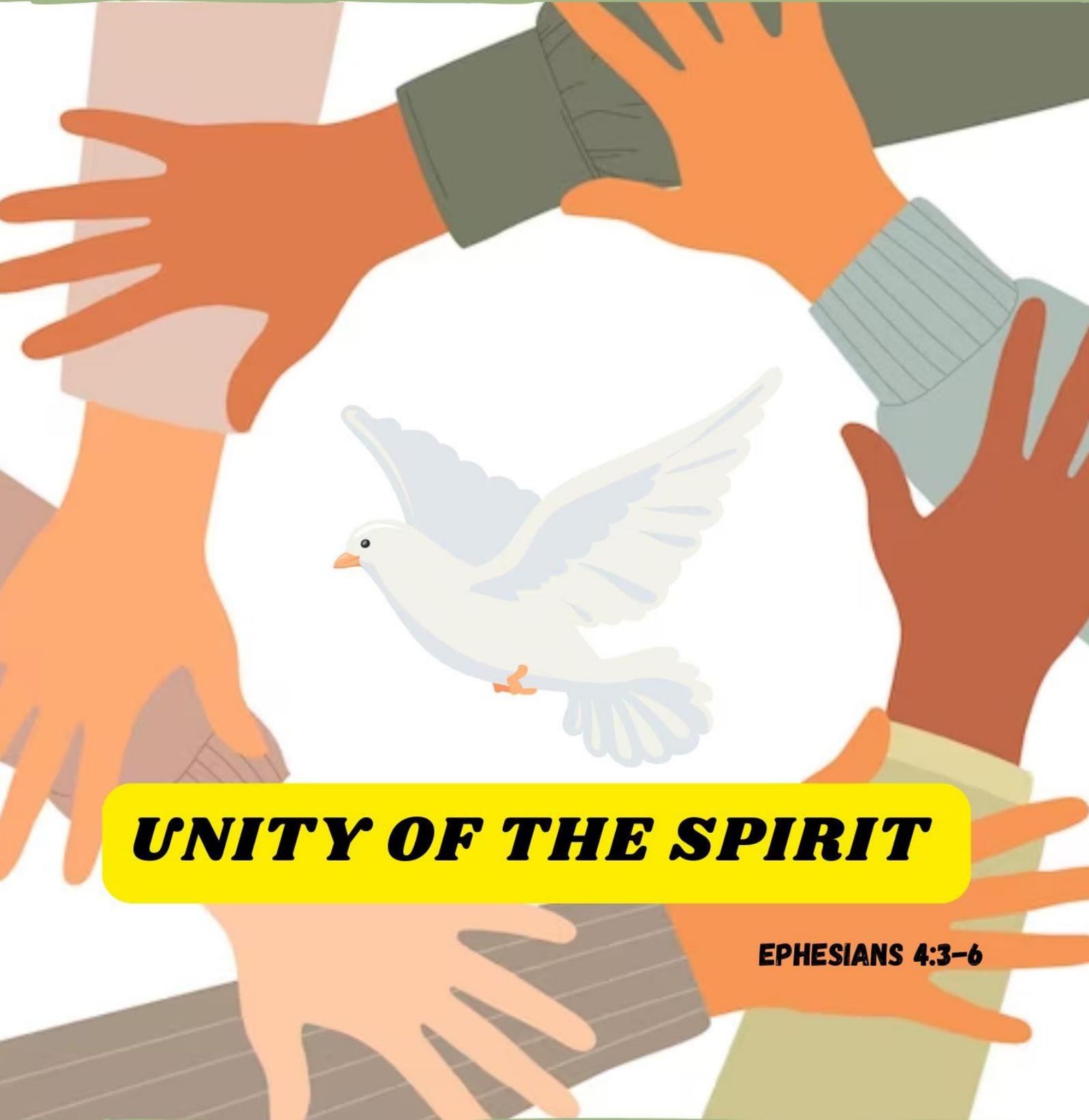




Christian Brethren Secretariat Malaysia

2024  
**diakonia**

One Lord, One Mission, One Heart



***UNITY OF THE SPIRIT***

**EPHESIANS 4:3-6**

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# Messages

## CBSM Chairman's Message



*"The Heavens declare the glory of the Lord, and the skies proclaim the work of His Hands."*

Psalm 19:1

Greetings in the precious Name of our dear Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We praise God for another edition of the Diakonia magazine and the unity of the members of the Editorial Board 2024, labouring together in producing our annual Brethren Assembly magazine.

Unity makes hard work easy. As John Heywood says, *"Many hands make light work."*

The unity we have in Christ is far greater than what we commonly understand about unity. It is "Unity of the Spirit," which is the overarching theme of Diakonia 2024. The tagline of the Diakonia magazine "One Lord, One Mission, One Faith" further strengthens this wonderful blessing that is ours in Christ.

Christian unity is not created by us neither is the union among believers produced by us. It is already there; it exists the moment we are born again into the Body of Christ. The root word for unity refers "to a condition of harmony or oneness that can only be experienced among members of Christ's body—the church. This unity already exists as a spiritual reality through the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life. Unity of the Spirit comes from God, but its expression can be destroyed by humans and, therefore, must be guarded and maintained." (*Got Questions – Keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, Ephesians 4:3*)

Hence in Ephesians 4:3-6 Paul urges us to make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit that binds us together in Christ.

*Ephesians 4:3-6 NKJV*

*"...endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."*

To endeavor is to have an "eagerness" to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (ESV), and to "make every effort" to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace (NIV). We should passionately pursue to keep the unity of the Spirit, making sure that no effort is spared in attaining this godly characteristic of Christian behaviour and Christian living.

This unity ought to also take place "in the bond of peace."

We can pursue the bond of peace by being like-minded, having the same love, and being of one accord. (Philippians 2:1-2)

*Philippians 2:1-2*

*Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfil my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.*

There are numerous things that we can do to keep the unity of the Spirit. Some of these things are already in practice in our assemblies and should be continued in all eagerness. Besides that, unity of Spirit among different assemblies can also be seen in the collaboration of serving together in different areas of the Lord's work.

We see leaders and potential leaders coming together for leadership training courses like the School of the Shepherds courses, for children ministries like the STEM programs, for specific learning programs like the Christian Education Program, for OA ministries, for sports ministries like the COPA IBA, and so on. Being united in serving the Lord not only brings us closer in fellowship between one another, and between assemblies but also encourages one another and spurs each other to continue to serve the Lord.

For example, Temerloh Gospel Chapel (TGC) runs the monthly OA Leadership Program with the help of the MPI ministry. About forty OA leaders and potential leaders from different districts in Pahang gather at TGC monthly. We have believers from five different assemblies working together in this training program, helping out as the trainer, facilitators, drivers, food preparation, and so on.

Moving forward, assemblies, especially smaller ones, can reach out to other assemblies for help in specific ministries, serving together in the unity of the Spirit and giving all glory to the Father in Heaven.

# Messages

The editorial board of Diakonia is another fine example of members from various assemblies serving together in the unity of the Spirit. We take this opportunity to thank them for their labour of love. May we continue to make it our priority to endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

**To God Be The Glory.**

Chiew Sai Kee; [tcjii@gmail.com](mailto:tcjii@gmail.com)  
CBSM Chairman  
2024-2025

## From CBSM General Secretary's Desk



CBSM continues to work towards serving the assemblies better. Our goal is to enable and encourage brethren to work together in unity by facilitating communication and cooperation. This is often challenging since we all have our differences but we have the same Lord, same Mission and the same Gospel. Additionally, we are working towards a better representation of the assemblies and agencies to our brethren abroad and to the government.

We are grateful to the assemblies who have prayed and contributed to the running of CBSM. We shall endeavour to serve the assemblies more effectively.

### **Government Recognition of CBSM**

CBSM continues in its attempt to seek the recognition of the government so that CBSM may represent the assemblies in its affairs. This is only a representative “face” to the government and is in no way meant to control or determine how each individual assembly is governed. Each assembly is still answerable to the Lord, not CBSM. This would be similar to NECF which does not determine the practices of their members. Recognition by the government can be helpful in several circumstances. For example, if a state government is allocating land for Christian churches, CBSM can represent the assemblies instead of the local assembly in the area which may not have the resources or number of believers to justify the need for the land. Or if the government seeks to tax an assembly for income, “members” of CBSM can rightly justify that they

are a church, especially where some of the assemblies have names that do not sound like traditional churches. Similarly, agencies such as Evangel or Emmaus can be clearly identified as religious bodies advancing the “Christian religion”, and not be subjected to tax.

After our meeting with the Senior Private Secretary to the Minister of Unity and presenting our package of documents last year, little has progressed. Follow up was difficult as calls went unanswered. We met with CFM, NECF and some knowledgeable brothers to strategize. It appears that it is not the role of the Ministry of Unity to recognize a Christian denomination. On further review of our own documents, the Marriage Ordinance 1956 (page 134) of the Federation of Malaya Government Gazette of 3rd October 1957 had already recognized the Christian Brethren Churches as a Religious Denomination. The governing body of this denomination at that time was Venning Road Chapel which has since relocated and renamed Jalan Imbi Chapel (JIC). JIC together with the Assembly Leaders Conference elders had mandated CBSM to represent the Assemblies and Agencies in religious matters. This mandate is stated in the CBSM Trust Deed. These documents were submitted to the Christian Federation of Malaysia (CFM) and were verified. CFM then has written us a letter confirming that the Christian Brethren Churches is a recognized denomination prior to the formation of the Federation of Malaya.

CBSM had also joined the National Evangelical Christian Fellowship (NECF) so that it is now recognized as a religious church body.

We continue to strengthen our position by seeking to do two things. (1) To amend the CBSM Trust Deed to be named as CBCM Trust, i.e. Christian Brethren Church Malaysia Trust. This is to further reinforce to any reader/examiner to recognize that this Trust Deed is the governing deed for the “Brethren” Church and churches. (2) To register the CBSM Trust as Public Trust (as compared to

# Messages



an ALC in 2022, the trustees decided to have a mini 1-day ALC for fellowship, updates and election of trustees. The ALC theme was **Press On** and was held at Petaling Jaya Gospel Hall (PJGH) on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2023. We are grateful to PJGH for letting us meet there and for their full support in the amenities, audio-video equipment, kitchen facilities and

the present CBSM Trust which is a Private Trust). A Public Trust needs to be registered with the Prime Minister's Department, and to submit financial accounts and hold an AGM (Annual General Meeting) annually to elect office bearers. We feel these are acceptable for CBSM although not for the assemblies.

We trust these validations are sufficient should there be any queries from Lembaga Hasil Dalam Negeri (LHDN; Income Tax) or the government. Pray with us as we seek to better serve and protect our assemblies.

## Bank Accounts

CBSM continues to assist assemblies and agencies to open bank accounts with Public Bank. Assemblies are not seen as legal entities by the government and banks. However, our early trustees had an agreement with Public Bank to allow "members" of CBSM to open bank accounts. It requires a set of documents from CBSM and some from the local assembly. We thank the Lord that this arrangement has been successful in most cases although we have encountered difficulties and rejection from some branches. Hence our endeavor to get CBSM recognized by the government to help resolve this predicament.

## Assembly Leadership Conference 2023 (ALC 2023)

A full blown ALC was held in 2022 at Port Dickson Methodist Centre even though it was not the year for ALC. ALC is usually held biennially during which trustees are nominated and elected, viz. 2021, 2023, and 2025. Since we've already had

presence. We had 60 in physical attendance and 17 online.

Among the items presented and discussed were CBSM Government Recognition, Church Revitalization, NGC Project 100, Nepal Mission and IBCM8 Follow up. Presented slides can be made available for those who are interested. At the elders meeting, Trustees for 2024-2025 were elected.

## Youth Rally



At the ALC presentation of IBCM8 (which was held in June 2023), it was suggested that a follow up of the successful IBCM8 Youth Rally at Jalan Imbi Chapel would continue the momentum. This was taken up by the organizers of the IBCM8 Youth Rally. As a result,

the Youth Rally 2024 was held at Petaling Jaya Gospel Hall on 10<sup>th</sup> August. The theme was "**In Christ I am.....**". Colin Wong was the plenary speaker and 3 workshops were conducted, namely (1) *Vocation*, (2) *Gender and Sexuality* and (3) *Mental Health*. 132 Youths participated in the Rally. We thank the Lord for the committee

# Messages

that worked very hard for the Rally and pray that the Lord will continue the good work amongst the youths.



## Church Revitalization

Another issue identified by CBSM is the plight of the small assemblies in small towns. Many have buildings and properties but few believers. CBSM is looking into how the assemblies can work together to assist these little flocks. We are thankful to Dr. Khong for generating the STEM programs to help the assemblies use the

programs to run children and teen's programs. Pray with us as we seek the Lord's wisdom.

## Legacy Fund

CBSM has a fund which we've named the Legacy Fund, available for assemblies and agencies who may need some funds to start or renew their mission efforts. This fund has been contributed by brethren who have gone to be with the Lord. There are some guidelines to ensure the fund is used well, one of which is that it is limited to RM50K. Write to CBSM if your assembly or agency has a mission's project that is in need of funds. [cbsm0709@gmail.com](mailto:cbsm0709@gmail.com)

## CBMPTB Office

CBMPTB (Christian Brethren Malaysia Properties Trust Berhad) official address now is at CBSM Office. The Title Deeds are now safely kept in the fireproof safe at the office. We thank the Lord for the new CBMPTB Company Secretary, brother Ng See Yen who will be operating out of the shared CBSM office. The CBMPTB email contact is: [cbmptb@gmail.com](mailto:cbmptb@gmail.com)

In Him,  
*Teo Pek Bing; [cbsm0709@gmail.com](mailto:cbsm0709@gmail.com)*  
General Secretary CBSM

## From Diakonia Editor's Desk **WELCOME!**



It is with great joy and gratitude that I welcome you to the latest edition of Diakonia 2024 magazine. As we gather together in these pages, we are united by a shared faith, a common hope, and a deep love for our Lord

Savior, Jesus Christ.

In a world filled with noise and distractions, this magazine serves as a source of peace, inspiration, and spiritual nourishment. Our goal is to provide a space where you can deepen your relationship with God, grow in your understanding of His Word and connect with a community of believers who walk alongside you in this journey of faith. Each article, reflection, and testimony shared is a testament to the power of God's grace and the transformative work of His in our lives. From stories of redemption and healing to insights on

prayer, worship, discipleship, this magazine seeks to uplift, encourage, and challenge you in your walk with Christ.

As we explore the themes of faith, hope, and love in the pages ahead, may you be inspired to draw closer to God, to lean into His promises, and to live out His love in all areas of your life. May you find solace in the midst of life's storms, strength in times of weakness, and joy in the presence of our Savior who walks with us every step of the way.

I encourage you to engage with the content to reflect on the messages shared and share your stories of faith and transformation with us. Your voice is a valuable part of our community, and your experiences can serve as a source of inspiration and encouragement to others who may be walking a similar path.

The theme for this year's Diakonia 2024 is **"Unity of the Spirit"** with the Bible verses taken from Ephesians 4: 3 – 6. In a world marked by division and discord, the call for unity resonates deeply within the hearts of believers. As Christians, we are called to walk in unity, bound together by the Spirit of God and the love of Christ. Ephesians 4: 3 – 6

# Messages

reminds us of the importance of preserving the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace:

*"Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all." (Ephesians 4:3-6, NIV)*

The unity of the Spirit is not merely a superficial agreement or a temporary alliance; but it is a deep and profound bond that unites believers across diverse backgrounds, cultures, and traditions. It is a unity that transcends human differences and reflects the oneness of God's kingdom.

As we reflect on these verses, we are reminded of the essential elements that underpin our unity in Christ. We are one body, interconnected and interdependent, each member playing a unique and valuable role in the body of Christ. We are indwelt by one Spirit, the Holy Spirit, who empowers and guides us in our journey of faith.

Our unity is grounded in one hope – the hope of salvation and eternal life in Christ. It is anchored in one Lord, Jesus Christ, who is the center of our faith and the source of unity. We are united in one faith, a shared belief in the Gospel of Christ that unites us across denominational lines of differences.

Through one baptism, we are initiated into the family of God, symbolizing our identification with Christ in His death and resurrection. And above all, we are united in one God and Father, the source of all creation and the ultimate source of our unity. He is the God who is over all, through all, and in all, weaving a tapestry of unity that transcends human understanding.

As we strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, let us embrace our common identity as children of God and co-heirs with Christ. Let us seek reconciliation, understanding, and love in our relationships with one another, bearing with one another in love and humility.

May the unity of the Spirit be a shining testimony to the world of the transformative power of Christ's love. May it be a beacon of and a source of strength in times of division and strife. Let us walk in unity guided by the Spirit, and bound together in the love of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Thank you for being a part of our community, for sharing in our mission, and for allowing us to be a part of your spiritual journey. May God bless you abundantly as you read, reflect, and grow in faith through the pages of this magazine.

On a final note, I take this time to thank all contributors and especially to the editorial team for an awesome and splendid job in preparing, editing, and designing each article! You may find the PDF version at CBSM's website (<https://www.cbsm.com.my/site/diakonia/>).

Chat @ Diakonia



diakoniacbsm@gmail.com

## Diakonia 2024 Editorial Board

Top Left to Right:

*Teo Pek Bing (Sg Nibong Gospel Hall), Dr Khong Yoon Loomg (Bukit Mertajam Gospel Centre), Samuel Chandy (Seremban Gospel Chapel)*

Bottom Left to Right:

*Rodney Tan (Melaka Gospel Chapel), Selina Tan (Bandar Puchong Gospel Centre), Lee Zhi En (Temerloh Gospel Chapel), Joel Chooi (Sunway Gospel Chapel), Yap Yoke Chin (Temerloh Gospel Chapel)*



**Samuel Chandy;** [sam@elim.my](mailto:sam@elim.my)

# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

Love Nepal (Nepallai Prem Garau)

Tan Boon Hong ([bhtan01@gmail.com](mailto:bhtan01@gmail.com))

Nepal Mission Trip 2023 - 10<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> November 2023



Mission team at Triek Mukti Church, Bhalumara – Chitwan, Nepal

Hannah Cheng Lee Ah	Bandar Sunway Gospel Centre
Ngai Kuan Yew	
Tan Boon Hong	
Yap Fook Loy	Bentong Gospel Centre
Rodney Tan Chai Whatt	Melaka Gospel Chapel
How Pooi Han	Sungei Way Christian Church
Kong Lai Meng	The Life Chapel
Melinda Loh Yuet Woon	
Rachael Yapp Wye Ching	
Sean Oluwarantimi Alabi	
Sylvia Christie	
Tan Sean Yii	



The annual Combined Assembly Mission Trip is intended to provide an opportunity for believers to participate in the ministry of encouragement and to tell of the wonderful acts of God. 12 believers from 5 worship centres in Malaysia spent about 10 days of togetherness **led by the Spirit to be ambassadors for Christ Jesus in Nepal.**

Bro. Amar, sis. Shanta, Priscilla and Shikshita from Kathmandu Mission Centre (KMC) joined the team for ministry in Madi, Bhalumara and Dhading Hills.

As in previous years, many who went said that the trip had been an ‘eye-opener’ on matters concerning the mission work in Nepal and what God is doing. The team was met with enthusiasm at every stop and many were touched by the love and warm fellowship. Many felt that they have been blessed by those they went to bless. We are very thankful to God for having watched over the team, for the smooth journey and the wonderful togetherness in building up one another. **To God be the glory!**

## Nepal Mission trip contd.



### Katmandu Mission Centre Imadol, Lalitpur

The missionaries broke bread with the believers on 2 Saturdays.

Bro. Rodney shared God’s word from the pulpit after which the missionaries led the Sunday School, Men’s Fellowship, Ladies’



# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)



Fellowship and Young People's Fellowship.

The mission team had the opportunity to see the piece of land in Chalnakhel that had been purchased for construction of the Church Building.



**Basantapur Fellowship**  
Basantapur, Madi, Chitwan

A company of believers came together to praise God and hear God's message delivered by bro. Yap Fook Loy.

The men, ladies and young people gathered separately after that for a time of fellowship and sharing.



The team then went for visitation to 3 families in this rural and mainly agricultural region.

The gathering of children took place in the late afternoon during which the Children Ministry Team conducted a wonderful session, telling about God the Creator and Jesus the Saviour of the world



# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)



## **Triek Mukti Church** Bhalumara, Chitwan

This is the first time, a mission team from KMC ministered in the village of Bhalumara. This visit was at the invitation of the leadership of the Triek Mukti Church, through bro. Saurab Chepang, who used to worship in Bandar Sunway Gospel Centre. The village is predominantly 'Chepang', an indigenous people group.

There was a time of devotion, a time of fellowship among the men, ladies and young people.

More than a hundred children came for the Children's gathering during which God the Creator and Jesus the Saviour of the world were wonderfully taught.



## **Dhading Hills Fellowship** Dhading Besi

The team went through the experience of walking up and down slopes, typical of life in the mountains, and they did so in good spirit.

Many in the area came to participate in the activities which included a time of devotion where bro. How Pooi Han delivered God's message.

After that, separate fellowship meetings for the men, ladies and young followed. About 60 came for the Children's Gathering which had to be done outdoors because of the lack of space.

# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

## Ministry in Nepal



The work in Nepal is led by the **Nepal Mission Team** consisting of Bandar Sunway Gospel Centre (BSGC), Melawati Gospel Centre (MGC) and Subang Jaya Gospel Centre (SJGC).

Chairman: Michael Fun

Deputy Chairman: Ng See Yen

Secretary: Tan Boon Hong

Treasurer: Ng See Yen

Committee members: Mow Kam Yeen, Chai Cheng Sheng, Shanmugam, Yap Kok Keong

The committee continues to oversee the 3 worship centres in **Kathmandu, Madi and Dhading** with the help of local leaders; Amar Tamang, Abraham Sunar and John Prakash respectively. Annual Bible teaching seminars assisted by GLO Malaysia and short-term mission trips are carried out to help build up the local believers through education and encouragement.

**The committee invites for more assemblies to join in the work.**

One major project that started in recent years is to construct a building for the church in Kathmandu. Fundraising and the search for suitable land began in September 2022. The 2400 sq.ft. land in **Chalnakhel**, southwest of Kathmandu city, was purchased for a sum of RM319,000.00 on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023. The area is less densely populated, with a good mix of farmers and urban dwellers. It is on the side of a hill near a small village where the residents are mostly Buddhists.

We are very thankful to God for the land which was purchased with the help from the assemblies in Malaysia.

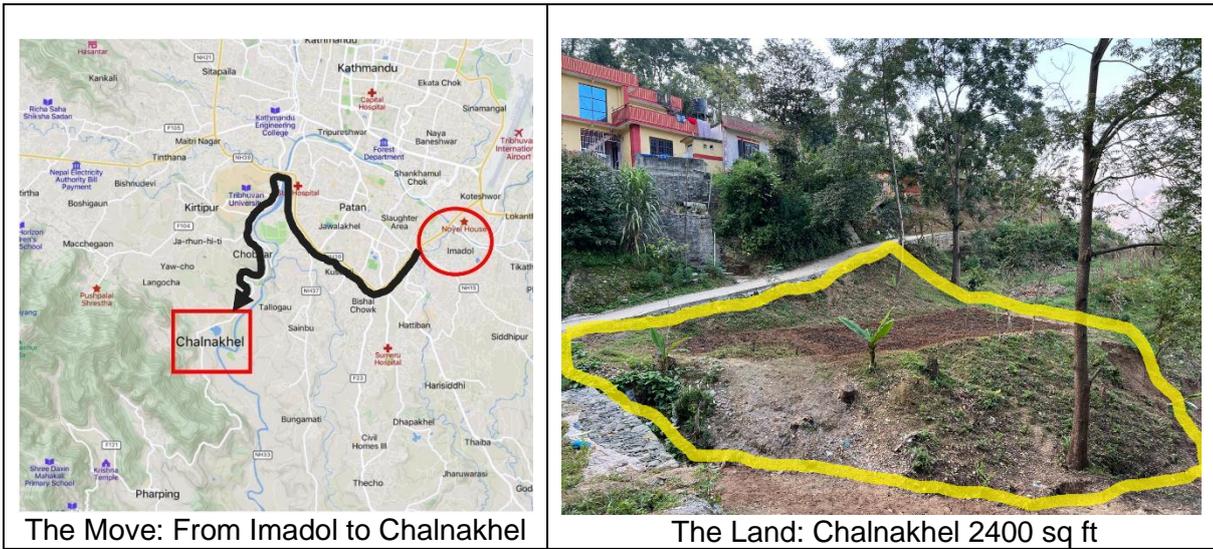
The planning, design and costing for the building is **in progress**. It is estimated that a sum of about **RM150,000.00** will be required. We pray that construction may start in September 2024 and gathering for worship to begin in April 2025.

Contributions from believers and assemblies can be banked to:

**Bandar Sunway Gospel Centre, Public Bank Account No. 3097535806** ('KMC Building Fund'). Contact person: Tan Boon Hong (BSGC), 019-3207061, bhtan01@gmail.com.

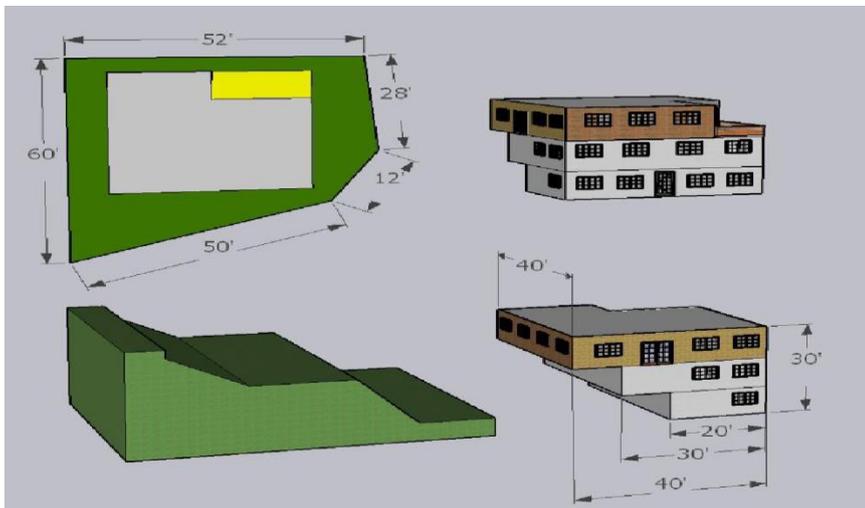
# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

## A Building for Kathmandu Mission Centre (KMC)



The Move: From Imadol to Chalnakhel

The Land: Chalnakhel 2400 sq ft



Conceptual Design



## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

### What Are My (Church) Priorities?

Jimmy Chok ([ichokkh@gmail.com](mailto:ichokkh@gmail.com))

Today is Sunday (14/7/2024). On Friday 12:15am, I received the following message from brother Amos, our full-time Myanmar church pastor: "Hi- Elder Jimy: Prayer Request: My two boys are sick with fever , diarrhea and vomiting, to day the younger Benjamin is admitted to Sungai Buloh Hospital - Benjamin with Sennu at Hospital . Samuel at home with me. Please pray for my family. Thank you and God bless."

[Later, at 8:16 pm] Amos replied to my message of prayer: "Thank you Elder Jimmy, Benjamin is still in Hospital with sennu- and still going on the diarrheas. By grace, Samuel is a bit getting better at home- We do not know yet the costs- Deposit Rm 1500 was given to hospital.Thank you"

Benjamin is 2+ years old and Samuel is 4. Yesterday, at the hospital to visit Benjamin, I was told of a hospital ruling for Ward 8C that allows only parents to visit or accompany the sick child. So, with Sennu the mother at the entrance, we prayed for Benjamin! Today, his blood count is still not up to normal.

For most, incidences like this may be normal life encounters. However, for Amos and Sennu who are full-time refugee church workers, I wonder if they struggle with the question, "What are our priorities?"

Since mid-2022, with an influx of Myanmar-speaking refugees, the "hot" topic in MMM is "Cross-cultural Mission Amongst Myanmar Speaking Refugees"! We pray and work towards building up the Myanmar Churches to learn from those already reaching-out and take up the challenge! Much hope is on brother Amos' shoulder to teach and lead the Myanmar flock!

In the context of cross-cultural mission, is the question of "priorities" (or, one step back, "relevance"), appropriate for Malaysian Assemblies too? Possibly, at the least, rendering some support for brother Amos?

About 20 years ago, some in The Household of God have regarded the foreign workers and refugees scenario on our shore in the similar understanding as that of Rick Warren years ago in his book "The Purpose Driven Church". Rick basically says near the beginning of that book, "If you want your church to make an impact, find out where God is already moving in your community and join in. Ride the wave, because you can't create waves of divine activity just like you can't create waves in the ocean." Another church leader in our era has similarly experienced this and he said: " That's what you see in the book of Acts multiplied 1000 times."

[\(https://outoftheoverflow.com/2011/05/24/the-holy-spirit-do-we-make-waves-or-ride-waves/\)](https://outoftheoverflow.com/2011/05/24/the-holy-spirit-do-we-make-waves-or-ride-waves/)

May we pray and seek, as a matter of priority, to ride the surf of The Holy Spirit in our times!

(NOTE: For Malaysia Myanmar Ministry (MMM), monthly financial reports and prayer points are sent to all Assemblies via CBSM.)

Jimmy Chok  
15/7/2024



# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

## Mental Health Matters!

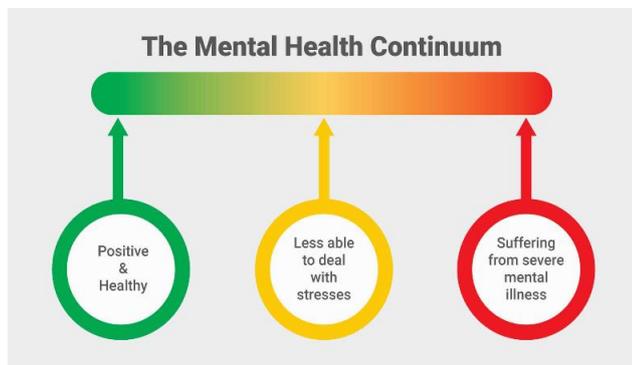
Datin Indranee Liew ([indraneeliew@gmail.com](mailto:indraneeliew@gmail.com), +60125342022)

Mental Health First Aid Instructor (UK), TCF Preschool Project Manager, Educational Consultant & Trainer

- IGCSE
- Behavior Management & Learning Strategies

Mental health is a fundamental component of overall health, and it affects our thinking, feelings and behaviour. It determines how we manage stress, relationships and make decisions.

