

THE COURIER

ST ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL



MARCH 2017

MICA (P) 123/12/2016

eleven:30

ST ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL



THE LIVING WORD CONFERENCE

19-21 JULY 2017

7.30PM - 9.30PM

SONGS FOR LIFE'S JOURNEY

AN EXPOSITION OF THE PSALMS

**ST ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL (CITY HALL MRT)
NEW SANCTUARY**

**SPEAKER: MICHAEL RAITER
PRAISE AND WORSHIP: BOB FITTS**

FREE AND OPEN TO PUBLIC



MICHAEL RAITER is the Director of the Centre for Biblical Preaching, an organisation that seeks to train and equip churches around the globe in expository preaching. He is a gifted, internationally recognised speaker and is also the author of a number of books, including *Stirrings of the Soul: Evangelicals and the New Spirituality* which won the 2004 Society

for Promoting Christian Knowledge Australian Christian Book of the Year Award.

Mike studied at Moore Theological College in Sydney, becoming the head of the Department of Missions in 1997. On concluding his study at Moore, he taught at the Zarephath Bible Institute in Pakistan, and subsequently worked with Church Missionary Society Australia and Interserve. From 2006–2011, Mike served as the principal of the Melbourne School of Theology, an evangelical theological college.



BOB FITTS has been at the forefront of worship leading and song writing with an international platform in live performance and recordings for over 30 years. Bob and his wife, Kathy, have made their home in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii since 1981. They have travelled to well over 50 nations to lead worship and teach at schools, events, conferences, ministries and churches. He will be leading praise and worship at the evening sessions.

**DAY CONFERENCE 20 & 21 JULY 2017
THURSDAY & FRIDAY, 9AM - 1PM**

**For pastors, lay preachers, elders
and Christian workers**

BY REGISTRATION ONLY

**Registration Fee: \$30 (includes lunch and materials)
Registration Closing Date: 30 June 2017**

GROWING YOUR MINISTRY OF PREACHING

**ST ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL (CITY HALL MRT)
PRAYER HALLS**

SPEAKER: MICHAEL RAITER

ENQUIRIES: Francis Leong T: (65) 6337 3222 Ext. 183 | DID: (65) 6304 3762 | E: francis.leong@bible.org.sg
Karen Wong T: (65) 6288 8944 Ext. 230 | E: karenwong@anglican.org.sg

www.bible.org.sg/lwc2017
www.cathedral.org.sg/livingword



Jointly organised by the Diocese of Singapore
and The Bible Society of Singapore



EDITOR

Revd Canon Terry Wong

SUB-EDITORS

Edmond Chua
Patricia Aw
Adeline Hee

DESIGNER

Joyce Ho

CONTRIBUTORS

Ang Bee Lin
Dora Cheong
Edmond Chua
Priscilla Chua-Loh
Adeline Hee
Kwan Fook Seng
Jeanette Lee
Hambali Leonardi
Keith Leong
Liew Hui Min
Lye Siew Lin
Linda Ng
Cheryl Tan
Grace Tan
Joshua Tan
Louis Tay
Ti Lian Swan
Steven Wong
Terry Wong

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Bjorn Ho
Joyce Ho
Mark Lee
David Pooh
Francis Tan

ILLUSTRATOR

Ben Lai



Cover:

eleven:30 staff team
(clockwise from left):
Steven Wong, Dennis Low,
Kenneth Ernest, Peter Lim,
Hambali Leonardi, Joel Tan

THE COURIER is published by
St Andrew's Cathedral
11 St Andrew's Road, Singapore 178959
Tel: 6337 6104 Fax: 63391197
Email: info@cathedral.org.sg
www.cathedral.org.sg

All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole
or part without written permission is
prohibited. Opinions and views expressed
do not necessarily constitute the official
stand of the church.

MICA (P) 123/12/2016
Printed by Hock Cheong Printing Pte Ltd

contents

- 2 The Vicar Writes
- 4 The New Kid On The Block
- 8 When I Dance, I Encounter God
- 9 By His Grace Alone
- 12 Telling Everybody About Him
- 14 Hui Min, God Really Loves You
- 18 Was the Galileo Affair A Conflict
Between Science and Religion?
- 21 Friends In Mission Together
- 24 Keeping The Cathedral Small
- 28 A Good Way To Study The Whole Bible
- 32 Creating An Oasis In the City
- 34 Love Within For The Unsung Heroes
- 36 Why Didn't I Sleep In?
- 38 Living In Uncertain Times
- 43 The Cathedral Food Ministry
- 44 Imagine A Place
- 45 From Imagination To Reality
- 46 How A Stay-Home Mum Baked Her
Way To Charity
- 48 A Steep Learning Curve On The
Mountains Of Nepal
- 50 In & Around
- 56 Staff Directory

Screen or

The Courier has taken a long hiatus since the days when it was helmed by a very able team of editors, headed by Rosalind Chen. That pause was necessitated by the clergy leadership transition and changes in the way communications are done today. In this day and age, do we still need a printed magazine? We have already done a major revamp of our website (cathedral.org.sg) with a Courier-Online section.

The answer - at least for the moment - seems to be in the affirmative. We need both. Not only do they each reach a different demographic, they actually complement each other.

Much is happening through the life of the Cathedral which is newsworthy. And more than just information and the need for connections, people and events need to be reflected on. Someone once said that an unreflected life is not worth living. The same can be true with life and ministry in the Cathedral. We can continue to benefit from a conference or event long after it has happened if we pen our observations. Before we turn the page to the next chapter, some parts of the book are worth a pause or even a flashback.

And both online and print can function as archives for future generations.

On this "Inaugural" Issue

I am blessed to have a page in our weekly bulletin to ruminate my thoughts. Cathedral, however, is a very deep and rich community of faith. Grand as the building



Ink?

is, especially the Nave, grander still are the lives that fill it every weekend. We hear many stories, daily and weekly, that are worth telling to the wider community.

You have heard of the many guests who have been participating in our Alpha courses. Each guest brings with them a history of God at work. Hui Min shares her story here of the journey she and her husband took.

Unbeknown to many of us here, some courageous young adults have been dedicating some years to serve the needy in other cultures. An unexpected blessing is how new spiritual friendships are formed when people are trenching together in a foreign culture. The bubbles, necessitated by culture and language, lead to a deep sharing of lives which would not have been possible if they had remained in their own bubbles of busy lives back home. Some of them share their stories here.

We will always be indebted to clergy who have served faithfully and passed on something precious to future generations. The recently retired Canon Dr Louis Tay has been a fine example. He continues his ministry here as Auxiliary Clergy and shares his ministry journey with us.

Six new ministries deserve special mention:

Connect Group Ministry, Cathedral Biblical Studies, Creative Arts & Dance, Contemplative Ministry, eleven:30 Service and the new Cafe.

Keith Leong and Fook Seng reflect in two teaching articles, one on Science and the other on Christian living. In every issue of The Courier, we hope to have one or two articles of in-depth teaching. To this end, we welcome the contribution of members who are able to enrich others through their reflections on life and the Word.

We have also added some recipes to indicate that Courier can also lighten up occasionally and celebrate the people in our midst. This can go beyond recipes to other matters of community interests for future issues.

Depending on the interest and participation from the Cathedral community, we can plan for two or three issues of The Courier per year. In between, Courier-Online will actively release articles, including those that did not make it to print.

We value your feedback.
Write in to courier@cathedral.org.sg

Revd Canon Terry Wong

eleven:30

ST ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL

The eleven:30 Service started towards the end of last year, led by Pastor Hambali and a team of energetic young adults. The Courier interviews him.



Hambali Leonard



Kenneth Ernest

THE NEW KID On The Block

C: A broad question, but one that we need to ask anyway: what's your vision for this new Service?

HL: Our vision is for eleven:30 to be a place for young people, especially those outside the church, to feel at home, and know and worship God freely.

C: What is your philosophy of ministry as a service pastor? Nobody can do everything, and it is often necessary to identify an entryway by which some people may find themselves getting 'into' church and, hopefully, 'into Christ' by His grace and election, of course. So, going back to the question, are you more focused on pre-believers, or worship (as in praise), or on discipling those who are already Christians, equipping mature believers, or on age groups (youths, young adults etc)?

HL: Our heart is for non-Christians. God impressed upon me and the team the word, "shepherd." He led us to the passage in John 10:16 about His desire for the sheep outside of His sheepfold to be gathered under one shepherd. We want to create a community which is welcoming, accessible and evangelistic to a modern generation. eleven:30 will be Alpha centric, i.e. we encourage our members to bring their non-Christian friends to the Alpha Course.

C: This is where I ask you what the emphases/priorities of eleven:30 are, your specific goals, and therefore your benchmark for 'success'.

HL: I emphasise being accessible and welcoming. We learned a lot from Revd Peter Cook who heads the Alpha ministry at the Cathedral. He reminded us of the





eleven:30 service leaders and guests from Holy Trinity Bukit Bintang

3 'B's – Belong, Believe and Behave. He reminded us that we should be a welcoming community for people to feel a sense of belonging. In the past, we tended to expect visitors and new-comers to change their behaviour before they would be accepted or integrated into a faith community. At eleven:30, we want people to feel welcomed and valued. Our slogan is "welcome home." As people feel a sense of belonging, they will be open to believe in and change their behaviour for God. I would define success as people finding a sense of belonging at the Cathedral and becoming active believers that love God and people.

C: What might be some of the popular misconceptions people might have concerning eleven:30 that you would perhaps like to take this opportunity to clear up?

HL: Some people think that Anglicans must only sing traditional hymns and follow a liturgical style of worship. Or, we have to do things in the old traditional ways. I value hymns and liturgy as I grew up at the traditional 11:15 am Service but the modern unchurched generation does not appreciate them YET. As such, we Anglicans must change and adapt for a new generation or else we will

be one generation from extinction. I usually remind them of our Anglican hero, Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury who brought reformation to the 16th century English Church. He crafted the 39 Articles of Religion which addressed non-biblical and archaic practices of the Church at that time. He was adamant that the worship experience and knowledge of God should be made accessible and relevant to the laypeople. I like to quote his Article 24: "It is plainly repugnant to the Word of God and to the custom of the early church for public prayer or the administration of the sacraments to be conducted in a language not understood by





eleven:30
ST ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL

was officially launched on March 19 2017 with Revd Miles Toulmin (left) from Holy Trinity Bukit Bintang as special guest speaker. The HTBB worship pastor Stewart McIlrath (right) led during the praise segment.

the people." At eleven:30, our desire is for the worship experience and knowledge of God to be made as accessible as possible to a new generation. We want to stay relevant and accessible to them but remain true to our core gospel truths. I believe the gospel message is timeless and unchangeable but the messenger may present it in a more modern and accessible manner. Jesus himself used down-to-earth and relatable parables to present heavenly truths.

C: In what ways would you say your

previous ministry experience has prepared you for your current role?

HL: I worked mainly with children and youths. It has helped me to think of creative ways to engage the young people at eleven:30. It also helped me not to take myself too seriously as church ministry can be difficult and challenging. I remind myself and the eleven:30 staff team to have a good sense of humour and optimism. It is important to have child-like faith, good fun and joy in serving God and His people.



When I dance, I encounter God

It is difficult to feel uneasy around Steven Wong.

This is because the 42-year-old Malaysian is personable, warm and disarming.

Beneath his affable nature and his warm smile is a heart that seeks to bring pleasure to God in the things which matter most to Him.

For Steven, who came to Singapore for work, is in pursuit of an opportunity to serve God in the area of the creative arts.

His talent and skill in dance, cultivated from mid-adolescence, has been an avenue through which Steven has experienced God in a personal way. Whenever he dances with a view to expressing his faith in God, he tastes the freedom of the life that is found in Christ. Indeed, the experience has been a therapeutic one.

"And that's why I'm convicted of the importance of worship in dance and music. I personally encountered God in those moments," explains Steven.

A crucial formative phase was inaugurated in Steven's life at the age of 16 with his attendance of a workshop taught by a pastor from Singapore which covered the use of the tambourine in dance. It was at that event that Steven found that he "loved movement", and saw the way in which the medium

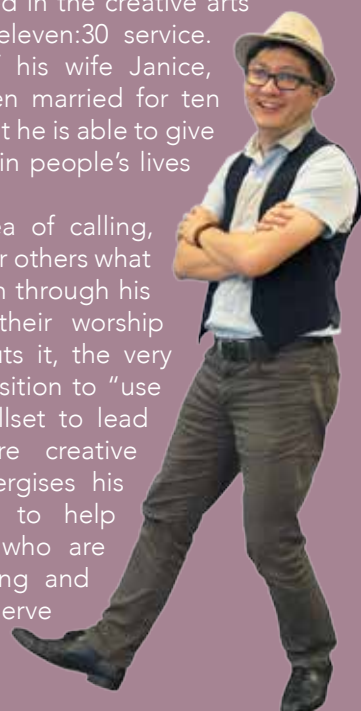
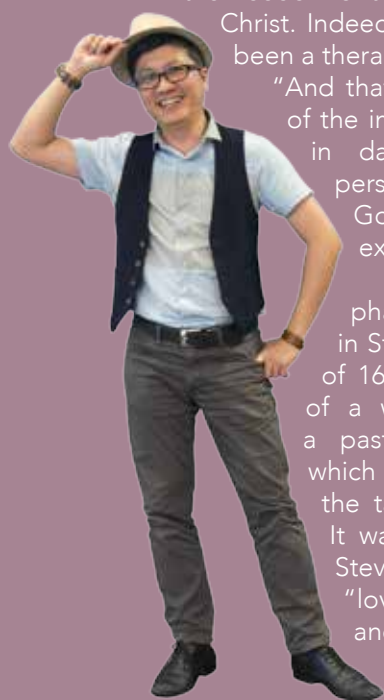
of movement can complement singing and musical expressions of worship.

