall

It has been a truly amazing experience. I met some pretty amazing people and I thank God for all that He has done. RBS FTW!

Elaine Sharmila a/p Janarthnam, Port Klang Gospel Hall

It really helped me step out of my comfort zone and has been a great experience. I learnt more and grew deeper in my relationship with God. I also learned that here in RBS, I don't only have friends, but I also have a family! I

also learned to eat vegetables. RBS FTW!

Shermann Jit Singh, Bethany Life

RBS 2016 has honestly been the best experience of my life. There's far too much that has happened for me to summarize here, but I will say that it has made me see the world with new eyes. I've grown and learnt so much over these five weeks and even though there were difficult and painful times, those were the moments where I grew the most and I have no regrets at all coming here. I'm a lot prouder of the person I am now and I'm eager to re-enter the world as a new and improved Joyce Phung version 2.0!

Joyce Phung Si Qi, Petaling Jaya Evangelical Free Church

RBS 2016 has shaped and moulded me in ways I never could have imagined. My thinking and life has been turned upside-down. Truly, God has baffled me.

Calan Moy Ka-Shing, Bandar Sunway Gospel Centre



RBS has been a place where I not only learned more about God and fellowshiped with Him, but also a place where I've been able to feel accepted and be myself without fear of being judged. RBS has also been where I've finally been able to share my struggles and make strong friendships. It has been a great experience living with others in a giant school (big sleepover!). I managed to step out of my comfort zone, had a lot of firsts and even gained a new family. Thanks for the experiences guys!

Gloria Cheah Phaik Hui, Setia Alam Community Church

An experience that taught me to take God seriously in my life by trusting and obeying Him each and every day.

Daniel Cho Zhen Ming, Gospel Hall Kuala Lumpur

In the past, I have often left Christian camps on fire for God, only to find that fire dying out quickly in a matter of weeks - just like a sparkler. However, RBS has lit a new candle in me that shines bright and strong. Now, I must work hard to not let the fire get blown out, but keep it burning with passion and compassion for God and others.

Emily Tan Hui-Ping, Subang Jaya Gospel Centre

Religion became a relationship. Strangers became family. The Word of God became alive. RBS has taught me to press on towards the goal for which God has called me in Christ Jesus.

Jessie Chong Tze Mei, Gospel Hall Kuala Lumpur



RBS 2016 has revealed to me that despite being a person with many masks and one who has committed many sins, God stills loves me and He longs for me to go back to His arms and cast off all the things that hinder my relationship with Him and follow Him. After deciding to leave my past behind and to focus on rebuilding a new life with Him, He certainly has helped me reshape my life through the classes and testimonies of my friends and teachers. God speaks to us in mysterious ways, but despite this, I will always remember one thing: God loves me - and this lesson is what I will treasure most from RBS 2016.

Timothy Low Keng Hau, Gospel Hall Kuala Lumpur

Without any handphones or other electronic devices, RBS was a place where I improved my relationship with God. Five and a half weeks of school made me miss my family and friends a lot, which made me realise how important they are in my life. It also made me want to preach the gospel to them. Finally, RBS is a place where my spirit is on fire again. Although it is burning slowly, I know it will last longer.

Calvin Tan Kai Wen, Ipoh Chinese Methodist Church

God has shown me His love through the community of believers at RBS. I learnt that we are all to live together in love, and that love is not just about feelings - it is commitment. Love always protects, trusts, hopes and perseveres.

Mah Jee Hung, Bandar Puchong Gospel Centre

A turning point in my faith. I discovered and experienced God deeper and in a more personal way through the people that I spoke to, classes and most evidently through the Word of God. The indelible memories, genuine friendships that were forged and the roller-coaster ride of emotions will be highlights and moments that I will cherish forever.

Julian Yon Ming Yee, Cheras Gospel Centre

RBS was like a train I couldn't miss! The journey with my new friends was more precious than silver or gold. It was self-revealing and God-revealing.

Reuben Lau We iChuan, PJ Evangelical Free Church

RBS meant a lot to me. I found a new and big family! Everyone comes from different backgrounds, and by God's grace, we were together at RBS. I learnt a lot in RBS, and I think what is most important is that after RBS, we keep each other accountable throughout the roller coaster ride of our lives.

Jocelyn Low Zi Yeng, SS Gospel Centre

RBS is a good training ground for Christians. It built my character up to be more Christ-like. I've also encountered God many times throughout the quiet devotional moments with Him. I also learnt that God is always good to everyone.

Jared Hoong Wei Yew, Ampang Gospel Centre

RBS taught me a lot about God's Word and how to serve Him. I thank God that He put me into this big family and let me know how important friendship is. RBS helped me improve my spiritual life and I learned to seek God first.

Wallace Yoong Jun Kai, Temerloh Gospel Chapel

RBS 2016 has meant many new changes to me. I know that because of God's work, I'm not the same person I was on day one. RBS has taught me that there's more to being a Christian than I would have ever imagined. Truly our God is an awesome God.

Matthew Lim Kun Ji, Sg. Way Christian Church

RBS 2016 has been meaningful to me because I never knew that RBS can be so much fun (I thought a school couldn't be fun!). Anyway, I'm really glad that I came. I found a big family that is easy to communicate with. I also realised that I have grown stronger in my walk with God.

Mah Wai Ming, Setapak Gospel Centre

It has been a fun and new experience – one that I may never experience again in the future!

Jeremy Tay Chien Lee, Bandar Puchong Gospel Centre

Assembly Leadership Conference 2017 FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT.

**DO NOT MISS THE TOPIC OF GREAT
RELEVANCE TO OUR TIMES:**

“Christian Witness in a Plural Society”

**at the Methodist Center, Port Dickson
Oct 2016**



FROM AROUND THE ASSEMBLIES

70th Anniversary. Gospel Hall Cameron Highlands.