The Mental Health Continuum model depicts mental health on a line where a person's mental health can range from positive mental health to mental illness.



Mental illness can affect anyone regardless of age, economic status or race. Children and young adults can struggle with mental health issues just as working adults, new mothers and the elderly.

Talking about mental health is nothing to be ashamed of and should be routine as talking about physical health. Having mental health issues is nothing to be ashamed of and should never be regarded as personal failure. In reality, conversations about mental health and accessing professional help alleviate unnecessary emotional suffering.

When life challenges us, mental resilience helps us to live in turbulent circumstances that agitate our mental health. Resilience is the ability to surmount difficulties and recover from adversity. Living in safe and healthy communities boosts human resilience to enable people to cope with traumatic and stressful situations.

Christians have a special source of resilience. Christian life supports and develops our resiliency through prayer and Bible study that draw our mindset towards God.

Psalm 121:1

*I lift up my eyes to the hills-- where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth*

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10,12

*Two are better than one...If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.... Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.*

## NURTURING MENTAL WELL-BEING

People with good mental health are generally positive and happy, live productive lives, take care of their health and enjoy a sense of community and social well-being. Some ways to nurture positive mental well-being:

1. Balanced nutrition
2. Adequate sleep
3. Movement - getting up and moving every 30 – 45 minutes
4. Executing an enjoyable exercise routine
5. Setting boundaries; know how much you can and cannot do so you don't over-commit by taking on too many responsibilities
6. Perspective or mindset - Proverbs 17:22: *A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.*

Good mental health enables us not only to cope with life but also to enjoy it so it's certainly worth pursuing!

## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

**Sangkhim Canaan School,  
Kampung Chhnang, Cambodia**

Annie Khoo (khoo.annie@gmail.com)



# Annie's Anecdote

### Unity of the Spirit.

*...one body ...one Spirit ...one hope  
...one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God  
and Father of all, who is over all  
and through all and in all. ~ Eph 4:3-6*



Rachel(Khmer), Dena(Karen), Annie & Hanna(Japanese)

Representing 4 different ethnic groups, we prayed in 4 different languages, each taking turns to pray for one another in our own heart language. As our prayers rose up to God our Father, we felt the unity of the Spirit in a very deep and special way.

*The Karen tribe believed that they were a people who have lost their way from the Father, but one day a younger white brother will come with a book to show them the way back to the Father. God protected them and prepared them for the gospel through this 'prophecy' in their belief system. The Buddhists were not white and they didn't have a book. The Muslims had a book but they were not white. They waited for hundreds of years till a white missionary came with a book and showed them the way back to the Father. Back then, many Karen tribal people who lived in the hills were stateless. They yearned to belong to a kingdom and be granted citizenship. Through Christ, they found their way back to the Father. Through Christ, they now belong to the eternal Kingdom of God and have become citizens of heaven.*

Dena, from Myanmar, is from the Karen tribe. She was studying in Myanmar, specialising in prosthetics. Her experienced trainers were from Cambodia, a country with the highest ratio of mine amputees per capita in the world. Due to the war in Myanmar getting more intense, the Cambodian trainers were evacuated and returned to Cambodia. As a result, in 2022, Dena was sent to continue her training in Cambodia. Dena found Sangkhim church on 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2024. She could only join us for a few weeks before having to go to another province for 6 months to complete her training. Although Dena is a 4<sup>th</sup> generation Karen Christian, she had not known about how God had preserved and prepared her tribe for the gospel. My first mission exposure trip was to the Karen tribe more than 20 years ago. I thank God for the opportunity to introduce Dena to her special Karen heritage and to inspire her to bring the message of Salvation and Hope back to her people who are in the midst of war.



Thank God for sending Hanna to us on 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2024, as a missionary intern. At 12, Hanna met a missionary nurse, and she was inspired to serve God in other countries as a missionary nurse too. That vision shaped her direction in life. After graduating, she worked 4 years as an A&E nurse, and another 4 years as a mid-wife. Finally, after 18 years of focused perseverance, Hanna is now doing basic language study and will begin her mission as a school nurse in August. The caretaker's house at school is being renovated and will be called The Shepherd's Heart, where Hanna will offer health care and Annie will offer counselling. Pray that Christ's Shepherd Heart will be demonstrated through us and that this will be another way we can lead the lost and hurting, back to the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls.

## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

The Bible Centre



The Dormitories



Thank God that through contributions from believers, The Bible Centre and dorms are now ready. Thank God too as The Bible Centre committee works to develop a wholesome curriculum, we are excited to see how things are taking shape as each one does their part. Pray that the Lord will call the right people to our residential training programme starting in January 2025. We commit to disciple each student the Lord sends to us, equipping them to be disciple-makers. We pray that The Bible Centre will be a place where Cambodians from different places and backgrounds, will grow to have the likeness and the mind of Christ, to understand and do the will of the Father. May each student be transformed to be someone that God can send out as missionaries, church planters, ministry leaders, or career people who can effectively disciple others as they expand and establish God's Kingdom everywhere that He sends them. Pray for our team to be united in spirit as we prepare ourselves for such a task.

Truly, we cannot do it apart from being united and by God's grace and enablement. We value your partnership through prayer and other ways as the Lord may lead you.

<https://www.facebook.com/biblecenterkampongchhnang/>

By His Grace,

**Annie Khoo**

24/07/2024

[khoo.annie@gmail.com](mailto:khoo.annie@gmail.com)

☺ **LOVE GOD** ☺ **LOVE**  
**OTHERS** ☺ **MAKE**  
**DISCIPLES** ☺

If you would like to visit, support or partner with us in any way, please write to brother Kian at [kian@jian.org](mailto:kian@jian.org) for more details.



# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

## Bound by Faith: Be Intentional to be Christlike

Philippines Brethren Assemblies – Ministry Updates



VOLUME 04 \* JANUARY \* DECEMBER 2024

As we reflect on the past months, we are filled with gratitude and awe at the goodness and faithfulness of God in our ministry. His guidance and blessings have been evident in every event, fellowship, and outreach we have undertaken. Through His grace, we have seen growth, both spiritually and numerically, in our church family. We have experienced the joy of new beginnings, the strengthening of bonds within our community, and the opportunity to share His love and message with many.

This year, our theme is "Be Intentional to Be Christlike," with a focus on "Unity in Spirit." Together, we are striving to emulate Christ in our actions, thoughts, and interactions, ensuring that our unity is a reflection of His love and teachings. We have witnessed the power of this unity in every aspect of our ministry. Together, we have come together as one body, united in purpose and spirit, to serve our Lord and spread His message of love and hope. From anniversaries and fellowship gatherings to community outreach and educational events, each activity has been a testament to His enduring love and provision, demonstrating what we can achieve when we stand together in His name. This intentional approach has brought us closer as a congregation, enabling us to serve our Lord more effectively and to spread His message of love and hope.

KaPaSan -FaCa is in consistent prayer for God's wisdom and leading for the ministries entrusted to the church and continues to adhere to Jesus command in Matthew 28:19-20 saying "Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you;" and holding on to the promise that "and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."

### MISSION TRIPS

Commended Workers Fellowship Team visited and conducted Special Studies in "One Mindanao Churches", which aims to unite all Brethren Churches in Mindanao  
Team: from Left to Right

Ike Villareal  
Robert Roberto  
Joel Alviar  
Jim Mendoza  
Murel A. Espiritu  
Carlos Padilla



## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)



Prayed for Bro. Berlin Ducut, pioneer of Christian Brethren Churches in Mindanao  
They are praying for a Campsite in Mindanao



**ENTRUSTING THE WORD FELLOWSHIP**  
donated 14 Solar Lights to churches in Laak  
Davao de Oro, Mindanao



### PRAYER REQUESTS

#### **CORON , PALAWAN Outreach**

Please pray for this piece of land donated by one of ETWF members (2,000 sq. m.)

- Construction of a Church Building and Home for the Aged for Workers
- For committed workers and financial provision

#### **FATIMA & CARDONA Outreaches**

- Church Building



# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

## ACTIVITIES FOR THE FIRST HALF OF THE YEAR.



### PALANGOY GOSPEL CHAPEL

The past 26 years, God's faithfulness has been evident, leading to the establishment of five churches **KaPaSan -FaCa Churches**, composed of **KA**sinay Church, **PA**langoy Gospel Chapel, and **SAN** Carlos Church, **FA**tima Chapel and **CA**rdona Church.



Palangoy Gospel Chapel (PGC)  
26th Anniversary Celebration (19 May 2024)



PGC SUMMER VBS 2024



### ENTRUSTING THE WORD FELLOWSHIP (ETWF)



**Women's Thanksgiving Fellowship**  
Theme: "Mighty Woman of Valor,"  
highlighted the significant role of women in  
the ministry of the Lord



**Fire Prevention Month Symposium** (March 3, 2024) aiming to educate the youth on preventive measures and safety protocols during a fire.



Youth Ministry Friendship Day (12 March 2024)



**Senior Couples Summer Fellowship**  
(April 7, 2024) Theme: "Together Forever."

## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)



**Summer VBS** (June 10-14, 2024)  
Theme "Salvation: The God's Gift."  
Ninety-nine children aged 4-12 y.o.



**Parents' Day Celebration** (June 23, 2024)  
ETWF Honoring parents as commanded in  
Exodus 20:12.



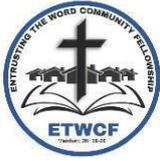
### ENTRUSTING THE WORD COMMUNITY CHURCH-CARDONA

ETWF's outreach in Cardona, the 5th outreach will be celebrating its 1st year Anniversary on August 11th 2024. As we welcome these new believers, let us remember the words of Acts 2:47, "And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." This growth is a powerful reminder of our mission to spread the Gospel and our commitment to being intentional in living Christ-like lives, united in spirit and purpose.



1<sup>st</sup> VBS with 25 children

# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)



## ENTRUSTING THE WORD CHURCH- FATIMA



A Year of Growth and Blessings:  
ETWCF 1<sup>ST</sup> Year anniversary



1<sup>st</sup> VBS with 70 children



## ENTRUSTING THE WORD CHURCH- KASINAY

Entrusting The Word Church-  
Kasinay CHILDREN'S Ministry



1<sup>st</sup> VBS with 100 children

# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

## Youth Rally

Andrew Tan ([andrewtxj1@gmail.com](mailto:andrewtxj1@gmail.com))

The recent CBSM Youth Rally for Christian youths among the Brethren assemblies in Malaysia was an encouraging gathering, primarily attended by churches from the Klang Valley, with participation from Melaka Gospel Chapel as well. We had a total of 132 youths present out of 180 registered, representing 28 Assemblies. Among them, 12 were from non-Brethren Assemblies, and 5 were unbelievers, showcasing the event's appeal beyond our immediate community.

Over the past two years, this gathering can be seen as a point of connection for youths from Brethren assemblies and other youths alike, offering them encouragement in their walk with the Lord. We were tackling the pressing issue of "What is our true identity in today's world?" in the main theme. Further topics were proposed to explore the main theme that resonate with today's youth : LGBTQ issues, mental health, and vocational guidance.

With the theme "In Christ, I am...", we aimed to create a space for young people to discover their identity in Christ, understand the depth of salvation, and grow in their relationship with Him. Our year-long planning process was rooted in prayer and collaboration, all with the hope of fostering spiritual growth and meaningful fellowship amongst the brethren youth.

The message for the main theme came at the right time to remind us that our primary identity is being 'a follower of Jesus Christ'. At times, we tend to base our identity on performance, possessions, popularity, or even the search for passions. However, we are reminded that God wants to redeem and restore us to who He created us to be. It was inspiring to witness over 100 young participants engage eagerly in the workshops and interactive sessions.

Additionally, another highlight for the Youth Rally would be the Booths Section which showcased Emmaus, Evangel Bookstore and Scripture Union. Participants were encouraged to visit the Booths during every break. Many had stopped by, with some making purchases of valuable books and materials that encapsulate godly wisdom and knowledge, all aiming to strengthen and deepen our identify in Christ.

This event served as a vital platform for helpers from various churches to come together and serve. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to them

for their willingness to contribute, as well as to CBSM and individual sponsors who supported us both through services and monetary means. Their generosity contributed to the event's success.

## Lessons from the Main Session by Mr. Colin Wong

In Christ, our primary identity is as followers of Jesus Christ. This allows us to have a strong sense of identity that will transcend all cultures and trends. Genesis 1:27 shows God as the Creator, who has designed for us to find our identity in Him. However, sin has fractured this image (Romans 3:23) which has distorted and taken away our primary identity. These are identity struggles entangled with our performance, possessions, popularity, and passions, which are the common struggles we as followers of Christ can face daily.

Despite so, God in His love wants to redeem and restore us to our true identity in His Son, Jesus Christ (Col 2:9-10). In Christ, we are made COMPLETE (Col 2:10): firstly as children of God (1 John 3:1), secondly as friends of Christ (John 15:14), and finally as servants of God (Mark 10:42-45). God forms, sin deforms but Christ transforms.

This journey we are embarking on allows us to recognize our identity, embrace Christ's transformative power, and reflect on His character through our service as His people, hence calling all youths to step up to win youths for our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us as youths be honest and true to ourselves, confronting the idolatries and worldly patterns of our time today by dying to ourselves and securing ourselves in Christ in this journey of sanctification (1 Thess 5:23).

## Group Interactive Sessions

The Rally this year attracted a large number of high school graduates and college/university students. At their age, most participants are just beginning to search for directions in life. It is no surprise that the topic of Identity drew the attention of many. They came with the expectation of gaining at least some sense of guidance to figure out what's next for their life.

During the Interactive Sessions, we heard wonderful stories from different people about how God had spoken to them. We believe that Mr. Colin's illustration would have deeply resonated with many participants, encouraging and appeal to our participants to search their hearts and

## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

souls and return to our ever-loving, gracious, and patiently waiting Father who would held His arms open wide for our return.

We are greatly thankful to the Group Facilitators who volunteered their time, moving along with their group members throughout the day and attending the session and workshops. They spent time with their group members in facilitating discussions and sharing each other's experiences to encourage the deeper conversations of our Identity in Christ.

### **Workshop : Vocation (Mr. Colin Wong)**

During the Workshops Session, the participants were free to choose the workshop according to their preferences. Interestingly, the majority selected Vocation as their primary interest. The statistic depicted that most of the participants were eager to learn about career or occupation options. However, some participants also admitted that they were merely following the crowd due to uncertainty about suitable occupations for themselves.

Through this Workshop, Mr. Colin Wong laid out some principles on making decisions on the choice of career or future for the youths. Ultimately, we hope that this Workshop would have helped to give some direction for the youths and to encourage them to continue seek God in their choices for the future.

### **Workshop : Gender & Sexuality (Mr. Steven Foong)**

In this Workshop, the content was relatively heavy, particularly for some younger participants. Despite this, Mr. Steven Foong drew out the subject based on the Bible on what God says about sex, sexuality, sexual orientation and sexual sins like adultery. He gave an exercise among the participants to differentiate between a sin against God, a moral sin and an act against the law.

He also drew out the lessons on Gender and showed how the world has distorted what God has made in His image and in His Sovereign design. This Workshop helped the participants look at the Bible passages not in isolated passages but in the big picture in what God is trying to tell us about Jesus being the true Saviour and the redeeming of all things distorted – and ultimately, that our identity is found in the image of God.

### **Workshop : Mental Health (Dr. Lai Fong Hwa)**

In today's fast-paced world, where we are often bombarded with external pressures and expectations, understanding our true identity can be a challenge. During our interactive Mental Health Workshop with Dr. Lai, we delved into the deep connection between understanding ourselves better while also recognizing our identity in Christ.

We were invited by Dr Lai to draw our own Life Tree – where we identified our origins, strengths, hopes and significant relationships. He also explained that our thoughts, emotions and behaviour are connected – what we think and do affects the way we feel. Through a worksheet exercise, we learnt that we could anchor ourselves to God using scripture, such as John 1:12 (*“To those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God”*).

This intersection of faith and self-awareness is not just about spiritual grounding but also about mental and emotional well-being. It was comforting to know that I can be secure in Christ and my self-worth is tied to who God is and His assurances to me, rather than my own effort and doing.

- Compiled by :

**Ann Choo (Setapak Gospel Centre)**

**June Chai (Bandar Sunway Gospel Centre)**

**Lim May Hsin & Leandra Choo (Sungai Long Chapel)**

**Lim Pei Pei (Cheras Gospel Centre)**

# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)



## Testimonies from the Youths

I think Youth Rally is a great way to know more about Christ and fellowship with fellow believers. The topics and speakers for Youth Rally were really entertaining and relatable, especially the sermon where the speaker shared about his childhood and his identity.

The session topics were also really engaging. In the session that I was in which is Gender/Sexuality, I learnt about what God had to say about gender, sexuality, and adultery compared to what the world today says about it. Steven Foong explained it really well and the content about the topic sourced from the Bible were explored in depth. It wasn't hard to understand at all as a young Christian. The fellowship was amazing as well. The volunteers were really polite, supportive, helpful, and caring.

Overall, it was a great experience and I'd definitely come for next year's Youth Rally!

**- Joseph Ng, 13 (Petaling Jaya Gospel Hall)**

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Youth Rally 2024 was a really fun event. It allowed me to share my thoughts and discuss things with my group mates. I was in the Mental Health workshop and we talked about many things such as how to have good mental health, how to prevent depression and so on.

It was very interactive, I found out that having a good diet can help with your mental health. I can't wait for youth rally 2025!

**- Hooi Caleb, 13 (Bandar Sunway Gospel Centre)**

=====

This year's Youth Rally felt different from last year – in a really good way. There were workshops and more interactive sessions that made it engaging. One of the highlights for me was Mr. Colin Wong's message about identity in Christ. His talk really hit home, reminding me how important it is to be sure of my identity in Him.

I also joined the Mental Health workshop, which was a great choice. We did some drawing activities that were not only fun but also gave us a chance to explore our thoughts and feelings in a creative way.

The group interactive sessions were another big plus. I got to hear from my peers about what they learned in their workshops and share my own thoughts too. It was really cool to see different perspectives and learn from each other.

Overall, this year's Youth Rally was a solid experience. The mix of messages, workshops, and group activities made it a memorable event. I'm definitely planning to come back next year and would recommend it to anyone looking to grow in their faith and connect with others.

**- Sheanna Choo, 15 (Sungai Long Chapel)**

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CBSM Youth Rally 2024 was a really fun experience for me. It was the first time I had ever attended a gathering for youths in any location and it was a really good experience. The talks I attended were really interesting. I chose the Vocation talk run by Colin Wong. It was very



## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

interesting to see how he explained the different steps one must take to discern their calling.

I learnt that although it may not look easy, sometimes God is testing you and giving you experience which you would find helpful further in the journey. Likewise, I recall him saying that although your current path looks easy, it may not be God's intended purpose for you.

Overall, I found it a really fun and enjoyable experience and I would definitely go again, as well as inviting others too.

**- Joshua Looi, 15 (Petaling Jaya Gospel Hall)**

From this Youth rally, I have learnt that God's desire has been for us to find our primary identity in Him. However, our sense of identity is often fractured and broken due to the effects of sin. We search for meaning in various places, but God wants us to recognize that our true identity comes from Him alone. By focusing on His love and purpose for us, we can find wholeness and a sense of belonging.

God's master plan involves knowing Jesus Christ and walking with Him in a personal, intimate relationship. This is not a passive endeavour; it requires our active participation. God calls us to engage with Him, to learn from Jesus, and to embody His teachings in our daily lives. By doing so, we align ourselves with His mission and purpose, experiencing the fullness of life that He intends for us. Lastly, I thank God that He has made plans that led me closer to Him.

**- Wong Li Ying, 15 (Bandar Sunway Gospel Centre)**

I went to Youth Rally in 2023 and that's how I got to know about the Youth Rally this year. The theme 'In Christ, I am...' is really interesting because I think most of us have questions about our identity, like "what is our purpose of being here" or a simple question like "who am I?"

Normally when people ask "who are you?", the first thing that comes to mind is my own name. Other than that, sometimes my mind will be blank. The speaker talked about identity disorientation and the two that I relate to the most are 'I am what I do' and 'I am what others think'. Oftentimes I take what others think of me as who I am. But all these are not important because in God's eyes, I am a child of God, a friend of God and a servant of God. We are all broken people but through Christ we are complete (Colossians

2:10). In short, Youth Rally 2024 is a reminder for me to focus on my identity in Christ instead of focusing on my earthly identity.

**- Erica Chong, 18 (Sungai Long Chapel)**

During the Youth Rally, I've learnt a lot, but one of the lessons that stood out was the workshop about Vocation. Conviction is what "vocation in Christ" is ultimately about. I've learnt that vocation is fundamentally a spiritual commitment to God's call and for every one of us to love Jesus and serve Him whatever and wherever, and that God has a plan for us all as we keep growing in Him.

What I hope for future youth rallies is for more topics that can be related to youths.

**- Dominic Ng Cheng Hung, 19 (Sri Damansara Gospel Centre)**

This was the first year I actively participated in the Youth Rally throughout the entire program.

What encouraged me the most was seeing youth from different places come together to seek answers to life's questions through the Word of God. The speaker spoke about our identity in Christ, reminding us that we are not defined by how the world sees us or by the things we possess, but by how God sees us – His precious children. This was a powerful encouragement, especially as many of us are at the stage of deciding what to study or which career path to take after graduation.

I also enjoyed the workshops and group discussions, where we had the chance to listen to people from various backgrounds share their thoughts and experiences. Overall, it was a great day and a wonderful event to meet new people.

**- Yam Kah Chun (Jalan Imbi Chapel)**

### Some Reflections from the Planning Team :

Planning for Youth Rally this year was a very exciting affair filled with many ups and downs, late nights having discussions in planning meetings, and much prayer. Youth Rally 2024 was the first time we were organizing Youth Rally independently, as for the first Youth Rally in 2023, we had received much help and support from IBCM, CBSM, as well as our friends from Emmaus Bible College (USA) to make it happen. So, the pressure was on.

## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

This was the first time that we personally had to take part in planning Youth Rally, and it was our first time planning any rally at all in fact. Thankfully, we had a team of seasoned veterans, taking the vanguard, and giving lots of useful advice and guidance. Without the support provided by each and every one of them, we would have been as lost and clueless as we were when the planning initially began. We learnt many things during this time, not just about how to run a rally, but also about inter-church relationships, the current state of the youths in general, as well as just how enthusiastic the aunties at church can be when it comes to feeding the youth!

Overall, the experience we had planning the Rally is one we would treasure, especially since we got to know so many people from different churches and walks of life, getting to know their stories, and see them in action faithfully serving the Lord.

Seeing the Brethren youth together with their friends come together was also quite the special experience. It gives hope that the youths are willing to come together for the Lord, and seeing many of them serve in many different forms during the Rally really showed us how much potential there was for the youths to flourish serving God, given the opportunity.

Once again, we are very much thankful to CBSM for being the supporting organization for the Youth Rally, acting as a firm steady pillar of support for us to rely on as well as our Planning Team. We are grateful to the Publicity & Design Team who put in great effort to make the event visible on social media and generate so much excitement to engage the participants, and the Media Team who gave their time to take photos and videos. We also give thanks for the many helpers moving behind the scenes, and to all the attendees who travelled far and wide to join the Youth Rally. It was amazing seeing all of you this year, and we pray that we may see all of you next year, and also new faces too! God Bless!

**- Andrew Tan (Bandar Sunway Gospel Centre) & Ivan Lim (The Life Chapel),**

**Co-Chairs, Youth Rally Planning Team 2024**

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The CBSM Youth Rally 2024 was profoundly inspiring, bringing together over a 100 youths from various churches across Malaysia to worship and delve into God's Word. This unity is essential for Brethren churches, where we often, as individual churches, face challenges in isolation. The Rally served as a powerful

reminder of the vastness of the Church of God and the true meaning of being united in Christ.

For many youths, it was a chance to step beyond the confines of their individual congregations and experience the broader Body of Christ.

Personally, serving alongside individuals from different churches, all driven by a shared passion for youth, was a deeply fulfilling experience. As one committee member aptly noted, our teamwork was so exceptional that even Marvel's Avengers would pale in comparison. It was truly an honour and privilege for Petaling Jaya Gospel Hall to host this year's CBSM Youth Rally.

Today's youths are a precious asset to the Brethren Church. While we are accustomed to focusing on preparing the next generation of leaders of tomorrow, it is crucial that we now begin the empowering of the emerging leaders of today. For years to come, may the CBSM Youth Rally serve as a catalyst for making this vision a reality.

**- Jonathan Wee (Petaling Jaya Gospel Hall),  
Logistics and Treasurer**

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As a member of the Planning Team, it has been insightful to discover that many Assemblies face similar challenges with their youths. Issues like distractions from worldly pursuits, struggles with identity, and the absence of reliable mentorship sources are common. This shared experience emphasizes the importance of learning from one another, allowing us to return to our local Assemblies better equipped to serve our communities.

Ultimately, we must reflect on what we are building here. Are we constructing with wood, hay, and straw, or are we laying down precious stones? As 1 Corinthians 3:12-13 reminds us, "If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, their work will be shown for what it is; because the Day will bring it to light." We give thanks to God for His guidance and provision throughout this event. May we strive to build a legacy that reflects our commitment to Christ and serves the greater good of our local churches, giving all glory to Him in our efforts.

**- Lim May Hsin (Sungai Long Chapel),  
Registration & Admin**

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# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

Being a part of the Youth Rally Planning Team is incredibly impactful. Witnessing young people from various congregations come together to worship God and delve deeper into His Word is truly inspiring. I am particularly heartened by the sight of young adults stepping up to lead and coordinate such events. It demonstrates that the younger generation is eager to contribute to the church, given the opportunity and support from us.

My hope and prayer are to witness numerous youth wholeheartedly surrender their lives and strengthen their faith in the Lord Jesus through their involvement in this yearly gathering.

**- Alicia Yong (Bandar Sunway Gospel Centre), F&B Coordinator**

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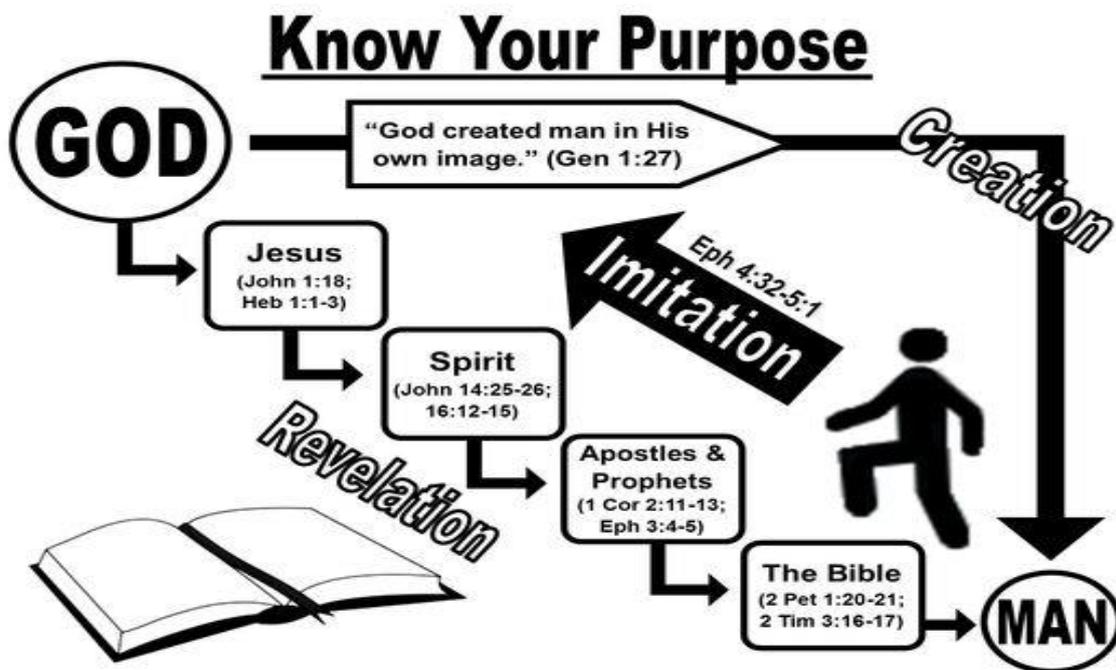
Being part of the planning committee for the 2024 CBSM Youth Rally was both challenging and deeply fulfilling. The night before the Rally, and certainly on the day itself, the Youth Rally Planning Team's energy was infectious. Their faces radiated joy and love as they served the next generation, with everyone stepping up to play their part. I was also grateful for the CBSM Board of Trustees' presence throughout the day, showing genuine support and interest in what the youth were learning.

The F&B Team's role was to ensure a warm and welcoming atmosphere, and as the saying goes, "an army moves on its stomach." We knew the Lord's Army of young warriors-in-the-making needed to be well-fed, especially growing adolescents. It was a joy to see them rave about the delicious Chicken Rice! I'm also incredibly grateful for the generous aunties and uncles who donated snacks – we had such an overflow that it felt like a feast.

Beyond the food, what truly moved me was the love, commitment, and sacrifice of the "big brothers" and "big sisters" in the Planning Team. Their dedication was evident, from tending to the smallest details—like the meaningful shapes of paper clips—to handling the "big deals" like moderating workshops and ensuring that CBSM Board of Trustees and outstation guests were well hosted. "Serve one another humbly in love" (Galatians 5:13) truly came to life through their actions.

"It takes a village to raise a child," and that truth was never more evident as we came together to raise and equip this generation.