Steven enrolled himself in a ballet school and after that, he started conducting dancing classes in churches. When he came to Singapore, he served in two churches (Church of our Saviour & Paya Lebar Methodist Church), initially as a dancer and later in ministry leadership and training. During this period, he had opportunities to teach in Taiwan, India and Malaysia.

Immediately prior to his employment at the Cathedral, Steven underwent a three-month training programme offered at a Bible college to ascertain his fulltime calling.

Here at SAC, in his first fulltime ministry role, Steven is involved in the creative arts ministry and in the eleven:30 service. With the support of his wife Janice, to whom he has been married for ten years, Steven finds that he is able to give himself to "investing in people's lives and impacting them".

In his specific area of calling, Steven hopes to do for others what God has done for him through his mentors: to widen their worship expression. As he puts it, the very idea of being in a position to "use your creative arts skillset to lead people into a more creative way of worship" energises his workday. He hopes to help Cathedral members who are interested, both young and old, to worship and serve God through dance and movement.



STEVEN WONG CREATIVE ARTS



BY HIS GRACE ALONE

canon dr louis tay

The only constant in life, apart from God, is change. He reminds us of our status as strangers and exiles (Hebrews 11:13) headed for the everlasting (abiding) city (Hebrews 11:10, 16; 13:14) which God by His grace is preparing us for.

Mission in Christ by His Grace

In spite of being raised in St. Andrew's Cathedral, it was only in Inter-School Christian Fellowship (ISCF) in my Pre-University (conclusion of twelve years in mission school) that I came to a personal awareness of sin, and, my need for Jesus as Saviour, Master, Standard and Christ.

This inter-denominational setting for growth as a Christian disciple continued as I proceeded to the University of Singapore in 1968 to study Dentistry. Just before matriculation, I attended the Varsity Christian Fellowship (VCF) Camp where Dick Dowsett expounded 1 Peter.

During my first year as an undergraduate, I assisted Canon James Wong, then

Precentor of St Andrew's Cathedral, to run the Anglican Youth Fellowship (AYF) Camp at the Dean's House at Cavenagh Road. There Dr. G. D. James (Executive Director of Asia Evangelistic Fellowship [AEF]) preached on the early church depicted in Acts as a Growing, Groaning, Giving, Glowing, and Going Church. His challenge to us campers to individually bear these five traits evoked a strong response from the majority of campers and was my call to the set apart professional Christian ministry.

Next Call

At the end of the first academic year (1969), I joined two second-year medical undergraduates on a four-week mission trip by rail (two weeks in Saiburi Christian Hospital in southern Thailand, one week in Bangkok and Manorom, Central Thailand, and one week in Chiangmai) to be exposed to the medical, student and tribal mission work of the Overseas Missionary Fellowship (OMF). It was then that I first sensed God's

leading towards overseas missionary service.

During my dental housemanship in 1972, I was among the earliest intake to be enlisted into full-time National Service. As a dental surgeon, my national obligation was backdated to include the obligatory housemanship year. Thus I fulfilled my National Service obligation by serving as a dental officer in the army for a further one-and-a-half years.

Together with 30 other medical doctors and nurses, we underwent a six-week Combat Medical and Medical Ancillary Officers' Course at SAFTI (Singapore Armed Forces Training Institute) School of Military Medicine. I viewed National Service as an example of, "No choice is God's choice", making the most of the situation to learn and serve.

After being commissioned, I became a Dental Officer in SAFTI and helped in the Military Christian Fellowship in the army camp. From my experience of trying to juggle this dual role, it became clear I could not be a dental missionary as it would be frustrating for me to be unable to fulfil both my dental duties and the Christian mission work to my 'complete' satisfaction. It was obvious I should choose one or the other. It appeared then as has been confirmed with time that pastoral ministry rather than dental work enabled me to be more effective in touching lives to count for eternity!

Theological Preparation

I had been pursuing part-time biblical and theological training with various seminaries – Laymen's Institute of Theology (Anglican Church), Melbourne College of Divinity, Australian College of Theology, and Singapore Bible College. I could persist along that path or I could study theology overseas on a full-time basis.

Through counsel from Canon James Wong and Reverend Howard Peskett, I applied for training at the Discipleship Training Centre (DTC) in Singapore and was accepted. The request for disruption from National Service to commence my two-year Diploma in Theology studies through normal

MINDEF channels was turned down.

I appealed through my Director of SAFTI, but was posted meanwhile to Tengah Air Base before being re-assigned subsequently to the Dental Clinic at Singapore General Hospital. It was there that, a letter from MINDEF arrived to announce that I was to be released six weeks before the completion of National Service, thus allowing me to commence DTC term on time (in September 1974). Truly "God will make a way where there seems to be no way" (in the words of Don Moen's song based on Isaiah 43:19 and 1 Corinthians 10:13).

Life Partnership

A year later, my wife Priscilla (Pelaez), who came from the Philippines, joined DTC. I have always been taught that, next in importance to receiving Christ as personal Saviour, is the choice (or more precisely, God's choice) of one's life partner (Proverbs 5:18; 12:4; 18:22; 19:14; 31:10, 30). In 1976, after completing the course at DTC in May, I served out my remaining six weeks of Dental NSF at Beach Road Camp and finally discharged my National Service fulltime duties.

I was made an Anglican deacon by Bishop Joshua Chiu Ban It on October 4, 1976, together with Soon Soo Kee and Ronald Hu. Priscilla and I married in July 1977 after she completed her two-year Diploma in Theology course. I commenced DipTh studies by external examinations with the University of London whilst in DTC and subsequently the

Canon Louis and his wife Priscilla



Bachelor of Divinity (University of London) by external exams during our 18 months in England (1980/81).

In the 40 years as an ordained minister, we have served in nine parishes (Church of the Good Shepherd (English) Oct 76 to Dec 79; St. Stephen's Church, Norbury and Thornton Heath in the Diocese of Croydon Jan 80 to Jun 81; St Hilda's Church Jul 81 to Apr 86; St. John the Evangelist Church, Albany in the Diocese of Bunbury (Australia) May to Jul 86; St Andrew's Cathedral Aug 86 to Dec 91; St. Peter's Church Jan 92 to Mar 95; St Paul's Church Apr 95 to Mar 2004; St. Hilda's Church Apr 04 to Feb 07; and finally St Andrew's Cathedral Mar 07 till I officially retired from employment in the Diocese of Singapore on September 7, 2016, our ninth posting.

I have been privileged to serve on the Board of St. Andrew's Mission Hospital Board since 1990, four years as the Brigade Chaplain of the Boys' Brigade, Singapore, many years as Board Member of the Singapore Leprosy Mission, Ltd, Exco Member of the Bible Society of Singapore, Exco, and subsequently Board Member of Celebrate Christmas in Singapore.

We have two sons, Luke and Matthew (both now serving their National Service Reservist). Through the years, God has provided amply for them. As we managed our household (1 Timothy 3:4, 12), we are mindful that our family life is incomplete without family prayer time. Thus as role models, we can with Paul, exhort, "Be imitators of me as I am of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:6-7).

Contentment in Loving God

He constantly reminds us, "What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?" (Mark 8:36). Contentment is to be found in fearing and loving God (1 Peter 2:17) whose words always prove true. "Give and it will be given to you" (Luke 6:38) and "It is more blessed to give than to receive," (Acts 20:35) were divine promises which we claimed and practised in our lives.

God calls us to be materially content and spiritually discontent. In pastoral ministry, God stretched us (Philippians 4:13)

as we served in teamwork (Ephesians 4:11-13) - in COMPLETING and PERFECTING the Church, which is the Bride of Christ (Matthew 24:14; Colossians 1:28).

One key lesson in life is whether by His grace, we are like overflowing rivers of living water (John 7:38) or in our flesh, running on empty (Jeremiah 14:3).

Exodus 16:21 recorded this account of the Israelites in their wanderings, "Morning by morning they gathered it, each as much as he could eat." We all need fresh manna each day since it is only as we behold the glory of the Lord (through his MEANS OF GRACE – word, prayer, fellowship, sacraments and witness) that we can be transformed into His image, from a lesser to a greater degree of glory (2 Corinthians 3:18).

This disciplined yet delightful feeding on His Word in order to obey Him, through the Holy Spirit's strengthening, has anchored my 40 years of ordained ministry. This spiritual feeding (2 Timothy 2:15) is done through daily hearing, reading (reading through the Bible every year), meditating on, memorising and studying (the Daily Bread and Encounter with God Notes of the Scripture Union enables me to study through the Bible once every four to five years) the scripture in order to obey/apply and preach in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Whatever our abilities, experiences or track records, we need to be reminded that "apart from me you can do nothing", as Jesus said (John 15:5; Psalm 119:11, 94:12). We are all leaky vessels who need to keep on being filled/intoxicated with the Spirit and the Word (Ephesians 5:18; Song of Songs 5:1b; Acts 13:52; Luke 11:13) and keep on walking and bearing fruit in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16, 18, 22, 25; Ephesians 5:26).

Eugene Peterson, author of the Message, sees the Bible as "God's voice, speaking to us, inviting, promising, blessing, confronting, commanding, healing – protecting, correcting, directing." God's Word remains "the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16) and, through His Word in us "a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (John 4:14).



Telling Everybody ABOUT HIM

cheryl tan

The biggest mission that Jesus sent His disciples on before He ascended into heaven, was basically to tell everybody about Him! He said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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 behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20, ESV)

Not only did Jesus want every person on earth to know that He loved them, He also lovingly gave His disciples the privilege of being a part of His work to bring all man to Himself.

Exciting as that sounds, whenever I read those verses, I am – more often than not – reminded of how poorly I’ve been performing on this mission, and what a struggle it is for me to do it well. I want so



Audrey Leong and Cheryl Tan from the eleven:30 welcome team.

much to tell my friends about Jesus and how amazing life is with Him. I really do! But so often, I'm paralysed by fear - What if my friends think I'm preachy? What if they have questions I can't answer? What if things get awkward between us?

Earlier this year, I had the privilege of attending an Experience Alpha conference at Holy Trinity Brompton Church (HTB) in London - the church where the Alpha Course began. I've always known Alpha to be a 10-week course about the basics of Christianity, where people watch videos together and have group discussions. Alpha is indeed all of that; but it is also so much more!

The leaders at HTB and Alpha had an undeniable passion for the Great Commission. Though many rounds of Alpha are run at HTB every year, I came to see that the church's focus was not on running Alpha as much as it was carrying out the mission of telling everyone about Jesus and showing them His love. Alpha was just one of the means that God had given the church to carry out this task, and so they sought to do it excellently, with a great dependence on Him.

I learned that this culture of dependence on the Holy Spirit was of great importance to carrying out this great mission, and hence also to the work of Alpha. The church demonstrated this through prioritising their role in creating a space where people could come and feel comfortable, loved and welcome enough to hear about God through the Alpha material. Then, they simply waited on the Holy Spirit to do the rest of the heart-

changing work in the lives of all who came.

In 1 Corinthians 2:1-5, Paul said this about how he went about the Great Commission:

"And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. ²For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. ³I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. ⁴My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, ⁵so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power" (NIV).

At HTB, I saw how this dependence on the Holy Spirit, and not on human wisdom – as Paul described it – freed the church to listen attentively to the views of others during discussions, and to find joy in showing love to everyone who came to Alpha. There wasn't a need to fear difficult questions or opposing views, or to correct every misconception right away. Instead, there was a quiet, liberating, joyful confidence that the Holy Spirit can and will do far greater things in the hearts of people than human words ever can.

I was greatly encouraged to realise that I, too, could take on this same confidence as a child of God in carrying out my mission to tell everyone about Jesus. I'm filled with excitement as I embark on my first Alpha journey to explore life and faith with friends, and to see the power of the Holy Spirit do amazing things. Join us at Alpha!