In conjunction with its anniversary, GHCH produced a well put together book on its history. Below are extracts from the book



Mr. Chiang Kai Cheong

Chairman, Organizing Committee of 70th Anniversary Thanksgiving and Mission House Dedication Service

"70 years have passed and our merciful Heavenly Father and Holy God is still with us, helping and preserving this small Church"



Mr. Kodimani Kasimani

Elder of Gospel Hall Cameron Highlands

"The assembly that is here today, and what has been achieved so far, is a testament to the fact that the work done here is truly the Lord's work. Looking back, it would definitely have been a monumental challenge to start an assembly in the Highlands. Yet these brothers and sisters heard his voice and were compelled to move and overcome the challenge"



Mr. Koh Gim Lam

Chairman of Editorial Team

"GHCH is a small assembly. We have had very few major events that are worth putting into written records. But thanks be to God, it is from this little assembly that God raised up many workers and leaders serving not only in Malaysia but in other parts of the world"



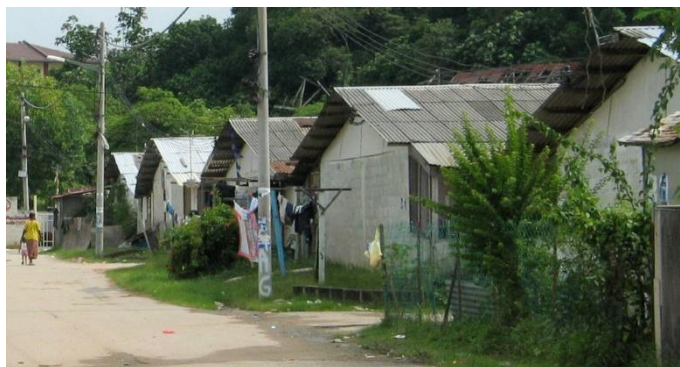
It was 27 years ago that one of our church members invited her house-help to send her children to our Sunday School in Cheras Gospel Centre (CGC). They came from a squatter area in an abandoned tin mine in Cheras. It wasn't long before they invited some friends, and these friends invited more friends, and over the years what began as a simple invitation grew into an outreach. Today about 160 Tamil children are enrolled in the Tamil Junior Sunday School and Tamil Youth.

In the early days of the work from 1988 to 1995, the children were integrated with the English Sunday School. Even among the earliest children who came, it was obvious they could not fit into a normal English Sunday School class, so they were taught in Malay. But it was always an uphill struggle, because the children were weak even in Malay. That they continued to come is a testament to the love and acceptance they received from their teachers.

In 1995, when one of the families moved to live in flats in the Balakong area, it was a difficult decision to continue bringing these few children to Sunday School. Apart from the distance, at the time, Balakong was considered a rural outskirts of KL with poor road access. But the children from this family were to be instrumental in inviting their school friends from a longhouse settlement in Balakong. The longhouse settlement was established to house squatter communities relocated during the building of a second north-south railway track. These longhouses were rows and rows of small, linked, wooden houses in a poorly accessible area. A very high density of Indian families were living in them, and through the invitation of friends, the numbers of Tamil children attending the Sunday School from this area grew to the extent that we had to hire a bus to bring them. A decision was made to have a separate Sunday School to meet the different needs of the Tamil and English-speaking students, and I was asked to lead the Tamil Sunday School.

My personal involvement with the Tamil children began with transporting them to Sunday School, while at the same time teaching an English Sunday School class. Perhaps, being young, and working in a laboratory located in an estate, I was viewed as a suitable person to navigate the difficult road conditions leading to their houses, at first using my car and later using our church elder's van. In those days, our church Sunday School had a good

practice of visiting children in their homes. I had to team up with other teachers to make visits, of which one, naturally, was the Tamil children's class teacher, as I was the only one who knew how to find their houses. Neither Yoke Lin nor I expected that we would later become a husband and wife team. When the Tamil children from the longhouses began to increase in number, I took it upon myself to try to recognise each one and keep a record of their names and addresses.



Long houses settlement in Balakong 2004

In 1996 our elder received news about a Tamil Youth Camp organised by the Tamil Brethren assemblies in Johor and Cameron Highlands. We decided to bring some older children to the camp, which was held in Cameron Highlands. There a brother from Batu Gajah took an interest in the children and the work we were doing among them in Cheras. Devid Asirwatham ("David"), who was called home to be with the Lord last year, also shared much about his personal experiences working with Tamil children and youth. He was so touched by the fact that non-Indian brothers and sisters in CGC were taking an initiative to reach out to less privileged Indian children that he offered to come to our church once in two weeks to help us teach them.

David's ministry among the children also extended to their homes. He would come on a Saturday and stay over with his sister who lived in KL so that he could also visit families with us. He not only made this pilgrimage every fortnight but also invited others he knew in Klang Valley churches. Ravi and Mary, Wilson and Rani, Mano and Pari, and Kumari came from Jalan Imbi Chapel (JIC) to help teach, and as more teachers came, David gradually reduced his visits to our church to monthly and began to commit more time to teaching Tamil children in the Sunday School in Bidor.



David from Batu Gajah Gospel Hall, who was instrumental in bringing others to CGC to teach in Tamil.

Many people contributed to the teaching of the Tamil children over the years. Kumari, with the support of her husband Ezra, has been the longest serving non-CGC teacher, who to this day still teaches and ministers in many ways. Wilson and Rani, who came from India, were also long-serving teachers till they moved to Australia. Rani was called home to be with the Lord two years ago. From a Sunday School, the Tamil work in CGC began to grow into an outreach to the community. Visitation was a very important part of this outreach. Through it, parents understood where their children were going and what they were learning. They developed a trust in the church and a relationship with church members. Through visitation we also began to understand the problems and needs of the families and tried to help them wherever we could. Parents could see that we had their genuine interests at heart and told friends about it. Without visitation, the Sunday School would not have grown or even sustained those who came.

When the number of new children coming to Sunday School from the longhouses was fast growing in 1996, we hired a second bus to bring them. At the same time, the local temple in the longhouses commenced classes for the children, but very few turned up. When they asked a few families why they didn't send their children for the classes, they replied that they were already attending Sunday School. Blaming the church for a low turnout, a few members of the temple committee boarded our buses and asked the children to come down. They threatened the drivers saying they would burn their buses if they came back. But as the empty buses left, many of the

children stopped the busses further down the road and boarded them again.