**- Janice Wong (SS Gospel Centre), F&B Coordinator**



# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

## Nilai Gospel Chapel: Sanctuary Home for Elderly Folks

Nilai Gospel Chapel, Fred Tan & Andrew Peng ([nilaigc2016@gmail.com](mailto:nilaigc2016@gmail.com))

### Proposal for Endorsement and Blessing: Sales of Fully Furnished Sanctuary Home Room for Elderly Folks



Nilai Gospel Chapel (NGC) is a Brethren Assembly that provides opportunities for growth in the love, knowledge, worship & service of Jesus Christ as well as fellowship with believers in a Christ-Centred & Biblically Oriented environment.

NGC (English) had its first inaugural worship on 20 December 1998. Four assemblies, namely Jalan Imbi Chapel (JIC), The Life Chapel (TLC), Bangsar Gospel Centre (BGC) & Seremban Gospel Chapel (SGC) agreed to come together in September 1997 to start the English work in Nilai in view of the potential growth of nearby new industries, colleges & universities.

There was a serious need for a Christian managed home care for the old-aged people in Nilai. Hence, in 2019 a plot of land was offered to NGC and was subsequently purchased. The land is situated near Nilai Springs Villas. This project is named “NGC Sanctuary – Community Living” We are writing to present a comprehensive proposal for the establishment of a fully furnished sanctuary home for elderly folks within our church community. This project aims to create a safe, comfortable, and nurturing environment for our elderlies.

As believers, we share a common bond and a calling to care for those in need, particularly elderly believers who have dedicated their lives to the faith. The proposed sanctuary home is a testament to our shared values and a tangible expression of our commitment to providing them with the utmost care, support, and dignity as they enter a new phase of their lives.

#### Key Salient Points:

##### 1. Purpose:

To build a fully furnished sanctuary home for elderly folks within a Christian community.

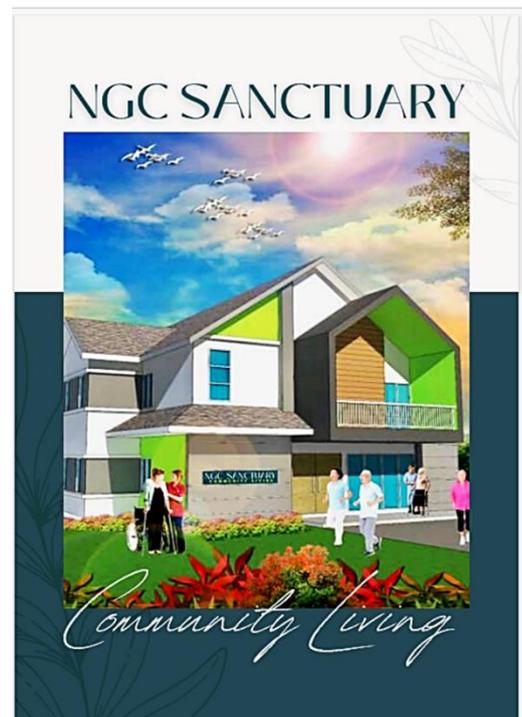
To provide a safe and comfortable living environment for seniors and elderly believers.

##### 2. Project Overview:

About 10 fully furnished rooms for 20 to 25 residents on the ground floor and dormitories for 6 to 8 male and 6 to 8 female residents/helpers on the first floor. An open space on the flat roof is designated for general usage as well as activities like pickleball.

With essential amenities, encompassing a total build-up area of approximately 10,000 sq. ft. A common facility area to promote social interaction, including shared spaces for activities and fellowship. A carefully planned design to meet the physical, emotional & spiritual needs of our elderly residents.

The front end of the building will consist of a double-story structure designated for the community centre ministry under Nilai Grace Community, a ministry of Nilai Gospel Chapel. The blueprint of this ministry is still in discussion, and we seek your prayers for its successful development.



## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

### 3. Approximate Cost Breakdown:

Initial Building Cost: RM1.70 million.

### 4. Challenges:

Building Approval: The project is awaiting submission and approval from local authorities due to its location in a residential area. Prayers are requested for this as well as the careful management and administration of the sanctuary and community centre.

### 5. Partnership and Financing:

Partners: The project initially had 9 partners with one partner withdrawal for personal reasons.

Partner Contributions: Partners in missions pledged RM160,000 each, totaling RM1.28 million. One of the partners agreed to take up another suite on a temporary basis bringing the total pledged to RM1.44m.

NGC Contribution: NGC will temporarily fork out RM260,000 for one suite and upper deck dorms. This was from our building fund which our members gave and from the love gift contribution from a few other assemblies as well as individuals who remain anonymous.

Additional Funding: Interest-free loans from JIC and Bangsar GC totaling RM200,000 to be repaid at RM40,000 per year over five years.

### 6. Current Status:

The project has not fully commenced yet, as it is still in the stage of obtaining building approval and finalizing contributions. Site clearance just commenced,

There are still 2 suites available for new partners.

### 7. Overall Goals:

The project aims to provide a comfortable living space for seniors and a sense of community within the NGC Sanctuary.

**Site clearance just commenced.**

The progress of this project is seen as a mission effort for the Kingdom, relying on the wisdom and provision from God to move forward.

Given the complexities and the need for approval and financial management, seeking wisdom and God's guidance is essential for the successful completion of the project.

### Scope of Target Group and Partnerships:

We are pleased to announce that we will offer the first opportunity to both NGC English and Chinese assemblies' members and Business Partners.

This partnership will allow us to create relationships that share the same values, fostering a larger community of support and care for our elderly believers.

If you are interested and have other queries on this project, you are welcome to contact us so that we may answer any concerns that you may have.

Your support and guidance are crucial for the success of this project, and we are confident that with your endorsement, we can bring this vision to fruition and positively impact the project to complete earlier.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



In His Service,  
*Fred Tan & Andrew Peng*

**Nilai Gospel Chapel**  
**PT10398, Jalan BBN 11/3N, Desa Melati Putra**  
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# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

## A Matter of Distinction

Teo Pek Bing ([pekbing.teo@gmail.com](mailto:pekbing.teo@gmail.com))

What makes a “Brethren” assembly a “Brethren” assembly? There have been many attempts at defining the “Brethren” Distinctives. Some terms were used in attempts to better define the discussion. Some call it the Brethren Distinctives, or Assembly Distinctives, or Biblical Distinctives.

I contend that what distinguishes the **so-called** “Brethren” assembly is really our **Hermeneutics** (see footnote for definition). It is **NOT** our practices, tradition, roots (Plymouth Brethren), or even our theology. All evangelical churches believe in the authority and inspiration of the scriptures and a literal-grammatical-historical interpretation of the scriptures, and yet we don’t all hold to the exact same set of **Hermeneutics**. True, our practices are unique compared to many denominations but they stem from how we read the scriptures, i.e. our **Hermeneutics**.

### 1. Diligence to the Literal Word.

First of all, we take every part of the Scriptures more literally than our brethren in other denominations (yes, we are a denomination! More of that in another time). If we believe the scripture is the Eternal Almighty God’s Word, we ought to read it and understand it the way the Apostles did, i.e. literally. The Apostle Paul defended his teachings from the Word literally (Paul had only the Old Testament!). E.g. Gal 3:16 seed versus seeds.

The Lord Jesus Himself quoted from Deuteronomy 8:3 in Matt 4:4 But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by **every word** that proceeds from the mouth of God.’ (Also Luke 4:4). Unless there is a scriptural warrant that a word means something else, we stick to how the Word uses the word.

When the Scripture says, elders are to shepherd the church, do the elders then hire a “pastor” to do the shepherding in the church? (1 Peter 5:1-2, Acts 20:17, 28). Granted there are roles that are assigned to assist the elders, e.g. Sunday School Superintendent, Youth leaders, etc. And we do hire gardeners and janitors! But it is the elders who shepherd (pastor) the church.

Secondly, we try to not **approximate** the words of Scripture. E.g., when we read about elders and overseers, we don’t say they are pastors or leaders of the church. We choose to use the words of the Scripture. Yes, ours are translations but the translations attempts to get at the

meaning of the original. E.g., elders could be translated older ones, or the elderlies but never leaders or pastors.

Of course, there are figures of speech, similes, parables and illustrations in the Word but they are what they are and we know what they are.

### 2. Defining Definitions

Politicians are adept at choosing words that either convey or conceal. E.g., in the U.S. pro-abortionists will use terms like Reproductive Rights to mean women should have the right not to reproduce, i.e. abort their babies because they think it’s women’s right to choose when to abort.

Christians, in general tend to use the word “church” to mean the building in which they meet. Yet the Scripture uses it to mean the assembly of believers. Precisely for this reason that we do not name our buildings so-and-so church. If the Scripture does not use church to mean buildings then we will not. We are particular about words.

### 3. Distinction between Addressee and All People

We make a distinction between how God deals with mankind through the ages. And I don’t mean that God saves people in the Old Testament one way (by works) and people in the New Testament another way (by faith). Rather God does, from time to time, give instructions that are specific to individuals or groups which do not apply to others. E.g., God gave instructions to the **nation of Israel**, demanding that they obey the 10 commandments and the 613 Mosaic laws. They were not addressed to the church. Hence there is no difficulty with the 4<sup>th</sup> commandment on keeping the Sabbath (which strictly speaking, is on Saturday). Similarly when God told Joshua to go and conquer the land of Canaan, He was not expecting all Christians to do the same, spiritually or otherwise.

A key distinction we make is between the Nation of Israel and the Church in the New Testament. They are distinct but the Lord loves both and has different plans for each albeit some plans are similar. But they are distinct just as we treat each of our children differently (but fairly). Think boys and girls, age, personalities.

### 4. Distinguishing between Culture and Commands

The Scripture does have instructions that are cultural. E.g. greet one another with a holy kiss. This instruction did not come with any justification and occurred only once. However, there are other

## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

injunctions that are justified with rationales that are beyond culture. E.g., the issue of head coverings in 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 Before we get all upset, note that the **first** instruction (1 Corinthians 11:4, 7) is that **men ought to uncover** their heads in prayer (no baseball caps or hats) before he mentions women. The instruction is really to both men and women. Unfortunately, in our culture (and those of our forefathers), we **over-emphasized** the instruction to women. During our trip to the Western Wall in Israel, I observed that all Jewish men would wear the Kippah to perform their prayers at the wall. In fact, they provide free Kippahs for those who forgot to bring, or for the unlearned like me! Paul was really teaching something against the culture of the Jews, i.e. not according to the culture of that time.

Further Paul quotes several reasons that are not cultural for this instruction.

- a. v.3 Headship of Christ, man and woman
- b. v.8 Creation order
- c. v.9 Creation purpose
- d. v.10 Angels
- e. v.16 Same practice in all churches
- f. 14:<sup>37</sup> *If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the **commandments of the Lord.***

We need not be legalistic but we must admit that Paul was very adamant. It is symbolic of deeper spiritual meaning (headship and the other non-cultural reasons), perhaps not very different from the Lord's Supper and its meaning. (By the way, the Lord's Supper was commanded, "worship" meetings were not.)

### 5. Adapting to Change, True to Enduring Scripture

What exactly is the Scripture commanding? We must know the Scripture literally and understand the times. The Word of God is eternal and never changes but culture & communication methods (and technology) change. We need to make the distinction between what's eternal and what's evolving. 1 Chronicles 12:<sup>32</sup> *of the sons of Issachar who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, their chiefs were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their command;.* So, we too, need to know the times and the Word.

Paul while at Athens adapted his communication without compromising the message. (*Acts 17:16-34*). Methods change but the Message remains. We must make the distinction.

### Conclusion of the Matter

Finally, no doubt there are difficult passages. We trust God to reveal/illuminate in His time. In the meantime, we obey what has been revealed and understood. We continue to seek and grow in the knowledge of His Son. And we may have differences but we must always act in **love**.

Our distinctive is really in our **view** and **reading of the Scriptures** (Hermeneutics), **not** traditions or practices, or what we **traditionally** believe, or what our forefathers taught (with all due respect). We must continually **Compare the Scriptures** with the **Current Situation** and determine the best course to **Reach the Lost** and **Build the Saved**.

### **Notes:**

**Hermeneutics** (Merriam-Webster): the study of the methodological principles of interpretation (as of the Bible).

**"Word", "Scripture" and "Bible":** I use these words interchangeably to mean the same thing, i.e. the 66 books of the Protestant Bible in the original autograph.

# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)



## BER - School of The Shepherds

Robert Quay ([robertquay@gmail.com](mailto:robertquay@gmail.com))

### Introduction

**Biblical Eldership Resource (BER)** Mission is to promote and encourage the practice of Biblical Eldership and to build up elders and leaders in the church worldwide. Notably the Biblical principles and moral standards apply to all believers.

In July 2016, Alexander Strauch and his US BER Team invited Robert Quay to represent BER in Malaysia, followed by Chris Leong in 2019. Robert (formerly elder of Jalan Imbi Chapel) and Chris (Antioch Network Community) are both retired elders and currently regional representatives for **BER** Ministry for Southeast Asia. Robert together with Chris have many years of training experience and are itinerant speakers of churches.

Robert was responsible for flight crew safety training with Malaysia Airlines for 29 years before his retirement. Chris was an elder and pastor of Antioch Network Community, and founder of Mission Partnership Initiative (MPI) to train Christian Leaders using resources from Bible Training Centre for Pastors (BTCP), BER and Leader Source to train bi-vocational and full-time workers. BER Southeast Asia has other capable team members below who are also capable facilitators, teachers & trainers. Contact the personnel below for further information.

### BER Southeast Asia Team

#### **Malaysia**

Andrew Lim ([andrewlst7@gmail.com](mailto:andrewlst7@gmail.com))

Dexter Ng ([sagcfamily@yahoo.com](mailto:sagcfamily@yahoo.com))

#### **Singapore**

Chia Eng Chuan ([ec\\_chia@yahoo.com](mailto:ec_chia@yahoo.com))

Stephen Yoong ([yoongys@gmail.com](mailto:yoongys@gmail.com))

#### **Philippines**

Francis Puzon ([fmpuzon@yahoo.com](mailto:fmpuzon@yahoo.com))

## 1. SOTS 103 – SPIRITUAL MATURITY

In December 2016, the 1<sup>st</sup> Spiritual Maturity Program (**SMP**) or SOTS103 (**S**chool of **T**he **S**hepherd), based on Qualification for Elders & Deacons was conducted. This is to address the important issue of the biblical qualifications required of men entering and remaining in the office of pastoral eldership. To date we have conducted twenty-two (22) onsite Spiritual Maturity Training in Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, South Africa and Vietnam.

The 31 criteria represent the benchmark of spiritual maturity that all Christians should strive to attain. Anyone wanting to grow spiritually would be well served to study the picture of maturity found in the qualifications. The program is an evaluation designed to help determine a person's Christian Maturity, measured by the standards set forth in Titus 1:6-9, 1 Timothy 3:2-7; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 20:28.

The materials in the Spiritual Maturity booklet are designed to encourage all believers to apply and grow in spiritual maturity. **SMP** is not for elders and leaders only but open to all believers. God demands that as believers we live according to His holy standards. Therefore, like living stones, we are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:5).

**SMP** can be conducted in homes, cell groups, camps, retreats and in the church. Sisters, especially wives with their husbands, are encouraged to participate in this program. In view of its popularity and importance for believers to grow spiritually mature, the 31 elements were conducted online weekly (Tuesday) in 2020 – 2021.

### Course Context

#### 1. DESIRE

- Spirit Motivated
- Godly Desire
- Eager to serve
- Not Reluctant

#### 2. INTEGRITY

- Devout
- Above Reproach
- Good Reputation
- Respectable
- Upright
- Exemplary



# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

## 3. THE WORD

- Faithful to the Word
- Able To Teach
- Exhort Sound Doctrine
- Refute Error

## 4. FAMILY

- One-Woman Man
- Manage Household Well
- Children Behaved

## 5. PERSONAL

- Lover of Good
- Prudent/Sensible
- Self-controlled
- Temperate
- Not a New Convert
- Not a Drunkard
- Not Greedy

## 6. RELATIONAL

- Hospitable
- Gentle
- Self-Controlled
- Not Lording
- Not Quarrelsome
- Not Self-willed
- Not Violent

*Subject of Pornography may be covered*

### Note:

SOTS103 Spiritual Maturity Program is a popular course which will be conducted online at a later date.

## 2. SOTS 101 – INTRODUCTION TO SHEPHERDING

**BER Southeast Asia** officially launched the 1<sup>st</sup> SOTS 101 in 2022 with 38 participants focused on Malaysia and Singapore. It gained a firmer footing within Malaysia, with many Malaysian assemblies from 4 in this pilot project growing to 16 assemblies and churches in Asia including some African Countries like Kenya, Nigeria and Zambia. This course is helmed by elder Dexter Ng from Shah Alam Gospel Centre.

SOTS101 is the basic of all six (6) SOTS courses. BER conducted Three (3) SOTS101 in 2022/2023, with a total of 71 participants from Grace Assembly in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah with Kenya in Africa joining for the first time.

Mission Partner Initiatives (**MPI**), partnering with **BER** conducted a 3<sup>rd</sup> SOTS101 for 43

participants from 4 nations. The **MPI** Team comprises 5 Malaysian elders, namely, Peter Tan, Dexter Ng, Daniel Wong, Rodney Tan & William Yeong. Thus, a total of 114 leaders attended in 2023. Since 2022 a grand total of 145 participants have attended SOTS101. On 4<sup>th</sup> July 2024, the 4<sup>th</sup> BER' SOTS101 was launched with 28 participants with some new assemblies participating.

### Course Context

Introducing the student to the School of the Shepherds and what biblical eldership is, which is foundational to the whole course.

1. Recovering a Lost Doctrine
2. Biblical Evidence for Eldership
3. Eldership and the Church
4. Eldership as Pastoral Oversight
5. Qualifications for Elders - Part 1
6. Qualifications for Elders - Part 2
7. Abilities of Elders and Examination
8. Work of Elders: Teaching and Protecting
9. Work of Elders: Leading and Healing
10. Graduation Celebration & Testimonies

### SOTS 105 SHEPHERDING BY PLURALITY

With the fire of enthusiasm and interest of many believers after SOTS101, the 1<sup>st</sup> SOTS105 course began in 2023 with 24 participants from 5 countries. A veteran elder who attended SOTS105 shared, *"I learned many precious lessons re accountability, communication and self-discipline . . .group discussion is a great platform to learn from each other"*. Another elder said, *"I was appointed as an elder and I did not know what the work of an elder is, until I attended SOTS105"*.

In February 2024, the 2nd SOTS105 began and was completed in July. A total of over 40 participants attended. This course is facilitated by Chris Leong.

### Course Context

Teaching foundational principles for practical shepherding in the context of a plurality of elders.

1. Shared Leadership
2. First Among Equals
3. Love Among Elders Part 1
4. Love Among Elders Part 2
5. Accountability
6. Communication Part 1
7. Communication Part 2
8. Self-Discipline Part 1
9. Self-Discipline Part 2
10. Graduation & Thanksgiving

# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

## **SOTS 104: COUNSEL of GOD**

We also launched SOTS4 (Counsel of God) in February 2024 with a record number of 50 participants from 6 nations that came from at least 24 churches! Elder Stephen Yoong (Bethesda Chapel, Singapore) is the main facilitator.

### **Course Context**

Elders & Leaders must know sound doctrine and defend truth. This course is a survey of essential doctrines an elder must know and be able to teach.

1. Creation and the Curse
2. Key Old Testament Covenants & Promises
3. The Lord Jesus Christ
4. Gospel Salvation Truths Part 1
5. Gospel Salvation Truths Part 2
6. The Holy Spirit
7. Walking Worthy of the Gospel
8. The Church
9. The End Times Events
10. Graduation & Thanksgiving

There are two other courses below that we have yet to embark on. This will be decided later.

## **SOTS 102: ELDER'S SPIRITUAL LIFE**

Developing the disciplines of an elder's spiritual walk. He must be able to guard himself, so that he can guard the church.

### **Course Content**

1. People Skills Part 1
2. People Skills Part 2
3. A Shepherd's Heart
4. Hospitality
5. Handling Conflict Part 1
6. Handling Conflict Part 2
7. The Diotrephes Syndrome
8. Meetings Part 1
9. Meetings Part 2

## **SOTS 106: MORE SHEPHERDING**

Continuing from the previous course, teaching the fundamentals of practical shepherding.

### **Course Content**

1. Becoming a Bible Reading Leader - 1
2. Becoming a Bible Reading Leader – 2
3. Becoming a Memorizing Leader
4. Becoming a Praying Leader - 1
5. Becoming a Praying Leader – 2
6. An Elder's Personal Life & Growth – 1
7. An Elder's Personal Life & Growth – 2
8. An Elder's Personal Life & Growth – 3
9. An Elder's Motivation

### **THE CHALLENGE**

Join us in our effort to promote and help assemblies and churches better understand the importance of Biblical Eldership (BE) and Leadership. What is BE? It is by the Book, Pastoral Leadership, Shared Leadership, and Qualified Leadership. The apostle Paul said, *Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.* [Acts 20:28-29](#)

[www.biblicaleldership.com](http://www.biblicaleldership.com) is committed and dedicated to helping you understand:

- What biblical eldership and Leadership is and why it is so important.
- How to implement biblical eldership in your local church.
- How to become more effective in shepherding God's precious flock.
- How to apply Biblical Principles for Spiritual Growth.

# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

## Rasah Gospel Chapel Community Centre (GCCC)

Ps Phang ([sgc.gccc@gmail.com](mailto:sgc.gccc@gmail.com))

Rasah Gospel Chapel Community Centre (GCCC), situated in Seremban under the oversight of Seremban Gospel Chapel, serves as a vibrant hub of community activities and spiritual growth. Since its establishment, the center has played a pivotal role in uplifting the local community through various ministries. Church services are held on Sundays, with an approximate congregation of 20 members.

Even before its inaugural church service on January 8, 2023, GCCC was actively used for educational and community services. These included tuition classes and a childcare center, alongside initiatives like praise dance sessions, all aimed at fostering holistic development.

On weekdays, the center buzzes with activity, welcoming around 70 students ranging from preschool to secondary school age. The dedicated team includes Pastor James, overseeing operations, 12 teachers engaged in the tuition center, as well as a driver and security guard.



### Praise Dance

A highlight of the week is the Praise Dance sessions held four times from Tuesday to Friday mornings, where community members come together to dance to Christian music. Beyond promoting physical health, these gatherings serve as opportunities for evangelism. Each session begins with a prayer, blessing the participants and providing a platform for the gospel to be shared.



### Student's Learning and Support Programme

Central to GCCC's mission is the Student's Learning and Support Programme (SLS), which not only supports academic growth but also nurtures emotional and spiritual well-being among students. Many young lives have been transformed through this initiative, with numerous children discovering a newfound enthusiasm for learning and encountering Jesus Christ for the first time.



# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

## Bible Study



Every Wednesday, a group of 8 women gathers to study the Bible at Rasah Gospel Chapel Community Centre (GCCC). Some of them had just recently come to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord through one of our ministries. The presence of these new believers is a source of great encouragement, affirming the impact of our ministry efforts.

## Evergreen Chinese Class

Several years ago, a group of 19 elderly individuals, all non-believers, sought a venue to learn Chinese together. Through what can only be described as divine providence, they chose our church for their weekly classes, accepting Pastor James' offer to preach the gospel during the initial 30 minutes of each session. Pastor James seized this opportunity to delve into biblical truths, effectively sowing seeds of the gospel. Recently, one participant made the life-changing decision to follow Jesus, a powerful testament to God's grace in our ministry.



## SLS Seremban 2 Heights



In March 2024, fueled by faith, we expanded our reach by establishing a new branch of the Student's Learning and Support (SLS) program in Seremban 2 Heights, approximately 10 kilometers from Rasah. Mirroring our successful model in Rasah, this centre aims to support more school children academically while sharing the message of Christ. Currently staffed by 5 members, including the program coordinator, it aims to grow from 7 students to possibly 20-30 in the near future.



## Evergreen English Class

May 2024 marked the beginning of another impactful initiative as 8 seniors started attending weekly English classes known as the Evergreen English Class, mirroring the format of our Chinese class for the elderly. This setting provides another avenue to reach receptive hearts with the message of the cross, with the initial 30 minutes devoted to singing, prayer, and biblical teaching.

## SLS Donation Drive 2024

The SLS program operates across three venues, including Seremban town center, Rasah Jaya and Seremban 2, collectively serving 155 students. Many of these students, 55 in total, require partial or full subsidies to afford tuition fees. Annually, our church organizes donation drives to sustain these vital initiatives. We invite anyone moved by our mission to contribute to our ministry through online banking at the account provided below.

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**Bank Name: Hong Leong Bank Berhad  
Malaysia  
Account Number: 011 001 40522  
Account Name: Seremban Gospel Chapel  
(Chinese)**

Please forward your transaction slip to the person in charge of the donation drive, Brother Khoo Jay Sern +6012-2286535. An acknowledgment receipt will be issued for each donation.

For more information about the SLS program and our church, please visit our YouTube channel via the QR below.



Student's Learning and Support Programme

### AI (Artificial Intelligence) – How do we cope? What are the guidelines?

Ian Teoh ([ian.teohsc@gmail.com](mailto:ian.teohsc@gmail.com))

AI (Artificial Intelligence) has been part of our daily lives long before the recent entrance of ChatGPT into popular culture. From search engines (i.e. Google search) to content recommendation (e.g. Instagram Shorts) to targeted online advertisements, Christians have largely ignored the underlying AI technology powering these websites. Discussion has focused largely on the social & spiritual impact of these tools on Christian discipleship and growth.

The renewed interest and focus on AI come from the ability for AI to now comprehend and create text and media in a context sensitive and cohesive manner. This is made possible through advancements in 2 areas of AI, namely Large Language Models (LLM) for text related comprehension and generation and Generative Adversarial Networks (GAN) for artificial image generation. These developments have allowed AI to generate new content at a level of consistency and quality that was previously only reserved to humans. This opened the pathway for automating the generation of mundane textual information generation (e.g. summarizing graphs, meeting minutes). One then wonders if we can use AI to generate Bible study materials that are coherent and useful. The generation of Bible study materials require careful Biblical exegesis and interpretation. If this is done for us by the AI, how do we know what's shown is accurate? Where is the AI getting its sources from?

One thing for sure is that AI tools are not “conscious” in any appreciable manner. Words such as “comprehend” and “create” are meaningful only in the sense of how a parrot can seemingly comprehend and create human speech. LLM are indeed very advanced models of human knowledge. They are products of mathematics and computation. It doesn't “know” or “create” like humans do. Human knowing comes from knowing God (Rom 8:28) and human creativity is rooted in us being an image of the Creator God (Gen 1:27). Only humans can truly embody the meaning of “create” and “comprehend” because we are created in the image of a creative and creator God.

Prior to AI, human knowledge (i.e. in contrast to artificial intelligence) was written down in the form of Bible study tools such as commentaries, dictionaries, translations, cross-references, and et-cetera. The goal is to present facts in a manner that's coherent and grounded in Biblical proof text which in turn is grounded in the actual historical findings of the original manuscripts. Furthermore, these tools are published and are open to checks and critiques, which further strengthen its ties to reality.

Consider the following text that's generated by AI when prompted<sup>1</sup> with “Provide me a summary on the book of John based on the theology in the book of Exodus”:

*\*\*The Tabernacle as a Foreshadowing of Heaven\*\*:* The Gospel of John highlights the concept of Jesus as the “tabernacle” or dwelling place of God among humanity (John 1:14, Colossians 2:9). Just as the tabernacle in Exodus symbolized God's presence with His

<sup>1</sup> Prompted on Meta Llama 3.1 on Instruct 7B Q6\_K.

## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

*people, Jesus embodies this presence and offers a new way for people to dwell with God.*

The output is coherent and logical but it's difficult to attest its truthfulness. Furthermore, these sentences are produced on the fly and thus haven't had the opportunity to be checked and critiqued by fellow Christians. It's impossible to review and critique a moving target, much less one that is not published. Therefore, the entire burden of ensuring truthfulness rests upon the AI user. This is not ideal as no one has a monopoly of human knowledge and everyone is susceptible to errors and biases.

Do attempt to spot the theological errors stated. The author observed at least 2.

AI advocates would argue that: firstly, proper prompt engineering will yield better results; secondly, AI tools are as good as those who wield it; thirdly, better LLM may yield better results. All are valid counterpoints. One can even request the AI to state its line of reasoning and source material. But again, it's drawing its answers computationally instead of from sources that are grounded in physical realities. A mathematical model can't bridge the conceptual and physical. Its argument can be logical and even rational but may not be ultimately empirical.

Therefore, for the purpose of Bible study, the recommendation is to use AI tools, not as a spotlight, but like a flood light. When searching for a needle in a haystack, an AI tool can illuminate a general search area with respect to the questioner's context. Once illuminated, one must do the due diligence of sourcing for proof texts to ultimately locate and ground the proverbial needle in empirical evidence.

As with all other man-made tools, AI will have its strengths and weaknesses. The Pandora's Box of AI has been opened and we will have to track its consequences, if not for ourselves, then for the church. Let us consider what God has warned us in Jeremiah 23:16 (NIV):

*16 This is what the Lord Almighty says:  
"Do not listen to what the prophets are prophesying to you;  
they fill you with false hopes.  
They speak visions from their own minds,  
not from the mouth of the Lord.*

Christians should be careful not to project the "mind" of an AI into Biblical teachings. Any AI generated Bible study or interpretation needs to be taken with much caution and validated diligently. Users of AI tools are ultimately responsible for its right and proper use. With proper use, AI will be another tool in our toolbox in our pursuit of understanding the deep truths in God's Words.

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### GLO Australasia Conference, 2024 You Can Tell a Lot About a Person by Their Friends

Andrew Cowell ([andonindo@gmail.com](mailto:andonindo@gmail.com))

There is a saying, "*You can tell a lot about a person by their friends.*" If so, what can be learned about you from your friendships? For example, how diverse is your group of friends? How many different generations are represented? What about nations? Genders? Different social classes?