Hui Min, GOD REALLY LOVES YOU

Dr Chloe Liew Hui Min shares about her spiritual journey of finding faith in Jesus Christ and how it has transformed her life and marriage.

chloe liew hui min

Before I accepted Christ, I believed in karma and, under my parents' guidance, I grew up to be a filial daughter. I was taught that in order to gain success, I need to work hard and be independent. I did achieve success later in life. In my family circle, we occasionally made fun of Christians who say grace for their food. We have always thought that the food on our tables was a result of human effort and there was no need to give thanks to a divine being for that.

My Christian journey began when my husband and I decided to move to Singapore from London three years ago. Alfred was a nominal Christian. While we were in London, my life as a newly married career woman and a new mother of two children took a toll on our relationship daily. I was neglecting my husband. I had too many expectations of him. We had no help and decided to move back to Asia for support. I thought I had always been a supportive wife even though I was a busy mother. I also helped to resolve our financial challenges. I thought I did well as an ambitious and driven woman, who was always trying to fix problems.

After we moved to Singapore, he became a different person. He was unhappy, stressed out and he looked lost. Rather than trying to understand what he was going through in adjusting to life in Singapore, I just became angry with him. I made decisions, including threatening divorce, which I thought were for


the good of the family. They were actually selfishly motivated. His non-response affected me badly and I started to question many things in life. Things were intense at home. It got to a stage where my husband felt that moving out of our new home was the right thing to do. Life turned for the worse at that moment.

God came into the picture when He brought my old friend from medical school, Christina, from the UK to Singapore. At that time, Christina had just been married and was settling down. She had plenty of time for me. She supported me and introduced me to St Andrew's Cathedral. I also read the book, "Prayers to Save your Marriage." It struck me that I had been too eager to fix problems and had never allowed God into my life. I read that I needed to listen more and speak less. I have said so many unpleasant things to my husband when I was angry. I made things worse by always wanting to fix our problems without listening.

I later learned to swallow my pride and pray. I decided to let go and allow Jesus to intervene. I prayed every night for wisdom and guidance from His Holy Spirit. I asked Christina how I would know if God was listening to my prayer. She encouraged me to pray the sinners' prayer and declare that Jesus is my Saviour, and told me I would feel His hug. I did just that and I felt His presence in the room and His love. I even fasted a few



One of the sessions showed an image of Jesus knocking and waiting at the door, and that image stayed with me.



During this time,
I continued to pray for
wisdom
and for the
Holy Spirit to tame my
tongue.
I would pray for peace,
casting off
all the evil thoughts in my
mind.

times with the help of a new friend I met in church, Winnie.

Meanwhile, it wasn't an overnight miracle for my marriage. I continued to pray and I could sense a change inside of me. My husband wasn't aware of what God was doing for me and I didn't want to tell him. Things were not getting better between us. He later told me he wanted to move out permanently and that he had no feelings for me anymore. He broke the news on Mother's Day two years ago. I thought it was absurd that a man would leave his wife and young children in a foreign country for the sake of his career. Somehow I managed to hold back my anger and continued to lead my new life in Singapore. During this time, I continued to pray for wisdom and for the Holy Spirit to tame my tongue. Every time there were negative thoughts, I would pray for peace, casting off all the evil thoughts in my mind.

After several months of separation, God intervened and made a drastic change to our life. One evening, Alfred returned home. God had been watching and I realised that He had put me in a difficult situation so that I could become stronger and learn to be a more forgiving person.

My husband and I fell in love once again. God forgave my sin for not believing in Him. He took away the pride that killed me. He had given us challenges to make us stronger. Alfred later told me that he could see how I have changed to be more Christ-like and that in turn changed him.

I was invited to join the Alpha Course at the Cathedral two years ago. After the first video, I was hungry for God's Word. I watched the whole Alpha Course series by Nicky Gumbel on Youtube over the weekend, before moving on to other Alpha sessions.

One of the sessions showed an image of Jesus knocking and waiting at the door, and that image stayed with me, telling me that Jesus had always been waiting for me to invite Him into my home. It was only then that I realised that Jesus had attempted to

get Himself invited into my home, but I had always resisted. Eventually, I realised what love and sacrifice meant. God loves us so much that He was willing to give His Son to die for our sins so that we could have eternal life. In the past, I was clueless about Christ's death and wondered why Christians took His death so seriously! For a sceptic like myself, the Alpha Course gave me opportunity to explore and ask questions about the Christian faith in a conducive environment. It helped to shed light on the way I had lived in the past and it gave me a foundation on which to build my personal relationship with God.

Despite all these, I still had doubts about God's healing power. I wasn't ready to be baptised after the Alpha Course. My husband ministered to and counselled me on what it meant to be a Christian but I just wasn't ready. I had been to another church and came across Christians who were desperate to be healed by the Holy Spirit but I did not see any miracles. It puzzled me that some ill elderly people would seek healing from miracles and not take their doctors' advice. As a doctor myself, I believe in evidence-based medicine and not healing based on miracles or luck. God had planned for me to pick up a book at the airport on the way to a holiday in Phuket. My husband was supposed to join me but his work delayed his departure from Singapore. I went alone and had a day to myself. I read the book, which was about a female orthopaedic surgeon who was pronounced dead and her journey back from heaven. I completed the book within a day, just before my husband arrived after a rainy day. The story touched me but did not move me.

A year later, I was invited to a Jackie Chan charity concert by a family member and I was excited. I jumped into the back of a car and sat next to a lady called Ashley. I spent the evening with her and she shared about some miracles involving her dying husband. Later in the evening, she told me that she

and her husband were famous among the Christian community in Malaysia, Singapore and Australia. She told me to check them out on YouTube by searching for Ashley and Tony Low and I did that the following day. They went through a lot in search of healing for Tony's stage four nasopharyngeal cancer which had metastasised to all parts of his body including his brain. Before undergoing surgery to remove a tumour in his brain, his wife's pastoral team prayed for him. At that time, as an unbeliever, he said he wouldn't believe in Jesus unless He appeared in front of him. He did meet Jesus during his coma. He woke up paralysed as part of his brain was removed. He decided to read the Bible from cover to cover and by the time he finished the last page, he felt a burning sensation creeping up his legs and he stood up and walked!

Tony is my husband's aunt's nephew. A miracle has happened in my circle of family. God has planned it so well and arranged for these lovely people to appear in my life, just to let me know He is real!

Another miracle took place again a year after I met Ashley. I was ready to be baptised on the Easter Sunday just passed. The Cathedral invited Tony and Ashley to share their testimony of faith on the day of my baptism. I met Tony for the first time on the day of the baptism and he heard about my story. Tony pointed at me and said "Hui Min, God really loves you". He is right. God had a plan for me. He also has a plan in allowing me to share my story with you.

There will be many temptations to cling on to my rope coming my way, but I can now trust God to guide me and my family by letting go of the rope.

I would like to share a verse from Jeremiah 29:11, which has helped us a lot:

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" (Jeremiah 29:11, NIV).

May you experience His love.

Was the **GALILEO AFFAIR** a Conflict between Science and Religion?

keith leong

The charge and arrest of Galileo Galilei for the “vehement suspicion of heresy” of proposing a sun-centred model of the universe despite being told not to have been commonly cited as embarrassing instances, par excellence, of the inevitable conflict between the forward-looking nature of science and regressive character of religion.



of the universe, whose mathematical calculations he had already favoured beforehand. Historical evidence suggests that the Church had previously accepted the Copernican model insofar as it was a useful predictive mathematical tool that did not also assert that the sun must be at the centre of the universe (this was otherwise known as “saving the phenomena”, a type

A simple internet search yields a massive number of articles and talks that have used this episode as an anchor point for defending or castigating the Catholic Church or religion’s relationship with science. In my reading of the historical reconstructions of this affair, differences of opinion concerning what the conflict was predominantly about – that is, a conflict between science and religious authority, science and approved scriptural interpretation, science and science, different Catholic establishments and their respective sympathies toward or against Galileo, and so on – abound in the literature.

In this article, I wish to offer a brief recounting of this episode. In doing so, I hope that I would have related its complexities and the corresponding impossibility of drawing simplistic conclusions concerning the Church’s conflicting or cooperative relationship with science at the time.

Having done so, I then hope to mention some lessons the episode can offer believers about how we should conceive of the relationship between faith and science today.

Galileo was a prolific scientist who lived in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and made seminal contributions to physics, engineering and astronomy. With the creation of a superior telescope, his corresponding observations led him to favour the physical reality of a sun-centred Copernican model

of scientific explanation that may be worth researching if the reader is interested). The Copernican model differed from the earth-centred model of the universe based on an Aristotelian physics that the Church and many scientists accepted at the time.

Aristotelian physics conceived of reality as composed of five elements, four of which consist of base, or inferior material which tended to the centre of the universe, where the earth was believed to be, which was unmoving (coincidentally, this fact debunks the mistaken claim that the geocentric model was erected on the Church’s belief that the earth and its inhabitants were somehow superior to the rest of the universe). The fifth element, quintessence, or ether, an incorruptible and unchanging material, was what made up the heavenly bodies, that is, the sun, the moon, and other planets, and determined that they revolve around the earth in perfect circles for eternity.

Galileo’s observations revealed to him, among other things, that the surfaces of the sun and moon were not perfect, as quintessence would have it; and that Jupiter had four moons, which indicated that the heavenly bodies did not all revolve around the earth.

He published these findings in 1610 and 1613, indicating his inclination toward

Copernican astronomy. This led to the Inquisition's, or Holy Office's – the office charged with ensuring orthodoxy – declaring the implications of these findings to be false, and the Cardinal Robert Bellarmine's in 1616 telling Galileo not to defend the model. Many scientists disagreed with Galileo as well. They argued that the Copernican model could not yield superior predictions to the earth-centred model partly because both assumed circular rather than elliptical orbits. They also argued, wrongly – because they did not have powerful enough measurement equipment at the time – that stellar parallax, which should be observable if the earth was moving, could not, in fact, be observed.

However, by 1613 and 1615, he had already sent out widely circulated open letters to his disciple Benedetto Castelli and the Grand Duchess Christina defending the Copernican model on scriptural grounds.

In the letters, he relied heavily on the interpretive principles of the Church Fathers, especially St. Augustine's concept of "accommodation," which is the idea that the scriptures have been written to accommodate the mind of the common person, giving priority and clarity to matters pertaining to salvation, and not to scientifically robust descriptions of reality. He offered the metaphorical anthropomorphisms of God as an example of his claim.

The verses which had been appealed to in support of the Aristotelian model of an unmoving earth and moving sun included Joshua 10:13, Psalm 19:4-6; Psalm 93:1; 96:10; 104:5; 119:90; Ecclesiastes 1:5, and 1 Chronicles 16:30. Concerning the Joshua narrative specifically, Galileo also argued that Joshua's command to stop the sun from moving can be better interpreted as a command to halt the sun's stationary rotation, since he believed that the sun's rotation drove planetary movement, and therefore that the whole universe would come to a halt.

Unfortunately, by appealing to scriptural interpretation, he was treading on thin ice. The Church had been embroiled in theological and political conflict with the Protestant Reformers for some time, and had declared at the Council of Trent in 1545-63 that "no one, relying on his own judgment and distorting the Sacred Scriptures according to his own conceptions, shall dare

to interpret them contrary to that sense which Holy Mother Church, to whom it belongs to judge their true sense and meaning, had held and does hold."

While the declaration did not deny the interpretations of the Church Fathers, it had been understood in Galileo's time to include extra-scriptural authorities such as Aristotle's cosmology, Galen's medical theories, and other ideas which permeated and informed the intellectual culture and religious thought of the time, in much the same way modern ideas permeate our intellectual culture and inform our own religious assumptions.

Thankfully, Pope Urban VIII, who was a long-time admirer of Galileo's work, told him in 1624 that he could discuss Copernican theory but only as one hypothesis among others. This emboldened him to publish his *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems* in 1632, wherein he, rather unwisely, promoted Copernican theory with the aid of a lengthy fictional dialogue between three individuals who held different cosmological views. And he gave the name Simplicio, the name of a 6th century Aristotelian philosopher but which also means someone who is simple-minded, to the advocate of the Aristotelian position, a position which the Pope personally favoured.

In other words, Galileo seemed to be accusing the Pope of being simple-minded in an underhanded way. As one might imagine, the Pope did not take kindly to this. He was at the time embroiled in the Thirty Years' War, had just switched his allegiance from the French to the Spanish and felt that he needed to come down strong on Galileo to show his new allies his authority and decisiveness. In addition, Galileo's good friend and supporter Giovanni Ciampoli, the papal favourite who helped him remain surprisingly well-regarded in ecclesiastical circles, fell from grace in the Spring of 1632, leaving Galileo unsupported and vulnerable to discrediting accusations.

Thus, in 1633, he was summoned to the Holy Office and found guilty of vehement suspicion of heresy. He was ordered to publicly recant his Copernican astronomy, commit to three years of weekly Psalm recitations, where the sizeable proportion of verses featuring an unmoving earth is located, and be confined to his home in Florence where he remained until his death in 1642.