When it was reported what had happened, the church prayed communally and our teachers also met for special prayer. The temple committee members who threatened the drivers were also hostile towards us when we tried to settle the matter by negotiation. However, we said that we cannot stop helping these families because we have been their friends for about two years now. The next week I followed the bus alone wondering what would be the outcome. We had arranged with parents to bring the bus only as far as the entrance road to the houses. Much to my surprise, a parent flagged us down well ahead of the houses and boarded our bus. He had friends escort the bus on their motorcycles. At the entrance road some parents and their children were waiting to board the bus, with the temple committee looking on threateningly.



Wilson, Rani and Jason. Wilson and Rani from India helped for many years in teaching the children while Wilson was working in Malaysia

We put visitation on hold for a few months and then my wife and I returned to make quiet visits, parking in unusual places and reducing time spent outside homes. This crisis took a toll on the Sunday School and our outreach. One third of the children stopped coming. But with time, and as more parents spoke to those who threatened us, the problem subsided and most children gradually returned. To our surprise one day, the temple priest's nieces and nephews began coming to Sunday School. During a visit to their houses, we were asked to see the temple priest himself because his children did not have birth certificates. We offered to help. His children also started coming to Sunday School, and from then on we developed a relationship with him and his family, always wary of members of the committee who might oppose the church.

With the opposition behind us, we could concentrate on teaching and building up the children. Tuition classes were commenced in the afternoon after Sunday School, with lunch provided in between. This was done out of need because the families could not afford tuition and some of the children were not even literate at a late school-going age. Initially it was difficult to keep children coming beyond their primary school years. A youth meeting was begun with a small group of youth to help them feel they still belonged in the church. Since parents were often reluctant to send their girls after they reached puberty, a Girls Youth Fellowship was held once a month on a Saturday for those unable to attend the mixed group on Sunday. But as the years went by, the need for a separate fellowship for girls reduced. Most girls continued in the Tamil Sunday School Youth Fellowship without objections from their parents, and the Girl's Youth Fellowship was discontinued. Perhaps trust had developed, or the girls were children of a younger and less traditional generation of parents. Bible Studies in the homes of parents were also held once a month and later replaced with a combination of meetings and evangelistic visitation to reach a wider number of people. Charles Linggam, a fulltime Tamil worker in Johor Baru has been the main person involved in ministering in the homes.



Kumari and Ezra from Jalan Imbi Chapel with children from Manchis. Kumari has been the longest serving teacher, and also helps in visitation.

Through the yearly Tamil youth camps, we were able to make contact with able camp teachers living in other parts of Malaysia. A local VBS was started with the help of

such teachers to cater for all ages of children. However, as the numbers of children attending began to grow too big for personal interaction, the camp was split into different age groups. Currently we conduct three camps: the Kids' Holiday Club is a three-day daily camp for young children ages 7-9 years, and the longer, stay-in Tamil Children's Camp caters to ages 10-13 years, while the Tamil Youth Camp, now organised by our church with the help of teachers from other churches, aims at young adults and older teens 14 years and above. Among the longest serving and most faithful teachers at the camps have been Charles Linggam, Anna and Martin (originally serving in Batu Gajah and now in Sungai Petani), and Suguna (Bandar Teknologi Gospel Centre, Kajang). For the last four years, we have brought in a VBS team from India each year, led by brother Vivek, to help minister to the students in some of the camps. They have brought much blessing to the students and fresh ideas for the teachers. Among the youth there are now a number who believe. Dinis, who was a nephew of the local temple priest in the longhouse area is one such believer who was baptised in 2012. One of our problems has been losing believing families and youth to other churches because we do not have a full Tamil church service. While it is our intention to commence a Tamil worship service in the future, we have to wait on the Lord for the right timing and able people who can lead this.

Besides sharing the gospel, teaching the Word and bringing up children and youth in the faith, the Tamil outreach has also been involved in trying to assist families with problems and needs. When we began this work, it was common for children to end schooling before finishing their primary education. Other children could not get into school because they lacked birth certificates. Such problems are now relatively rare among children in the Sunday School. This is partly because of the work of the church in counselling children and parents, supporting school bus fares where needed and sending little ones to preschool. In 2007, the church started the *Child Sponsorship and Relief Fund* to help provide medical and food aid to the neediest families, to support school education and to provide good preschool education to children from families who have difficulty to afford sending their children to a kindergarten. This fund was initially supported by our own church members, but in more recent years we have begun encouraging members of other churches to participate, as the needs have grown considerably. Today about 70 children are sponsored to preschool and about 40 children to school each year.

Preschool education has greatly helped increase literacy among the children.

Helping families obtain birth certificates for their children has also helped reduce schooling problems. Without a birth certificate, getting into school is nearly impossible. In some cases, a parents can't be traced, or more than one generation has no birth certificates. The quest to solve more complicated birth certificate problems such as these took us to other towns such as Klang, Tapah, Ipoh, Mentakab, Manchi and Kuala Pilah. As a result of these visits and the new contacts made in these towns, new outreaches were started in Kuala Pilah, Sungai Buloh, Kampar and Ipoh.



Kuala Pilah Children's Camp

In Kuala Pilah, once a year we have held a children's camp since 2010, and mission trips were also made once a year to visit families in their homes and bring provisions where needed, as well as share the gospel where there is opportunity. The camps were originally started with the help of Kumari, Rani and Wilson from JIC, and are now run mainly by Anna and Martin (Sungai Petani), Suguna, Geeta and Thiyagu (Kajang), and the families of Chandran and Sarah from Nilai Gospel Centre. Over the last 5 years we have made contact with more than 50 families. The camps are attended by 60-70 children of all ages, including teenagers. Some of the families we got to know in Kuala Pilah are very poor. We continue to help people with birth certificate problems in this town. To share the testimony of one mother who accepted Christ together with some of her grown up daughters, she said she had given all her husband's EPF withdrawals to people who promised to help her solve her family's birth certificate problems but let her down, and we on the other hand offered to help her without asking for anything. Now her family's birth certificate problems are solved, and she is

so happy, she said. Last year we ran similar camps for children in Kampar and Ipoh in partnership with Kampar Gospel Hall and Elim Gospel Hall, but conducted the VBS for just one day in each town.