There is no doubt about it; a lot can be learned about a person by their friends, and the same is true for a mission organisation. From April 15 to 18, GLO Ministries held the GLO Australasia Conference at Jalan Imbi Chapel, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Aptly, the theme for the conference was "Friends On Mission."

So, what can be learned about GLO Ministries from the "Friends On Mission" who attended the GLO Australasia Conference? Upon reflection,

what can be learned is that by God's grace, GLO Ministries enjoys:

- Multicultural friendships, with over 80 people from 14 nations gathered for the conference, including people from Australia, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Mongolia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, The Philippines, Romania, Singapore and South Korea.
- Multigenerational relationships, with Gen Z, Gen Y, Gen X, and Baby Boomers all being represented.
- Prayerful partnerships, with each day starting with delegates gathering in small prayer groups and each session opening and closing in prayer.
- Gospel-based companionship, with six training sessions that shared simple yet effective ways to engage in friendship evangelism.
- Practical and tangible mateship, with two workshops explaining cross-cultural ways

## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

to B.L.E.S.S. people (see the sidebar for more details).

- Pastoral friendships, with delegates participating in both informal and formal shepherding sessions.
- Worshipful fellowship, with each session starting with contemporary worship and the conference being concluded by celebrating the Lord's Supper together.
- Personal relationships, with participants taking advantage of extended meal breaks, group outings, and lots of free time to relax and catch up with new and old friends.

Apparently, you can learn a lot about GLO from the GLO Australasia Conference and from the friends who attended! Arguably, however, the most telling thing of all was how the conference was concluded. After three days of studying the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus, the concluding prayer committed more than 80 people from 14 nations to "go and make disciples of all nations" by following Jesus' example of being "Friends On Mission" together.

P.S. I can't wait to hear how the Lord has answered that prayer when we gather our "Friends On Mission" together again next year from 22 to 24 April!

If you would like to see some snapshots of "Friends On Mission" in action, click on the following link to view a short conference video.

<https://tinyurl.com/GLOAustralasia24>

### B.L.E.S.S. Stories

During the GLO Australasia conference, participants were trained to B.L.E.S.S. others as a simple and tangible expression of "Friends On Mission."

B = Begin with Prayer.

L = Listen with a Care.

E = Eat Together

S = Serve in Love.

S = Share your Jesus Story.

### Malaysian Masterlife Meat Up Meals

Titus, a GLO Malaysia Discipleship Training School graduate and Church Planter in Sungai Long, Malaysia, attended the GLO Australasia Conference with his daughter, Olivier. After the conference, Titus decided to B.L.E.S.S. those **Brethren Assemblies History**

attending the Masterlife Disciple Making Training by adding "Meat Up Meals" to the sessions.



### Cambodian Nonya Curry Connections

Kian Huat and Akiko, commended missionaries from Singapore serving in Cambodia and having established the Sangkhim Canaan School, implement B.L.E.S.S. every Sunday night by inviting "already friends of Jesus" and "not-yet friends of Jesus" to enjoy a Singaporean-like hawker stall experience by serving them authentic Singaporean dishes like Fried Hokkien Mee, Laksa, and Nonya Curry.

### Multigenerational Filipino Friendship

After finishing the conference, Jerome, an up-and-coming church leader in the Philippines, prayed that God would give him an opportunity to practice B.L.E.S.S. Upon returning home, he discovered an elderly neighbour lying sick outside his house. Jerome politely offered to care for the elderly man while his daughter went to work. As the elderly man neared the last stages of his life, Jerome had the opportunity to share the gospel, and the Catholic man, who was non-verbal by this stage, responded by lifting his hands and smiling. It is hard to tell for sure, but it would be great if this elderly man became eternal friends with God by trusting in Jesus Christ as His Saviour!

## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

### Burmah Road Gospel Hall

Colin Tan ([colinfan@outlook.com](mailto:colinfan@outlook.com))

Assembly work in Penang has been progressing steadily since the 1860's. Today, there are four English-speaking assemblies on the island and another two on the mainland. (Assembly work in other languages, for example, Chinese and Tamil, is also being carried out in the state.) The oldest of these is Burmah Road Gospel Hall or BRGH in short.

#### 1860 – 1938: Farquhar Street

Assembly work, however, did not begin at Burmah Road but at Farquhar Street. It was initiated in 1860 by Mr. John Chapman, and he was helped by his wife and Ms. O'Callaghan. The three were from the assembly at Bristol in England. Mr George Müller, an elder of the Bristol assembly and "one of the spiritual giants of the 19th century"<sup>2</sup>, supported the work with practical fellowship and prayer.

The Chapmans lived and worked in Penang for several years before moving to South Africa. During their time here, a Boys School was established, and the gospel was preached to prisoners.

The Chapmans were succeeded in 1866 by the MacDonalds. They spent 44 years serving the Lord in Penang. Mr. MacDonald was the one who

built the Farquhar Street Mission Chapel and Mission House. He also travelled far and wide, preaching the gospel of Christ in Balik Pulau, Sungai Petani, and Pulau Jerejak, the leper island just off the coast.

The MacDonalds were later joined by the Ashdowns. Mr. Ashdown was a "very fluent" Hokkien speaker who spoke "a very high standard of Hokkien".<sup>3</sup> He presumably learned the dialect so that he could do the Lord's work more effectively. Such dedication is indeed commendable. Both husband and wife laboured 34 years for the Lord before returning home.

There were, of course, many others who came after the "pioneers". They included but were not limited to Mr. Sidney S. Adams, who later married a fellow missionary, Mr. & Mrs. Albert E. Phillips, and Mr. & Mrs. William Wilson, the last of the foreign missionaries. These men and women came from diverse homelands and backgrounds, but they all had one thing in common: They loved the Lord, the Lord's people, and the lost.



The saints at Farquhar Street Chapel (circa 1921)

<sup>2</sup> These were the words of Dr. Harry A. Ironside, who was himself a spiritual giant, albeit in a different era.

<sup>3</sup> This was the opinion of the late Mr. Sidney S. Adams, an Australian missionary based in Penang and a competent Hokkien speaker himself.



## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

### 1938 – 2010: Burmah Road

It was announced in 1938 that “From May the 25th onward, all services now held in Farquhar Street Chapel will be held in the Burmah Road Hall”. Why the relocation? As Mr. Adams put it, the Chapel was by that time “very small” and “very inadequate”, so a larger hall was required. Also, why “Burmah Road Hall” and not “Burmah Road Gospel Hall”? Burmah Road Hall was the original name; but a name change was thought necessary to differentiate it from other types of halls commonplace at the time (for example, cabaret halls and dance halls).

A building’s name is important; but its purpose is as, if not more, important. The saints of 1938 were crystal clear about the Hall’s purpose, and this was their prayer—that “the building may ever be to the glory of God, in the salvation and upbuilding of souls”. And from that building, many works were later launched.

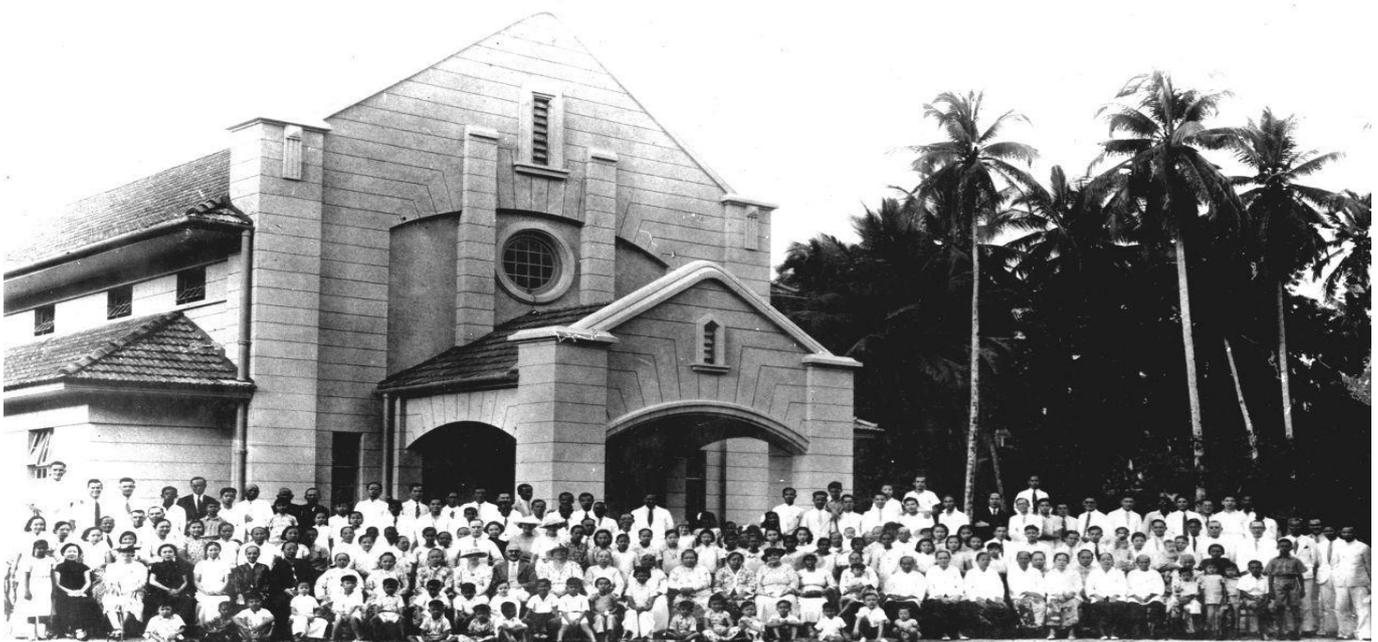
But things did not get off to a good start when they are seen from a *purely* human perspective. For not long after the relocation came the Second World War and the Japanese Occupation. During the Occupation, some foreign “Brethren” missionaries were interred in Changi Prison, Singapore, while others managed to leave Malaya. Yet assembly testimony never stopped during those tumultuous times: it continued under the leadership of locals such as Mr. G. N. S. Sabapathy, Mr. J. Samuel, Mr. Tan Wah Kim and Mr. Tay Hooi Keat. And to the glory of God, at

least 60 people were saved and added to the fellowship during those dark years.

Large-scale work became possible after the War ended. One example is the Bible Camp, the first of which was held in 1947. There was, however, a scarcity of suitable campsites in those days, so BRGH decided to build one with the Lord’s help. The result was the Christian Convention Centre (CCC) in Batu Ferringhi which opened its doors for our Father’s business in 1963.

Indeed, physical buildings are sometimes needed for the “salvation and upbuilding of souls”. Hence, BRGH was involved in a number of other building projects. These included but were not limited to Butterworth Gospel Hall (1959) and Sungai Nibong Gospel Hall (1982)—the so-called “daughter churches” of BRGH. But the biggest and most challenging of them all was BRGH’s own new building project. The project itself begs the question: Why a new building?

Perhaps unbeknown to many, BRGH is home to two assemblies: the Chinese-speaking assembly (CSA) and the English-speaking assembly (ESA). In the 1990’s the two assemblies agreed that the hall and its ancillary buildings could no longer meet their needs, so a new building or buildings were needed. (Eventually, each assembly submitted its own plans, and so, today, each assembly has its own set of buildings.) What is noteworthy is that the brethren met for the first building committee meeting in November 1995, but the ESA met to remember the Lord for



The saints at Burmah Road Hall (circa 1938)

## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

the first time at its new building in October 2013. In other words, it took 18 years to complete the project! This is a long story for another day. It should, however, be pointed out that it took a “political tsunami”<sup>4</sup> for the building plan to be approved and a financial catastrophe<sup>5</sup> to bring construction costs down so that the project could move forward. Truly, God works in incredible ways!

### 2013 - Present: BRGH 2.0<sup>6</sup>

As alluded to earlier, the saints of BRGH have been meeting at the “new” Hall since October 2013. Not much history can be made within the short space of 11 years. Nevertheless, it is good to look back, for history is instructive. And if one were to take a good look at BRGH history—whether “ancient” or recent—one would see the hand of God upon many things.

A good place to start is 2023. Why this year? Because 2023 was a year of anniversaries, and anniversaries are an excellent time to count our blessings and see what the Lord has done.

To begin with, 2023 marked the 85th anniversary of assembly testimony at Burmah Road and the 10th anniversary of the new building. These milestones would not have been possible if not for our God whose faithfulness is great.

2023 was also the 60th birthday of CCC. It recently underwent renovation because of wear and tear, and the Christian Brethren Secretariat Malaysia’s Legacy Fund made a partial but substantial contribution towards the project. BRGH is grateful to CBSM and many other supporters over the years for their practical fellowship and to Jehovah Jireh, our God who provides.

Additionally, it is worth pointing out that the 75th iteration of the Bible Camp, which first began in 1947, was held earlier this year (25 Feb - 2 Mar 2024). Today, the Camp is no longer organised exclusively by BRGH but by the island-side assemblies on a rotational basis. The 2024 camp was jointly organised by Sungai Nibong Gospel Hall and Sungai Ara Gospel Hall.

One could, of course, look at all the other years, but the same pattern will repeat itself: Every year you look at, you will see the hand of God.

The apostle Paul wrote: “For everything that was written in the past was written to **teach** us, so that through ... the **encouragement** they provide we might have **hope**” (Romans 15:4 NIV).

That’s why histories are written. And that’s why histories ought to be read.

Finally, a short note on the present. Besides the weekly Lord’s Supper, BRGH has other meetings and ministries. They include the following: monthly Gospel meetings; mid-week prayer



The saints at Burmah Road Gospel Hall (2023)

<sup>4</sup> The opposition in the State became the government of the State in 2008.

<sup>5</sup> The collapse of US investment bank Lehman Brothers in 2008 and its ripple effects.

<sup>6</sup> The attentive reader will have noticed a gap in the chronology (i.e. 2010-2013). The reason for the gap: BRGH had to relocate to another meeting place for more than 3½ years so that the building project could proceed.

## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

meetings; Sunday School (known as “Lighthouse Kidz”); Youth Fellowship; Emmaus Bible Classes (every 2nd and 4th Sunday); regional Bible classes (every 4th Wednesday); Ladies Fellowship; community outreach; and short-term mission trips. Through these meetings and ministries, BRGH hopes to achieve a healthy

balance between the “salvation of souls” and the “upbuilding of souls”—for the glory of God.

*Interested readers may visit the website <https://brgh.church> to find out more about BRGH.*

### Taiping Gospel Hall

Dr. Tan Teong Ghee

([tanteongghee@yahoo.com.sg](mailto:tanteongghee@yahoo.com.sg))

In the 1860s, the missionaries in Penang Island paid regular visits to places on the peninsula, including Taiping which was an important tin mining town. According to one missionary Mr. William MacDonald, a mission station was set up in 1880 in Kota village near to Taiping town. There were 80 names on their roll then. They had a piece of land given by the government, situated near to many tin mines. A building of wood and thatch was erected for the mission, and it was big enough to hold 100 persons.

The missionaries work together with some Chinese brethren, one such person was Voon Kiong, a preacher and an evangelist. They had Chinese meetings as well as English meetings even in the 1880s. As the number of believers grew, Mr. Phillip J. Hocquard led the Brethren to apply for a land from the Sultan of Perak. They were given a land in Kota and in 1890 a new building of hard wood and stone foundation costing 700 dollars was erected. (Photo 1)

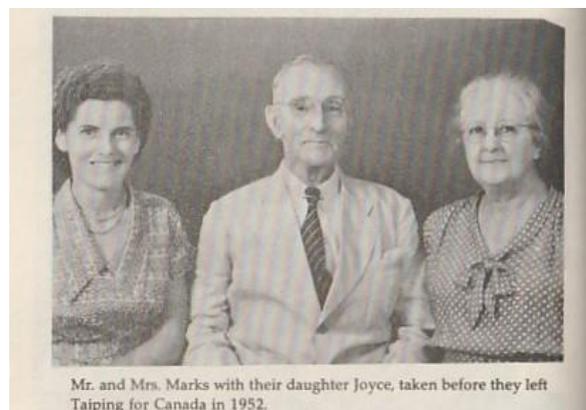


This building was later demolished to give way to tin mining. A new piece of land was given to the mission at Kota Road where the present Chinese Gospel Hall is now located.

By 1899, Sundays were usually very busy in Taiping, with the English meeting at 8-9am and Chinese meeting at 9.30am. Building of a separate hall for the English assembly was

started on a piece of land given for mission work at Main Road and on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1899 the English Hall was opened. The first gathering was around the Lord’s Table, followed by Gospel service and Watch-night service.

The longest serving missionary in Taiping - Mr. Harry Freeman Marks



Among the missionaries who came to serve in Taiping, there was one who served the longest time. He was Mr. Harry Freeman Marks from England who came to Taiping in the year 1900 at the age of 28, and only left in 1952 at the age of 80. He had the inner conviction that God had some work for him in distant land, a conviction also shared by his wife Rose, whom he married in 1898.

He heard about Taiping through another missionary Mr. Hill, who was on furlough in England. In obedience to God’s calling, Mr. Marks and his wife arrived in Taiping after a long journey and Mr. Marks gave the first Gospel message of the year 1900 in the new English Hall.

In addition to the work in English and Chinese Halls in Taiping, he travelled widely in Malaya, Siam, Burma and Sumatra to share the Gospel. Mrs. Marks spoke Hokkien quite well and did much work among the Chinese women. She passed away in Taiping in 1935.

Mr. Marks married again in 1938; the bride was Lily Loob who had served in Taiping back in 1918.

## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

The Markses were very gifted at visitation work. They visited families, fetched children for Sunday school and were remembered for being kind and loving to those they visited. Mr. Marks was a humble, simple but intelligent man of prayer. Weekly prayer meetings were held at their mission house.

During the Japanese occupation, all the missionaries were evacuated. The Markses went to Australia and were able to return to Taiping in 1946, much to the joy of the local believers. After serving faithfully for 52 years in Taiping, they left for Canada in 1952. Mr. Marks was called home in 1964, and Mrs. Marks in 1976. Praise to the Lord for their labour of love and a shining testimony of faith and steadfastness.



### The Present-2024

**Membership** - we have about 20 members meeting on Sunday morning for worship and Lord's Supper in Taiping Gospel Hall and about 10 members meeting in Kamunting Gospel Centre. Every first Sunday of the month, a combine meeting is held at Taiping Hall. Most members are above 50 years old and retired from work.

**Prayer meeting** – we used to meet on Wednesday at the assembly hall for prayer, but since the Covid 19 pandemic we had to modify the way we meet for prayer as a church. A change was made to conduct the prayer meetings on phones using social media application WhatsApp. More people came to join in prayer this way and the prayers can be viewed by everyone whose name is on the list of the WhatsApp group.

**Bible Study** – A group of brothers and sisters participate in a weekly group Bible Study on Thursday evening. It is conducted on Zoom

Video Conferencing. The study materials are taken from Bible Study Fellowship and others.

Since 2016, a regular meeting for people in their golden years was held in the house of Elder Sung Lai Su or at one of the church bungalows. It later became known as - Joy Fellowship. It is well attended by 10-20 people, coming together for singing, activities, sharing of God's word and also delicious good food. The meetings are more casual and serve to be a place to invite non-believers to come for fellowship.

Sunday School used to be held after the Sunday Worship Service, but since 2024, it was decided to move it to Saturday morning to enable more children and teenagers to come and participate.

Taiping Gospel Hall invited Dr. Khong YL to come and conduct his STEM Program in Taiping in 2023. We had had several such one-day event called STEM Carnival where up to 100 children participated and also smaller events called STEM Explorer in between the larger events. Marks kindergarten that was started in 1970s is still running. There are 2 classes, and we are praying for more children to enrol for next year.

**Kamunting Gospel Centre** – The building was completed in 2006. Since 2014, believers meet regularly in this hall on Sunday for the Lord's Supper.

**Visitation work** – Since late 2023, we formed a team of members who are willing to visit church members and non-believers that we know to pray for and to encourage them. Usually, the visiting take place on Sunday after church, but it can be on other days if the need arises. Peter Chit, a full-time worker who joined the church since April 2023 coordinates the program.

**Nursing Homes** - Several members together with elder Sung Lai Su goes to various nursing homes regularly on weekdays to minister to the residents.

**Home Fellowship** – We have meeting in the house of various church members on the last Friday of the month. These give members and friends a chance to get to know each other more and to strengthen the bond of love.

**The leaders** – We have 4 elders in the English Gospel Hall Taiping Assembly, they are Elder Subramaniyan, Elder Sung Lai Su, Dr. Tan Teong Ghee and Dr. Ferdinand. There are 2 deacons, Mr. Leow Kim Fong and Mr. Gunabalan.

## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

Looking ahead, we see that the average age of the church members is getting higher. The young people who grew up with the church have left Taiping to study and to work in bigger towns and

cities. The assembly need young adults to join and to continue this ministry that had started since 1880.

### Petaling Jaya Gospel Hall (PJGH)

YL Khong ([ylkhong1@gmail.com](mailto:ylkhong1@gmail.com))

*This article is written, with permission, using information from the PJGH 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary booklet, 2009*

In 1893, the Chinese Assembly work began in Kuala Lumpur. The year also marked the start of the Chinese Girl's School, the fore-runner of the Bukit Bintang Girls School (BBGS). In 1894, a church was built at Petaling Hill, later called Jalan Davidson and today referred to as Jalan Hang Jebat. Today, Kuala Lumpur Gospel Hall is situated on this site. In 1897, the English-speaking assembly commenced at Bluff Road Hall served by missionaries Mr. and Mrs. TR Angus (parents of David Angus), who served till the Japanese Occupation in 1940.

In 1922, the English-speaking congregation moved into their new premises at Venning Road. Among the Sunday School kids included names familiar to the assemblies like Elena Cooke and David Boler. Today, the Venning Road Chapel site houses the National Mosque.

The Japanese Occupation saw missionaries losing their lives or being detained at Changi. Venning Road Chapel itself sustained heavy damage. Venning Road Chapel and its congregation rebuilt after the war and ventured into new outreach works, including Emmaus Bible Correspondence School (formed 1950) and Evangel Book Centre (formed late 1950's).

In 1957, a small group began prayer meetings in the home of Dr Low Nan Wan at the fledgling suburb called Petaling Jaya. That same year, Bukit Bintang Boys School opened its doors to kids in this developing area. The primary school also hosted weekly prayer meetings as well as Sunday gospel meetings twice a month. Meanwhile, a half-acre piece of land was acquired along one of the first main roads in Petaling Jaya. IN 1959, Petaling Jaya Gospel Hall was completed at a cost of RM44,000. Low Nan Wan, Arthur E Perera, Willilam Wilson and Chang Kim Swee and later Alastair McGregor (principal of BBBS, secondary) were elders commended to lead the work In 21<sup>st</sup> March 1959, a congregation of about 35 people attended the church's inaugural service.

As the assembly grew through the efforts of the believers there. Believers from other parts of

Malaysia who were posted to Kuala Lumpur for work and higher education also added to the numbers. New elders were added – Ang Chui Pek (1965), David Boler ( 1966) and Lim Peng San (1968); they replaced William Wilson and Lown Nan Wan who left for Penang and Hong Kong respectively. Around the sixties, an outreach effort was made in section 14 and 17 leading to the formation of the Life Chapel. On 1st July 1967, The Life Chapel became autonomous with Lawrence Chan, Henry Philips, Chew Chye Thuan and Billy Tan Gim Hoe as the first elders.

To accommodate the growing numbers that outgrew the seating capacity of 200 pax in the main sanctuary, the annex was built in 1972 which was used for classes, wedding receptions and to accommodate congregation overflow. The annex also housed a small library.

The 1980's and 1990's saw a sprouting of new residential areas in the Klang Valley. This presented an opportunity for PJGH to birth 4 more assemblies namely:

SS Gospel Centre (30 March 1980); Subang Jaya Gospel Centre (3 Dec 1989), Banday Sunway Gospel Centre (23 Oct 1991) and Bandar Puchong Gospel Centre (2 July 1995).

PJGH was also privileged to partner with the Japanese Christian Fellowship for 2 decades during this period.

More elders were added to the Oversight during the 80's and 90's – Wong Chung Wha ( 1981), Koh Gim Lam (1986), Kong Yen Phooi (1988), Lee Hong Kwang (1992) and Ong Hock Chye, Ong Say Yuan, Tan Kim Shah & Yeoh Seng Kooi all in 1994. In that time, a piece of property next door was purchased and converted into the Mission House.

As so it came to pass, that after all the church-birthing, it was time for PJGH to take stick of herself. The 1959 building, though charming and cozy, was not equipped to accommodate the changes associated with the turn of the millennium. The Lord had blessed the congregation with increased numbers as well as

# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

a treasure trove of individuals. New forms of worship, new opportunities for ministry and, most importantly, God's leading, were all instrumental in the decision to rebuild PJGH as a state-of-the-art worship centre. The last Lord's Supper was held on 27th July 2003, before the old building was demolished. During the construction period, the congregation setup in the Mission House next door. On 11th November 2007, the official Dedication and Thanksgiving of the new 600-seater building was conducted.

In addition to regular services, the church hosts inter denominational, para-church functions and serves as a resource for Klang Valley's Christian fraternity. More importantly, it is God's witness to the community at large.

As we cross the big milestone, we must remember that our roots started with the Word of God and the confession that "Jesus Christ is LORD" (Phil 2:11). Just like the early Brethren, let us always be known as "the people of the Book". And let our heart's desire be to heed the Holy Spirit's leading for further growth – so our family album has no last page until our Lord returns.

Currently approximately 270 saints fellowship at PJGH and the elders helming PJGH and the years they became elders are Lee Wee Min (1998), Chew Phye Keat (2008), William Yeong (2011), Woon Chung Neng (2018), Yap Wai Shoong (2019), Benny Kong (2024).

## Gospel Hall Kuala Lumpur (GHKL)

Jimmy Chok ([jchokkh@gmail.com](mailto:jchokkh@gmail.com))

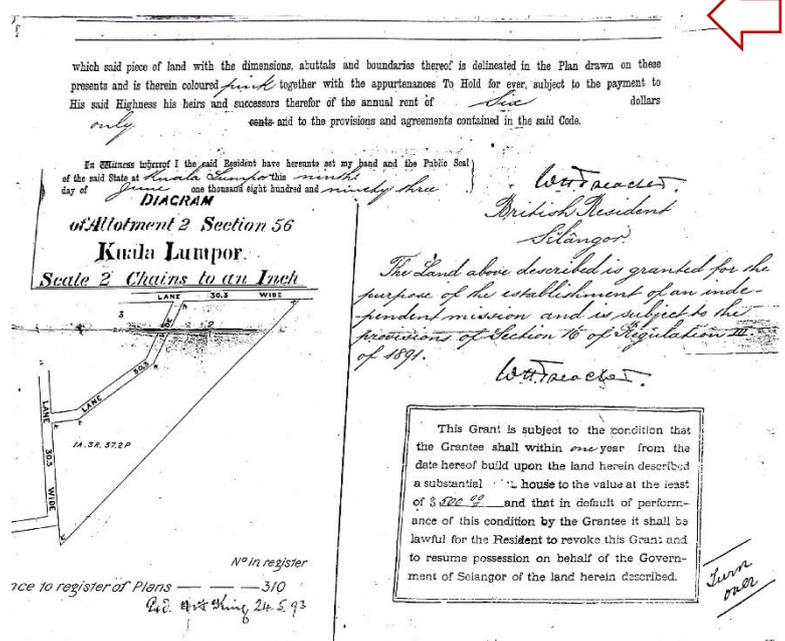
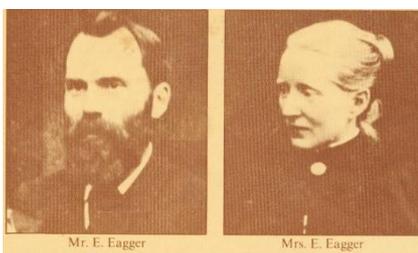
### Introduction

From the original Land Grant for the purpose of an "independent mission", the first Chinese speaking Assembly in Kuala Lumpur was born, i.e. the Gospel Hall Kuala Lumpur (GHKL). Many also refer to the Assembly as "Kuala Lumpur Chinese Gospel Hall" (KLCGH). One area of significance in the formative years of the Assembly was the first "Chinese Girls School" in Kuala Lumpur that operated on site.

Even briefly tracing the Assembly's long history of 130 years, we are filled with awe of God's Grace and the challenge of His Mission! This article only serves to share some bits of history of The Assembly early developments (see [Note](#)).

### GHKL and Early Missionaries: 1<sup>st</sup> Missionary Couple

In 1889, missionary couple Mr. & Mrs. E. Eagger arrived in Kuala Lumpur (KL) from Penang and wasted no time in commencing their Gospel Mission, both in English and Chinese.



The KL then was more of a "kampong" by today's standard. I have been told that the nearby Jalan Petaling was without proper drains in those days. Let alone the Mission challenges, the living conditions must have called for much sacrifices!

# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

In 1893, Mr. Eagger applied to the then government, and acquired a perpetual Land Grant for a piece of land on one slope of the Petaling Hill, Davidson Road. The purpose of the Grant was the establishment of an "independent mission" and the first buildings were two mission houses, one of which still stands today. There was also a wooden building with "attap" roof that served as the place for Assembly Gathering called "Chinese Gospel Hall".

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Missionary Couple

The 2<sup>nd</sup> missionary couple who arrived in 1903 was Mr. & Mrs Thomas R. Angus. They left Glasgow, Scotland, at the close of the 1800s. Mr. Angus served among the Chinese in KL for about 40 years, longer than all the early missionaries. He spoke Hakka and well known to many in Petaling Street as the small build "white man Pastor An" (安牧师) in white shirt, who talked about "Jesus" to everyone he met!



On the left is a November, 1938 photo of Mr. & Mrs. T R Angus' Retirement Farewell Gathering of the Chinese Gospel

Hall Assembly. In the immediate background is the wooden church building that served The Assembly for over 40 years.