A century later, the Church began the gradual process of publicly shifting their stance toward Galileo. In 1744, Galileo's *Dialogue* was republished with the Church's approval. In 1893, Pope Leo XIII advanced a view concerning the relationship between the scriptures and science in his encyclical similar to those in Galileo's letters. Between 1941 and 46, several academic clergymen occasioned a partial and informal rehabilitation of Galileo in their published work. And in 1979, Pope John Paul II began a further informal rehabilitation of him. In his 1992 speech, he declared with some finality that the new science, with its methods and the freedom of research that they implied, obliged theologians to examine their own criteria of scriptural interpretation. Most of them did not know how to do so. Paradoxically, Galileo, a sincere believer, showed himself to be more perceptive in this regard than the theologians who opposed him.

From the brief description above, it is apparent that interpreting the affair as a conflict between science and religion would be a gross oversimplification. In order to really appreciate the complexities involved, the minimum factors, of varying weight, that have to be taken into account include the legitimate disagreement among scientists toward Copernican astronomy on observational and mathematical grounds, the Reformers' challenge to the Church's interpretive authority, the cultural norms and intellectual influences of the age, Urban VIII's own political troubles, Galileo's commitment to the primacy of mathematics over the teleological nature of Aristotelian physics, and his unwise jab at the Pope.

What can be learned from this episode? We can learn that the relationship between the scriptures and the deliverances of modern science is not a straightforward one. This opens us up to being sceptical but not antagonistic toward scientific pronouncements that, on the surface, seem to conflict with the scriptures. We can also learn to appreciate the different kinds of literary genres in the scriptures and value their theological import without necessarily committing ourselves to an overly literalistic understanding of their descriptions of reality.

Finally, we can learn that science and religion do not have to be in conflict.

Our embodied, finite nature and the corresponding limitations of our scientific and religious enquiries (see Job 38-42 and 1 Corinthians 13:1-12 respectively) mean that, even though the truth exists, we are not always going to be right ourselves or find the most accurate answers to the questions that we may have. If, as Hebrews 11 suggests, we are called to live by faith, then accepting that there may be questions we do not have certain answers for, or that we may be wrong about some of our beliefs, is to do no damage to it.

At any rate, there are professional historians, scientists and theologians who work tirelessly at the intersection of science and religion, who have offered solutions to just about any question we could ask, some of whose works and resources, in addition to the sources I used to compose this article, are listed below for your research.

On Galileo and the sources used in this article:

Maurice Finocchiaro, "The Copernican Revolution and the Galileo Affair," in *The Blackwell Companion to Science and Christianity*

Michael Sharratt, *Galileo: Decisive Innovator*

Stephen Long, *Christian Ethics*

Samir Okasha, *Philosophy of Science*

Lecture notes from David Wilkinson's science and religion undergraduate course at Durham University (which I audited in 2013/2014)

Peter Harrison, *The Fall of Man and the Foundations of Science*

On general topics in science and religion:

Alister McGrath, *Inventing The Universe*

Peter Harrison, *The Territories of Science and Religion*

John Hedley Brooke, *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives*

On the theory of evolution:

Alvin Plantinga, *Where the Conflict Really Lies*

William Lane Craig, Defenders Podcast Series 2: The

Doctrine of Man on his Reasonable Faith website

William Lane Craig, Defenders Podcast Series 2: Creation and Evolution on his Reasonable Faith website

Kenneth Miller, *Finding Darwin's God*

The author welcomes earnest correspondence pertaining to matters of correction and inquiry via: keithleongyanhao@gmail.com

KEITH LEONG completed his Master of Studies in Science and Religion degree at the University of Oxford recently. He is a member of St Andrew's Cathedral.





FRIENDS

in Mission Together

Four young adults - Hannah Chee, Samatha Ooi, Vanessa Kong and Belinda Chee – have spent a stint serving in Lat Krabang, Bangkok. Here they share their experiences and the value of spiritual friendships.

We started off as a Life Group in 2012. We hadn't known each other from before though we were all church members at different services and ministries. At that time (and still) we all had our own lives - careers, friendships, travel schedules etc. We came together in YA (Young Adult Ministry) because we were seeking something more.

At first it was hard to build relationships. After all, we were new to each other and we only met once a week for an hour or two. Since we were keen on growing together, we arranged meet ups outside of YA. This included Saturday brunch before YA, or after work dinners.

It had only been a year of fellowship together, before Hannah left for Bangkok in 2013. Vanessa left in 2014 to Chiang Mai. Samantha started her journey in 2015 and Belinda in late 2015. It seemed like a ripple effect, as we shared our stories and prayer requests from overseas, we caught on to God and what He was doing.

Being away from each other, and especially since we were alone on the field sometimes, meant that we had to be intentional in staying connected and sharing about what God has been doing in our lives. We made effort to call, text and pray. Being overseas had helped us to treasure spiritual friendships. We also learnt that encouraging and building each other up doesn't come

naturally. However, when our hearts are submitted to God, He fills us with what we need, and instead of competing, we began to learn how to celebrate and cheer each other on.

What were your first impressions of each other?

Samantha Ooi (SO): I honestly don't think I would've hung out with any of them if we had been in the same school/class

Vanessa Kong (VK): I thought that we were really quite different individuals. I was impressed by the different skills and personalities that each of us had. I didn't imagine that we would click so well together!

Hannah Chee (HC): Now that I've known them a bit better, I still think they're awesome, but in a very real and honest way because of how they share their hearts for God.

Belinda Lim (BL): My first memory of Hannah was listening to her share at YA about her mission trip experience in Cambodia. I was curious: why would a young adult leave the comfort of home? That is serious stuff! I was in the same YA cell group as Samantha. She impressed me by how she persevered to pray even when she was struggling to, and wasn't afraid to show that.

Why did you go to do missions?

SO: I was already going to leave my job - it was just a question of what to do next. I'm not sure I thought or prayed it through all that much, looking back. I had some pretty vague sense of wanting to know Him more, to experience Him more. And it seemed more of a possibility with other YA people like Hannah and Vanessa already having gone. So I asked, and the door happened to be opened to go to Thailand. It was more like a "why not?" Again, God used even my little motivation to open me up to see more of who He is and what He is doing in the world.

VK: It was just this fantastic sequence of events that led from one thing to another – I was keen to go at first but there were so many doubts and worries. Over the year, God took care of the concerns that I had and spoke to me so clearly that I felt that it would be disobedience on my part if I continued to resist His call.

HC: At that time, I had just quit my job and was quite certain the corporate world wasn't for me, though I had really wanted 'the life', i.e. career, money, marriage, house, kids (yes, in that order too). I had always been open to missions, and I thought that would help me to know God more so I said yes Lord, I'll go with You.

BL: I believe that God has called me to His kingdom work, so when there was opportunity to serve in Lat Krabang, I quickly raised up my hand very high. Thank God for the YA community which provided the spiritual support that I couldn't do without in this journey. Seeing other YA friends serve God unreservedly was great inspiration to me as well. Nobody goes to mission alone!

What was hard to give up?

SO: I can't think of anything I've really given up actually! Perhaps some comforts of home, being able to be around friends and family..

VK: My old self. I used to have so much pride in my own independence and I hardly prayed

to God unless I was in a very dire situation. Being in Chiang Mai really made me cling on desperately to God because He is the only constant in the midst of unfamiliarity.

HC: The comfort of being 'home' and the prospect of 'settling down', and the freedom, both time and financially, to travel. Maybe it isn't so much of 'giving up' these comforts but more of getting myself out of my comfort zone that was difficult.

BL: My desire for a life partner. I struggle very much to submit that to God.

What was challenging for you while you were on missions?

SO: One of the most challenging things for me was becoming more self-aware. Through different people whom I lived and worked with and through new circumstances, I learned more about myself.

VK: It was really challenging to deal with not being in control of everything: the language, the environment, the culture, the people. I needed to partner with God and it was then that I finally understood the meaning of "my yoke is easy and my burden is light".

HC: Building relationships with the team and with the people we were reaching out to. I used to be pretty independent and self-reliant. Living and working in community has challenged me to be more loving and giving. God also showed areas of my life that needed changing.

BL: The hardest thing for me was to stay close to Jesus. I tried to find my identity in doing many 'good' things, proving myself, comparing with others etc, and ended up empty and losing sight of the most important thing, which is to be with Jesus. That was the biggest lesson for me.

Share one memorable event during your time on the field.

VK: I think the most significant for me was witnessing how God's love transformed so

many of the children. These children from the neighbourhood are mostly from broken families and they had serious behavioral issues. Some of them were even in gangs. From my human mind, it just seemed impossible that they would even change at all but they were little miracles that unfolded before our eyes. They were so eager to learn about God and to pray to Him. They stopped hanging out with the gangs and started hanging out in church.

HC: I'd like to share one about the kids we've met. Kids Club is a children's ministry to kids in the Lat Krabang neighbourhood. We taught them English through Bible stories, songs, games and crafts. The responses from the kids have shown me that God reveals Himself specially and specifically to kids, and He wants to be known by all His children. They express this through their art. On one of the sessions, we shared about God calling Samuel at night, and one of the older boys, aged 11, wrote his own name instead of Samuel's on his craft "Speak Lord, Tong is listening." On another occasion at Christmas during craft time, instead of drawing Christmas decorations on the card, he drew Jesus on the cross and added light through the clouds, and a man kneeling before the cross. No one had told him to do it - he did it all by himself, and he was only 11.

BL: One night, we were hanging out with a few young believers and volunteers. As we talked, we realised that God has brought each of us strangers together to Lat Krabang. It was a time of shared gratitude. The young believers also expressed their desire to bring the good news of Jesus to their own people through the skills that God has given them, whether in the arts, business or translation. Our little stories are strands woven by the master weaver into His beautiful tapestry for His purpose and glory!

What have you learnt about God through your time on missions/through your friendship?

SO: I've been learning how much God loves

people. His intention is to restore them to Himself. I don't have to be stressed about "succeeding" at the work because God loves the people I minister to and He is the one who draws them to Him. He loves me, too, wants me to be a part of what He is doing

VK: I learnt so much about God's love – it is so vast and life-changing that we can neither escape from it nor comprehend the depths of it. I also caught a glimpse of God's love from our friendship. It is remarkable how God brought us together at the start and kept our friendship going despite the fact that we are "same-same but different".

HC: I've been learning that God's heart is loving, and God's way is humility. I've been learning about my personal convictions about the gospel, and what it means for me to believe, receive and repent. I'm also learning that conviction and compassion go hand-in-hand, remembering that it is the broken who need the gospel. God has been stretching me beyond who I thought I was, and showing me over and over again what it means to be His beloved child and a servant-disciple. I'm glad this missions journey isn't just a personal one, but one taken with friends, and it looks like it'll continue that way as long as we each make the effort to keep connecting and sharing life with each other.

BL: I learnt that God is our greatest treasure, and true friends are priceless gifts from Him. Irreplaceable!

Will you still 'go'?

SO: Yes :)

VK: Yes!

HC: Yes, let's!

BL: Praying and preparing! Would appreciate support in prayer and/or finances, thank you!



janice lee

CONNECT GROUPS KEEPING THE CATHEDRAL SMALL

canon terry wong

More than ever, in a busy, modern city like ours, many are searching for meaningful connections and friendships. The Christian life is not meant to be a solitary experience. It is to be lived and breathed in community.

Henri Nouwen, in his popular book, *Wounded Healer*, spoke of the loss of connections in modern societies, with the dissipation of culture, family and familiarity. With the loss of continuity and history, we live only

for the “sharp moments” of the here and now, which we consider to be valuable. For the modern man, “life easily becomes a bow which string is broken and from which no arrow can fly.”

Indeed, even in church life, we live for those “sharp moments.” It may be a Church Camp, a concert, a conference or even revival meetings. All these do have their place, but nothing comes close to an on-going family relationship in church life: where we grow together, remain accountable, discover ourselves and in the process truly grow and change into the likeness of Christ. In fact, in a Cell or Connect Group, we don’t even get to choose who we want to be friends with: that is where we truly learn to love and be loved.

I have been a pastor for long enough and I have seen enough to know that it is the life of church community that matters the most in the end, and where the string is taut enough for arrows to fly. Revivals come and go. The big gatherings leave behind memories of the good old days. But the true impact of Christians in classrooms, offices and factories are all first chiseled in the context of small intimate church communities.

This is why I am a firm believer in the local church. And also why I believe in long-term small group communities. If you have been long enough in the Cathedral, just look around. The pillars of the cathedral are built on small communities with dedicated leaders who have pastored, loved and allowed communities to serve and grow together.

At the Cathedral, the need for Christian community is addressed through the creation of close-knit, faith-focused and vision-attuned spaces known as Connect Groups.