The Sungai Buloh outreach began in mid 2014 after ministering to one family in this area that had schooling and birth certificate problems. Kumari and Suguna also made occasional visits with me to teach them songs and Bible lessons in their home. On one occasion when they were not in, we looked for them in another neighbourhood where they said they have relatives. Kumari and I were drawn to the presence of other eager and inquisitive children in this neighbourhood. This led to more home-based classes. On the Sunday evening after Christmas 2014, we organised a Christmas event to launch the first formal class in Sungai Buloh Gospel Hall, called GRACE School (for God Reaches All Children Everywhere). The hall was once a church for the leper colony and is now underutilised. In spite of rain, it was attended by over 30 children and several parents. The classes continue to be held once a month and has a faithful following of about 45 students. The two and a half hour programme comprises singing, memorising scripture, a scripture lesson, a tea break and some tuition. Those who have been helping in this ministry are Suguna, Geeta, Thiyagu, Esther Hooi (KGC), Kumari (JIC), Shirley Chin, Samantha Yap (CGC) and my wife and I.

The Tamil community outreach of CGC requires a lot of resources. Besides manpower, it also costs the church a lot to bring the children to Sunday School in two big busses, one small bus, and two vans, as well to provide them with lunch and run camps. The costs of outreach in other towns add to this. While many missions are supported by multiple churches, the Tamil outreach of CGC is mainly supported by the local assembly that initiated it. However it has grown to the extent that it

requires the manpower and financial support of other churches. We have been grateful for the support of JIC and the Penang assemblies that have, on a regular basis or from time to time, provided gifts that help defray costs. Individuals in JIC and assemblies in Kajang, Batu Gajah, Muar, Nilai and Cameron Highlands have also provided teaching support. It is our hope that other churches will partner with us both logistically and financially in the future.

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Please email transaction details to Gene Long (gene.long@hotmail.com) and Laurence Kirton (l.g.kirton@gmail.com).



Laurence &
Yoke Lin

Christmas Street Party, Agape Chapel

Peter Tan

Let me begin by introducing you to Agape Chapel. Firstly, we are a community of Christians located in Section 6 of Kota Damansara, who believes in spreading God's love in Kota Damansara and beyond. In fact our tag line is: "We love because God loved us first!" So, in 2015 Christmas season we wanted to share with the community in a simple manner God's love as we celebrated Christmas.

Secondly we're all about people. Every person who walks through our doors is important to us. As a group of God's people we care about families in the community of Kota Damansara. That is why we run a number of community

events and classes especially for the community. We love doing it and this is why we exist!



Thirdly, we're all about relationships. We hope to cultivate and grow meaningful relationships between one another, as well as with the people around us as we are growing in our relationship with God. That's us in a nutshell!



In partnership with local community leaders which included, YB Sivarasa Rasiah our MP and YB Hajah Halimaton our ADUN and CPHM who supported us with their generous contributions and presence at this carnival, celebrating Christmas with us. Agape Chapel's Christmas Street Party at Section 6, Kota Damansara, was celebrated on 20 December 2015 (Sunday). Agape Chapel was established in this locality 13 years ago and had in the past, celebrated Christmas with street parties held on the parking lots along the shop lots at our vicinity.

We have maintained a good rapport with our neighbours who are primary small-scale business operators - running food and provision shops in our area. We as a church also run a Tuition Centre and a Children's Library to serve the community. The Christmas street parties provide an opportunity for us to engage with the community and foster a sense of belonging. Our hope is to encourage people to reconnect with one another and foster the spirit of goodwill as fellow Malaysians. Over 500 people from the community participated in our half-day festivities as we shared our love with them in the spirit of Christmas.

The Christmas Street Party had Food Stalls, Amusement Games, Jumble Sale, Family Events, Christmas Carolling and children's activities with competitions and clowns to encourage interaction in a fun atmosphere. The church involved the stores in the locality by catering from them the food and drinks provided during the street party. Our church members and their families provided the manpower and resources to make this a fun and fruitful time of celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ. As before, all of these were provided free to the community in the spirit of Christian generosity and love.

We thank God for giving us this privilege to share His love and the good news of peace on earth and goodwill to all man.

Port Klang Gospel Hall



Parents' Day Dinner Celebration

In conjunction with Parents' Day, the Assembly had a Dinner Celebration and Outreach on Saturday, 25th June 2016 at the Look Fook Moon restaurant in Klang. This was one of our outreach efforts to reach out to the parents of our Sunday School children, Tuition students, Youth Group, the Ladies/Kitchen Ministry, the Chinese Assembly which included our believers' parents and relatives and friends. We thank the Lord that more than 200 persons attended the occasion which included many non-Christian families and contacts we have invited.

The guest speaker was Bro. Lee Wee Min from The Focus on the Family Global who spoke on the "Ingredients of a Strong Family" and this was summed up with a gospel message with interpretation by Bro. Chai Seong Ing to

Mandarin. Prior to the message, there were presentation of items by our Sunday School children/Youth Group and also from our Chinese Assembly including a video round up of all our Assembly activities.

We solicit your prayers that the message given would bring seeking ones to our Lord and also for our next follow up programme to befriend and invite them to our Assembly meetings and activities.

We praise and thank the Lord for this opportunity open to us.

Vacation Bible School (VBS 2015)

The Sunday School held a Vacation Bible School (VBS) where 54 children attended a 3 day session in Port Klang Gospel Hall (PKGK) from 4th to 6th December 2015. The Theme was: “Weird Animals” – Where Jesus’ love is one-of-a-kind.

Most of those who attended are from non-Christian families and it was a good opportunity to share God’s love with the children. We also thank God for His guidance in the preparation, provision of all resource required to carry out the programme and also a good attendance from the parents on the Celebration Night where the gospel message was given by our Bro. Andrew Lim. Please pray for the salvation of parents and children that have heard the Gospel message.