We shall also learn later that this building also served as the first "Chinese Girls School" in Kuala Lumpur!

ladies and children around here! She served tirelessly in Jalan Davidson as well as in the Sungai Buloh Leprosy Settlement Gospel Hall.

About 6 years ago, the writer had the opportunity to meet Miss Gibson's nephew David in Gold Coast Australia.



(After Miss Gibson's retirement in the 1951, she had lived a number of years with her sister, David's mother, in Brisbane, Australia.)

David told me the story of his Aunty at the age of 4, while traveling by sea with her family from England to Australia, had a stopover in Singapore and declared her desire to return when she grows up to serve as a missionary! God valued her desire and heard her prayer!

In 1941, during the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, under the Japanese occupation, Miss. Gibson was imprisoned in the Singapore Changi Prison and endured a fair share of prisoner suffering but never did she regretted responding to the Missionary Call from the Lord!

On the right is a 1931 photo of the opening of the Sg Buloh Leprosy Settlement Gospel Hall. Missionaries and Brethren from GHKL have served there since opening. Over the years, many leprosy patients have passed through this Assembly Gathering place with some, by God's Grace, receiving Salvation. Most have Gone Home To The Lord and, now, a small outreach ministry in Bahasa Malaysia is ongoing. (That is another story!)



## Missionary Miss Margaret Gibson

Miss Margaret Gibson came from Australia to Gospel Hall Kuala Lumpur in 1928. She spoke perfect Cantonese and her happy and warmhearted nature were great attractions for



SG. BULOH 麻风病院福音堂开幕典礼 (1931)

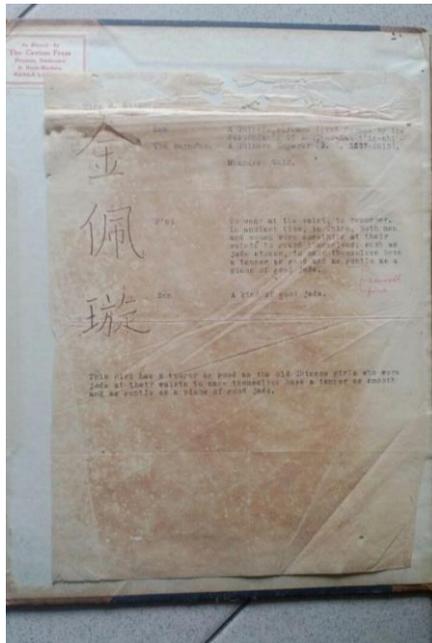
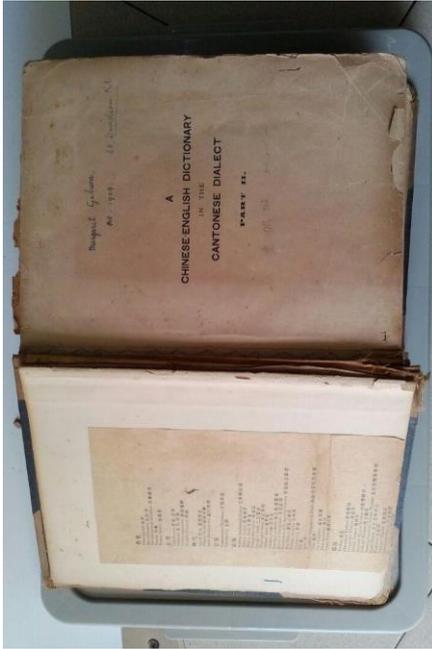
SG. BULOH 麻风病院居民同庆圣诞 (1988)



## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

Years later, before coming to GHKL to serve in The Gospel Mission, she did part of her education in Hong Kong where she learned the Chinese language and the Cantonese dialect.

Before she left on retirement, she parted with her invaluable "Chinese English Dictionary in the Cantonese Dialect" inscribed with her Chinese name, bearing testimony to her lifetime of Mission for The Lord, if we care to remember!



### Missionary Mr. David A. Angus

Mr. David A Angus was a perfect example of family missionary succession! He was the son of GHKL's 2<sup>nd</sup> Missionary Couple **Mr. & Mrs Thomas R Angus**. Mr. David Angus was born in Kuala Lumpur in 1904. His primary schooling was completed in The Chinese Girls School. He returned to Scotland to complete his secondary school education. In 1931, he heard and received the call from the Lord to return to Kuala Lumpur Chinese Gospel Hall as a full time missionary.

When the writer arrived in Gospel Hall Kuala Lumpur in 1968, Mr. David Angus was still serving in the Assembly as well as Jalan Imbi Chapel and The Gospel Hall in the Sg Buloh Leprosy Settlement. Speaking fluent Cantonese, he partnered well with the then first Chinese Missionary Pastor Mr. Mah Tham Soon. Other

than conducting regular Worship Gatherings of The Assembly, they regularly venture out in open-air street Gospel Services with small groups of local believers!

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, Mr. David Angus together with other missionaries were imprisoned in Singapore Changi Prison. In spite of the suffering of war and imprisonment, Mr. & Mrs. David Angus held on to the banner of Mission of The Gospel relentlessly!



An Open-air Gospel Service



Mr. David Angus, our Assistant Marriage Registrar



## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

### Our 1<sup>st</sup> Chinese Missionary Preacher Brother Mah Tham Soon (马潭顺传道)

In 1883, Brother Mah Tham Soon was born in Macau. When he was a teenager, his businessman father migrated the family to Medan, Indonesia. When he was 15 years of age, his mother took him back to Macau to have a Chinese education. He lived in Macau several years and also got married there. In 1905, at the age of 22, he heard and received The Gospel from an American Missionary in a Baptist Church and also received the water baptism there. In the face of many objections from his father, in order to follow Jesus and serve as a Gospel missionary, he finally decided to leave home and landed in Kuala Lumpur.

In 1914, he responded to The Lord's Call and commenced a full time missionary as the 1<sup>st</sup> local Chinese Missionary Preacher of the Kuala Lumpur Chinese Gospel Hall. He worked well with both senior Mr. Thomas R. Angus and son Mr. David A. Angus throughout the years. His mission fields included The Pudu Jail and the Sg, Buloh Leprosy Settlement Gospel Hall.



### Kuala Lumpur Chinese Gospel Hall and The Mission in Education

The history of this Assembly would not be complete without more accounts of the "Chinese Girls School" established on the very site of the now Gospel Hall Kuala Lumpur.

In 1893, **Missionary Miss Mary B. Langlands**, arrived in Kuala Lumpur, a land of The British Empire colony. She was shocked to find the majority of the girls she came into contact with were totally illiterate! Without second thought, she started to teach groups of adult ladies and young girls in the Brickfields area of Kuala Lumpur, to read and write.

Founder of Bukit Bintang Girls' School  
华人女子学校 创办人 (1893)

Miss Betty Langlands

1893 – 1895

In 1893, this missionary gathered a few women in Brickfields and taught them to read. This was the first girls' school in Selangor.



Under her leadership, in 1893, the "Chinese Girls School" using the Assembly Gathering place at Petaling Hills, i.e. at the current site where Gospel Hall Kuala Lumpur stands, was established! This was the earliest Mission School in Selangor.

In 1895, Miss. Langlands **invited Miss Bessie Maclay**, a missionary at that time to come from China to take over heading the School operation.

1<sup>st</sup> Batch of students for the Cambridge School Certificate Exam--1928



In the 1930s, the Chinese Girls School was relocated to much better and larger premises in Jalan Bukit Bintang and assumed the name "Bintang Bintang Girls School (BBGS)". The much acclaimed history of BBGS is well-known (even, I believe, among many of the readers of this article), but, today, let us not forget or overlook her formative years that started from "nothing"!

### Kuala Lumpur Chinese Gospel Hall and An Unknown Community Life of A Brethren

There was a Kuala Lumpur Chinese Gospel Hall brethren in the early 1900s that our archive has virtually no information on. The community around us knows more about him! Even then, when he Went-Home- To-The-Lord and the Wake Services were held in the Kuala Lumpur and Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall (KLSCAH) and many government dignitaries around the world turned up to pay their last respect, people were astonished of his position and standing!

Today, his tomb stands tall in the Cheras Christian Cemetery with the inscription: **"MR. TOO NAM, COOPERATOR IN THE FOUNDING**

# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA”!



杜南先生创建中华民国的贡献和地位  
MR. TOO NAM, CO-OPERATOR IN THE FOUNDING OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA

辛亥革命100周年，尤其是在吉隆坡教会（福音堂），不能遗漏此墓和墓主。



Here was a brethren who worked on God's Mission for him tirelessly but remained very low profile indeed. Today, we strive to continue to learn of him and from him. Other than his passion and role in the “**FOUNDING OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA**”, we Give Thanks To God for a brother such as Mr. Too Nam, who also:

- brought his grandchildren, including the late Dr. Too Chee Cheong who for many years operated a clinic in Jalan Sultan, to Sunday School in the Kuala Lumpur Chinese Gospel Hall (as recounted by Dr. Too Chee Cheong);
- left The Christian Faith in his family for generations;
- established a “Too Nam Co-ed School” in Pudu area of Kuala Lumpur, and introduced his very own version of Chinese Pinyin;
- served in the capacity of Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Bukit Bintang Girls School.

## IBCM Network Updates

Dear Brethren,

It is hard to believe that almost a year has passed since IBCM8, and it is with much joy that we are writing to you to let you know some of the outcomes of this global conference, to present our current ministry focus, and to communicate our hearts for the future.

### IBCM8 OUTCOMES

#### 1. YOUTH

As you know IBCM8 provided a much-needed focus on the youth, by integrating significant content to engage and encourage the younger generation. In the years leading up to IBCM8 we intentionally worked to ensure there was greater participation of our young people than at previous IBCM conferences. In KL we were blessed to have over 260 people under 35 years of age from all over the world. During the conference we organised the youth into regional focus groups and encouraged them to continue networking following IBCM8. This has resulted in:

#### IBCM8 YOUTH OUTCOMES

- **Rwanda National Youth Conference** – In November 2023 more than 200 young leaders from all Rwandan regions met together in Kigali, some of them for the first time, to start a Youth Network and to collaborate across Rwanda.

- **Pakistan National Youth Conference** – Inspired by what they experienced at IBCM8, the Pakistani leaders started replicating the youth panels in their churches, and in local and regional youth gatherings. Such events are being used in the lead up to the first National Pakistan Youth Conference, where more than 1000 young people from all over Pakistan are expected. The main speaker will be Nate Bramsen, one of the keynote speakers at IBCM8.
- **Malaysia Youth Rally** – Encouraged by the IBCM Network team, the Malaysian youth gathered in a united national rally in June 2023 just before IBCM8. They are planning a follow-up national youth rally again this year.
- **Zambia National Youth Conference** – Encouraged by the IBCM Network team, in August 2024 more than 1000 young people are expected to gather for their first National Youth Conference in Zambia. David Smith is the main speaker.
- **IBCM Europe Youth Conference** – IBCM Network is organising the first IBCM Europe Youth Conference together with the Polish youth team. This conference will be held in Wisla, Poland in September 2024.

# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)



- **Congo National Youth Conference** – Inspired by the IBCM Network ministry and IBCM8, the Congo Youth Ambassador together with other youth leaders from Congo are organising a National Youth Conference which will be held in October 2024.
- **Africa Youth Network** – Following the impact of IBCM8 and encouraged by the IBCM Network team, the Africa Youth Ambassadors started working toward their first Africa Youth Conference in 2026. They are organising a conference planning retreat in October 2024 in Kenya.
- **IBCM Central America Youth Conference** – The Youth Ambassador from Costa Rica together with youth leaders from other Central American countries have started planning for the first regional Central America Youth Conference.

## UNITY AND NETWORKING

Our motto is “Unity is Mission” (John 17:23). IBCM8 was intentionally focused on unity and inspiring greater networking and collaboration. Some countries have captured this vision and commenced initiatives to bring greater unity in their home countries:

## IBCM8 UNITY & NETWORKING OUTCOMES

- **Philippines** – National Leaders Conference and a Combined Church Conference held in October 2023.
- **Pakistan** – National Leaders Conference and the commencement of the Pakistan Brethren Network in November 2023.
- **Rwanda** – Encouraged by the IBCM Network team Rwanda had their first National Conference in 2022 and are planning the second one in November 2024.
- **Malaysia** – Following IBCM8 the Malaysian commenced a Church Planting Network.



# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

## 2. MISSION

Following the IBCM8 conference over 50 people were divided into international teams and participated in eight IBCM8 Go-Serve short term mission trips in Malaysia, Philippines, and Cambodia. Encouraged by this positive experience a number of mission initiatives have since commenced:

### IBCM8 MISSION OUTCOMES

- **Go-Serve Mission Opportunities**  
Host countries who experienced the IBCM8 Go-Serve impact have invited IBCM Network to facilitate the following Go-Serve mission opportunities in their countries in 2024:
  - Cambodia – Leader’s training & schools
  - Italy – Mission camp & refugee ministry
  - Rwanda – Working with teenagers in schools
  - Australians in Mission Together (AMT, the Australian Mission Service Organisation) has adopted Go-Serve to encourage more involvement in mission globally. AMT is working actively with IBCM Network to add new Go-Serve mission opportunities in the future.
- **Mission4LL**  
Inspired by IBCM8, AMT has organised an international team of Youth Ambassadors who along with the IBCM Network International Director, David Smith, conducted a mission tour of six Australian cities. Mission4LL is designed to expose people to mission worldwide and encourage greater engagement in local and overseas mission.

## IBCM NETWORK NOW

IBCM Network is committed to connecting and serving the Brethren community worldwide, which has churches and mission endeavours in over 160 countries, and includes over 40,000 churches. The attached 2023 report outlines the ongoing ministry of IBCM Network. See the Appendix/ below for some testimonies acknowledging the impact of our current ministry worldwide.

## OUR FUTURE VISION

In addition to the ongoing ministry of connecting and serving our network, the next few years will see us intentionally invest in:

- **YOUTH** - Actively developing regional youth conferences and widening the youth network globally.
- **REGIONS** - Assisting with the organisation and intentionality of the various regional conferences.
- **CHURCHES** - Visiting countries with international teams to encourage churches and strengthen leaders.
- **TRAINING** - Expanding the impact of the Brethren Training Network through greater collaboration worldwide.
- **MISSION** - Growing the networking of mission partnerships and serving opportunities.
- **GLOBAL** – Encouraging global networks and organising IBCM9 in Africa in 2027.



# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

## SUPPORTING IBCM NETWORK

In order to continue the work and accomplish the above, IBCM Network needs individuals, churches, and organisations to partner with us prayerfully and financially. Below you will find our 2024 target budget and our bank account details for your prayerful consideration. We look forward to having you partner with us. If you have any

questions or would like further information, please contact me at [david.smith@ibcm.net](mailto:david.smith@ibcm.net).

In His Hands,

Dr David Smith

**IBCM Network – International Director**

## Testimonies of National Leaders on the Impact of IBCM Network

### Daniel Ochieng (Kenya)

*“When the IBCM Network Team you came to Kenya, it gave our students a new energy for training. You gave them a new vision. In Kenya we lacked structured, systematic way of study and now have that.”*

*profound experience led me to envision a new women’s ministry named “Pastoral Care-God Cares,” dedicated to showing love, sympathy, and understanding. Now with the help of the Inkurunziza representative we have already conducted regional outreach where women church leaders were again trained by Sanja.”*

### Moses Omondi (Kenya)

*“In the past we thought that the Brethren work worldwide was just a small work. It was important to see people from different countries. IBCM8 also encouraged us to focus on the young people, the future generation of our churches. Now we know that the brethren movement has a future, because the young people are being encouraged to join. Having IBCM Network teams visiting various countries is very key. They help to encourage the local churches, they help to identify weaknesses in these countries and among these countries, and suggest ways to solve these weaknesses. I think this is how we are going to achieve a united front in the Brethren, and also this is how we are going to have more leaders growing for the future.”*

### David Power (Zambia)

*“We really appreciated IBCM8. The Brethren Church in Zambia is very divided. It was a great opportunity, especially for the youth ambassadors to come back to Zambia and try to talk about what is possible and what is happening in other parts of the world. I think gradually IBCM Network is even helping us in Zambia to become a little bit more united.”*

### Donatille Niyonsenga (Rwanda)

*“I write to share a heartfelt testimony of how God inspired the development of Go-Care Ministry among women in Rwanda through IBCM Network. During the National Rwanda Conference in December 2022, Sanja Zurovac shared the word of God (Isaiah 45:2-3) and her personal testimony. Her words deeply touched many hearts. This moment of vulnerability and honesty highlighted a critical need within our community: a supportive and empathetic environment for women to express their struggles and seek help. I felt a personal responsibility for not being approachable enough to those in need. This*

### Peter Calvin (Pakistan)

*“The lack of unity which was experienced for many years in Pakistan started disappearing with the help of IBCM Network. In particular IBCM8 gave a big blow to the spirit of disunity as the participants learned and experienced the joy of being united. More than 50 Pakistan participants, mostly young, attended IBCM8, and all of them came back with a renewed passion to serve the Lord in a spirit of unity and care. This passion was instrumental in giving birth to the Pakistan Brethren Network in November 2023. The young people in particular are excited about this network.”*

### Juvenal Ngendahayo (Rwanda)

*“Since IBCM Network came to Rwanda their work has resulted in the strengthening of our leadership and in greater unity among our churches. By working together in cooperation there has been an increase of believers and growth through the preaching of the good news. The elders, youth, and women leaders have*

## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

*benefited from the teachings of Go-Disciple, Go-Care, and accredited training through the International Training Project.”*

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### Aminadab Mbanzabugabo (Rwanda)

*“The young people commented that they thought that the global conferences were only for the older generation, but now they feel empowered... When the IBCM Network Team came to Africa we were not united, everyone was doing their own thing. They are contributing to uniting the body of Christ in Africa. We have been excited seeing a lady travelling as part of the team to do ministry among the ladies. Historically, ladies in Africa were taught they have no voice. But when they see another lady as part of the team, they are now motivated to encourage other ladies to grow.”*

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### Romel Vallejo (Philippines)

*“We gain a deeper understanding of the importance of building relationships with other churches in the Philippines. We are taking steps to establish closer partnership with other churches. We are looking forward to commencing the ITP theological training which will start in Philippines in 2024.”*



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## Doors Continue to Open: The STEM Outreach Work

Dr YL Khong ([ylkhong1@gmail.com](mailto:ylkhong1@gmail.com))

### **\*STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics**

We have been reporting the STEM Outreach Work since in Diakonia 2022 and 2023<sup>1,2</sup> and also in Echos International. Since starting this work in 2022, we have seen many opened doors in churches and schools around Malaysia and elsewhere. To date, more than 50 STEM programs have been run in about 30 locations in Peninsular Malaysia, Sarawak, Thailand, and Cambodia. As the requests to run STEM programs accelerated in 2024, it became apparent, we have to structure the programs to facilitate planning and communication about the programs and more hands will be needed to do this work.



Late last year, we started to structure our contents. Prior to that, we were just doing the activities in an ad-hoc manner. We now put our programs under the STEM Carnival, STEM Explorer, STEM Camps and Mobile Maker's.

The STEM Carnival starts with a Science Show of about 20 – 30 mins and then the participants are put into groups with each group moving through different stations of hand-on STEM activities. Each group spends 20 – 30 mins per station and then moves on to the next station. Typically, a STEM Carnival lasts 3 to 4 hours or half a day. The STEM Carnival can accommodate from tens to hundreds of students. It is a good way to introduce STEM programs that will be run in the church.

The STEM Explorer is a hands-on science learning activity where students are provided with a box kit with all the components and apparatuses to go through a workbook, Facilitators are present to assist the students. Typically, an Explorer topic runs for 4 to 8 hours and focuses on a single topic each time. Sometimes, some groups chose to run each STEM Explorer topic over several sessions spanning weeks or months. The Explorer is a

## From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

good way to promote continuous engagement with the audience. Over time, as they come to church many times to run the Explorer programs, they get to know the church and its people better. It was encouraging to hear some feedback that many of these people would not step into the church if it were not for the STEM programs.



We also ran several STEM theme based camps over 1 to 3 days. 3 of these were in the Scripture Union, Tapah campsite under nature-based themes as the site is surrounded by tropical forests. A couple of nature-based outings were also conducted in Taiping at the zoo and botanical garden there. Bukit Mertajam Gospel Centre had a mission camp at Cameron Highlands and STEM was used as a platform to engage a CF group and an Orang Asli community.

The Mobile Maker is a place where various tools are placed so participants can develop skills for innovation. One has been deployed at Sangkhim Hope School in Cambodia and another at SMK Selirik at Kapit, Sarawak. The Mobile Maker would allow participants with innovative ideas to try them out using the skills they related to the tools put in the Mobile Maker.

As of July 2024, 24 Carnivals have been conducted in 21 locations and 21 Explorers in 9 locations. Many requests continue to come in not only from the assemblies but other churches and Christian organizations.



Recently, the Christian Brethren Education Trust Board has provided a space at their building within the Bukit Bintang Boys School in Petaling Jaya, Selangor to set up a STEM Hub. The Hub will be used as a place to train people in using STEM as a platform for outreach and also a repository of equipment to conduct STEM Outreach work. We hope this will be a place where people interested in using STEM as an outreach platform can also meet and develop ideas for new contents. We also hope to develop a Mobile Maker space there to eventually run community programs.

In tandem with this work, the Christian STEM Nexus

(<https://www.facebook.com/christianstemnexus>), an interdenominational group of Christian scientists, technologists, doctors, teachers and interested parties have been meeting over the last 2 years to look at matters where faith and science intersect and to use STEM as a platform for Outreach. We praise the Lord that recently, the Nexus has been officially registered as a society by the Registrar of Societies of Malaysia. With this, we can get into gear in a more official capacity and use the standing of those in the society to speak up on matters related to science and faith.

I never expected the work to grow so fast over the last two years and as we head into 2025, the Lord continues to open more doors especially in Sabah, the Philippines and also the Chinese Assemblies in Malaysia.

Pray with us that the Lord will use it for His glory. If you like to journey with us, contact Dr. YL Khong ([ylkhong1@gmail.com](mailto:ylkhong1@gmail.com))

- 1 "Connecting through Science and Technology for the Gospel" - Diakonia 2022, pg. 54
2. "Opened Doors through Science and Technology for the Gospel" - Diakonia 2023, pg. 38
3. "Connecting Science and God" - Echoes International, Nov 27, 2023

# From Around the Assemblies (Local / Overseas)

## The Christian and Mental illness

By Dato' Dr Lai Fong Hwa (Contact: +60125342022, [laifh78@gmail.com](mailto:laifh78@gmail.com))

Island Glades Gospel Centre, Penang

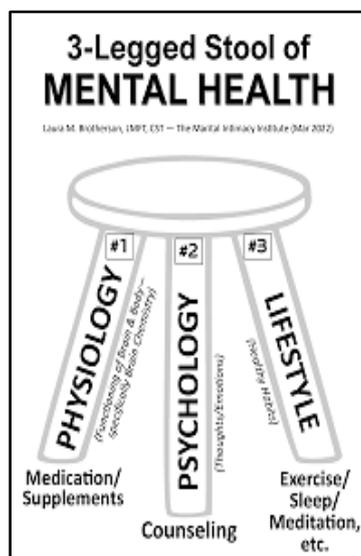
- Consultant Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist
- Cognitive Behavior Therapist
- Family & Couple Therapist

Many years ago, I was asked to see a lady client by a psychiatrist colleague of mine. The lady came with a 'religious problem' which my non-Christian colleague found some difficulty handling.

Upon further talking with the lady, I found that she was a Bible believing Christian and for the past year or so had been much troubled by the verse in Romans 10:9 - 'if you declare with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved'. Her difficulty was, she said, "I have declared with my mouth that Jesus is Lord, but I do not know if I truly believe that God raised him from the dead, so I cannot be sure if I am saved." She had talked about this with her Christian leaders and pastors who had all reassured her that they believed that she was a born again Christian and was saved but she still could not be sure. This so troubled her that upon advice from a friend who told her that she may be suffering from Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), she decided to try consulting a psychiatrist about her problem.

Clinically she could have been diagnosed with OCD as her 'obsession' about this matter troubled her almost daily throughout her waking hours so much that it interfered with her personal and occupational functioning. I could have started her on an SSRI medication which is effective in reducing her obsessions, but the Holy Spirit reminded me of the story of Moses' bronze snake to help this sister-in-Christ. So, I asked if she carried a Bible in her handbag which she promptly produced. "Can you turn to *Numbers 21:8-9*:

*"The LORD said to Moses, "Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live." So, Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived."*



Then I asked her, "If the Israelites only went and looked at the bronze snake but didn't really believe in their hearts, do you think God would have healed them from their deadly snake bites?" She sat there in deep thought, and I believed God used His words to open her mind to His truth which finally did set her free. She left the clinic still deeply in thought, but she did not attend the follow-up clinic.

What does the above story say to us? Not very much. Mental illnesses like other physical illnesses are often more complex than we often think. The causative factors are myriad, ranging from physical, neurological, psychological, social to spiritual. Usually, the causes are not clearly delineated but are interrelated in causing mental illnesses in patients. As such, Christians should avoid being too quick in passing judgment on someone who may be troubled mentally. Giving standard advice or 'prescription' we read somewhere to a fellow Christian who is depressed without first sitting down and trying to understand his/her predicament can be more hurtful than helpful.

I recently listened to a talk by Tim Keller on Elijah's despondency. It's interesting that Keller highlighted how God was multidisciplinary in His approach in helping His servant through his depression. He first allowed Elijah to rest, got His angel to cook for him (physical needs), listened to Elijah complained, not once but twice, (psychological), corrected some of Elijah's cognitive errors e.g. believing that he was the only faithful believer left but in reality, God told him there were more than 7000. Then, God gave Elijah a fresh commission (social-occupational). And all these after God gave Elijah a fresh and personal relationship with Himself through the 'still small voice'.

In treating persons with mental illnesses, I like to use the '3-legged stool' model: one leg for personal-social intervention: ensuring normal routine, diet, sleep, exercise, connection with friends; another leg: psychological - counselling/therapy/ reading the Bible and the third leg — medication if necessary.



### Growing up in Penang, nurtured by the Burmah Road Gospel Hall

Prof Tan Chong Tin ([chongtin.tan@gmail.com](mailto:chongtin.tan@gmail.com))

In this little write up, I want to recount my growing up years in Penang, particularly how the Burmah Road Gospel Hall has transformed my whole family.

#### From Long Yan, China to Penang

I grew up in Penang in a large shop house in Beach Street, near to the ferry terminal. My father, Tan Whye Choon 陈槐椿 was a first generation migrant from Longyan, south China. Longyan is located in a hill area in western part of Fujian province. Father completed 8-years of primary school, considered then to be well educated. At age 16 years, in 1924, he borrowed 10 yuan and migrated from Longyan to Penang, looking for better opportunities. During that time, the journey from Longyan to Penang took one month. Father went back to China to marry my mother in 1934. Father started as a shop assistant selling kitchenware, eventually setting his own hardware shop Lam Choon 南春 in Beach Street in 1945.

I was number eight in a string of 11 children. We stayed upstairs in a double story shop house, while the ground floor was used as a shop front, stores and dining area. Father's business was trading hardware goods; he mainly imported the goods and distributed them to the many shops in northern Malaya, making use of Penang's port facilities.

Father was stern, honest, disciplined, and a man of few words. Nevertheless, he was caring for the family. When I was 13 years old, my father suddenly fell ill from cancer of the lung that had spread to the spine. He soon died at the age of 52 years. Four of my older siblings were then studying in Melbourne and London. Chong Kheng, my brother, older than me, who was number seven among the siblings and in Junior Middle three (15 years), immediately decided to drop out from school to continue father's business, so that the other siblings could continue their studies.

Mother Loh Keok Geok 罗巧玉 was from another village also in Longyan. Mother, probably influenced by the then communist thinking and wanted freedom, expressed the wish to leave for a new life in South East Asia. So when introduced to Father, she readily consented. When father passed away from lung cancer in 1962, mother

was a young widow of 46 years. It was clear that although not educated, mother was intelligent, perceptive and decisive. Mother's main role in the family was as a wife and mother. She was not involved in father's business.

#### Becoming Christians

Mother's adoption of the Christian faith was a pivotal event in our family. She was influenced by the midwife who helped to deliver the elder siblings, Madam Teh CS 郑清秀。Madam Teh was from the Burmah Road Gospel Hall. When the midwife spoke to her about the Christian faith, mother readily accepted. She did not have a good impression of the traditional Chinese religion. The religious rites and place of worship evoked fear rather than honour and worship, whereas the atmosphere in the church was tranquillity and hope. She explained that the Chinese tradition also worshiped the 'heaven' 天, the highest god. The new faith, worship the highest God who created the universe, and bypass the others. It is also a God that one can pray to and build a relationship. Her many difficult experiences as she cared for the older siblings in their illness has confirmed her faith. Father initially strongly objected. However, the personal experience of prayer and God's protection during the Japanese occupation brought him to also embrace the Christian faith in 1943.

Mother was often asked by her admiring friends about her success in bringing up her children as 4 of her children were medical specialists, another 3 were other graduates, a rare feat during the time. Mother would respond by attributing the success to her Christian God. When she embraced the new faith, she soon became literate as she learned to read the Bible in Romanised Minnan 闽南 version, and with it, learned to read the more difficult ideographic Chinese script.

#### Early Education in Penang

Union Institution

My earliest education was the Union Institution 协和学校 in Burmah Road Penang. The school was founded by a group of Christians first as a kindergarten in the Hokkien Methodist Church, Madras Lane Penang. It was shifted to the purpose-built building in Burmah Road in 1938.

By the time I entered kindergarten in 1953, and primary one in 1955, it was already a full-fledged school from kindergarten to junior high school. It always has a Christian presence with the headmistress (庄琼珠, 庄安然) and a number of my teachers (林美兰、张瑞瑛) being Christians. There was strong emphasis on discipline and morals.