GROWING TOGETHER

valerie pang

Our cell group, or Married Couple CG (MCC), began with overgrown young adults who found themselves at an odd juncture where many were fast approaching the end of our journey with the Young Adults ministry, were too ‘young’, or so we felt, for many of the adult cell groups that we knew of. Having grown up together since our early 20s, we were also hesitant to leave our friendships behind for what seemed like an uncertain phase in our spiritual journey. So when Revd John Lin suggested that we move together into forming a MCC, we jumped at it, even though we had no idea what that was or meant then.

Seven years on, we grew as we feasted and fellowshiped on great cooking and of course Bible studies. In numbers the cell welcomed new couples and little ones along the way too. From young husbands to wives, God has used each cell member to edify, spur and challenge us all to shape our character and become more mature as we gained a deeper understanding and appreciation of His precepts and ways. Through candid and oftentimes heartfelt sharing and sincere questioning, God has revealed to us each step of the way what it means to apply biblical concepts in this day and age, as families and parents. We have had opportunities to reflect honestly upon communication struggles between each couple to work at children matters and more.

Seeing each other through various seasons and struggles, we can only thank God for the friendships that allow us to experience and cultivate the “Fruit of the Spirit”. Surely there are times where we may ruffle each other’s feathers but there again God uses each of us to grow in character, Christlikeness and basically teach us what it means to be Family.

Praise God for giving us dedicated Pastors and His wonderful blessings. We look excitedly, and expectantly, to becoming more like Jesus and passing on this spiritual heritage as best as we can, to the next generation who, by the way, always look forward to meeting together during cell Saturdays too!



The pillars of the cathedral are built
on small communities with dedicated
leaders who have pastored,
loved and allowed communities to
serve and grow together.

They function in a similar way to what is more popularly known as Cell Groups in other churches.

These groups meet on different days of the week in homes, offices, or other places, ranging in size from a few to 30 persons. With the express aim of building community, facilitating pastoral care and helping members to grow in their faith, these groups bring the reality of Christian community and ministry closer to the individual church member.



"When the Connect Group gathers, it gives priority to the study of and sharing of our lives around God's Word," says Pastor Ti Lian Swan, who is in charge of the Connect Group ministry at the Cathedral, adding that members "also worship, pray and share meals together."

It is a place to make new friends and tap on the rich cultural diversity in the Cathedral community. There is also room for interpersonal support, often appreciated

amid the impersonal nature of modern city life.

Apart from bringing believers closer to their faith in personal experience, the connect group also helps members to own and grow a shared vision for the Cathedral.

In the final analysis, connect groups are small communities with a big role; to grow and multiply, and, according to Pastor Ti, "to promote the vision [of the Cathedral] and synergise with other groups, ministries and the wider church community to build a strong, healthy and growing Cathedral community."

We would like you to join one of our Connect groups. For more information please email connect@cathedral.org.sg





Dora (fourth from left) with her Connect Group ministering to children in Trang, Cambodia

Finding Family in the Connect Group

dora cheong

I remember feeling like my soon-to-be husband was robbing me of my community that had become family when he said to me, a year ago, that we were to leave our Connect Group to serve at LYnC, the Cathedral's youth ministry. In this large, sometimes lonely church that I had joined for no more than a year then and which still felt more foreign than familiar to me, my Connect Group was mostly all the warmth I had at that point. It consisted of a group of like-hearted individuals in our twenties that were of vastly different personalities and experiences – some were really struggling and shared openly about those struggles; some were particularly philosophical and we grappled with their enlightening epiphanies; some had many questions about the Bible and we explored and discovered deep truths in the Word with them; some carried illnesses and taught us that hope in the Lord's faithful promises was more life-giving than a physically painless life. And despite these differences, we never gave up meeting together on Saturdays, we pored through the Bible together, worshipped together, and went on short and long mission trips to Batam and Cambodia, journeying through the Christian life as a unified body.

So it felt like a huge sacrifice having to give this family up for a new group of young strangers at that time, but thankfully for my husband's stubbornness (which on hindsight looks more like admirable resolve!), we made the move to LYnC and that marked the beginning of my new family. My Connect Group became a bunch of 16 to 21 year-olds that wore two extremes. Some were still exploring, in search of their identities in Christ, and were quiet at most of our Connect Group

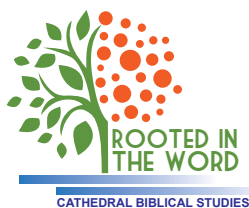
meetings; others had already developed a strong sensitivity to His voice, modelled what a God-fearing, God-seeking heart looked like, and taught me to stop saying "I'll pray for you" but to pray for each other immediately, wherever, whenever. Most of all, being young(er) and well-endowed with energy, enthusiasm and an earnest desire to perpetually be together (as most teens are), I have re-learned the pure joys of companionship through my new Connect Group. Again, as we never gave up meeting together on Saturdays, pored through the Bible together, laughed and cried together, I found my new family!

Alas, I am about to move to another new Connect Group this February 2017. It is a new challenge all over again. But by now I have learned, the Lord's ways are truly higher than our ways and His thoughts than our thoughts. Any group of His people that He leads us to, of whatever age, name, and composition that never gives up meeting together, studying the Bible together, and holding each other accountable in living out our faith, can, and will always become family!

Dora and husband Aaron with LYnC youth



A GOOD WAY TO STUDY THE WHOLE BIBLE



Few Christians would disagree that it is important to study the Bible. Certain challenges, however, stand in the way of reading the Scriptures, including a lack of discipline. And while the Bible is sufficiently perspicuous for the layman to understand, it is always possible to dig deeper into the written Word of God. This is where the new Cathedral Biblical Studies (CBS) programme, which goes through the entire Bible in four years, comes into its own.



To gain a better sense of the purpose and direction of CBS, The Courier initiated an email conversation with Pastor Grace Tan, the programme's staff coordinator. The following is a transcript of our interview.

C: Why CBS?

GT: Most do not have the discipline and know-how to study and interpret the Bible on their own. Even if we could do so on our own, our good intentions can be overtaken by the pressures of life and the spirit of the age. As such, choosing to attend a course on the biblical books may be one way to instil some structure and discipline in our study with guided instruction from experienced and qualified teachers of the Word.

The CBS course is one such vehicle, amongst many in Singapore, which the Cathedral is offering this year to facilitate a systematic study of the 66 books of the Bible in 4 years. The rationale behind studying the whole Bible is that we may understand the whole counsel of God.

A well-loved imagery of the importance of the Word of God is found in Psalm 119:105, 'Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path'. God's Word is likened to light that will illumine our path in life's journey. Biblical illiteracy is a real concern in the Church. Unless we know the Bible, we will not be able to distinguish truth from error - to identify the false prophets that will arise in our midst in the 'last days' (Matthew 7:15), to discern false teachings/heresy (Matthew 24:5, 11), to shun godlessness (2 Timothy 3:1-4) and to stand firm in the time of persecution (Mark 13:9-13). The Word of God is our anchor to keep us strong and steady so that we are not deceived by falsehood and swept away by wickedness. Through the Word, we also learn to know and love our God.

C: What kind of biblical learner is the CBS targeted for? Is it a requirement for the participant to have any knowledge at all of the Bible?

GT: We are aiming at those who have a hunger for God's Word and who are serious enough to commit time and energy to reading and studying it. There is no minimum entry requirement for this course. We welcome all who are eager to know and learn God's Word.



C: Your lectures and tutorials take place on Thursday evenings from 7.30pm to 9.30pm. There will understandably be homework. What will be the nature of these assignments, and how much time would a person need to put in to ensure that they are up to speed on the course?

GT: There are only lectures at the moment. And yes, there are reading assignments of between 14 to 21 chapters each week. This works out to about 2 to 3 chapters a day (approximately 1 hour of reading a day).

There will also be a 2-hour written assessment at the end of each CBS module for those who are keen to consolidate their studies further. Interested students will be encouraged to commit time to study for these assessments which will lead to a *Cathedral Certificate of Biblical Studies* on their successful completion of the assessment.

C: I recall asking you what the theme of the entire Bible is. Would you be able to repeat your response for our readers, and possibly also, as briefly or lengthily as you would like, show how the different major sections of the Scriptures fit together as one theologically unified work?

GT: Several themes have been proposed for the Bible. For instance, Salvation History; Salvation through faith in Jesus Christ; God's plan and purpose for the Universe; Covenant History; Covenant of Grace; Covenant of Redemption ... all of which centre on God's salvific plan for the world.

I am inclined to think of the theme of the entire Bible as the 'Covenant of Redemption'. The concept of God as a Covenant-Keeper is introduced in the Old Testament and this is continued in the New; and God's covenants (Noahic, Abrahamic, Davidic and the New Covenant) have to do with His redeeming grace. The redemption referred to is far more than the forgiveness of sins. It includes the whole sweep of God's purpose to redeem and restore humankind and all creation (cf. Romans 8:19-25). And this redemption is achieved through the finished work of Jesus Christ on the Cross - a redemption that was spoken about in the OT Scriptures: the Law (e.g. Genesis 3:15), the Prophets (e.g. Isa. 53:5, 6) and the Writings (e.g. Psalm 22). In fact, the Lord Jesus Himself spoke of the OT Scriptures testifying about Him (John 5:39) and Himself being the fulfiller of all that is written about Him in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms (Luke 24:44). In the fullness of time, this covenant of redemption finds its fulfilment in Jesus Christ (John 3:16; Galatians 4:4).

C: Given that you are a specialist in the Old Testament, I cannot resist asking you a question that is probably in the minds of most inquisitive people; namely, what the OT writers' view of their writing was and what they were trying to achieve when they wrote the documents that have been recognised as divinely inspired. With what sort of expectations should modern readers approach the Bible?

GT: Firstly, I cannot claim to be a specialist in the Old Testament. Rather, I am a keen student and an on-going student of the Old Testament.

The OT writers have a high view of Scriptures. They were the messengers or prophets of God who mediated God's Word to His people. They were the vehicles of God's interpretation of His own holy acts. And the writers wrote under divine inspiration and guidance (a duality of divine and human authorship – 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21), exercising selectivity in



order to emphasise theological truths about God and His dealings with humankind in the world.

While there are specific purposes for their writings and some authors have spelt these out clearly (e.g. Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:1-3; Proverbs 1:1-4), generally, the writings are God's self-disclosure. Perhaps it will be helpful to take a look at the three broad classifications of the Hebrew Bible and ascertain their purpose in the Canon of Scripture:

(i) The Pentateuch/Law: These comprise instructional materials and historical records. The biblical history written is not so much scientific history but rather interpreted, theological history, with the intention of revealing who God is in His words and His acts.

(ii) The Prophets: These writings contain revelations/warnings from God and calls for repentance and obedience to walk in God's ways.

(iii) The Writings: These include the Psalms (comprising prayers/hymns) which are vehicles for devotion and worship; Wisdom Literature (with wise sayings, and instructions on godly living are undergirded with clear directives to walk in the fear of the LORD).

From the above, it will be clear that the writings are God-centred - to follow God in His ways.

One sound advice which Bishop Rennis gives in his Bible classes is that we adopt the posture of the learner described in Proverbs 2:1-4 when we approach God's Word. The learner should have:

- (i) a teachable heart
- (ii) a listening ear
- (iii) an inquiring voice
- (iv) a searching eye

Expect to hear the voice of God in the Bible. Believe that God still speaks to this day. We will hear from God when we come in humility and reverence to His Word and when we expect that He will meet with us in His living Word.

C: My final question pertains to whether there is any particular order in which you would recommend potential participants sign up for courses in such a way that they might maximally benefit.

GT: My recommendation is for all to start with the background overview modules for OT and NT. This facilitates understanding of the historical/political/socio-cultural backgrounds of the Bible text and enhances understanding of the text. For new believers, it will be beneficial to start with the NT track. Certainly, it will be good to do a systematic study of the 39 OT books and 27 NT books in their canonical order. But this is not a rigid requirement for this course.

TERM 2 23 March 2017 to 27 May 2017

MODULE / TITLE	CONTENTS	DATES	ASSESSMENT
Module 3 The Former Prophets	Joshua Judges 1 & 2 Samuel 1 & 2 Kings	Mar 23 - May 25	May 27
Module 9 The Early Church	Acts of the Apostles	Mar 23 - May 25	May 27

TERM 3 29 June 2017 to 2 September 2017

MODULE / TITLE	CONTENTS	DATES	ASSESSMENT
Module 4 The Major Prophets	Isaiah Jeremiah Ezekiel	Jun 29 - Aug 31	Sep 2
Module 10 Romans and Galatians	Romans Galatians	Jun 29 - Aug 31	Sep 2

TERM 4 7 September 2017 to 11 November 2017

MODULE / TITLE	CONTENTS	DATES	ASSESSMENT
Module 5 The Minor Prophets	Hosea, Joel, Amos Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Micah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Zechariah, Haggai, Malachi	Sep 7 - Nov 9	Nov 11
Module 11 Corinthians	1 Corinthians 2 Corinthians	Sep 7 - Nov 9	Nov 11



Creating an Oasis in the City

priscilla chua-loh

With its placid and somewhat rustic environs, the Cathedral seems the perfect place to sit down in quietness and become immersed and lost in a conversation with the Lord.