It was a real privilege to serve the Lord alongside our fellow believers – young and old, who came forward joyfully to offer help in various tasks in the preparation for and during the VBS.

To our faithful and mighty God be all glory and praise.

A Community Service – Medical Talk

The Assembly had another outreach effort in the form of a Community – Medical Talk “Understanding Cancer” by Dr. Daniel Wong Wai Yan, a Consultant Oncologist & Radiotherapist, held on Saturday 9th July 2016 at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Soh Boon Khim in Taman Sri Andalas, Klang.

As this was a Community Service held in a house, special efforts were made to invite our relatives, friends and



ENGLISH TUITION CLASS



YOUTH GROUP



SUNDAY SCHOOL SPORT

neighbours for this talk which if held at our Church Hall, they may not find it comfortable to attend.

We thank the Lord about 50 persons mainly from non-Christian backgrounds from the community attended the special talk and Dr. Daniel Wong also gave a closing gospel message. Pray for the gospel message given that it will touch some searching hearts and bring them to Christ. We thank God for this opportunity given to us.

Burmah Road Gospel Hall

Colin Tan

How do we reach out to the lost?

Assemblies all over perennially ponder that question, and BRGH is no exception.

That question, however, has taken on an increasing urgency at home. Why? Because certain indicators suggest that things are not all OK. The Sunday morning attendance has improved, to be sure. But that's just one number; and there are other important ones to look at. In last year's *Diakonia* it was reported that eight believers were baptised in 2014. The 2015 number is not as encouraging. Clearly, we need to plant and water and *pray* that God would give us the desired increase.

Consider the word "pray" in the previous sentence. That's something all of us can improve on. The Lord Jesus Christ said: "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore *pray* the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest" (Matthew 9:37-38, emphasis added). If the Lord says "pray", then pray we must.

So what can be done to enhance an assembly's prayer life?

In its search for answers, BRGH is willing to learn from others. The very first BRGH Prayer Day is a case in point. It began with an observation: a few people saw that some assemblies had held prayer days and thought it a good thing. It was followed by contemplation: the leaders met and discussed the benefits of having such an event. It then ended with implementation: The Prayer Day was

eventually held on January 25 2016, and we praise and thank God it was well attended. What's more, several attendees offered suggestions for improvements (indeed, opportunities to learn abound!), and BRGH would adopt some. God willing, BRGH will hold its next Prayer Day on 29 October 2016, and one of its key foci will be on our year-end evangelistic efforts (e.g. the annual Christmas Song Service).

BRGH has also looked at history to find answers to the outreach question. One lesson we gleaned from the yesteryears: the distribution of tracts. Colloquially referred to as "tracting", it was a big thing in the 60s and 70s. Although BRGH has not wholly abandoned tracting, it has not done it in the way it was done in the past. Our seniors were more organised and they did it more frequently; and it is time we emulate them. BRGH had its first Tracting Day for 2016 on April 30. Tracts and informational packages were distributed to the homes, shops, and offices around BRGH. We thank the Lord for some success: a few first-timers attended our Daily Vacation Bible School because of the tracts/packages. God willing, BRGH will hold its next Tracting Day in December. The mission then is to distribute tracts and informational packages about our year-end evangelistic meetings/events.

Please continue to remember BRGH in prayer as we strive to serve our Master in a way that brings glory to Him.

Bukit Mertajam Gospel Centre

YL Khong

Bukit Mertajam Gospel Centre (BMGC) comprises about 30 believers, down from about 50 plus a decade ago. Currently the assembly occupies 2 adjacent double storey shop lots in the suburb of Sri Rambai, a short walk from the local market.

The second shop lot was a special provision from the Lord. It was purchased over 10 years ago through some unusual circumstances. Due to a major flood in Sri Rambai, a scheduled auction for the second shop lot was aborted, drove away the property agents who had intended to bid for the lot and the price was much reduced. After we acquired the second shop lot, the flood no longer occurs

due to mitigation measures taken by the local authorities. One marvels at the hand of the Lord.

As in most assemblies outside the main centres, BMGC loses its youth to assemblies in the bigger centres mainly in the Klang valley and Penang. Over the last decade, BMGC lost all its youth, about a dozen or so. The mechanism for the loss is almost the same for each individual, the youth leave home for study elsewhere and then settle down away from their hometown.

This obviously impacts our witness to the youth as it is evident that over the last five years, all those who came

to the Lord are between 70 and 85 years old. Visitations are conducted almost exclusively to people 60 and older.

This is hardly surprising given the average age of the congregation is approaching 60. As resources are diverted towards the care of the aging and aged, less becomes available to seek new grounds among the youths.



Holiday Children's Program December 2015

One other challenge faced by BMGC is the surrounding community uses mainly dialect (Hokkien) and Mandarin rather than English. So communication becomes an issue when we try to reach out.

Apart from the Lord's Supper, the assembly conducts a mid-week Bible Study and Prayer, a program for children under 13 called English Hour in lieu of Sunday School to try and cater for non-believers. We have the occasional special meetings and gatherings. Some of our children also join the Chinese assembly's Sunday School. Since there is no progression to a youth program from the English Hour, we generally lose the children after they finish primary school. A brother attempted to start some club activities using science and electronics as a vehicle to try to make it into a neighbourhood club this year. So far there is only one youth. There is clearly a need for capable workers to conduct youth work.

We organized a yearly Christmas open house which is well attended by the community usually about 100 people or so would turn up, many of them are friends and people familiar to the members of BMGC.

Our year end vacation children's program is well received with about 30 children attending but they generally do not continue with us when school reopens.



Visit to Orang Asli Work at Tapah with our non-Christian friends and also saints from Butterworth Gospel Hall

Realizing the need to reach out to the youth, we have been praying (and saving) for a youth worker and also got down to renovating one of the shop lot to make another foray into starting some youth activities. This will be in the form of a student drop-in centre where students from the neighbouring school can come to a comfortable (air-conditioned) environment equipped with computers, study tables, availability of light snacks and refreshments and shower facilities. We are trying to see if we can also link up with some State sponsor youth programs.