### Chung Ling High School

In 1960, I entered the Chung Ling High School 钟灵中学 to continue the secondary school education. Chung Ling was already a premier education institution in Malaya, with many students from outside Penang, as far as Thailand and Medan. The language milieu was Chinese, but the science subjects were taught in English, and the students were encouraged to take public examinations in English, so that the students could enter the public universities, tertiary colleges and further education overseas. The basic philosophy was to preserve the Chinese identity, while preparing the students to acquire the scientific knowledge conducted in English; as well as adapt to the multi-cultural, globalized world. Unlike the Union Institution, Chung Ling was set up by the Chinese community. There were a few teachers who were Christian, the best known was the headmaster Mr David Chen 陈充恩, who was a member of the Penang Anglican church. The school also allowed the setting up of the 'Bible Society', where I actively participated. However, my most unforgettable moment was the comments by my Chinese language teacher, who questioned how one could still hold on to religious beliefs in the modern age of science; reflecting the anti-imperialist, anti-Christian position of many leftist Chinese intellectuals then.

### The Burmah Road Gospel Hall

The story of my early education should also include the growing up years in the Burmah Road Gospel Hall. I attended Sunday School from young, was an active member of the Chinese youth fellowship in the Burmah Road Gospel Hall. At one stage, I would drop by the church in the early morning on the way to school in order to pray. I was also involved in the services, gave teachings to children in Sunday School, fellow youths and older adults in the worship service, organized Bible camps and inter-school public talks on Christian faith. Through the various camps, sermons, discussions; reading of the

many Christian books borrowed from the church library and bought from the Evangel bookshop next door, my faith was strengthened. I was nurtured to be an 'intentional' disciple of Christ, to adopt His mission and values. My tribute to the pastor then, the late Mr Yee Fook Cheong. Of course, my university years in Overseas Christian Fellowship (OCF), Melbourne also helped to deepen my faith.

### Transformation of my whole family

To summarize, I want to quote from my older brother Chong Kheng, who described the role of Burmah Road Gospel Hall in our family. He said: "We grew up in a 'bad neighbourhood' near the Weld quay with gangsters, smuggling, opium, gambling & fighting. Because of the Christian faith brought to my mother, we have become an outstanding model for the Lonyan community. Mother was able to pull through, because of the love demonstrated by Sister Teh CS 郑清秀 and missionary Mr Adam who spoke Hokkien. They would frequently visit, pray and encourage my mother, as she went through the stress looking after 11 children. The Colonial government only cared about grabbing the wealth of the country. It was only the Christian church that did the social work of education and health care, and brought a transformation to our family fate. From young, my mother brought us to attend the Sunday School in Burmah Road Gospel Hall, which helped us to withstand the bad influence from the neighbourhood." Of course, many of us also attended the Union Institution, which also has strong Christian influence.

So, when Pek Bing asked me to write my own testimony. I thought it would be more true and correct to tell the story of my family, starting from my parents, especially my mother, an illiterate woman who decided to adopt the Christian faith, helped by the love demonstrated by the sisters in the church, and also the influence of the Union Institution. This faith has not only transformed me, but the whole Tan family; as my father was poor and had to take a 10 yuan loan as travel fare from China, and started life in Penang as a shop assistant. Today, many of my family are community leaders and leaders in the various churches. I mentioned four of my siblings who are medical specialists. There are 15 medical doctors among the grandchildren. My third brother, Chong Siang, was the founding Medical Director that built up Lam Wah Ee Hospital, the leading community hospital in Penang. My fourth brother, Chong Guan, was past chairman of OCF

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Australia, and helped build the Penang Batik Museum; my fifth brother, Chong Kheng, helped to transform the 'Blue Mansion Penang' to a popular heritage site. and younger brother, Chong Tien, was chairman of the Grace Baptist Church, Singapore. The main message of this testimony is that the transforming power of the gospel is not only able to transform us as individuals, but the whole family, and even the entire clan and community.

*Prof. Dato' CT Tan is currently Emeritus Professor of Neurology, University of Malaya. He helped to build up the Neurology service in University Malaya Medical Centre, and has trained more than a hundred neurologists in Malaysia and the region. He founded the Malaysian Society of Neurosciences, ASEAN Neurological Association, is editor-in-chief of Neurology Asia, official journal of Asian & Oceanian Association of Neurology. He was a recipient of the first Merdeka Award in Health, Science, and Technology for work on the Nipah Virus encephalitis. He is an Elder of the Jalan Tiga Gospel Hall, Petaling Jaya, immediate past-chairman of CASM; Council Chairman of the Malaysia Bible Seminary, UTAR Trustee and Honorary President, Centre for Malaysian Chinese Studies. His popular writings include "Values to Bind and Build, a reflection", "Ethnic Relations, Emotion is the Key", "A Christian View*

*of Social Justice" and many titles in Chinese. He is married to Irene Yek from Bintulu, Sarawak. They have two boys, Li Ping a nephrologist, Li Kuo a Medical Physicist; and two grandchildren. They all worship in the Jalan Tiga Gospel Hall.*

Mother holding guava fruit.



Mother's Romanized Minnan (Hokkien) phonetic Bible. The title 'SIN KU IOK E SENG-KENG' is 'New and Old Testament Bible'. The title 'CHHONG-SE-KI' is Genesis. First verse reads: 'Goan-khf-thao Siong-te chhong-cho thi kap toe' is 'In the beginning God created heaven and earth.'

### A day in the life of a young Elder Journey of Faith

Raymond Phing ([rpwk98@hotmail.com](mailto:rpwk98@hotmail.com))

Me...? An Elder..? Why..? Are you serious? I am too young for it! I am sure there are more people who are way more 'qualified' than me! Why not consider Uncle.....and maybe Uncle....they are more qualified than me! They can do a good sharing in the morning worship...they can teach the Bible study better ... .they can speak on the pulpit better...choose them! Not me!

Did the questions and thoughts above also come to me? Yes! Surely so!

I felt that all around me there were many more brothers who were more qualified than me. And moreover, I had a sense that my current Elders need not step down to make way for me! They can stay on till their grand old ages!

I became the Elder of Kepong Gospel Chapel at the age of 40. But the seed of curiosity on Eldership had been laid on me since a very young



age of about 16 or 17 years old. It was during a worship meeting in Jalan Imbi Chapel ('JIC') where I was worshipping then that I asked my Sunday School teacher, now an Elder in JIC, the humble but curious question.... Must I be a deacon first before I can be an Elder? What's the process like? To my mind then, it was like a 'career progression', that when you make the 'grade', you are then given the 'appointment' to

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be a Deacon. And when you perform better, then you will be an Elder.

Of course, in theory, it seems that to progress from a Deacon to an Elder requires 'gradual' steps, but looking at it biblically, God does not look at a person's abilities but at a person's availability and teachability.

When my Elders approached me to join the Eldership, I sought for time to consider this calling before the LORD. I knew that this calling was to be a serious one and it would involve me and my family. I feared that this calling would disrupt our young married lives and that I'll be too inexperienced to handle the pressures that came with the calling of an Elder.

I consulted a few Elders, some of whom were of the 'younger generation' and spoke to them of their challenges when they accepted the call. I also spoke to Elder Wong San Tosh, my elder in JIC, on what would be the expectations of an Elder and the challenges of the days ahead. They each reminded me of the blessedness of the call of Eldership and for all my fears, it can never be solved or answered, unless I commit it in faith before the LORD. They impressed upon me that the call of Eldership is certainly not an easy one but yet, with the LORD by my side, He'll be my Guide and Master.

The LORD had impressed on me a great desire for the work in Kepong Gospel Chapel and of how I can be a part of the change that can take place in the Assembly. He reminded me that rather than wait at the wayside hoping for change to happen or for things to work, I can be that agent of change. And God reminded me that He'll be my God who leadeth me...when I surrender my all to Him.

Despite my very young and few years as an Elder, I can testify of God's goodness to me. He had been there at every step of the way, providing me divine help and also timely assistance from fellow Elders and brothers and sisters in Christ showing me the way as I answered His call to lead Kepong Gospel Chapel into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I trust in my Master and King to lead me through the years ahead and I pray that I'll always be found faithful to His call.

With humility, I would urge all brothers to consider the call of Eldership with much anticipation and commitment before God. Seek His will for you and seek His face always. Always know that you can be that agent of change. Do not look at yourselves nor what you're capable of doing.

God used Moses to deliver Israel from the bondage of slavery...God took David from the sheep pens to the heights of being the King of Israel... God made Joseph the Prime Minister of Egypt to deliver the Israelites...And God can do that with you too when you surrender yourselves to Him. We can and need to be agents of change in leading His people for His glory and I urge you, dear brothers to do so! God bless!



### A day in the life of a young Elder

#### A Blessed Journey

Steven Yam ([stevenyam1974@gmail.com](mailto:stevenyam1974@gmail.com))

Greetings in the matchless name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

I am truly grateful for the privilege of introducing myself to the broader community of God's faithful servants.

It is with great honour that I share my calling to serve as an elder at Bandar Puchong Gospel Centre (BPGC) since last Christmas. This honour comes with a profound understanding that it is solely by the Lord's grace that I have been entrusted with the opportunity and responsibility to serve BPGC in this capacity. Reflecting on the

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invitation to serve as an elder, I recognize the weight of the expectations and responsibilities it entails for both me and my family. This role has prompted significant internal reflection, but I finally accepted it because it offers a great opportunity to serve God and His people in a greater manner and capacity. At times, the responsibilities of an elder can feel overwhelming, especially in caring for pastoral duties and ministries of the church. The weight of these responsibilities is immense, and for this reason, I hold great respect for those of you who have served in similar roles for years or even decades.

However, my feelings of inadequacy have been greatly alleviated by the wise guidance, care, and love I have received from the community at BPGC. My experiences have allowed me to witness the greatness of God's love manifested through His people in very tangible ways. During my hospitalization last year, I was not only visited and prayed for by concerned leaders and members, but also received home-cooked meals delivered to my doorstep to ease the burden on my wife. Additionally, there was no shortage of individuals willing to assist with financial assistance. Such acts of kindness have deeply encouraged me and illustrate the love of God that exists uniquely within the community of His people. I am truly grateful to be a recipient of such wondrous love.

I have experienced God's grace and love in my life from both Him and His people in deeply meaningful and uplifting ways. This has taught me that being an elder is more than just a title; it is a call to exemplify selfless servanthood and to demonstrate what God's love and grace can accomplish through a willing and obedient heart (Matthew 20:25-28). In my service to God and His church, I have chosen Hebrews 10:24 and Philippians 1:21 as my focus: to spur each other towards love and good works and to live for Christ.

If there is a reflection to share with anyone who aspires to be an elder, the Scripture is clear that the pursuit is a noble one (1 Tim 3:1). Feelings of inadequacy are not only natural but needed to remind us that our dependence should be on God rather than on our abilities. And the much feared requirements for an elder in 1 Tim 3:1-7 and Titus



1:6-9 are not extraordinary expectations but are generally expected of every Christian. Elders, however, are placed under public scrutiny, which can be intimidating. Yet, it is in such a position that one receives grace upon grace and learns to grow more dependent on God. As I begin this journey of eldership, I am unsure of what lies ahead, but with the Lord as my traveling companion, I am confident it will be a rewarding one.

Finally, we all require help on our spiritual journeys, and I attribute a significant part of my growth to the saints at Petra Gospel Centre, where I served for three decades before being called to BPGC. For now, I will continue to rely on God's grace, as well as the guidance and care showered by my fellow elders, the support and encouragement from the diaconate, and the fellowship from the rest of the saints at BPGC. Together, we will serve the Lord and His Kingdom with joy. I would like to conclude with one of my favourite quotes, which reminds me of the greatness and faithfulness of our God:

*"Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe."*

— St. Augustine

Steven Yam is turning fifty this year and is married to Michelle, they have two adult children, Niesha and Karsten. Currently, he is serving in BPGC as a church worker.



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## A day in the life of a young Elder

### The Call

Koon Wing Kit ([wkk2006@hotmail.com](mailto:wkk2006@hotmail.com))

As a start, I believe nothing in life is coincidental in the kingdom of God. Our God always prepares his people to serve him at an appointed season and time in a particular space or community. A life given to live is a joy and blessing. To discover how to live it meaningfully, purposefully and to make it count would be a wonderful achievement for anyone in this part of our lifetime.

The call to serve as a servant of the Lord as an elder in SS Gospel Centre (“SSGC”) came in mid 2022. It was post the Covid pandemic when I was in my mid 40s. There was much to do to rebuild and restore God’s kingdom as the church had just restarted. Our former elders laid a strong foundation of faithfulness and purpose for the church - to exist and thrive in our community - In Christ for the Community. When the call came, I felt much trepidation, anxiety and multiple thoughts of things I had to forego to serve the Lord. What a wrong way of thinking! Is our God a joy stealer? Every calling to an individual is special and unique for each person. It can be a vocation or calling in a ministry – a teacher, a youth worker, a business entrepreneur, a chef, an accountant or even as an Elder or full time worker. Throughout the journey, the Lord usually prepares the individual with the experience, the knowledge and heart for him/her to step forward when the time arises to heed the call. Most of the time, when the call goes out, it is the question of whether the heart is ready to surrender in submission to the Lord to say yes in trust and in faith.

For me, when called, my thoughts were in 1 direction - I am inadequate, it seems like a tall task and I can’t do it. That was an introspective view when I look within myself and find it likely that it would be hard if not impossible to accomplish the task. Too much to do, inadequately equipped (knowledge, character and competencies) and too much to give up. But if we look unto Christ, I can do all things in Christ because it is He who strengthens me and brings me to his Glory. Where do I look for wisdom, strength and guidance? Do I say Yes or No? Looking retrospectively, there were so many

questions but as I lay before the Lord, He had quieted my spirit to let me be at peace. Lay your fleece and let the Lord guide you. I laid my fleece and it was silent but as I waited, the Lord said, “Be still and know I am Lord. I am the Lord, therefore be still. I am your Father. I am the King of Kings and Author and Finisher of your Faith.” That was the time I knew that God will be with me even as I take a step of faith to consider the Eldership role in church.

The Lord said, *“Those whom the Lord calls He will provide. Those he appoints he will anoint.”* So I took a step forward and said yes. Those were the early thoughts in my journey as an elder. I knew in my head God would be with me but in my heart I was really lacking in faith. But like all our journey in faith, take a step forward and say yes. And life is an adventure with the master. The victory is in surrender. The glory is in submission to the Master to see Him accomplish His Kingdom through us. Along the way, we will discover our calling and purpose in this lifetime.

In my humble opinion and advice to others if we are called to take a step forward: The Lord says, “Have faith”. Most of the time we only have 2 fishes and 5 loaves of bread. Don’t look at the fishes and bread but surrender them to God. It will be more than enough and in fact there will be much more and with plenty of leftovers to be a blessing in your life and others around you. God bless and always look unto the author and finisher of our faith for our provision and providence.



Kit & Joyce (wife) in partnership in SSGC

## 2024 Chinese ALC Report

Bt Elder Choo Chee Choy ([ccchoo@ccchoolawyers.com](mailto:ccchoo@ccchoolawyers.com))  
Setapak Gospel Centre

### 1. Introduction

The July 2024 Chinese Assemblies Leaders Conference (“Chinese ALC”) held in Ipoh in conjunction with Elim Chinese Gospel Hall is unprecedented and historic in the sense that for the first time it gathered the largest representation with 30 Assemblies and some 135 participants attending the Conference. Even East Malaysian (Sabah) Assemblies in the Conference and representatives of one Assembly (Penampang Grace Chapel) were able to participate in the Conference.

One would like to consider that such enthusiasm was precipitated by a common awareness and concern, tacit or otherwise, that the Chinese Assemblies in the Country, especially the smaller ones, are facing immense challenges ahead and that some steps must be taken in the coming years.

Dwindling numbers, ageing church members, lack of leadership succession plan, lack of outreach works and others, are what many of the Assemblies are facing. One critical issue in many of the Assemblies is that there is a total lack or complete cease of youth work,

Apart from that, it is also observed that there is this lack of working together in a long term, systematic and cohesive manner between Assemblies and the inability to live in the present might have all contributed to the conditions which the Assemblies are in today.

### 2. Theme and Speaker

With the above background and consideration, the Chinese ALC adopted the theme: Challenges in Serving this Generation (如何服事这一代?). The theme is taken from Act 13: 36 which reads

*“Now when David had served God’s purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep.....”*

To address the above challenges, the Chinese ALC had invited Dr. Tan Hann Zhu as the main speaker. He has served Malaysian Bible Seminary as a research fellow and lecturer for many years, concentrating in reaching to the youths of this generation. He also spent several years in Hong Kong and served as a media evangelist, reaching out to the youths through media, small group evangelism and conferences.

3. The following were the several **workshop papers** conducted during the Conference.

3.1 **Topic: Workshop on Elders/Deacons – Fulltime Workers Relationship**  
(By Elder Choo Chee Choy, Setapak Gospel Centre)

(a) The following is a synopsis of the Workshop paper

One cannot disagree that, historically, the working relationship between the elders/deacons of a local Assembly and the Fulltime Workers in the Chinese Assemblies has not been ideal.

Many reasons could be assigned to this unhappy relationship. The Workshop paper explored potential areas of conflict or dispute such as: lay leadership v theologically trained pastors; lack of mutual respect, personality differences, undefined or poorly defined job scope of a pastor leading to different or unreasonable expectation, lack of work discipline, different priorities of church ministry between elders/deacons and pastors, financial matters, doctrinal emphasis and differences in views on Assembly traditions and practices, and many more

(b) The Workshop paper also explores how the “heart” plays a critical role in the matters of dispute or conflict resolution between parties. What it means is that if there is no sincerity (Jer 17: 9; Prov 4: 23; Psalm 139: 23-24 and James 4: 1-3) to reconcile, any attempt to do so will probably be an exercise in futility. Yet time and time again, the Scripture admonishes and encourage believers to make peace with each other (Pro 20:3; Beatitudes (Mat 5: 1-5: being called to be peacemakers rather than peacekeepers); Eph 4: 1-3; Phi 4: 2-3; 2 Co 13:11).

In the final analysis, if parties want to resolve their conflicts, they need to exhibit a genuine heart; humility; gentleness; patience; to bear with one

another; to avoid strife; love; be a peacemaker; be of one mind; willing to keep the bond of peace.

(c) The Workshop presented two (2) biblical models of dispute/conflict resolution, on which the following biblical principles were shared:

(i) "Matthew 18 Model" (Mathew 18: 15-20)

- Basic/comprehensive steps to resolving conflict/disputes between parties
- Goal of conflict or dispute resolution is redemptive rather than punitive.
- Need to restore a repentant party to fellowship after repentance.
- Be aware of situations where a brother/sister who has confessed his/her sin/wrong and asked for forgiveness, the party who is supposed to forgive struggles to forgive.

(ii) Acts 15: 1 – 23 ("Acts 15 Model")

- This Model provides classic situation when a local church is unable to resolve an issue or issues on its own, seeks help of another local church
- Model invites participants to consider how the biblical principle of "autonomy of the local church" may co-exist with another biblical principle of "interdependence and interconnectedness of churches" within our Assemblies
- Pooling of resources for the Lord's work

(d) The above Models have been extensively described in the Working paper and those who wish to deliberate on them are welcome to approach CASM for the materials.

(e) Moving forward:

(i) In February 2024 CASM conducted a Survey for purposes of improving the working relationship between the Elders/Deacons and the Full-time Workers. The following questions and answers were derived.

**Question A/6: To the Pastor**

"What steps may be taken to enhance the working relationship between elders/deacons and pastors?"

**Question B/8: To the Elders/Deacons,**

"What do you consider are the positive steps to improve the working relationship between the church leaders and the pastor?"

**The following were common answers to the above two questions:**

- i) To have time for person-to-person communication
- ii) Apart from ministry works, to share and pray for each other on personal/family matters together
- iii) Mutual respect and acceptance of each other.
- iv) To encourage and care for each other
- v) Sense of comradeship
- vi) Giving time and space for a pastor to learn and grow
- vii) When an error is committed, be able to forgive, encourage and help
- viii) Discuss together any issue that arises instead of accusing
- ix) A pastor ought to know that he is responsible for all that he does
- x) Connecting to each other in life and witness
- xi) To improve communication skill
- xii) Mentoring



- (ii) The Survey also aimed at assessing the current working relationship between the Full-time Workers. The following questions and answers were derived.

**Question A/5: To the Pastor**

“Please describe your working relationship with the Oversight.”

**Question B/6: To Elders/ Deacons**

“How would you describe the relationship between the Oversight and the Pastor?”

**The following were common answers to the above questions:**

Cordial to each other; good relationship; mutual respect; collective leadership; able to help each other; open to each other; similar ideas

- (f) Finally, the Workshop paper proposed if the Chinese Assemblies would consider forming a Conciliatory Panel, together with the proposed mechanism. At the end of the Conference, it resolved to form a Conciliatory Panel, and members will be appointed to form the panel.

**3.2 Topic: Raising Assemblies’ Future Church Workers**

(By Pastor Goh Eng Wee, Jasin Gospel Hall)

- (a) Being from a relatively younger generation of Assemblies’ full-time workers and preachers, I am honoured to be given the opportunity to share in the discussion concerning the topic on raising the future generation of full-time ministers or pastors of the Assemblies.
- (b) The following were my observations out of the discussion:
- Currently the ratio of Assemblies having full-time ministers compared to those without, is extremely high. At the same time, those who have graduated from major seminaries and are being engaged or are willing to be engaged as full-time ministers in the Assemblies are even more scarce.
  - Over the years, many Assemblies are aware of the situation and want

to engage full-time ministers, but are unable to.

- It is also noted that, currently, many Assemblies are witnessing leadership transition, with younger elders and deacons leading the assemblies.

- (c) In light of the above situation, it is important to encourage our young people to devote themselves to pastoral careers within the Assemblies. Arising from the outcome of the preliminary discussions, this seminar hopes to encourage all Assemblies to formulate strategies to increase the number of theologically trained workers.

- (d) This sharing also hopes to encourage Assemblies to view the issue of raising the next generation of church leaders from a more positive perspective and to make joint efforts to work together to achieve the objective.

**3.3 Topic: Educational Ministry**  
(By Elder Pang Xin Keong, Seremban Gospel Chapel)

- (a) The Chinese Assemblies Leaders Conference (“2024 Chinese ALC”) was held on 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> day, it held a seminar on educational ministry with the primary aim of addressing the growing challenge facing many Assemblies in the loss of the younger generations, especially children and youth. The seminar explored how Assemblies can become a vital touchpoint to reach out to this age group by engaging in educational ministry as a platform.

- (b) The session began with Setapak Gospel Centre sharing key insights from their experience in educational ministry. This was followed by presentations from Jalan Tiga Gospel Hall and Ipoh Elim Gospel Hall. The seminar concluded with Seremban Gospel Chapel, which presented an analysis of eight churches which have been actively engaged in educational ministries. The analysis covered:

1. Criteria (factors) for churches to consider before starting an educational ministry.

2. Various methods that churches can employ.
3. A step-by-step guide for churches which intend to launch the educational ministry.
4. Common challenges and issues encountered in educational ministry.
5. Strategies for guiding children from being seekers to believers and eventually becoming disciples through educational ministry.

### 3.4 **Topic: CASM-CBSM Full-time Worker & Theological Training Fund**

(By Elder Dr. Tan Chong Tin, Jalan Tiga Gospel Hall)

#### **Introduction**

In brief, this theological fund was started in 2020 by CASM to support the employment of full-time pastors, particularly in the smaller towns, and to provide theological education of the pastors. During the joint ALC in 2022, CBSM decided to participate in the project, which then became a CASM-CBSM joint project. Currently the Fund supports 4 pastors who serve in Bukit Mertajam, Taiping, Kuala Kangsar and Gopeng.

#### **Fund development**

The key factor in the success of the Fund is the buy-in among the leaders of the Assemblies. Quoting our Lord's words in Matthew 6:21, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"; i.e., whether the heart of the Assembly leaders is with the project.

To explain, let me quote the words of Peter Drucker, the management guru, on the importance of fund development in the management of NGO. Drucker says: "Fund-raising is going around with a begging bowl, asking for money because the *need* is so great. Fund development is creating a constituency which supports the organization because it deserves it. It means developing what I call a membership that participates through giving. ..There will always be a need for emergency relief and appeals to give for it ...But it is increasingly dangerous to depend on emotional appeal alone. In fund-development you appeal to the heart,

but you also have to appeal to the head. ...It is constituency building over the very long term...people who remember, who are not giving simply because someone rings a doorbell. 'They see support of the institution as self-fulfilment...Fund development is a *people* development.'" (Peter Drucker, *Managing the Non-Profit Organization. Practices and Principles. Harper Business.1990: 56-58, 97*)

It is only by appreciating what Drucker says above, that we can understand how Warren Buffett, the second wealthiest man in the US, decided to donate the bulk (85%) of his \$44 billion fortune to the foundation of the wealthiest, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. (*New York Times, 27 July 2006*) It was because Buffet has buy-in to the cause of the Bill & Melinda Foundation.

#### **Full-time pastors are the key to the health of the Assemblies in the smaller town**

So, why is supporting full-time pastors in the smaller towns so crucial to the future of the Malaysian Brethren Assemblies? Currently the English speaking Assemblies, particularly those in the big cities, are in general more robust and have larger numbers of weekly worshipers than the Chinese speaking assemblies. The main reason is that the Assemblies is by and large, a 'lay' movement. The governance, preaching, teaching, counselling and pastoring of the Assemblies are largely by elders, deacons and other ministry leaders who are largely lay Christians. There are only a few 'full-time workers' to shepherd these churches. Whilst this may work well in the English-speaking Assemblies in the big urban centres, this *modus operandi* does not work well in the smaller towns. In the smaller towns, there are less worshipers in the Chinese Assemblies who have received higher education. Overall, few of the lay leaders have received formal theological education, and because of the busy secular work, the amount of time that these leaders can devote to the ministries is also far less than the full-time pastors. Partly due to low pay, the drop-out rate of the few full-time pastors in the Chinese Assemblies have also been very high. There has also been large urban migration

to the cities, for further studies and better employment. All these factors result in less skilled time and efforts to shepherd these churches in the small towns. After decades, the result can be observed in the Assemblies of smaller towns today.

### **The church growth situation in the smaller town today**

During the ALC in 2022, CASM conducted a survey of 42 Chinese Assemblies in Peninsular Malaysia. We found that only a third (37%) of the Chinese Assemblies in Peninsular Malaysia have full time pastors. We also found that before the lock-down due to Covid-19 pandemic, for Assemblies with pastors, there were 1.5 times more adult attendees in the weekly worship, 1.9 times more attendees in the children Sunday School, and 2.8 times more youths in the Teens and Youth fellowship. (The survey also found that the church having an educational ministry has higher attendance in the weekly service, children Sunday School, Teens and Youth fellowship.)

It is also helpful to look at the situation of churches that closely resemble our own. Miri has a population of about 200 thousand. The Miri Gospel Chapel was founded in 1963 by an OMF missionary. It now has 13 churches in various parts of Miri (including two branches in Kuala Lumpur and Johor Bahru to serve their members who migrated), with 1900 adults in the Chinese Sunday worship, similar to the total number of worshipers in the Chinese speaking Assemblies in the whole of peninsular Malaysia, although our history is much longer. The key difference is the emphasis on full-time pastors in the Miri Gospel Chapel. The church has 30 pastors, plus another 9 in overseas missions. By comparison, Sungai Petani has a similar population as Miri. Sungai Petani Gospel Hall has a history of 100 years. The old church premise today has only about 10 regular worshipers. There were on and off pastors serving in the

Assembly, and no educational ministry as a means of outreach.

It is also enlightening to compare the growth between Brethren Assembly and Methodist churches. Both have been in Peninsular Malaysia for more than a century. Currently the number of worshipers in the Chinese Methodist service is ten times more than in the Brethren Assemblies. An obvious difference is that there are many times more trained pastors serving in the Methodist churches.

All these considerations call for a fund to support the employment of full-time pastors in the Assemblies in the smaller towns.

### **We are mutually enriched**

In general, the urban Assemblies in the urban centres benefit enormously from the ministries in the village churches. For the youth in the smaller town Assemblies, those with better academic records often end up pursuing higher education and subsequently reside in the cities earning higher income; while the village Assemblies lose them to the cities and remain poorer in human and material resources.

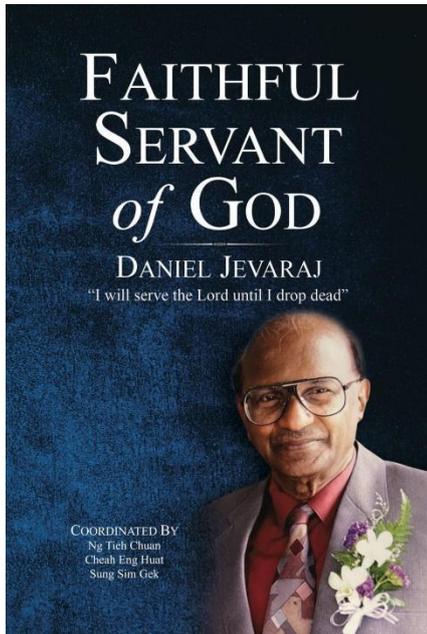
Similarly, some of the English-speaking churches in the urban centres also benefit from the migration of the Chinese-speaking youth from the smaller towns. This is because these youths often receive college education conducted in English, and may find life-partners who are more fluent in English; they thus prefer to worship in the English speaking assemblies.

It is thus appropriate for the city churches to reciprocate, and assist the Assemblies in the smaller towns. This is also true for the English speaking urban churches as we are all parts of the larger body of Christ.

Tan Chong Tin

### Review of “A FAITHFUL SERVANT OF GOD”

Emmeline Devan



Sitting in the living room of No.133 during one of our visits to the Daniels' home some 15 years ago, I remember being thrilled at the stories Uncle Daniel shared about his life. I had just gotten to know him and Aunt Ruth after my marriage,

through my husband Herbert, who had been a bachelor working in Taiping. The Daniels were now around their 80s, so I had missed much of the glory days when they were younger.