In this way, then, SAC's physical surroundings mirror the ministry aspirations of Mrs Priscilla Chua, who is married to Jeffrey Chua and mother of Karl Chua.

A Parish Worker attached to the 8 and 11.15am services and the Alpha and Contemplative Spirituality ministries, Priscilla is sold on the idea of helping others to identify sign posts in their lives by which God might be wanting to guide the believer.

Spiritual direction "is not about a mature believer directing another believer," she says. "It is about Spiritual Accompaniment, of a journey of co-discerning the direction of the Spirit of God at work in the directee

and the direction of the internal spirit of the directee."

It is not to be equated with counselling or psychotherapy, in which Priscilla is also trained, which may tend to take a problem-solving approach. Rather, spiritual direction is "a journey to bring another to see the presence of God in the midst of life challenges and problem[s], pain and sufferings."

A new staff though she may be, by no means is she new to the task of ministry. Flowing from her past experiences, Priscilla has an acute concern for those who are yearning to be helped in their endeavour to understand their spiritual journey. In the course of twelve years of ministry, she has met numerous people "seeking to make sense of God in their sufferings" and having no one from their tradition, if they have anybody at all, to turn to.

The Cathedral could also be the oasis in the city for many seeking quietness, a space for individuals to come away and encounter the presence of God. Christians from other churches, whether Anglican or not, are welcome to participate in the ministry's activities. Among various activities, a monthly "quiet Garden" retreat is organised.

In all of this, Priscilla does not neglect to credit her passion for her labours in spiritual guidance to those who have gone before and assisted her during her own time of need.

"I am a recipient of this gift of Spiritual Direction," she acknowledges, proceeding to relate the skilful and patient way in which her mentor journeyed with her.

Indeed, Priscilla has had many "mentors". A first was a young teacher who led her to faith in Christ. Then came her stint as a hospice nurse, during which she was acquainted with terminally ill patients and learned much about God and His ways.

Her subsequent entry into fulltime ministry work led, not unusually, to seminary studies. Noteworthy, she was exposed during those years to the concept and experience of the silent retreat. This gave her a better appreciation of how God might choose to reveal Himself in the least expected places.

As Priscilla has observed in her own life, "The Lord is in all things and all experience."

Visit <http://cathedral.org.sg/events/single/the-quiet-garden-monthly-retreat> for more info

CONTEMPLATION is to take a long loving look at the real which is the knowledge of God that is impregnated with love. It is experiencing reality and entering into communion with this reality. This reality is all living pulsing people, all circumstances, all things and, most of all, the risen Christ. Thus contemplative spirituality is life lived in communion with reality, and to know them, not just to study about them.

Contemplative spirituality is for everyone. Unfortunately, the 20th-century law framed by Walter Kerr "Only useful activity is valuable, meaningful, moral. Activity that is not clearly, concretely useful to oneself or to others is worthless, meaningless, immoral", has forced many to be guilty about doing nothing. Regardless of whether one is young or old, introverted or extroverted, the time set aside for contemplative gives meaning to the daily work.

There is no charge. The ministry provides a space for those who want to come away to contemplate. However, the price to pay is high: your time and silence. For those who want to contribute, you may give a love offering to the ministry.

This ministry also provides spiritual direction/accompaniment for anyone to co-discern how the presence of God is reality.

spiritual direction is "a journey to bring another to see the presence of God in the midst of life challenges and problem[s], pain and sufferings."



jeanette lee

‘LOVE WITHIN’ for the Unsung Heroes

Over Chinese New Year,
LYnC members baked
and cooked for the
church-ground’s keepers
and the blessings they
gave were returned
many times over.

A year ago, the impassioned youth of LYnC developed an outreach ministry to serve the wider community. Our first undertaking was Love Within – an idea that sprang from the realisation that within our grounds and amongst us are people who are very much deserving of our appreciation, such as those who toil daily to maintain the cleanliness and functionality of our beloved church. Henceforth we decided to begin our journey by first spreading a little love within the Cathedral grounds.

Love Within was set in the festive Chinese New Year season, during which the youths of LYnC are able to organise activities for, or present gifts, to the targeted groups towards whom we wish to express our appreciation and love. In 2016, we kick-started the first Love Within by baking pineapple tarts for the cleaners and vergers working in the Cathedral's grounds. This year, we decided to take it up a notch, and hosted a lunch session where we (guests and LYnC members) could have a nice meal together.

Some of us cooked, while others decorated and prepared door gifts in hopes that we might bless our guests when they came for the event. Eventually, as our guests arrived, the room was enlivened and our efforts were



From left: Jeanette, Nicole, Sandra, Natasha, Ah Eng, Courtney and Munima

rewarded as heartwarming conversations (and, of course, one or two compliments to the various chefs) filled the air in the Chapel of All Peoples. Truly, our attempt to bless as always was returned with even greater blessing.

Our vergers and cleaners are our friends as much as they are the church ground's keepers, and while they continue to bless us through their tireless efforts to maintain such a beautiful environment for us to worship and encounter God, may we encourage all of us to show the appreciation and love we all share for these unsung heroes.



Ah Eng, Desmond, Henry, Hwang, Paul and Hubert



Getting to know each other over good food



Why didn't I sleep in?

Mission work is the church making its presence felt in the world, writes Joshua Tan. A medical student, he tells us what motivated him to be involved in missions and care for those who are in need.

joshua tan

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." Matthew 5:16 (ESV)

As I dragged myself out of bed early on a Saturday morning to board the first train towards Harbourfront, and then to take the ferry to Batam for the quarterly medical mission, my sleep-deprived self asks the question, 'Why don't you just sleep in? Why bother with all this mission work?' I must admit that at times, such thoughts do cloud my mind, especially when burdened by my own workload in school and other extra-curricular commitments. But in my limited experience of mission work, local and

abroad, I have long learned to answer those very same doubts.

Being involved in missions helps me to see beyond my own problems, to work for a greater cause. It is so easy to be caught up in the busyness of our daily lives, to forget that God has called us to be His salt and light in this world! We weren't called to be Sunday Christians and pew-warmers, but to take up our cross and follow Him daily, to fulfil the Great Commission and share the good news with those who have yet to know Christ, in addition to caring for the less privileged amongst us.

It has also shaped the way I approach my work, where I see the skillset I am learning as a medical student as a way of contributing



It is so easy to be caught up in the busyness of our daily lives, to forget that God has called us to be His salt and light in this world!

towards the care of those who are unable to get access to primary health care. Consequently, whenever I help at the various community clinics, whether it is taking a patient's history or counselling them on their medication or just talking to them about their lives, I try not to rush through the whole process, but to be present and be there for them, in a classic case of 'What would Jesus do'?

Thus far, most of my involvement has been in medical missions - although I do run the community service programmes in my hall of residence - but my first experience of the whole idea of missions work was when I went to Cambodia with several of my friends from the Youth Fellowship, where we conducted a week-long Vacation Bible School for over a hundred kids. It was amazing to see how God could use anyone who said, "Here am I, Lord. Send me", and bring us together for that one purpose of sharing the Gospel. We came from different backgrounds and some were so reserved you

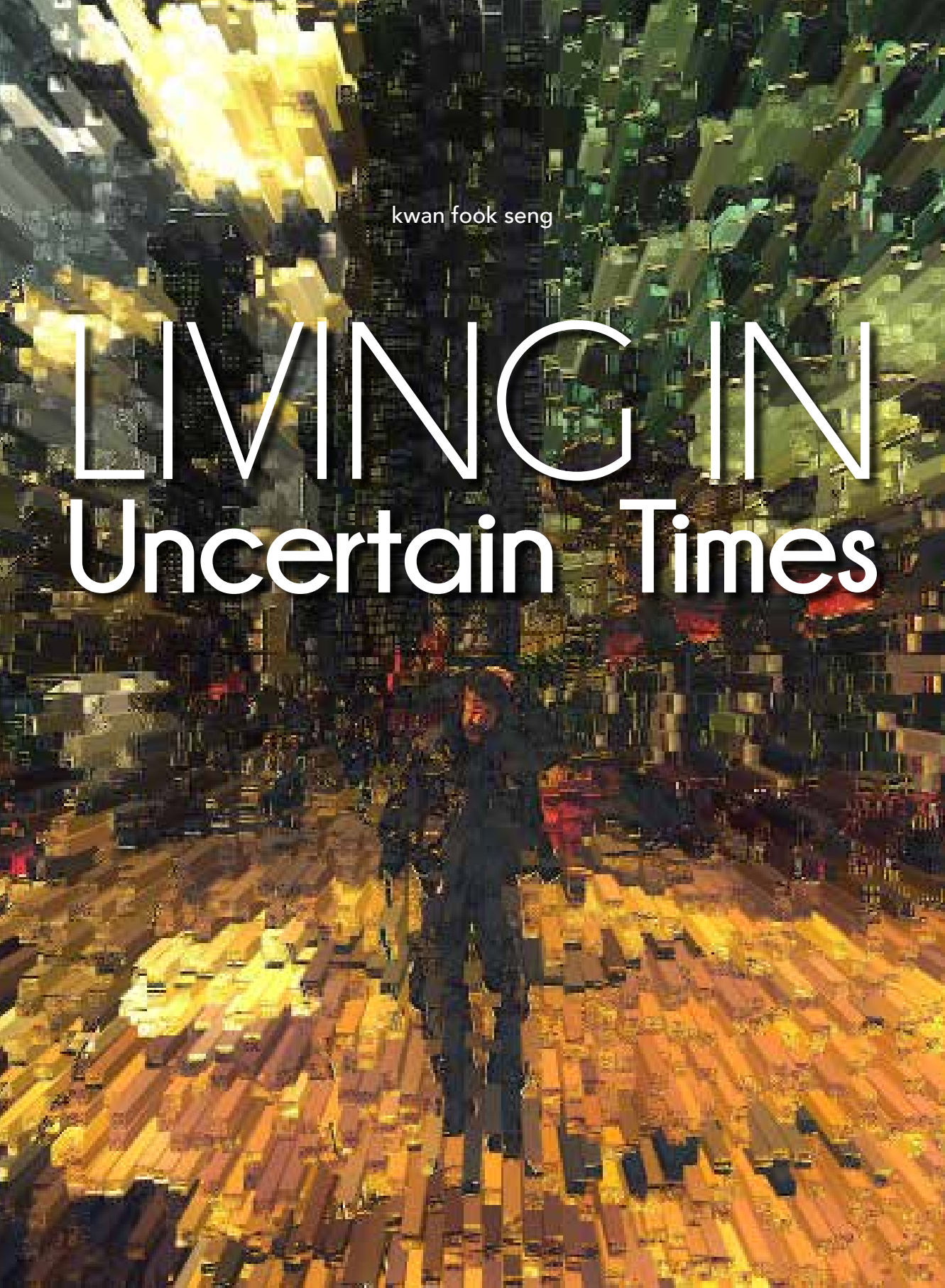
wouldn't have expected them to be up on stage conducting the lessons and games! Whenever I'm feeling sceptical or tired, I reflect on how inspired I was back then regarding how God could work so powerfully through us!

Missions, to me, is the church making its presence felt in the world, our practical demonstration of our faith. Through caring for the sick, feeding the poor and ministering to those in distress, we are following the example of Christ, showing compassion for the last, the lost and the least. Through such acts of kindness and mercy for our fellow men, we are also able to bring the Gospel across where previously it would not have been possible. After all, it is difficult to believe in this Jesus when you are hungry, cold, or sick. And if we can provide the latter the former will prove to be far easier.

What keeps me going is seeing how God works wherever we avail ourselves for Him to work through us for His purpose, and may it be that I never tire of the work!



Joshua Tan (far left) and team members in Batam

A photograph of a person standing on a rooftop, looking out over a city skyline at night. The person is wearing a dark jacket and is positioned in the center of the frame. The city lights are visible in the background, and the rooftop has a corrugated metal surface. The overall mood is contemplative and urban.

kwan fook seng

LIVING IN Uncertain Times

Brexit and the election of Donald Trump as the new US President were the watershed events in the middle and end of 2016. Coupled with the phenomenon of disruption in public affairs, business and personal life, it is no wonder that many, including Christians, are caught up in the dizzying swirl of events and suffer a terrible sense of disorientation and loss of bearings. Jobs have been lost and the future looks dim and insecure for many. One cannot help but recall the lines of W B Yeats's poem:

*Things fall apart;
the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed
upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is
loosed,
and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence
is drowned;
The best lack all conviction,
while the worst
Are full of passionate
intensity.*

*Surely some revelation is at
hand;
Surely the Second Coming
is at hand.*

Over a hundred and fifty years ago, Henry David Thoreau observed, "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation." This is true of many workers who fear being, or have been already, displaced or retrenched. The new phenomenon of disruption in the economy and personal life has affected the sense of employment security and personal identity and significance. What is less noticed is also the accelerated pace of change everywhere.