In this new ministry, the challenge of the lack of youth to reach out to youths and language barrier remain. However, we seek His grace as we move forward with the realization that for BMGC to be sustainable, we need to put some urgent focus on this work. We continually seek the Lord's wisdom and provision as we know the traditional approach to youth work does not work. So we need some breakthrough on what does work in our community. Also, the years catch on quickly with the current available members, so there is some urgency to see this through. This is indeed hard ground.

We hope you can pray with us particularly in the Lord's provision of workers. We have accumulate funds to support a youth worker for about three years. If the Lord is moving your heart to Bukit Mertajam to be involved in this work full time, please contact us via email: yl_khong@yahoo.com.



Christmas Open House 2015

The Lord started the Kids English Club on Saturday 1st Nov 2014, after we had prayed together for several months. Earlier the Lord had provided a bungalow as a place for the Club to meet. Since then we've been having some 25-30 primary school children attending each week. The objective is to help the children improve their English and also to share the gospel.

The program on Saturday begins at 9.30am. We had to provide transport for many of the children as the parents were unable to bring them. When the Club ends at 11.15am, they had to be taken home. We would begin with group singing of Christian songs, followed by a Bible lesson. The remainder of the time then is spent in classes according to the children's level of English. Overall, the children's grasp of English is rather poor.

Except for 2 families, the children are from non-believing homes. They had not heard about Jesus or a creator God! Indeed, "the harvest truly is plentiful" (Matt 9:23). It was exciting when one of the older ones started to ask about how from just 2 persons (Adam and Eve), we now have a world population of so many! He had also read a Chinese tract on the end times and started to ask questions!

We have a group of very willing laborers from different Penang assemblies who are already heavily committed to their home assemblies but had set aside Saturday to travel some 35-45mins to Balik Pulau to minister to these children. On several occasions, they had to miss the Kids' Club due to their commitments in their home assemblies, and we would be short-handed but the Lord always sees to it that we get necessary help or there would just be fewer kids!

Our sister, Ee Ling, had stepped out of secular employment and is giving English tuition on weekdays to some 14 children in different classes. The fees are very low and will be used to fund the year end English camp. As the Lord enables, the assemblies in Penang provide for Ee Ling's needs. The tuition kids are generally from the Kids' English Club but some have stopped coming on Saturday due to variety of reasons. We praise the Lord that we still have contact with them at the tuition class. Pray that there will be more coming to both the tuition and the Kids' English Club. Pray for Ee Ling as she not only teaches but she builds relationships with the parents.

Pray with us for the Lord's leading as we now consider how to meet the needs of those going into secondary school. They will begin to have extra-curricular school activities on Saturday. And the program will be too childish for them. The best time for the teen program would be Sunday morning. This would mean the workers will have to break bread at Balik Pulau instead of at their home assemblies.



Christmas Program 2015 with parents and grandparents!



Inter-Church Sports Carnival



For the past 7 years, the Brethren assemblies in the Klang Valley had participated in an inter-denominational sport event known as the Interchurch Sports Carnival (ICSC). ICSC was brought to life by 6 like-minded church leaders from different denominations as a platform for kindling Christian friendships beyond the walls of their respective churches.

ICSC's vision is "God's people from 'all churches with one mind and one voice to glorify God...' through ICSC (Romans 15:6)". Through sports fellowship, ICSC brings Christians from different denominations across all ages and background. Held annually since 2009, ICSC has grown from 6 churches participating in 6 events to 13 churches competing in 13 events in 2016. In 2016, over 1,000 participants and supporters came together over 3 weekends to battle for event medals and the overall champion trophy. The youngest participant on record was 9 years old and the oldest was aged 72. Over the years of ICSC, many have established Christian friendships with participants from other churches.

For the Brethren assemblies, we formed a team known as "combine Gospel Hall (cGH)". This team is unique because its players are drawn from various Brethren assemblies across Klang Valley as individual assemblies do not have the strength to participate in ICSC, whereas other churches gather their players from their individual churches. The arrangement for the Brethren assemblies poses special challenges with team communication and selection. The team captains and assistant captains therefore play very important role as link persons to update team members and get to get them to the right venues at the right time on the right dates. Through this,

the additional blessing for cGH is that there is now more cross-assembly interaction across all ages. In ICSC 2016, cGH team consist of members from 12 assemblies.

In 2015, cGH introduced our Brethren game, CAPTAIN BALL, to ICSC. Although captain ball has been played in the Brethren circle for many decades, this game is new to non-Brethren churches. We see captain ball gaining traction in ICSC with 6 churches participating in 2016. During the game, cGH team played their heart out, treasuring the opportunity to play competitive captain ball as the players no longer qualify to compete in COPA IBA.

Although the competitors sent teams of younger energetic players, the backing of many years of captain ball practice, cGH bagged the gold medal in this event.

cGH also emerged second runner-up in ICSC 2016, accumulating points being champions for table tennis, captain ball and badminton as well as second runner-up for basketball. In the past years, cGH had bagged medals for bowling and volleyball as well.





Volleyball

The games played at ICSC 2016 are basketball, netball, futsal, volleyball, international chess, Chinese chess, badminton, table tennis, bowling, golf, carom and captain ball. It is the ICSC committee's constant endeavour to create opportunities to remove age and physical barriers in the ICSC games. In futsal, there is an Under 12 category to encourage children to be part of ICSC. Veterans are given specific veteran categories in golf, badminton and

table tennis. In 2015, carom and chess was introduced in ICSC, and there were players who came in wheelchairs to participate!

For the cGH co-ordinator, it has been a challenge to assemble the team for each sport as players of each assembly has their own priorities in activities which clashes with ICSC. We wish to see more assembly members take ownership of cGH's participation in ICSC in the years to come.



Futsal Under 12

PITH 2016

A total of 170 delegates from 15 nationalities attended the 3rd PITH conference held at Yogyakarta from July 18-21, 2016. The theme "Ready Feet: Reaching the Unreached With the Good News" highlights the 2.8 billion people who have little or no access to the gospel. We do face a task unfinished. The church of Jesus Christ must rise up and consider how we are participating in bringing the Good News to every tribe and nation.