“Uncle’s life should be put in a book lest all that has happened is lost over time!” was the thought in my heart. Having some experience with writing in my career prior to marriage, I was stirred to make the attempt. But with two young children to care for and us not living anywhere near Taiping, I sadly realized it would be very difficult to thoroughly interview Uncle. There were too many names and occasions that needed proper citing and I would not have been able to carry out the research.

God has His perfect timing though. Uncle, in his self-effacing way, would not have been willing to co-author a book about his life, I see that now. He had given a quiet smile at the thought of a book about him, but it would take the untiring energy and dogged determination of more active and experienced people to pull it together. This came in 2024 in the form of the power trio – Ng Tieh Chuan, a TGH boy who had become an acclaimed Malaysian publisher for many personalities and even royalty; Sung Sim Gek, who was the coordinator and fact-checker while juggling her responsibilities as principal of Tadika Marks (TGH); and Cheah Eng Huat, also formerly from the TGH Young People’s group and now the elder of Island Glades Gospel Centre, who handled the coordination from contributors in Penang and also the fact-checking.

Even so, Uncle could not be convinced in his lifetime to do the book and it is only now, shortly after he returned home to be with our Lord that *Faithful Servant of God – Daniel Jevraj* could be put together and published in record time. The testimonies and stories of people whose lives he and Aunt Ruth have touched now come together even more meaningfully to honour one who has now gone before us. They tell the story from the recipients’ points of view.

This book is more than just a record of the assembly work in Taiping and Penang in a bygone era, for Uncle Daniel was the last elder trained by foreign missionaries in the 1950s. Nor is it entirely a biography about a well-loved elder. In it, one gets a glimpse of how life and ministry had been in the early years. I read of no great achievements that would be noted in the public annals. I see no names of those who now walk the mighty halls of power, though several noted Christian and secular personalities were once “little children Uncle Daniel fetched to Sunday School in his little Morris Minor”, as my husband Herbert likes to recount. (At least one of these persons appears though, among the many photographs sprinkled throughout the book, a silent but steadfast testimony to Uncle’s influence far and wide.)

No, this book does not tell of conquests. Rather, it features a very ordinary person, albeit with an extraordinary amount of energy, who, like the many, many followers of Jesus throughout the world, invest time and energy into the lives of others because of their love for the Lord. He and his wife juggled work with ministry, opened their home for others to share and when none came, they went to the others. I randomly mentioned Uncle’s name to a Penang friend who is from a different church, and she unexpectedly said she too had met them long ago during their visits to the home of a young married couple who were her friends!

I find an example of prioritizing people and relationships, which is sometimes lacking in our modern-day emphasis on programs and planning. I find the deep-seated conviction that it is through prayer that God will bring about changes. I find specific stories about how God had worked and how God’s people had worked, and I find many examples to aspire towards. I find chance comments or suggestions taking root and

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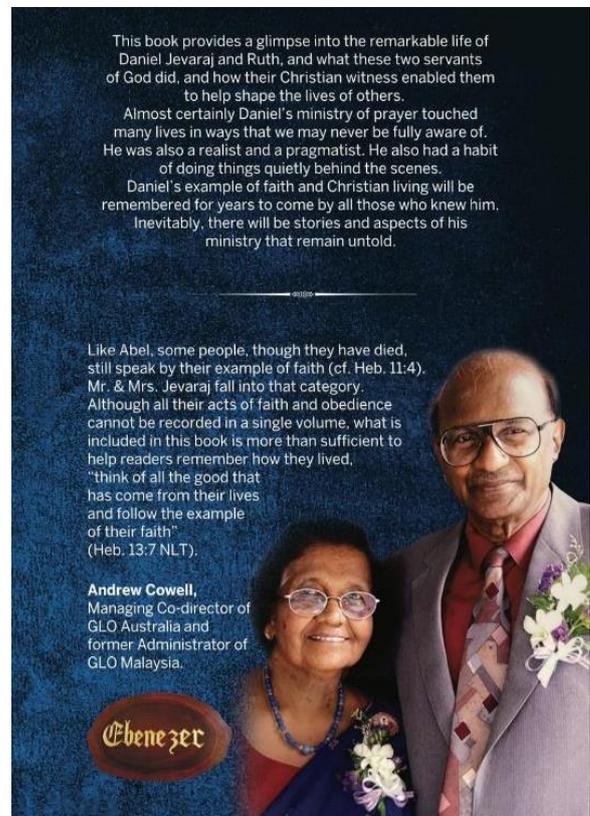
bearing fruit after many years. The Kathmandu Mission Centre has such a beginning in Taiping.

As someone with some relationship to the Brethren Assemblies in Penang and Taiping, I see at last the stories behind names I have heard mentioned at sundry times and diverse manners. While these names may mean nothing to the Brethren in other parts of the country or the younger generation, I read in them the many unassuming and tiring days of shepherding and discipling, and I find encouragement from the testimonies of those who have gone before.

There are numerous people who have known, been cared for, cared for or been associated with, Uncle Daniel and Aunt Ruth, whose stories cannot be told in this book for lack of space. But they would be able to find their connection in some or other of the places or people mentioned. I feel there is one group that hasn't had a place of mention though and that is the young people in the GLO Training School who would be the last young generation to be mentored by Uncle Daniel. From the dates mentioned in the book, there would have been quite a few batches of students who would have encountered Uncle, from the time he and Aunt Ruth moved back to Taiping in 2000, till the time GLO was relocated to Bidor Gospel Centre in 2015, a matter of great sadness to Uncle. My husband was friends with some batches of the students. And he remembers how every morning, the two stay-in boys in one batch would be groggy and trying to keep up with a spirited 70-over-year-old Uncle Daniel in the early hours as he led them through devotions!

To the older ones who remember Uncle Daniel, read this book and reminisce the old memories. To the younger ones, read the story of an entirely different generation and see what God speaks to you. To those who have your own excellent

elders and leaders to look up to, read and find your own faithful leader embodied in the late Daniel Javaraj. Let us take his motto - "I will serve the Lord until I drop dead" – as our own.



*Faithful Servant of God – Daniel Javaraj* is priced at RM20 and can be purchased at Evangel Book Centre (Penang & Petaling Jaya) and Canaanland Christian Store (DUMC Dream Centre & online shop) or contact Sung Sim Gek (+6012-2135246). Proceeds from the sale will go to the Nepalese mission and Praise & Worship Ministry in nursing homes initiated by Daniel Javaraj.

### Kuala Kangsar Assembly

William Chee ([sai\\_chye\\_chee@outlook.com](mailto:sai_chye_chee@outlook.com))

I was informed that a missionary, the late Mr. Tom Watt started the Gospel Work in Kuala Kangsar, about late 1950s. He travelled from Taiping to Kuala Kangsar regularly. See page 8 of the book "**Faithful Servant of God**".

I was saved after hearing the good news of salvation at the home of the late Mr. S.A. Curnard (an English speaking Indian family - at Jalan Taiping, Talang, Kuala Kangsar.) It was there

that I first heard the gospel message at a Watch Night Service in 1963. My fellowship with believers started here and I attended the Lord's Supper regularly in Mr Curnard's house most Sundays and also for other outreach meetings by the YP from Taiping Gospel Hall and the YP from Elim Gospel Hall, Ipoh. The late Mr. Curnard and his family moved out from Kuala Kangsar due to ill health.

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Together with Mr N. Thiran, the late Mr Poon Yew Fook; my wife, Nancy and I continued Sunday School in the classrooms of Clifford School, Kuala Kangsar from 1970 - 1975. The Lord's Supper was initiated by sister Tan Chin Moea at the government quarters just a walking distance opposite Clifford School. The group of young people grew during the years 1970-1975 but many later left Kuala Kangsar for Kuala Lumpur to continue their studies and for employment. I remembered Paul Chan, Leong Weng Oon, James Loo, Kwai Yoke (Sabah), Kwai Lan, Yoke Har and Mah Keng Hoh. Some left for Singapore to seek employment.

The late Mr Victor Doss travelled regularly from Ipoh to Kuala Kangsar on Sunday mornings to preach the gospel. The Chinese-speaking gospel outreach work was started by the late Mr. Khor Khooon Yeow of the Taiping Chinese Gospel Hall. Mr Lim Ah Bah from Sg. Petani also helped both in the Chinese outreach gospel work as well as in the English-speaking assembly in Kuala Kangsar.

In the late 1990s, we purchased a double-storey terrace house at Taman Batu Mas for our permanent gathering. We remembered sister Chuah Sor Hong and her husband, Jerry who

helped in the growth of Kuala Kangsar Assembly. There were others who also helped to build up the work in Kuala Kangsar.

In the year 2000, we purchased another double-storey bungalow along Jalan Dato Sagor Road. Jalan Imbi Chapel of Kuala Lumpur gave us an interest-free loan to purchase this property. The English-Speaking Assembly met regularly and had tuition classes every Sunday. The renovation of this building was helped by Mr. Robert Loh and Mr Tan Guan Choo.

But time is fast catching up as brother William Chee and his wife, Nancy are residing in Taiping. The work in Kuala Kangsar is being continued by Mr. Tan Guan Choo and the remaining members. Thanks be to God that CBSM and Dr Khong Yoon Loong (of the CBSM Church Revitalization Project) has come to help in the affairs of Kuala Kangsar Gospel Hall. There is much work to be done – “the harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few”. Pray for us in Kuala Kangsar.

Amen.

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## Focus on the Family Malaysia: Helping Families Thrive

*“We’re not perfect, but there is hope from going from not wanting to talk at all to, now, my parents are my best friends.”*

Growing up, Moriah (Name changed for privacy) felt like an outsider in her own family, leading to silence and resentment. Her father, Aaron, rooted in a traditional background where children were often not heard, struggled to understand her. In desperation, Aaron and his wife turned to Focus on the Family Malaysia for counselling, only to realise they needed guidance themselves.

Through FOFM’s mum-daughter and dad-daughter events, they embarked on a path of healing. Initially resistant, Moriah had a breakthrough during a camping trip, where she expressed her feelings of neglect to her mother. Though it took longer to mend her relationship with dad, Aaron learned to communicate better, and Moriah saw her father’s persistent love. Their relationship transformed, and they now share their story at FOFM events, helping other families reconnect and create meaningful memories.

This story of resilient love and transformation is one of the many that inspires the Focus team to keep serving and encouraging the families God brings to us.

### The Beginnings

In 1997, Lee Wee Min, Focus on the Family Malaysia (FOFM) Founder and Board Chair, as well as Elder in PJ Gospel Hall, recognised the early signs of family breakdown in Malaysia. After selling his engineering business, he felt called by God to strengthen families nationwide. This led to the establishment of FOFM with a vision to see families thrive, grounded in the belief that family is a divine institution designed by God.

Even after 27 years of service, the challenges facing families in Malaysia remain significant, emphasizing the ongoing need to strengthen Malaysian families through both preventive programmes and crisis measures.

### The State of Marriages in Malaysia

The state of marriages in Malaysia is concerning, with divorce rates on the rise due to cultural and

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spiritual challenges. In 2000, there were 1,613 recorded divorces among non-Muslims and 13,536 among Muslims. By 2022, non-Muslim divorce numbers had increased ten-fold to 16,752 and tripled to 46,138 Muslim divorces (Department of Statistics 2000, 2022). Studies indicate that a lack of understanding is the primary reason for divorce, cited by 56% of men and 38% of women, surpassing infidelity (11% of men and 20% of women) ([The Star, Nov 2023](#)). This highlights the urgent need for couples to focus on nurturing their relationships and improving communication skills.

The first decade of marriage is often marked by significant transitions, such as child-rearing, and caring for aging parents. This period is critical as most divorces occur during these early years. Young parents, especially working mothers, often feel overwhelmed by the demands of raising children while trying to maintain their relationship, build a family, and pursue careers.

### Mental Health and Sexuality

FOFM's counselling services have seen an increase in clients seeking support due to the pressures of life and the demands on marriages and families. Statistics also show that one in four teenagers struggles with depression ([NHMS 2022](#)) with children as young as five exhibiting signs of mental disorders ([The Star, September 2022](#)).

Children today have easier access to media and the world of AI, with 70% of Malaysian parents allowing their children more screen time since the pandemic ([Malaysian Reserve, March 2023](#)). Three in five students report learning about sex through online media ([The Star, August, 2022](#)). Their exposure to messages about sex and gender identity, often without parental guidance, have a significant impact on their young minds. This makes it increasingly important for families to have open and honest discussions about sex and sexuality, firmly grounded in biblical values.

### Strengthening Families Nationwide

FOFM is dedicated to strengthening families across our nation. We aim to be a trusted advocate for families offering reliable resources grounded on Christian values to protect the timeless institution of families in our fast-changing world. We believe that equipped with the right resources, families can overcome challenges, leading to healthier relationship dynamics.

By God's grace, FOFM has been able to collaborate with like-minded individuals, organisations, churches, and government agencies such as the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, and National Population and Family Development Board. These partnerships enable us to bridge the gap and serve the broader Malaysian community.

### Enriching Marriages and Equipping Parents

Recognising the challenges faced by married couples, FOFM has launched the **Marriage Legacy** and **Journey to Us** programmes. *Marriage Legacy* trains seasoned couples to mentor younger couples in their first ten years of marriage, fostering a supportive community where couples can share experiences and seek advice. *Journey to Us* participants learn how to make their marriage the safest place on earth by recognising the 'reactive cycle' and the importance of 'heart talk'. Our **Date Night** event is designed for couples to deepen their connection and rekindle the spark in their marriage.



[Picture: Couples Date Night – rekindling your spark and renewal of vows]

Parenting is an experiential journey of love, challenges, and profound life lessons. FOFM's **Bonding Programmes** are specially curated for dads and mums to have intentional one-on-one time with their child to foster deeper understanding and connection.

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[Picture: Dad & Son Adventure Camp – overcoming obstacles and challenges together]



[Picture: Dad & Daughter Date – The giving of a promise ring representing a Dad's affirmation of their daughter's worth and a daughter's commitment to uphold integrity and purity]



[Picture: Mum & Daughter – expressing affirmation to each other in journal writing]



[Picture: Mum & Son Connection – building a strong foundation of love for life]

Our on-demand parenting workshops, including **Digital Parenting**, **Parenting: A Roller Coaster Experience**, **Parental Guidance** and **Let's Talk about Sex** equip parents with relevant tools they need to raise children, set healthy boundaries and create opportunities for honest conversations about media, sex and sexuality.

### Empowering the Next Generation

Since 2003, FOFM has been empowering youths through the **No Apologies®** character-based programme, teaching them to make informed decisions about life, sex, and relationships. We empower youths to stand for integrity and healthy values, and at the end of the session, they are invited to pledge sexual abstinence before marriage, with a pledge rate of 91%.

With the endorsement of the Ministry of Education and partnerships with organisations in Sabah and Sarawak, we have been able to reach over 320 public and private schools as well as colleges. **No Apologies®** is conducted in English, Bahasa Malaysia and Mandarin. We humbly ask for your prayers for this ministry, the team of staff and volunteers as they work to reach the next generation.



[Picture: No Apologies® participants learning about getting help from the right people]

The harvest is plentiful, and for that we are immensely grateful for like-minded individuals who believe in the work we do and come alongside to reach their own local churches and communities.

We offer certification training for individuals with a heart for young people, enabling them to become **No Apologies®** Facilitators and Trainers. This training multiplies our efforts, especially in East Malaysia.

Additionally, through our **Prepare/Enrich** Certification Training we equip individuals passionate about strengthening marriages with



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the *Prepare/Enrich* assessment tool that helps couples explore and strengthen their relationship.

### Counselling for Families in Crisis

While FOFM's mission is primarily preventive, we recognise that many families experience crises. To support those navigating challenging seasons, we offer counselling services both onsite and online. Our professionally trained counsellors assist individuals and couples dealing with conflict, mental health issues and more. If you need a listening ear, please reach out to us and schedule an appointment. While our services are free of charge, donations are welcomed, with a recommended sum of RM70 per counselling session.



[Picture: [family.org.my/gethelp](https://family.org.my/gethelp)]

We also partner with corporations to promote the well-being of their employees, recognizing that a healthy employee is a productive one. We advocate for mental health by offering counselling services and promote family values by conducting marriage and parenting workshops.

### Community Awareness

FOFM serves the broader community by bringing trusted resources to families through conferences and events. We actively share content on social media and provide a wide range of articles on our website to support families. Through our contributions to The Sun's "*Under One Roof*" column every Friday, we offer marriage and parenting tips to families across the nation.

Additionally, we air *90-second audio commentaries* on TraxxFM radio twice daily at 12:30 PM and 5:30 PM, Monday to Friday, offering bite-sized advice on marriage, parenting, and family life. These short messages, which have also been featured in places like KFC outlets and supermarkets, serve as reminders of the importance of family to our listeners.

### Family for His Glory

We recognise that God designed the family to reflect His nature (Genesis 1:27). The foundation of every thriving family is Christ, and we are called to build and pass on a legacy of love and faith that will endure for generations. As Psalm 127:1a reminds us, "Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain." Let us together center our homes in Christ and build a strong family for His glory.

We covet your prayers and invaluable support as we endeavour to "**Help Families Thrive.**"

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## Koh Gim Lam's Personal Updates & Testimony

### Background

Brother Koh Gim Lam (GL) lying on the sick bed in the hospital. GL has been in and out of hospitals both public and private since 2022, when he was diagnosed with cancer in his bladder. Then early in 2024, the T 6-8 of his vertebrae backbone collapsed and rendered him paralyzed in both legs.

He was operated upon twice. In the hospital other complications arose; cancer of the prostate, TB embedded in his bones and 4 days haemorrhaging in his rectum. He was placed in the High Dependency Unit (HDU) of the General Hospital of Ipoh for 22 days. According to the nurses the longest a patient ever stayed in the HDU is 15 days.

On March 26, 2024, his surgeon commented that there was nothing more the hospital could do for him. He was discharged on March 27, and moved



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to stay in a nursing home for a period before returning home. He is continuing with all the medical follow ups required and appears to be better as the time progresses).

Two groups of friends visited GL from time to time in the hospital.

Group 1 (G1) visitors are of the charismatic circle and Group 2 (G2) are evangelical Christians. And both groups are friends of each other. While GL was very sick in bed, he was conscious of the discussions that were going on and was able to join in the conversation and discussion from time to time when he was feeling better. Now GL appears to be on the road of recovery.

The amount of prayer for GL during his prolonged illnesses was nothing short of amazing. In GL's last update, he shared that he was overwhelmed with grief and pain. With the demise of Yoke Ling, followed so soon by that of his mother, then hit with the sudden collapse of T6-8 of his backbone which rendered him unable to walk completely and in suffering with excruciating pain, he confessed that he did nosedive into depression as tears flowed too freely.

He was overwhelmed again, but with such positive inputs:

1) Overwhelmed with so much of Christian love. So many had sent greetings, calls and some even visited and had bathed him with so many prayers. His spirit was lifted. Being loved is so therapeutic.

2) Paying the growing medical bills. The concerns for paying the hospital bills was beyond his imagination. All outstanding hospital bills were paid in full and have no immediate need of more money.

3) Excellent Doctors. The doctors assigned to GL - Dr Azahari, Dr Tan Wei Ming and Dr Lai Tian Seong, treated him with such tender concerns. God sent Dr. Azhari, a surgeon. Thin and gentle, with one of the best bedside manners GL had experienced. He is head of the neurology / surgery department of General Hospital, Ipoh with well over 100 staff under him. Each morning when he leads his entourage of doctors to see the patients, GL sees a giant of a man. GL thanks God, for placing him in Dr Azhari's hands.

At the moment GL is under home medical treatment with Dr Lai who administers 2 jabs of antibiotics daily. At the moment GL is being treated for infection and inflammation as it is not possible to confirm it is the spread of the tumour.

Dr Lai Tian Seong, a dear friend and has become GL personal physician. Through his connections, he has been linked to so many in the medical community in Ipoh. Dr Lai is helping GL to understand in layman's terms what's happening with each medical upheaval is most comforting and enlightening. He even started a 'care for Gim Lam' group which not only pray regularly for GL but to look into his physical needs.

Then there is Dr Yeoh Beng San all the way from Australia. When he heard of GL's hospitalization, he arranged for Vicky Ng from the Ray of Hope that lunch be brought to GL on a daily basis.

Alex Chuah, one of the sweetest servants of God, GL has worked with. Alex told GL of his availability to work for OA serving together. With Alex is Kenneth Chong ever ready to come to GL's needs. His gentleness is so comforting to a very sick man.

Almost like an angel coming out of nowhere is Claren Choo. Through Indy of TCF, she came to visit then continued to serve GL's dinner. She came when GL felt very down, providing the shoulder to let GL's tears flow. Angel unaware!

Mei Yen, GL's 'kai lui', in spite of her physical limitations, comes limping with her husband, Roger, visiting regularly.

When Goh Lay Hua arranged a zoom prayer meeting for me, GL was amazed by the outpouring of Christian concerns. Nearly 70 participated. It felt so good to be loved.

Two days ago, GL received a call all the way from Mongolia, with former SU staff calling with so much concern for his well-being. Crowning it all, GL's former students in Jerantut, whom he had taught in the 70s, contacted GL and wanted to be updated. Never knew little seeds planted here and there can carry such a long way. The Lord be honoured.

Not that the cancer in my bladder is gone; not that the pain on the operated area of my vertebrae area is not troubling me; not that the TB is no longer concealed in the bone; and while the prostate issue remains. GL is still unable to use his two legs, yet he is upbeat! Jesus did come to my bedside!

After nearly two months in the hospital and nursing home, of which 22 days were spent in the High Dependency Unit, GL is now at home in the Tambun Ministry House with Ming Wei, Juli and Jamel taking care of him. GL seems to have

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regained his appetite and there's a general sense of some kind of normalcy physically.

Please cover GL with your precious prayers:

- 1) that Juli, Kamel and Ming Wei will be able to help him to rehabilitate quickly.
- 2) that the heaps of medication given to GL will bring about some healing.

3) that he may find strength in the joy of the Lord and always enjoy His presence and His people.

The occasional sense of grief still persisted but thank God His grace is sufficient!

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### Humanitarian Work Which The Church Is Doing

**Christian Brethren Church Mabvuku Chapel, Harare, Zimbabwe, Southern Africa**

Rodney Tan (+60 13-323 6771) and Pastor Anderson Mutema (+263 77 267 2999)

Having experienced a high level of poverty among believers in the church, especially the elderly, widows, single mothers and orphans. In 2016 the church leadership put in place poverty reduction initiatives namely:

1. **Piggery project** in Domboshava, 30 km from Harare. The sales proceeds are given to believers in the form of cash hand out.
2. **Horticulture Project** in Mazoe. 40 km from Harare. The object of this project is selling and consumption. The proceeds are given to believers in cash handouts as well.

#### 3. **Food Bank**

In this project, believers contributed whatever they could afford. This is done from April to November. The funds in this common pool are used to buy groceries in December, three days before Christmas. The groceries are distributed to all believers regardless of whether one contributed or not. The object of this project is to enable all believers to have a decent meal on the 25<sup>th</sup> December.

#### 4. **Cash planting project.**

Believers enter into groups. Each group member contributes to the common pool, which in turn the funds contributed, are made available for whoever wants to borrow at a minimal interest. At the end of the year total interest earned is distributed in the form of dividends to every group member who participated in contributing to the common pool of funds.

The objective of this project is for the provision of funds enabling believers who are aspiring to run small businesses to borrow money easily as start-up capital. For banks, they need collateral of which many and if not, the majority does not have.

#### 5. **EDU Fund**

Is meant for paying school fees to children from poor families and orphans. Believers do contribute towards this fund.

#### 6. **Sewing project**

This project aims at training women and school leavers to sew garments for selling. The project's aim is to create employment. This is a new project to be launched this year. Funding needed is for 5 sewing machines and 2 overlocking machines only.

Currently all these projects have stopped operating as a result of disasters caused by climate change as well as COVID 19 etc. This has impacted the lives of many people in our country, making it hard for them to contribute towards these projects. But now we would like to revive them.

Our prayer request is that we are asking our brothers and sisters in Malaysia and elsewhere to join us, asking God to avail funds to them, to kick start these noble projects towards strengthening the love of God among believers.

### The CHURCH's Spiritual Works

1. Discipleship among the youth.
2. Mentoring the youth.
3. Currently we are organizing a Church planting team.

Our prayer point in terms of spiritual work of the church is that we are asking believers in Malaysia and other countries to join hands praying for the church planting team to be eager in fulfilling the great commandments of our Lord Jesus stated in Matthew 28:19-20.

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In Zimbabwe there is hunger due to erratic rains in the farming season of 2023/2024. Pray for us for the Lord's provision and mercies.

For further information and or any consideration, please do not hesitate to contact Brother Rodney Tan on cell: +60 13-323 6771 and Pastor Anderson Mutema on cell +263 77 267 2999

### Brethren Movement in Brazil

Jabesmar A. Guimarães

Greetings in Christ to the brothers and sisters in Malaysia!

It is a pleasure to be able to share a little about the Brethren Movement in Brazil. First of all, I want to thank you for the warm reception given to us at IBCM 8 held in Kuala Lumpur. We are very thankful to all the churches that in some way contributed to that wonderful meeting. I returned to Brazil deeply impacted.

Let's then move on to the purpose of this article.

The work of the Brethren in Brazil began in June 1878 with a group of eight Brazilian brothers. Working in unity and with missionary zeal, that small group was blessed by God and quickly expanded to other locations, from cities to rural areas.

Eighteen years later, Stuart Edmund McNair arrived in Brazil from England. He was the first foreign missionary in Brazil from the Brethren Movement. Being a terrific Scripture student and a great evangelist, McNair had a great impact on the existing churches and started so many others. It has been 146 years since that small beginning in 1878, and today there are about 700 to 750 local churches in Brazil. Most of them are located in the Southeast Region (460), which include the states of Espírito Santo, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Minas Gerais. Due to Brazil large territorial extension, it is not easy to make an exact statistic of the number of the Brethren Movement Churches.

As we do not have a national missionary entity, there are some regional missionary entities that seek to provide some support to full-time workers. These entities promote regional missionary congresses to cooperate with the missionary work - Christ believers' edification and to support full time workers. Despite not having a national entity, Brazilian churches are united by bonds of Christian fellowship and collaborate with each other, as well as with full-time workers. Most of the missionaries are in urban areas, but we also have missionaries working among indigenous peoples around the Brazilian jungles.

Besides the national workers, we have missionaries in São Tomé and Príncipe (Africa), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Portugal, and Bolivia.

Space and time do not allow us to discuss all regions of Brazil, so, I will talk a little about the region where I live. I live in the Greater Vitória Metropolitan Region, in the State of Espírito Santo in the southeast Brazil, up from the state of Rio de Janeiro, which has 1.880.828 inhabitants.

Like all cities in the world, we have more urbanized and well-structured areas, poorer neighbourhoods on the outskirts, as well as rural areas. 54 Brethren Movement Churches are located here. We have many activities among the churches such as general congresses, youth congresses, camps for youth and teenagers, and also for the children. Besides their normal activities, the churches promote conferences, women's conferences, street evangelism, etc. inviting each other to participate in these activities. Thus, fellowship and practical cooperation are developed among the churches and there are even establishment of new churches.

The church where I serve, as one of the elders, is located in São Torquato neighbourhood in the Greater Vitória Metropolitan Region. The church is 56 years old and has 180 members. Including children, teenagers, and unbaptized youth. We are a group of approximately 230 people. Besides the local work, there are six congregations that we are responsible to assist as they are not yet independent and cannot walk alone. In these 56 years of existence, our church has created and emancipated 13 other churches. This is a brief summary of the Brethren's activities in Brazil.

I leave Philippians 1:6 for the meditation of the Brethren Assemblies in Malaysia.

Note: You can learn a little more about the Brethren Movement in Brazil on the link below:

<https://youtu.be/PO7VHecO610?si=xGt0uosR0NaJ4iZo>

# Touching Lives

## Indonesian Christian Brethren Assembly

Andy Siau (+628112954884)

### Yesaya 42: 10-11

*Nyanyikanlah nyanyian baru bagi Tuhan  
dan pujilah Dia dari ujung bumi!*

*Baiklah laut bergemuruh serta segala isinya  
dan **pulau-pulau dengan segala penduduknya.***

*Baiklah padang gurun menyaringkan suara  
dengan kota-kotanya dan dengan desa-desa **yang didiami Kedar!***

### Isaiah 42: 10-11 (NIV)

Sing to the Lord a new song,  
his praise from the ends of the earth,  
you who go down to the sea, and all that is in it,  
**you islands, and all who live in them.**  
Let the wilderness and its towns raise their voices;  
let the settlements **where Kedar lives** rejoice.



Indonesia is the 4th largest country in the world with a population of almost 280 million people. According to data from JoshuaProject.net, there are 786 people groups in Indonesia, and 239 of them are considered as Unreached People Groups (UPG). 83.3% of the population is Muslim, making Indonesia the country with the largest Muslim population in the world. 11.43% of the population is Christian, and 3.23% are Evangelicals. This means that Indonesia is a vast field where the workers are very few.

According to Isaiah 42:10-11, there will be songs of praise to God from all corners of the earth, including from the islands inhabited by the Kedar people! This description fits Indonesia perfectly because Indonesia is a country with

17,508 islands, and about 8,000 of them are inhabited. Indonesia is the largest archipelago country in the world, with the largest Kedar population in the world!

Brethren Assemblies in Indonesia are very few. There are no more than 10 assemblies scattered in several cities on the island of Java. The total number of the Brethren in Indonesia is probably less than 1,000 people. Therefore, Indonesia should be one of the ministry priorities of Brethren worldwide.

The Brethren assembly that we pioneered and serve is located in Yogyakarta, a city known as a student city. Yogyakarta can also be considered a "Mini Indonesia" because the students studying in Yogyakarta come from various tribes (people groups), most of whom are UPG. Our assembly is very small and simple, more like a "House Church". Since the establishment of this assembly about 10 years ago, our focus has not only been on increasing the number of members but our priority is to help members understand God's Great Vision in Revelation 7:9 and seriously fulfil the Great Commission of the Lord Jesus in Matthew

## Touching Lives

28:19-20. As most of our members are young people and students, our ministry focus is also on students. However, we don't have many programmes.