How should Christians think and respond to such unprecedented changes? To start with, we need to **trust in our sovereign and eternal God.**

There is space here to look at only two statements from the Old Testament. The first one is this. In response to the international politics of the time, Daniel said:

*"Blessed be the name of God forever
and ever,
to whom belong wisdom and might.
21 He changes times and seasons;
he removes kings and sets up kings;
he gives wisdom to the wise
and knowledge to those who have
understanding;
22 he reveals deep and hidden things;
he knows what is in the darkness,
and the light dwells with him.
(Daniel 2:20-22 ESV)*

God is the sovereign One over the nations of this earth and He watches over the political developments and upheavals to fulfil His purposes and plans. Verse 21 is emphatic in declaring He is in charge of all the changes taking place.

In the last few years we have witnessed the rise of new political leaders in the ASEAN region and the passing of old leaders as well. The three notable ones recently were the late Thai king Bhumibol Adulyadej, the late president S R Nathan and our founding father Lee Kuan Yew. With the Trump presidency, there is a fear of the unravelling of the established international order as well. We live in uncertain but interesting times. Unless we see our God as sovereign even



Our soul waits for the LORD; he is our help and our shield.

Psalm 33:20

over the discordant notes of the world, and eternal over the temporal, we are destined to live in fear and uncertainty. To think only of our security and personal lives is to take a myopic view. We need to rest in the eternal purposes and plans of God and watch what is being unveiled. In the meantime we fill our hearts with Scripture that anchors our faith and rest in God Almighty.

The second one is this one in Psalm 33:10-11(ESV):

*The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing;
he frustrates the plans of the peoples.*

¹¹ *The counsel of the LORD stands forever,
the plans of his heart to all generations.*

As the Sovereign Lord, He works out His purposes in each decade, each century and each generation of peoples. No living political leader can outwit Him and outplay Him. He also declares the masses and their plans will be frustrated. What more needs be said? God the Almighty can never be surprised. He knows the end from the beginning.

Our task is to pray for His will to be done as commanded in the Lord's Prayer. Psalm 33 (ESV) ends with this exhortation:

²⁰ *Our soul waits for the LORD;
he is our help and our shield.*

²¹ *For our heart is glad in him,
because we trust in his holy name.*

²² *Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be
upon us,
even as we hope in you.*

Whatever happens, "our heart is glad in him". That should be the posture of our hearts. The end result: a deep trust in God's providence is nurtured. This must undergird all our thinking and actions.¹

For Christians who have been retrenched or cannot find employment, this waiting season may flow into a number of months, even years. The waiting can be excruciating, especially when there are mouths to feed and savings dwindle by the day. Yet one has to learn to **wait upon Him**.

Some may find it helpful to **seek spiritual direction**. This is different from counselling. In counselling, the focus may be more on solving a particular problem or issue. In spiritual direction, the focus is on understanding the season of the soul and seeking discernment on what God is saying at this time of life for the seeker. A spiritual director serves as a sounding board to help the seeker discern the promptings of God. He does not provide readymade answers but helps the seeker to clarify and identify what God may be saying at this stage of life. Such seekers can approach the clergy and other pastoral leaders for this kind of spiritual direction.

As we wait, we can **adjust and adapt by learning new skills and exploring new directions**. You do not need to be passive during the waiting season. One can scan the horizon to understand the changing nature of the economy and where the new jobs lie. Aware of this need, our government has formed the Committee on the Future Economy. Very often professional conversion courses may be necessary in order to learn new skill sets. It takes humility to admit the

need to change, adjust, retool and reinvent oneself to take on portfolio or contract work. Philosopher Alan Watts said, "The only way to make sense out of change is to plunge into it, move with it, and join the dance." The American poet Robert Frost said something similar: "The best way out is always through."

The waiting season is also a time to learn **earnest and heartfelt prayer**. It is very common for Christians to experience the schism between the head and the heart. This is especially so for Christians who are clouded by confusion and uncertainties about future prospects. In such a condition the soul cannot hear God clearly. The head knows but the heart may not believe. The heart (*kardia* in Greek) is where the real centre lies, where the real change takes place. The soul or heart needs to be told many times in prayer and meditation on these Scriptures in Isaiah 30:21; Matthew 10:29-31; Proverbs 3:5-6. Then it will be easier to trust in the guiding hand of God for all circumstances.

The waiting season offers the opportunity and time for developing a **regular, spiritual practice of stillness before God**. Cultivating a real, personal relationship with God is not an option at this time of life. It has become a desperate necessity. For too long we have been in charge of our lives. This time of dislocation and need can be a reorientation to learn and trust in God's inscrutable ways. The practice of silence and stillness allows the soul to be addressed by God. That is something many Christians try to escape from.

The Cathedral now offers a monthly silent retreat on a Saturday morning. That is one place to start the practice and seek guidance from pastors where necessary. In the space of silence and stillness one can begin to learn the art of listening prayer. God speaks when the soul is willing to listen. Speaking from experience, Picasso wrote, "Without great solitude, no serious work is possible." In stillness and solitude, the soul's transformation under God is a greater work and of infinite value.

We have been schooled by the education system and the surrounding culture to

The waiting
season offers
the opportunity
and time for
developing
a **regular,
spiritual practice
of stillness
before God.**



be achievement oriented. As a result, we develop professional careers and seek titles and prestige for personal validation. Even as Christians, our actual sense of identity is very often derived from our professional or social standing in society.

But in actual practice, Sunday by Sunday, as we go through the liturgy, we confess we are unworthy sinners in need of the forgiving grace of God and humble ourselves before Him. One day too we will have to be shorn of our professional or work identities when we retire and be our naked selves and find our essential or core identity as true sons and daughters of Christ the King. For some this may mean another long conversion process. We need to **rediscover and rebuild a core identity in Christ**.

The time of job loss and lack of employment can be a time of awakening. Who really am I? What is my real identity? Slowly, we learn to shed our old self with its practices and *"put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator."* (Colossians 3:9-10 ESV) Then we are on the way to become the true image bearers of God as He intended us to be. Then we perceive our final identity as the glorious and glorified sons and daughters of the triune God. This is the *telos* (end or goal) of the Christian life. Ultimately our Christian identity must be rooted in the Scriptures and not in the workplace or the social order. Dallas Willard said something worth pondering: "The most important thing in your life is not what you do; it's who you become. That's what you will take into eternity. You are an unceasing spiritual being with an eternal destiny in God's great universe."

When unsettled by unnumbered uncertainties, a healthy dose of realism is necessary. It is alright for Christians to declare, "I hated life." It is there in the book of Ecclesiastes. The point is not to remain stuck there. But after that we learn to gather the broken pieces of our lives and offer them back to God. Then redemption begins. Grace works all over again. Finally we begin to acknowledge that a yielded or

surrendered life is the true life of discipleship. The Christian life is quintessentially a guided life. As we look back at the major milestones of our lives, we should be able to affirm with Paul in Romans 8:14, *"For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God"* (NRSV). Shakespeare had a glimpse of the truth when he wrote in *Hamlet*:

*"There's a Divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will."*

Whatever happens, we can know we are embraced by the secure hands of divine providence. *"The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."* (Deuteronomy 33:27 NIV). This is where we come back to our deep understanding of the doctrine of God's providence. Doctrine is strong meat for the soul. We ignore it to the loss of our own peace and rest in God.

¹For those interested in pursuing the theme of God's providence, a good study is done by Melvin Tinker in his book *Intended For Good: The Providence of God* (IVP 2012).

KWAN FOOK SENG, a retired teacher, worships and serves in St Andrew's Cathedral and Church of our Saviour.



From left: Monica, Sharon, Matilda, Nancy, Poh Wah, Marina, Elizabeth and Linda

THE CATHEDRAL FOOD MINISTRY

led by Monica Lee and Linda Ng, has been busy cooking sumptuous home-cooked fare for our Alpha Courses. Here, Linda shares one of her favourite dishes served at Alpha. If you would like to join and help in this ministry, please contact Monica Lee at the Welcome Centre (or email: monicalee@cathedral.org.sg).



BRAISED BEEF SHIN

500gm beef shin (cut into rounds)
 5 slices of ginger
 1 cinnamon stick
 1 star anis
 20gm rock sugar
 2 stalks of spring onion, cut into 5cm stripes
 100ml of chinese wine (I use Hua Tiao)
 100ml of soya sauce
 enough water to cover the beef while braising
 1 radish cut into rounds
 2 tablespoon cooking oil

METHOD:

1. Heat up the oil in the pot and fry the ginger till fragrant.
2. Then add in the cinnamon, star anis, spring onion and rock sugar. Stir for 2-3 mins
3. Add in the beef shin, let it turn brown a little and pour in the Chinese wine and soya sauce.
4. Pour in enough water to cover the beef and gently braise. After 30 mins, add in the radish.
5. Braise for another hour or so, till the meat is cooked. If you can easily stick a fork into the meat, it should be done. The meat should have a good bite and not fall apart.
6. You can thicken the sauce by using a corn flour slurry. Adjust the seasoning by adding some soy sauce if you need to.
7. Serve with steaming hot rice.

Cook's note:

1. You can also use a rice cooker or slow cooker to cook this dish.
2. Try to use a good quality soy sauce.
3. You may also use brisket beef.
4. You may substitute radish for potatoes and carrot. As they cook faster, add during the last 30 mins or so.
5. Do not cook radish and carrot together as the carrot contains an enzyme solution called ascorbic acid which will destroy Vitamin C in the radish.



The Cathedral Cafe started officially as a licensed Cafe in February of 2017. Serving the Cathedral community and city folks, the ten-year-old vision of the wonderfully located Welcome Centre was renewed. Set up in the first place to be a “home” in the city, the Cafe continues her role in facilitating the ministry of the Cathedral and enhancing our civic district. The inspired poem by the Vicar, published in March of 2016, captures this new imagination.



Imagine A Place

Imagine a place in the Cathedral
at almost anytime of the week.
You don't need prior permission.
You don't need a “good enough”
reason to be there.
You can be there alone. Or with
friends.
You do not know the host? It is okay.
Enter.

It really doesn't matter.

Not a Christian?
You are welcome.

No questions asked.
You can be completely relaxed.
Or focused on your work.

And yet, it is neither your home nor
office.

You can pray.
You can talk.
You can laugh.
You can discuss.
You can read.
You can nap.
You can write.

In fact famous writers have all
worked out of this place.

TS Elliott, Franz Kafka, Gertrude
Stein, F Scott Fitzgerald and J.K.
Rowling...
just to name a few.
And unknown ones as well, yours
truly.

Not home, nor office but a “third
place”.

Imagine ... if we have a Cafe.

In more than one way, Catherine Goh was prepared by the Lord to serve at The Cathedral Café.

Catherine, 64, who serves at the newly set up establishment as a manager on a pro bono basis, relates how she never intended to work at the café.

In point of fact, she underwent training to become a barista a couple of years ago purely out of a desire to work with her niece, who was taking a course in pastry making at a local institute, to start a café. Unfortunately, she eventually lost interest in it.

As excited as Catherine was about the idea of establishing a café, she became "very disappointed" and "put everything behind" her.



from IMAGINATION to REALITY



From left: Catherine Monica, David and Wei Inn

A regular worshipper in one of the Services, she came across the Vicar Writes in the weekly Cathedral bulletin which imagined a "Third Place" in the Cathedral. She offered herself to serve and it proved to be felicitous as little had been done up to that time.

A few more joined the cafe team and things fell into place relatively quickly, with the process from planning to the actual opening taking a mere seven months.

The busy Café is an avenue for community gathering and outreach. It keeps Catherine fulfilled and happy as she now works and serves with a sense of purpose.

How a stay-home mum baked her way to charity



Siew Lin rekindled her passion for baking after making a cake for her daughter's first birthday, and she didn't stop there. Armed with two toaster ovens, she baked for friends and friends of friends, and was convinced her talent wasn't her own.

Iye siew lin

I am currently a stay-at-home mum with two young children. I do some freelance design work, and I enjoy baking from home. My journey as a home baker started from a simple wish to bake a cake for my daughter's first birthday. I have had an interest in baking since I was a teenager. However, my technique then was confined to simple baking—not complicated bakes like those of a whole cake. Soon after having my first child in 2013, I thought I would make a homemade cake for her first birthday.

I didn't have much knowledge about baking and frosting a cake at that time, other than some basics I had learned at a cake frosting class I attended during my maternity leave. We were renting a flat while waiting for our house to be ready. Our landlord didn't have a proper oven. All he had was a toaster oven.

Armed with a prayerful heart, two toaster ovens, and some simple bake-ware, I managed to make a rather presentable frosted, rosette cake for my daughter's first birthday! My husband then commented that if I managed to bake a cake using toaster



ovens, I could do better if I used a proper oven. I felt so encouraged by his words and prayed that if God was willing, He could use this talent of mine to bless people around me.