This year's PITH prioritized youth aged 30 and below. One of the plenaries was "reaching and mobilizing the next generation" as the youth in the assemblies are the ones to whom the baton of leadership will be passed. There was over 30 youth and the youngest was 16. For the first time, a Youth Forum was held to give the youth a voice

with regards to their participation in mission. Clearly, much remains to be done to develop their youthful potential.

The plenary sessions imparted key teachings—the Church sent into the world to reach the world (John 20.21), we go with faith and with heavenly vision (Heb 12.1, 11.16) and with perseverance in the face of failure, with a renovated heart to transform the world, not alone but in partnership with others in the harvest (Lk 5.18-19). The 7 workshops held were conducted by practitioners with rich hands-on experiences in various challenging unreached fields and many said they were impacted.

Another first for the conference was the use of practicums. Those below 30 experienced interfaith dialogue and relationship-building in a Peace Camp setting with our 'cousins'. Many others had live-in cross-cultural interaction with the locals in a Javanese village over 3 days. Our Lord Jesus commanded us to make disciples of all nations, thus delegates experienced for themselves the barriers and efforts needed to cross cultures.

Towards this end, prayer for the nations was held for 2 evenings. About 60% of the delegates indicated that they were praying for certain nations for the very first time. Indeed, to reach all nations, we must first know them and pray for them.

Representatives from Echoes of Service UK, Global Connections in Mission NZ and IBCM present added to the international flavour of our endeavour.

Some of the comments and feedback received:

The conference was very informative, stimulating and enlightening for someone who does not know the SE Asia region. Thank you it was very well done! – United Kingdom

The best sessions were outstanding – world class – New Zealand

This conference is very significant for me. A great wake-up call or I must say reminder for me to pursue more about mission – Philippines

So thankful for meeting our brethren and really hope for partnerships in prayers and works together to be blessing and love the nations – Indonesia

Truly empowering from beginning to end, keep shining for Jesus, even to the end of the earth – Malaysia

Eye opening, spiritually strengthening & cross fertilization – Hong Kong

Excellent conference, opened my eyes on the work our fellow partners are doing in the world. Hope to be back again! – Singapore

God willing, the next PITH conference will be in 2020.

SSGC East Malaysia Mission Trips (2015-2016)

Back in 2010 when Rumba Rani took up the leadership role in Sidang Injil Borneo (SIB) Sabah's Preschool Education Committee, she was well aware that the task of establishing pre-school education among the indigenous children of Sabah would be fraught with challenges. With poor awareness for basic education, lack of infrastructure & resources, the need to identify, train & support teachers, and challenges of strong influences of other faiths, the committee knew that they had their work cut out for them.

But they pushed ahead in response to God's call to 'Arise, cry out in the night, as the watches of the night begin; pour out your heart like water in the presence of the Lord. Lift up your hands to Him for the lives of your children, who faint from hunger at the head of every street.' (Lamentations 2:19)

Rumba reflects in amazement at the way God has richly provided and grown the pre-school education work. "It was 'a step at a time' with a faithful God whose ways are higher than our ways and whose thoughts are higher than our thoughts", she testifies. "With the number of kindergartens growing to 80 and as the Lord continues to supply the seeds, the ploughing and sowing continues."

Hundreds of children are being blessed with good education undergirded by Christian values and the gospel of Jesus Christ; committed teachers trained and assigned to the work; and much-needed resources continue to pour in through partnership with churches and Christian organizations. Rumba shares that there is no way that they would have gotten this far had it not been for God and His hand at work.



Crossing the suspension bridge towards Kg. Taburan Besar.

SS Gospel Centre (SSGC) has been privileged in the Lord to be able to partner with SIB Sabah in this area of pre-school education, one of several key areas of mission work (which include student hostel ministry, longhouse outreach work, and evangelism & discipleship training) among the East Malaysians in which we have been involved in. We remain committed to the work of the gospel in Sabah and Sarawak, and the emergence of a strong and God-fearing church there.

Sabah

In June 2015, a team from SSGC visited two villages in Sabah – Kg. Taburan Besar and Kg. Mandawang – to minister the gospel, and conduct a children's Vacation Bible School (VBS) as well as a music workshop. SSGC has been supporting the pre-schools in these two villages where the need for education was evident. The children entering primary school were generally unable to understand and follow the lessons, find school a bore, and subsequently end up dropping out of school. In this respect, we were encouraged to learn that the pre-school in both these villages have been an effective means of equipping the children with fundamental skills (reading, writing and arithmetic) in preparation for primary school. What warmed our hearts further was the life-changes observed in the children by their parents as a result of the sowing of the gospel and God's Word.



We praise God for the successful kindergarten and Sunday School teachers training.

One of our young adults, Lim Yi Shien, spent a month in the early part of 2015 at Agape House student hostel in Kanibongan, Pitas. Agape House provides accommodation with good Christian supervision for students who come from remote areas to study at the secondary school in Kanibongan. Yi Shien spent his time ministering to the students, giving tuition, teaching music, and contributing in Bible studies, among other things.

Of his experience in Agape House, Yi Shien writes:

"My Sabah mission was an eye-opening experience for me. Agape House has been really hospitable to me the whole time during my stint. Sometimes I wonder if I am the one being

served instead. I am really happy being able to minister and to relate to them as a friend. I stayed there in the hostel following their rules and their schedule, and with that I experienced what it's like living there as a local. Living there changed my perspective on things because it contrasted the way I live my life back home in the city. Sometimes I feel like we tend to over-complicate ourselves as a Christian. What I have been reminded is that all we need to do is to sit at Jesus' feet like Mary, listening to him and being close to him. I believe churches in Malaysia should strongly focus and invest in East Malaysia because I believe there is a large need for workers and resources and for the Gospel."



Sarawak

From the 28th November to the 2nd December 2015, a team of SSGC kindergarten and Sunday School teachers were in Miri to conduct training for local kindergarten teachers as well as Sunday School teachers. Some of the team members also brought their children along to gain a mission trip experience as well. The local participants benefitted greatly from the training, and they are eager to use what they have learnt to bless the children and communities of Sarawak.