Our main program is to train and send each member to actively meet students on campuses in Yogyakarta, share the good news, and disciple them. The pattern we use is based on the principles of the Disciple Making Movement (DMM), with necessary modifications according to our ministry context. We are very open to collaborating with Assemblies from Malaysia and other countries to serve

Indonesia. We can also assist Mission Trip Teams who want to explore ministry in Indonesia. We can even train students from various countries who want to serve young people and students from UPG backgrounds in their respective countries.

Please support us in your prayers:

1. Give thanks for God's work through us in Indonesia to reach students for the fulfilment of the Great Commission.
2. That more Christian students would capture the vision of the Great Commission and commit to work on this calling in various campuses across Indonesia.
3. That the ministry we are doing would bear much fruit with discipleship groups that will multiply.
4. That there would be collaboration with Brethren Assemblies in various countries to serve Indonesia.



**Indonesian Christian Brethren Assembly**

Name: Brother Andy Siau  
Mobile: +628112954884

### Argentina – A Part of God's Work

José Omar Telmo

It all began with the exploratory trip of the English missionary John Henry L. Ewen around 1882. Ewen received missionary training at the college founded by the Grattan Guinness couple in London, where God worked in his heart to go to the region of the River of the Silver.

The chronicles record that he experienced a “miraculous” meeting with his contact in Buenos Aires, the capital city of Argentina. The rancher (or landowner) Federico Fletcher wrote a letter to young Ewen, offering to help him if he came to dedicate himself to evangelical work in Argentina. Unfortunately, due to the loss of some correspondence, Ewen arrives in Buenos Aires without Fletcher knowing. Thus, Ewen found himself alone in the city without knowing anyone and without knowing any Spanish. He sat on his suitcases on a busy street and a man passed by, asking him where he wanted to go and what his name was, to which he replied: “My name is Henry Ewen and I want to go to a man's house called” Fletcher.” The extraordinary thing about the case is that the man who asked him was Mr. Fletcher himself. And so begins our history that has already been going on for 142 years.

The work of God among the Brethren Assemblies was blessed by giants of faith such as J.H.L. Ewen, W.C.K. Torre, G.S. Payne, G.M.J. Lear and many others who, with their wives, did a magnificent task with around 1,000 churches and evangelistic points and about 70,000 believers. In addition, homes for children and the elderly, 20 evangelical schools, 5 community centres, many camps and retreat sites, some radio stations, a couple of book and magazine publishers, and several Bible institutes were created.

In 1891 the first testimony was established in what is the current congregation on 1750 Brazil Street, Buenos Aires. Today we find congregations in almost the entire extensive Argentine territory. This growth, to some extent, followed the development of the laying of railway lines, which linked the main regions of the country. Today each congregation is known as an Evangelical Christian Church.

Given the rapid growth, the pioneers detected the need to create some elements of unity and identification of the churches. Hence the holding of annual conferences for all churches, a book of hymns and evangelical songs, and a monthly publication called “The Believer's Path.” This decision strengthened the churches for almost a century.

Argentina has enjoyed very good evangelists and great teachers of The Word. Also translators of books and hymns, and writers of much blessed literature to this day. At the missionary level, workers are currently entrusted inside and outside the country. A couple of decades ago missionaries began to be sent abroad, especially to the Muslim world.

Aside from the socio-economic and political crises, the work grows slowly but steadily. To God be the glory!

José Omar Telmo

Rosario, Santa Fe, Argentina.

## Testimony of an Evangelist in India

Molay Kanti Das

On 3<sup>rd</sup> July we celebrated the Indian Christian Day. In 52 AD, St Thomas the disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ came to India to preach the gospel, and he was martyred in south India. We have a legacy of 2000 years yet the India Christian population is only 2.3%. We have failed to continue that legacy.

At present, gospel preaching is becoming difficult, especially in North India. Evangelists and Christians are being persecuted by the fanatics and many have been killed. Churches are demolished and false accusations are brought against the preachers with many of them in prisons.

I, Molay Kanti Das, come from the state of West Bengal. Here people are more educated and open to Christianity. We don't have much restriction for gospel work.

I am serving the Lord in a place called Barasat which is 11 km away from Kolkata Airport. For the last 24 years I have been in the full-time ministry. When I started my ministry, it was very hard as I didn't have any regular income. In India, the Brethren Assembly's evangelists do not get any salaries. We all live by faith and God provides for our needs. By God's grace, an assembly has been established. Most of the believers are from other faiths. Our believers face opposition and challenges from their family members and society. I have started a few Bible study groups where I teach the Bible systematically. God is using me among the children. I have started a free tuition center for poor children. My goal is to educate the underprivileged children and share the gospel with them and their parents. This ministry has opened many doors for the gospel. In many places, I conduct a children's club to reach them with the gospel. During summer vacation, I conduct VBS. This year we could reach 350 children with the gospel.

In West Bengal we have the freedom for open air preaching. Time to time we go out as a team for gospel outreach. We stand at the marketplace or the roadside and preach the gospel while distributing tracts and booklets. Many people receive the tracts and they don't show any opposition, but their view is your God, and our god are the same. This is a big challenge that we face in West Bengal. By the grace of God, we have 86 Evangelists and 82 Brethren Assembly workers. Every last Wednesday of the month we gather for prayers. Every year for believers of Kolkata and surrounding assemblies we conduct 3 days of Believers get-together during the Hindu festival. I do not know when the doors will be closed like in the other parts of India , so let us do the work of an evangelist and win West Bengal for Christ.

I would like to share the following prayers points:

1. Please pray for the spiritual growth of our believers.
2. The need for an assembly hall where believers can sit comfortably and worship.
3. Regular financial support to run various ministries.
4. Please pray that God may open the hearts of the people as we share the gospel.



Christmas program for the children



VBS IN OUR CENTRE



# Touching Lives

## GOSPEL OUTREACH



### My Address

Molay Kanti Das  
106, Gitanjali apartment  
NO.3 Jessore Road,  
Barasat, Kolkata,  
Pin No 700124, West Bengal, India  
Mobile no. +91 9433180449

## Testimony: Maseka Samuel Ngombo Music

Maseka Samuel Ngombo ([smmaseka@gmail.com](mailto:smmaseka@gmail.com))



**Maseka Samuel Ngombo** (born 1<sup>st</sup> February) is a Zambian Gospel singer, songwriter, composer, music teacher, a teacher of the gospel, event manager and planner, a project manager and a producer. Born and raised in Mongu, Western Province, Maseka's professional music career began as a member and lead singer of the gospel group at Mandanga Christian Brethren at the age of 12 with great inspiration from his mum and elder sister who were by then already members of the women choir within the Assembly. Born to a father who was a carpenter and a mother who was a hardworking businesswoman and a peasant farmer. He comes from a family of nine.

He made his on-screen debut as a choir director in Mongu and have won awards in Choir Provincial competition in HIV Sensitization and Drama where the Mandanga Christian brethren church emerged victorious in 1998, 1999 & 2000. He became the best music writer and composer in 2001. His best expertise accolades in the assembly included public speaking, church secretariat, deaconship, evangelism, active youth leader, an interpreter, church drama, counselor and the teacher of the Gospel.

Maseka married his long-time fiancé, Eziara Kamwengo Kaweza, and they are blessed with four children, two girls and two boys namely Musole, Joyce, Peter and Samuel Jr.

### LIFE AND CAREER

Maseka studied and obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Buildings and Construction at Copperstone University in 2004. He also attended University of Zambia where he obtained a Masters of Business

## Touching Lives

Administration (MBA) in Project Management (2008). His music interest began at an early age and joined a church choir as a lead singer at the age 12 where he became the youngest member at the time. In his life career, he has worked as Geomatic Engineer for the past 20 years for road works and currently is a Project Manager in his own construction firm. He owns Maseka Records Studios in Zambia.

The following are Maseka's studio albums:

S/N	ALBUM TITLE	YEAR	PRODUCER
01	SANKA UMOYO	2007	Jimmy Banda
02.	UNITY	2008	Patrick Kilima
03.	UPEPE	2009	Davies Mulaya
04.	SAKILENU	2010	Davies Mulaya
05.	ALIWAMA	2011	Davies Mulaya
06	KUKAVARI	2012	Davies Mulaya
07	UKWENDA NA YESU	2013	Ephraim Sinkala
08	NIFUMANI MUPILISI	2014	Ephraim Sinkala
09.	LESA EKACEMA WANDI	2015	Ephraim Sinkala
10	MULUNGU NDIWABWINO	2016	Ephraim Sinkala
11.	THE VERY BEST	2017	Ephraim Sinkala
12.	ELOI ELOI	2018	Sebastian Mutale
13.	KALOMBO MWANE	2019	Sebastian Mutale
14	MULENJIBUKISHA	2020	Sebastian Mutale
15.	HOSSANAH	2021	Sebastian Mutale
16.	YEHOVAH MWALIPULAMO	2022	Sebastian Mutale
17.	ATOTELWE LESA	2024	Happy Jay/ Davies Mulaya/Sebastian Mutale

With the above listed albums projects, Maseka has enjoyed being called within and outside the country to minister the gospel in singing. Many events with the Christian brethren circles have been highly graced by his soothing heavenly psalms and melodies. Some of the events are church services, weddings, kitchen parties, funerals, church plantations etc.

### CHALLENGES

Maseka Music Journey has been full of obstacles and challenges such as financial challenges, where he has to foot his own money to record music to international standards. The church does not have a doctrinal authority to give an individual artist to sing with the musical instruments in the Assembly. And the body of believers could not fully support the ministry which is solely owned by Maseka. Other challenges are not having adequate studio equipment that can help produce international standards music, and not having adequate music knowledge and lessons from reputable institutions or universities. Also, not having sufficient marketing strategies on how to market the end product so as to be able to bring revenue for self-sustenance.

### WAYFORWARD

Maseka believes in working hard and has ambitions to reach out to the world and spread the Gospel through the ministry of singing. He helps the youths via mentoring to believe in what they have as talents and to make use of these talents. He also assists them to choose the right studios and producers, helping them with a good genre that will excel and be accepted in the Christian circles. He is also seeking assistance for other brethren in terms of mentorship and capacity building so that they will have powerful ministers of the gospel in the singing ministry.

He wants to open his very own music studios that will train singers and vocalists to the high standards. He wants to send more youths to the universities to teach them the importance of social networking and how it can benefit the ministry, and to learn how to use marketing skills so that the end product could be shared with everyone globally.

Some of his music can be found on Youtube, facebook, Boomplay and Tiktok.

For more information you can write to him via email address: [smmaseka@gmail.com](mailto:smmaseka@gmail.com)

## Jalan Imbi Chapel Mission Trip to Java, Indonesia 2023-2024

Khor Keat San (+6012-2838032) Harry Loh (+6012-2107738) ([harryloh.bme@gmail.com](mailto:harryloh.bme@gmail.com))

**God made something unimaginable happen by bringing together His people from 2 different countries who love God and the lost.**

Just before the MCO lockdown in 2020, an Indonesian brother in Christ had been frequenting Kuala Lumpur for work. Across the weekends, he would join the saints in Jalan Imbi Chapel (JIC) to remember the Lord. This continued for several months where he got to know JIC better, especially in the area of creative outreach work among the youths. Unknown to JIC at that time, the brother also served in a committee that provided oversight to 13 private Christian schools in and around Indonesia. The desire of his heart was to see the school children between the ages of 7 to 15 coming to know the Lord Jesus Christ using the creative outreach programmes employed by JIC.

After the MCO was lifted in March 2021, God connected the brother with several members and the eldership of JIC to discuss the possibility of establishing teams from JIC to fly into Indonesia to conduct outreach programmes in the Christian schools. From that meeting, the idea of a vacation outreach youth camp was conceived. Of course, a barrage of obstacles still had to be ironed out and the road ahead was obviously not going to be easy. But the love of Christ compelled us to focus on the prize, the reward - a platform to share Christ - was just too great to be left unexplored.

**God had opened the door for the Gospel to reach children from 2 schools where many of the students are still unbelievers from unbelieving families.**

Thus started the coordinating process between the representatives from JIC and Gereja Kristen Tuhan (GKT) who are the founders of Alethea Christian School (ACS). The outreach youth camp adopted the name "Vacation Bible School" (VBS). Two ACS schools located in east Java were identified; ACS Jember and Genteng, with an estimated attendance of 230 students. A 3-day, 2-night skeletal plan involving daily messages, programmes and object lessons was presented and met the approval of the leaders of GKT and JIC. This was the easy part.

The VBS programme and activities had to be communicated and understood by both teams from Indonesia and Malaysia. Most of the planning, meetings, training and interacting between both teams were conducted via Zoom. Issues like adequate human resources, materials, cultural anomalies, finances, ideas, safety, language barriers, meals, etc had to be managed well in order to operate two camps in two schools for 230 students over a ten day period.

**God had opened the door for this ministry, God also provided for this ministry. Apart from Christ, we can do nothing (cf. John 15:5b).**

Truly, God's work, done in God's way, will never lack God's supply. God sent the Macedonian call and 12 like-minded individuals from 6 assemblies responded; Sungai Long Chapel, Bidor Gospel Chapel, Sungai Ara Gospel Hall, Sri Damansara Gospel Centre, The Life Chapel, and JIC. The Lord also moved assemblies and individuals to come forward with love gifts to support the work so much so that every need was met. Team members also bore their own financial expenses, while GKT graciously offered to host all inter-state travels, meals and accommodation needs of the team whilst in Indonesia. All praise and glory to the Lord of the Harvest.

# Touching Lives



JIC Mission team 2023



VBS 2023 in ACS Jember, East Java



VBS 2023 in ACS Genteng, Banyuwangi, East Java

16 months after the initial meeting and after hundreds of Zoom hours, the team from Malaysia landed in Indonesia. The staff and children were excited, open and responsive to the Good News, equipped & prepared with object lessons, colour and crafts and group discussions. There was the initial fear of the messages being lost in translation due to language barriers. Even so, the Lord provided the team with local translators who did an excellent job. Many came to know Christ, others rededicated themselves to the Lord. It was like a breath of fresh air that came at the right time for both the Indonesian and Malaysian team. It's hard to forget what the children said to us, that before the camp, their parents had pre-warned the children not to "believe in the Jesus gospel". After all, Christianity was the religion of the white man, and the visitor's objectives were to brainwash and convert people from their own faith. But during the 3 days, 2 nights of introducing the person of the Lord Jesus Christ via Bible lessons, songs, life-lessons, games, activities, shedding light to preconceived ideas against Christianity, the children could arrive at the simple conclusion that God so loved the world, and that anyone who believes in Jesus, the Son of God will have eternal life.



Object lessons to bring out Biblical lessons



Sisters from Sungai Ara GH sharing the Good News – open air



Creative gospel messages



Discussion groups for Q&A

# Touching Lives

## PARTNERS IN THE GOSPEL

Immediately after the conclusion of the first 2 VBS camps, the question on everyone's mind was: will there be another? If so, when and who will go? God already had the answers. **God works in and through His people.**

In 2024, we saw God open another door for us to minister to 4 schools – ACS Surabaya, ACS Lumajang, ACS Jember and ACS Genteng - to a total of 460 students. This meant more resources and more people were needed. Still, God faithfully provided again through His people for His glory. This time, God brought together a 24-member team with brothers and sisters from Sungai Ara Gospel Hall, Sri Damansara Gospel Centre, Ampang Gospel Centre, The Life Chapel, Melawati Gospel Centre, Melaka Gospel Chapel, Sungai Long Chapel, Jalan Imbi Chapel and Chinese Methodist church. God continued to stir the assemblies and individuals to come forward with love gifts so much so, as the psalmist said, the cup overfloweth.

**How wonderful to see brothers and sisters in Christ from Malaysia and Indonesia coming together to serve alongside each other, pray together, help each other, support one another, fellowship together, as partners in the Gospel.**

**God, the One who called us, will also enable us to carry out the work He had entrusted to us.**

After VBS, the schools faithfully followed up with the students that came to know the Lord and those desiring to learn more about Christianity by having Chapel Services, small Bible Study and prayer groups led by teachers called "Baca Gali Alkitab" (roughly translated as "Dig & Read the Bible"). It was so wonderful to see young students come to know the Lord, followed up and have a hunger for the Word of God. It was heart-warming that some are interested to learn more about Christ.



Colour & craft stations



Object lessons

## ALL PRAISE AND GLORY TO THE LORD.

We recognise that it is God who opened the doors for this work. We want to return all thanks and glory to the Father who first loved the people – especially the lost. He is also the one who provided by moving assemblies and people to support this work. We also thank the leadership of the assemblies who obeyed Him by encouraging their members to be part of the Great Commission. We also thank anonymous individuals who heard the Lord of the harvest and gave financially from their hearts. All your love, prayer support, financial help, and encouragement enabled His work to be done.

What a privilege to be an instrument in God's hand for His purposes!

God has not forgotten Indonesia. He is still moving. Perhaps the Lord of the Harvest has been talking to you about Indonesia? Would you like to be part of God's work in 2025 to reach out to the lost with the Gospel and to encourage



believers to be disciples of Jesus Christ? Would you cleanse yourself from worldly desires and pursue righteousness so that we can be vessels of gold and silver in God's great house (cf. 2 Tim. 2:15, 20 – 21)? Contact Khor Keat San at +6012-2838032 or Harry Loh at +6012-2107738. We'd love to hear from you today.

Mission team 2024



TADIKA  
**STAR KIDS**



# Open Day!

**Come & visit our preschool!**



Affordable Fees

Balanced & Holistic Preschool Education

Godly Values

Child-centered Learning

Appreciation of Nature & Culture



## Event line-up!

Free Admission!

- ★ Opportunity to enroll your child with us
- ★ Star Kids' Graduation Ceremony
- ★ Star Kids' Year-End Concert
- ★ Christmas Celebration with Music & Puppets

Registration form for the event!



Our social media links & website!



## Event details!

**Date:** Wednesday 11 December, 2024

(Selangor State Holiday)

**Time:** 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

**Venue:** Star Kids - Tadika Bukit Bintang

No. 1 & 2, Jalan Sungai Jernih 8/1

PJS 8, 46050 Petaling Jaya,

Selangor, Malaysia

Contact us at +603-79311117 / +6010-4415625 (Ms. Melody) for more information

# Reaching out ...

## SS2 King's Kids Kindergarten



**2025 REGISTRATION NOW OPEN**

**WE OFFER-**

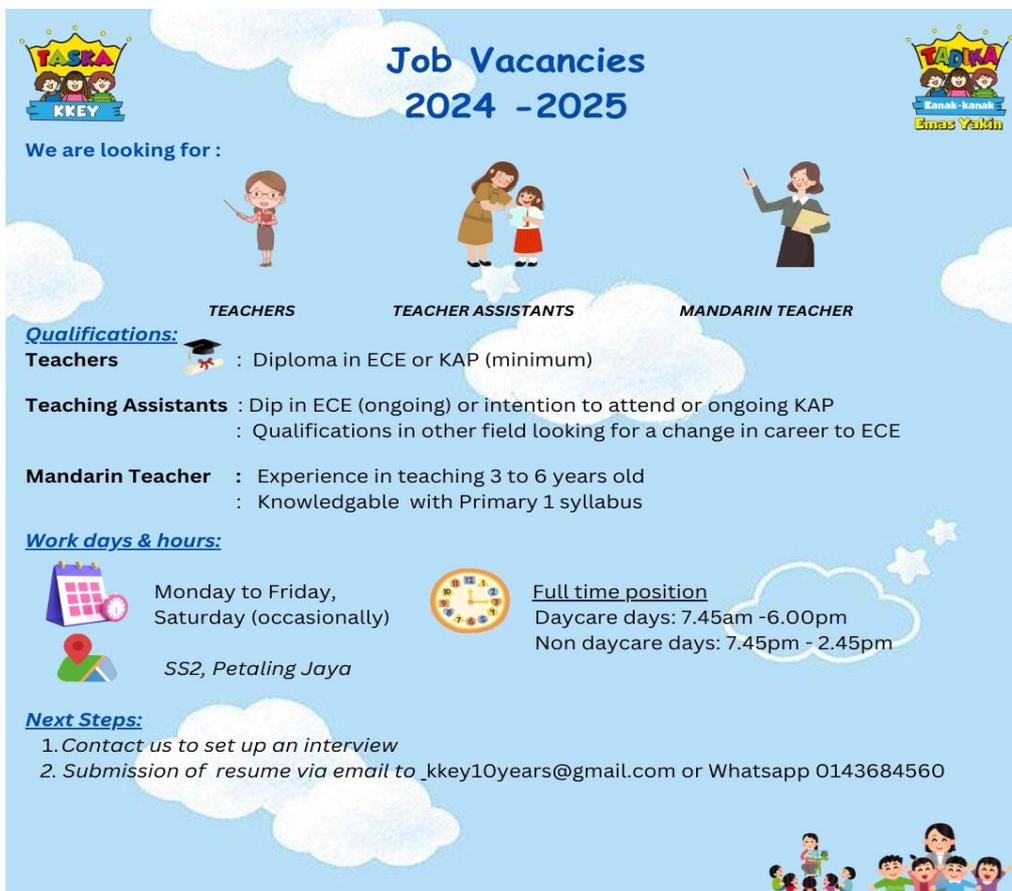
- Christian Pre School Education for 3-6 years old
- After School Program

Lot 18-22, Jalan SS 2/103, SS 2, 47300 Petaling Jaya, Selangor

014-3684560

kkey10years@gmail.com

kkey.kindergarten



### Job Vacancies 2024 - 2025

We are looking for :

**TEACHERS**      **TEACHER ASSISTANTS**      **MANDARIN TEACHER**

**Qualifications:**

**Teachers** : Diploma in ECE or KAP (minimum)

**Teaching Assistants** : Dip in ECE (ongoing) or intention to attend or ongoing KAP  
: Qualifications in other field looking for a change in career to ECE

**Mandarin Teacher** : Experience in teaching 3 to 6 years old  
: Knowledgeable with Primary 1 syllabus

**Work days & hours:**

Monday to Friday,  
Saturday (occasionally)

SS2, Petaling Jaya

**Full time position**  
Daycare days: 7.45am -6.00pm  
Non daycare days: 7.45pm - 2.45pm

**Next Steps:**

1. Contact us to set up an interview
2. Submission of resume via email to kkey10years@gmail.com or Whatsapp 0143684560

Marks Kindergarten

# Welcome to MARKS Kindergarten

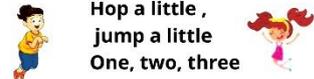
Come and learn with me



Tadika Marks is where we start  
On our education's path  
Put our trust in God each day  
Ever Bright At Work And Play



## Hop a little



Hop a little,  
jump a little  
One, two, three



Skip a little,  
Run a little  
Tap one knee.



Bend a little,  
stretch a little  
Nod your head.



Yawn a little,  
sleep a little  
in your bed.



## The Alphabet Song



A B C D E F G  
H I J K L M N O P  
Q R S T U V W X Y Z



Now I know my ABCs  
Next time won't you  
sing with me!



# Reaching out ...

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**OPEN TO 4-6 YEAR OLDS**  
**HALF-DAY & FULL-DAY SESSIONS**  
**LARGE INDOOR & OUTDOOR PLAY AREAS**  
**AIR-CONDITIONED CLASSROOMS**  
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**ACTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES**  
**SUPPORTS SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**PHONE: 04-658 4251 | WHATSAPP: 011-2083 5992**  
**E-MAIL: tadikasn@gmail.com**




## BPGC Toddler Playgroup & Sunrise Kidz



**Bandar Puchong Gospel Centre ([www.bpgc-puchong.org](http://www.bpgc-puchong.org))**  
 41-2 Jalan Bandar 16, Pusat Bandar Puchong, Puchong

- are you looking for a playgroup that:
- Promotes learning through fun & play?
  - Believes in imparting good Values at early age?



That's us! **Toddlers' Playgroup**  
 Our Program is specially designed for little ones aged 2-3 years old, accompanied by a parent/grandparent

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 We meet every **Tuesday and Friday**  
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Call us, we'd love to hear from you:  
 • Wai Ching (012-3180185)  
 • Peggy (012-2539091)

**Come join the fun and make new friends!**

**SUNRISE KIDZ**  
 (4 yrs – 12 yrs old)

**Sundays**  
**11:30 am – 12:45 pm**



**Activities:**  
 • Learn English & life skills  
 • Action Songs  
 • Crafts  
 • Storytelling  
 • Games & Quiz  
 • Building Blocks

Contact us:  
 Mun Ching (012-688 5947)  
 Peggy (012-253 9091)

Email: [bpqc.sunrise@gmail.com](mailto:bpqc.sunrise@gmail.com)

## Good Shepherd Counselling Service



### Good Shepherd Counselling Services

Take the first step in faith.  
You don't have to see the whole staircase –  
just take the first step.

*Martin Luther King, Jr.*

### About Us

In Good Shepherd Counselling Services, we provide individual, couple and family counselling to people across all faiths and religions. Our counsellors are professionally qualified (with at least a Master's degree) and are registered under the Malaysian Counselling Board.

### Issues We Help With

The issues that prompt people to turn to counselling and psychotherapy for assistance include:

- Relationship difficulties
- Stress or anxiety
- Effects of trauma and abuse
- Depression
- Mental health problems
- Anger
- Grieve and bereavement
- Eating disorders
- Desire for personal change
- Career guidance

### Counselling and Psychotherapy

There are times in many people's lives when they need help addressing problems and issues that cause emotional distress and make them feel overwhelmed. It is helpful to talk to someone who is trained to listen without judging or trying to influence, but who will support and guide them in understanding themselves and finding solutions.

Emotional problems rarely go away if ignored. Some people manage to 'bury' them, but they inevitably 'come back and bite' them at the worst moments at the times in their lives when they are most vulnerable.

For others, emotional problems are never really buried, they are always there in the background, impacting everything they do and generally affecting their lives negatively.

### How Counselling And Psychotherapy Work

Counselling and psychotherapy help you to discover the reasons for uncomfortable feelings and to work out ways of dealing with them.

The relationship between a counsellor and a client is confidential, and is based on respect and trust. As counsellors, we are trained to listen carefully, to help and to prompt, support and assist you to:

- ❖ Identify, explore and clarify your problems (often it is only when you talk to someone unconnected with your life that you begin to hear what you are really saying and feeling - counselling and psychotherapy are referred to as 'talking therapies').
- ❖ Increase your self-awareness and understand the underlying reasons why you feel troubled.
- ❖ Find your own solutions to improve or resolve your situation. A good therapist will help you to take control of your life and to find ways to help you handle your feelings in the future.
- ❖ Seek resources from your faith, culture or philosophy that you can draw upon to be healed, integrated and happier.

# How We Can Help

If you would like to make an appointment, please call us on:  
017-4321957 (9am-12pm) **everyday except Saturdays & Sundays.**

We offer daytime, evening and weekend appointments. As this is not a drop-in centre or a crisis centre, the sessions are by appointment only and last approximately 50 minutes. The number of sessions needed for any particular problem is entirely dependent on the client, the presenting problem and the co-operative way the therapist and the client work together.

## Confidentiality

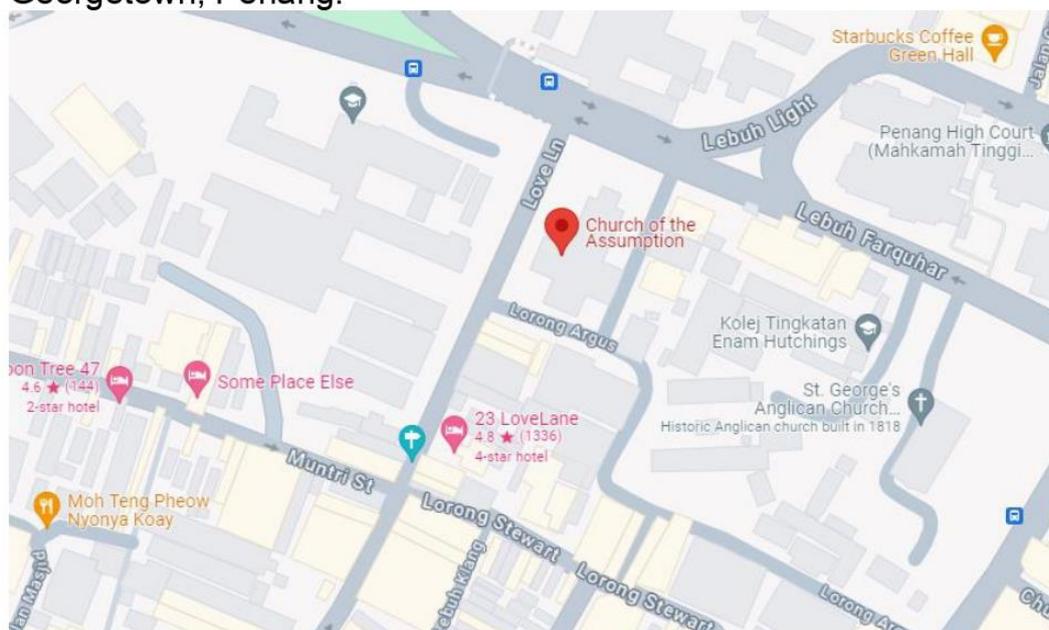
We provide a confidential setting where you are free to talk safely, without fear of rejection, criticism or blame.

## Fees

Clients are expected to contribute an offering for the counselling they received. It is to pay for the salaries and the maintenance of the center. Although a basic offering is suggested, the amount is entirely dependent on the client's ability to pay.

## How to find us

Our address: Church of the Assumption, No.3, Lebuhr Farquhar, 10200, Georgetown, Penang.



Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is One body and One Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

### Ephesians 4:3-6

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60000 Kuala Lumpur.  
TEL: +60-3-2176 4834  
EMAIL: [cbsm0709@gmail.com](mailto:cbsm0709@gmail.com)  
WEBSITE: [cbsm.com.my](http://cbsm.com.my)