Just after my daughter's first birthday, I started to receive requests from friends to bake cakes for their celebrations. I still remember that I started on the first cake with a pair of

trembling hands and a mind full of prayers. And that cake turned out so well! Thank God for that!

Gradually, more requests came from friends, as well as from their friends. I decided then to donate part of the proceeds from friends who paid me for the cakes, to a charity that takes care of children with major illnesses.

The cakes I made became fancier, and by 2015, my repertoire soon included fondant cakes and cupcakes.

I sometimes wondered about my achievements, which included making a frosted cake with just a few weeks of



practice, and then I proceeded to learn how to make more complicated fondant cakes all within the same year. I truly believe that this could not have been achieved by my own strength; I always say that God is the one who has created all these cakes. I cannot be more thankful for this talent with which God has blessed me, and to be able to do something that I enjoy and excel in.

"She is like the merchant ships. She



brings her food from afar. She also rises while it is yet night, And provides food for her household, And a portion for her maidservants." Proverbs 31: 14,15

Now, with the addition of a new baby for our family, I can hardly find the time to bake intricate cakes anymore. However, I carried on in my baking journey in other ways. Like the woman in Proverbs 31, I have continued to provide wholesome and healthier food for my family (especially important for the toddler).

Black Sesame Madeleines

(Makes 15 regular madeleines or 50 mini madeleines)

Ingredients:

- 85g butter, cubed
- 2 eggs
- 75g sugar
- 10g honey
- Pinch of salt
- 75g cake or plain flour
- 20g unsweetened black sesame powder
- 1 tsp baking powder

Method:

1. Melt butter over bain marie or in the microwave. Set aside to cool.
2. Place eggs, sugar, honey and salt into a large bowl. Gently break up the eggs and mix the ingredients well.
3. Sift in flour, black sesame powder and baking powder into (2). Mix till there are no traces of flour.
4. Add in cooled melted butter and combine well.
5. Cover the bowl with cling wrap and place it into the fridge to chill for 12-24 hours, for the batter to rest well. This will help the hump to develop during baking later.

6. Preheat oven to 200C. Brush on some butter or oil on your mold, and dust with some flour. Shake off excess flour. Fill the batter into piping bag, snip off an opening. Fill the mold with the batter, around 3/4 or nearly full.
7. Bake in preheated oven at 200C for 8 mins (or 4 min for mini madeleines), then turn down the temperature to 180C, and bake for 3-4 mins (or 2 min for mini madeleines). The madeleines are baked when skewer inserted in the centre comes out clean.
8. Let madeleines cool slightly in pan, before removing onto cooling rack. Cool completely before storing in air-tight container.



A Steep Learning Curve on the Mountains of Nepal

11-19 March 2017, Project Taja Asa CIT 3, Ramechhap

adeline hee

Project Taja Asa is a post-disaster reconstruction effort to deliver Fresh Hope to Christian Nepalese communities afflicted by the devastating twin earthquakes of 2015. Many of these communities reside in remote, hard-to-access and mountainous regions of Nepal. Besides the physical rebuilding of community worship halls, this effort, led by the Anglican Deanery of Nepal, also seeks to uplift the leadership capacities of the communities. Instead of the current dependence on a single, often-untrained, village chief or pastor to tackle community challenges, Project Fresh Hope envisions a future where a team of 10 servant leaders would be raised and trained in every village. This approach not only promotes a common alignment to Jesus' model of

leadership, but will greatly multiply a village's problem-solving capabilities.

Together with Joanne Chu, Tan Lay Eng and Allene Teo from SAC, we had the privilege of participating in one of the recent leadership training missions, held in the remote, mountainous region of Ramechhap, East Nepal. Throughout, this mission met with much spiritual opposition, from extreme and unexpected temperature drops, to members and loved ones falling ill. Yet, we also witnessed how God prevailed and assured us of His dominion over all things and situations. On more than one occasion, when the winds were chilly and the entire region was overcast, we prayed as a team for His protection. As we continued our outdoor



Joanne (left) and
Adeline (right)
on the trek to
Ramechhap



Overcoming all
odds as a team



Worshipping on the mountain in Phedi



The Nepali and Singapore facilitators

classes, no one felt cold and our hill enjoyed a literal hotspot of sunshine throughout. These supernatural wonders did not go unnoticed by the local community, and as we worshipped together, a visible change occurred in the attitudes and posture of all gathered.

In this outdoor classroom space of ours, I enjoyed daily and in-depth sharing with the local community. And, as I witnessed my team's level of engagement increase and deepen each day, my heart filled with joy and gladness. Through a progressive combination of practical lectures, experiential learning activities and mission exercises, the local leaders began to grasp the various principles and practices of servant leadership. They were not only exposed to the "why" and the "what"; more importantly,

A lesson in humility



they began to learn the "how" of servant leadership.

Being part of this training mission was an amazing experience for the whole team. Every new day brought fresh challenges and learning opportunities. Throughout, many of us were greatly inspired by the simple faith of the Nepalese, many of us experienced personal encounters with Him, and many were deeply impacted by how God never failed to re-energise or to re-connect us with Him each day. Indeed, this was a mountain-top experience like no other. I had gone with a desire to give and serve, but I received so much more from Him instead.

There will be future trips to Nepal, and those interested may contact me to find out more, at adelinehee@cathedral.org.sg

IN & AROUND



SENIOR CITIZENS' DAY









MISSIONS EVENING

The Cathedral Missions Evening event which showcased the Cathedral's missions locally and overseas. Among other things, the Cathedral is involved in medical and educational missions and has dispatched missionaries and teams to various countries in the region.



CITY COMMUNITY SERVICES

Around 120 H.E.R.O.es-in-training from CITY Community Services' 11 Befrienders Clubs took part in a 3D2N camp in White Sands Primary School from 13- 15 March 2017. Character values – Help, Encourage, and Respect Others (H.E.R.O.) – were taught through fun-filled lessons and activities. Campers were also treated to an outing to the Night Safari.



Staff Directory

CLERGY AND DEACONESSES

Revd Canon Terry Wong terrywong@cathedral.org.sg
Revd Peter Cook petercook@cathedral.org.sg
Revd Freddy Lim freddylin@cathedral.org.sg
Revd Bertram Cheong bertramcheong@cathedral.org.sg
Revd Alvin Toh alvintoh@cathedral.org.sg
Ds June Tan junetan@cathedral.org.sg
Ds Bessie Lee bessie.lee@cathedral.org.sg

PASTORAL STAFF

Judy Teo judyteo@cathedral.org.sg
Joyce Carino joycecarino@cathedral.org.sg
Ti Lian Swan lianswan@cathedral.org.sg
Hambali Leonardi hambali@cathedral.org.sg
Geraldine Lau geraldinelau@cathedral.org.sg
David Ng davidng@cathedral.org.sg
Grace Tan gracetan@cathedral.org.sg
Priscilla Chua priscillachua@cathedral.org.sg
James Tan jamestan@cathedral.org.sg
Rosy Lee rosylee@cathedral.org.sg
Moses Israeli Saw mosesisraeli@cathedral.org.sg
Peter Lim peterlim@cathedral.org.sg
Steven Wong Pi Leong stevenwong@cathedral.org.sg
Loi Heok Gam loiheokgam@cathedral.org.sg
Edmond Chua edmondchua@cathedral.org.sg
Jamie Choo jamiechoo@cathedral.org.sg
Wee Lian Kuanh weeliankuanh@cathedral.org.sg
Shaun Foo shaunfoo@cathedral.org.sg
Jacqueline Cheong jacquelinecheong@cathedral.org.sg
Denis Khoo deniskhoo@cathedral.org.sg

ADMIN

Mabel Lim mabellim@cathedral.org.sg
Jowenna Quek jowenna@cathedral.org.sg
Catherine Chong catherinechong@cathedral.org.sg
Mary Kong marykong@cathedral.org.sg

FINANCE

Jannifer Ho janniferho@cathedral.org.sg
Joel Tan joeltan@cathedral.org.sg
Jeannia Low jeannialow@cathedral.org.sg
Goh Su Whey suwhey@cathedral.org.sg
Susan Hu susanhu@cathedral.org.sg
Esther Leong estherleong@cathedral.org.sg

MEDIA

Joyce Ho joyceho@cathedral.org.sg

OPERATIONS

Kenneth Ng kennethng@cathedral.org.sg
Daisy David daisy@cathedral.org.sg
David Pooh davidpooh@cathedral.org.sg
Chin Sy Leong syleong@cathedral.org.sg

HOSPITALITY/WELCOME CENTRE

Monica Lee monicalee@cathedral.org.sg
Lim Wei Inn weiinn@cathedral.org.sg

ESTATE MANAGEMENT

Kevin Quek kevinquek@cathedral.org.sg
Dennis Low dennislow@cathedral.org.sg
Danny Chooi dannychooi@cathedral.org.sg

PKH HOME BASE COORDINATOR

Adeline Hee adelinehee@cathedral.org.sg

ACTS CENTRE

Revd Michael Lim michaellim@cathedral.org.sg
Angeline Leong angelineleong@cathedral.org.sg
Elizabeth Joseph elizabethjoseph@cathedral.org.sg

WESTSIDE ANGLICAN CHURCH

Kelvin Koo kelvinkoo@cathedral.org.sg
Violet Leong violetleong@cathedral.org.sg
Lim Kwee Hoon kweehoon@cathedral.org.sg

CITY COMMUNITY SERVICES

Patricia Aw pataw@citycomm.org.sg
Barnabas Sim barnabassim@citycomm.org.sg
Kenneth Ernest kennethernest@citycomm.org.sg
Terence Tay terencetay@citycomm.org.sg
Kenny Moses Khairon kennykhairon@citycomm.org.sg
Tony Tan tonytan@citycomm.org.sg
Irene Wee irenewee@citycomm.org.sg
Joanna Ng joannang@citycomm.org.sg
Chong Van Vun vanvun@citycomm.org.sg
Chng Bee Lay chngbeelay@citycomm.org.sg
Agnes Siti agnessiti@citycomm.org.sg

VERGERS

For work-related emails, eg instructions for verger team, please direct your emails to vergers@cathedral.org.sg
Maximillian Tan Desmond Chua
Hubert Wong Hwang Yea-Huang
Paul Ong Henry Seah

OTHER ENQUIRIES:

General: info@cathedral.org.sg
Alpha Course: alpha@cathedral.org.sg
Baptism/Membership Course: sacce@cathedral.org.sg
Cafe: cafe@cathedral.org.sg
Connect Groups: connect@cathedral.org.sg
Weddings: monicalee@cathedral.org.sg

ST ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL

11 St Andrew's Road
Singapore 178959
Tel: 6337 6104
Fax: 6339 1197

www.cathedral.org.sg

BIENNIAL SAC FAMILY CAMP LIVING A LEGACY

**How can we live to give,
for the present and future?**


**MON - THUR,
5-8 JUNE 2017
HOTEL JEN, JOHOR**

SPEAKERS:

Chua Wee Hian and Andrew Chua

www.cathedral.org.sg/cfc





journey with Jesus in his ministry to the lost and broken

with Jesus...

TUESDAY IN HOLY WEEK, 11 APRIL

7.30pm Lenten Devotion I (Nave)
(Dr Ephraim Radner)

WEDNESDAY IN HOLY WEEK, 12 APRIL

7.30pm Lenten Devotion II (Nave)
(Dr Ephraim Radner)

MAUNDY THURSDAY, 13 APRIL

7.30pm Maundy Thursday Eucharist (Nave)

7.30pm Evangelistic Outreach Night (Prayer Halls)
Hokkien movie "MISUNDERSTOOD"

GOOD FRIDAY, 14 APRIL

8.00am Good Friday Service (Nave)

12noon Three-Hour Service (Nave)
"The Seven Last Words"

EVE OF EASTER, SATURDAY 15 APRIL

9.00am The Quiet Garden: Easter Vigil

1.30pm Children's Easter Party (Prayer Halls)

4.30pm Saturday Evangelistic Service
(Pastor Don Wong)

EASTER SUNDAY, 16 APRIL

6.00am Dawn Service and Holy Communion (Nave)

8.00am Holy Communion (Nave)

9.00am Holy Communion (CNS)

11.15am Holy Communion (Nave)

11.30am Contemporary Service (Prayer Halls)

2.00pm Filipino Service (North Transept Hall)

2.00pm Myanmar Service (CNS)

2.30pm Bahasa Indonesia Service
(South Transept Hall)

4.30pm Hokkien Easter Evangelistic Celebration
(Prayer Halls)

5.00pm Holy Communion (Nave)

DIOCESAN SERVICES ON EVE OF EASTER, SATURDAY 15 APRIL

3.00pm Choa Chu Kang Cemetery

3.00pm All Saints' Memorial Chapel,
Poh Huat Road

(Please submit names of members who have passed away in the past year or earlier, to be included for prayer at these services, to the Cathedral Welcome Centre at 63376104 ext 141 by Fri, 7 April 2017.)