With some of the youth camp participants

Around the same time, another team of us headed to Limbang to help run a youth camp. We were involved in teaching at the camp, facilitating learning activities, counselling the youth, and organising games. What a blessing it was to witness the Holy Spirit's transforming work, as young men and women responded to the call to surrender their lives to Jesus. The theme of the camp was 'Berakar dan Bertumbuh' (based on 2 Kings 19:30), and our continued hope and prayer is that a generation that is rooted in Christ will rise up and bear abundant fruit in the Lord.

Another team of ours was also in Sibu in August 2015 to teach Apologetics & Evangelism to ministry leaders and workers.

What a wonderful opportunity it was to deepen the understanding on core Christian beliefs (particularly those questioned frequently by people of other faiths), so they can honour Christ as Lord and give the reason for our hope in Christ (1 Peter 3:15). Besides that, we also went to the longhouses in the villages for gospel ministry with the local outreach teams. Animistic practices, drunkenness, smoking, gambling, and other vices are prevalent, and there is a great need for people to know Jesus Christ deeply and experience true liberty in Him.

Moving forward, we look to God as we continue to focus on the key ministry areas that we've been called to, and any other areas of strategic need as the Lord directs.

We hope that more churches will come into effective partnership in ministry and mission with East Malaysian churches with a desire to see Christ glorified among the people of Sabah and Sarawak, and the emergence of strong churches and God-fearing leaders among them.

Klang Valley Assembly Elders Consultation Fellowship Nite



Community Fun Fair Carnival @ BSGC

The wild idea to hold a Fun-Fair was mooted during the Sunday School Teacher's Planning Meeting early this year, while planning for the annual Children's VBS program for June. It was decided that we shall hold a Fun Fair Carnival on the final day of VBS instead of the usual concert with church lunch as of previous years.

The idea then grew from a simple indoor fun-fair to a full blown carnival on the streets. We started to form a committee to plan for the Carnival. From the beginning, the planning team deliberately involved and mobilized the entire church to work on this event together.

Strategically, we felt the direction of the Lord leading us to use the event as a means for us to be more prominent in the community as we felt it was time for us to "make some noise"

Michael Fun

in the neighbourhood. As such, in a conscious effort to involve the community, we decided to make it into a charity event. For the past decade, the church has been ministering to the children with special needs comes mainly from the Association of Children with Special Needs (Persatuan Kebajikan Kanak-Kanak Kurang Upaya or P3KU) that is based in USJ2, Subang Jaya. Hence, we decided to use the carnival to raise money for the Association.

We started to pray for the carnival and the VBS since April. We were so happy when the local council of Subang Jaya (MPSJ) not only approved our application to allow us to close the road in front of our shop-lot church building but also sponsored the tents for the street carnival! They even came to erect the tents and dismantled them when it was over! That got the ball rolling for the planning team. We prayed for the church to be

mobilized to help. We were thankful for the church members who then started to rally behind the planning team with ideas and suggestions and volunteering to take up food stalls and to man the games booths.

But then, we needed also to focus on making sure that the VBS will have a good sign-up as well. We were a “little” anxious when within 3 weeks from the closing date, we only had 12 who signed up. However, as usual, the Lord surprised us - oh people of little faith – we had 83 children on the first day of VBS (exceeding our target of 75) ! God is good!

Continuing with our theme of “Jesus’ Explorers”, this year the children took a tour to “Morocco” and “New Zealand” with theme verses and lessons based on Psalms 23:6 and Matthew 9:2. The VBS took place on 2-4th June, with the final day’s program as the carnival.

We printed out leaflets which were distributed out to shops, restaurants, houses nearby and put on all cars parked nearby in the vicinity. We took advantage of social media and broadcasted through Facebook and WhatsApp to invite friends and also put up large banners to try and attract passer-bys. The event was also promoted through our MPSJ councillor and the Association of the Children with Special Needs.



The carnival had a large variety of food stalls selling food from hot-dogs to “tab tim krab” desserts; from toast breads to pies; and from pop-corn to candy floss. We even had a Coffee Barista making fanciful coffee in addition to a “Mocktail” Bar. A carnival is never complete without games, and we had a large variety of games stalls with lots of prizes to win and giveaways. We also had a clown brought in as well as a face painter. A live band from a local music school came also to entertain the crowd during the carnival.

Praise Items:

Everyone in church was so pumped up from the VBS and Carnival successes that even on the proceeding Sunday, the Holy Spirit led the congregation to centre on the need to shine for Jesus.



We praised God for blessing us with a beautiful sunny day during the carnival despite it raining for consecutive days prior to the carnival. The Lord ensured the carnival wasn’t going to be a washout as we estimated that we had more than 300 people turning up for the Carnival.

We had zero interference or troubles from the neighbours.

We were amazed at God’s wonderful way of opening doors. During the course of the liaison with MPSJ, we also managed to build up a good relationship with our Zone Councillor, who also were interested to work with us to support our work among the Children with special needs. He not only visited us in church during the Carnival, he even offered to assist us in doing more for the Association as well as to other parents in the area with children of special needs.

During the event, we managed to also sign up new children for our Saturday English Tuition for the Community as well, extending potentially our contact with the new friends that we made during the carnival.

We also promoted another event during the Carnival – the Family Night – as a means to follow up on our new friendships and we were glad many of them turned up on June 18th night where we had a fun night together – where we also managed to share the gospel from the stage.



We were also amazed that we were able to raise RM4,222 from the carnival from the sales of food, new & pre-loved books, pre-loved toys and crafts for the Association, extending our outreach and connection with the members from the Association.

Glory to God our Father!

1st Announcement

Assembly Leadership Camp 2017

October 2017

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Deepavali
↓

NOTES

Assembly Leadership Conference
Christian Witness in a Plural Society
Methodist Centre, Port Dickson

Call CB&M
 Stephen Lew
 0179118033

Important : DON'T MISS THIS!