

Interact

IN THIS ISSUE

Light of Christmas

Youth Camp

Encounter Journal

Children's Ministry

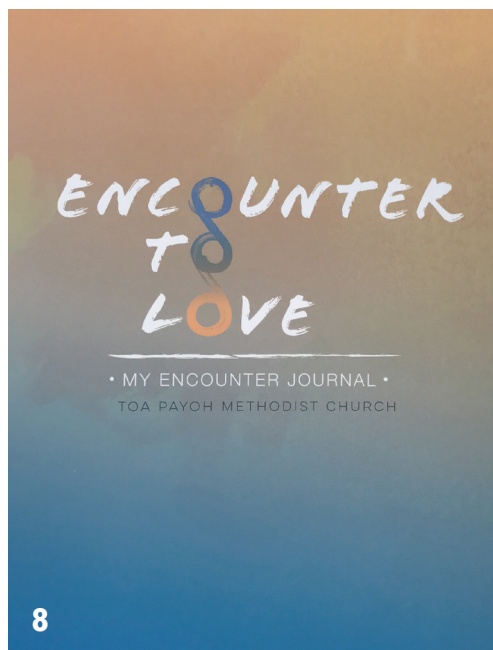
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What's *Inside*



1	Pastor's Message
2	Light of Christmas
4	Christmas Reflections
6	Youth Camp
7	Seniors Ministry
8	Encounter Journal
10	The Learning Academy
12	Children's Ministry
14	Filipino Ministry
15	Missions



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Pastor's Message

Our Encounter Journal

Once again we start off a new year; and with it, new (or perhaps renewed) resolutions. As Christians, one common “renewed” resolution would be to read the Bible regularly. That is something Toa Payoh Methodist Church believes in as well. And that is why we came out with the Encounter Journal (EJ for short). Why the EJ when there are so many other tools available? Here are three reasons why we recommend this.

– 1. Regular Encountering

Joshua 1:8 says “This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth; you shall meditate on it day and night...”. We see from this verse that we are called to encounter the Word of God “day and night”; in other words, daily and regularly. We see how critical and crucial the Word is when we realise that it is what God Himself offers as the key to success for Joshua to accomplish his mission in leading Israel into the promised land. Just imagine how pivotal and powerful the faithful act of encountering His Word is. This is where the EJ comes in handy. It comes packaged with a systematic reading plan to help us track how we are progressing with our intention to encounter and engage the Word on a regular basis. It is a plan that allows us to complete the Bible in one to two years, or longer, depending on how we use the plan. We understand that it is not a race to complete the reading, but a regular encounter of the Word that allows us to grow in the Lord. But why do we need to keep a journal? Can’t we just read the Bible? This is where the second reason comes in.

– 2. Not Just Reading

Joshua 1:8 continues with “...so that you may be careful to act in accordance with all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall be successful.” It is reading plus acting in accordance with what we read! In other words, applying the Word. James 1:22 puts it this way, “But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves.” That is why the EJ comes with the “ROAD” method in our daily encounter with the Word. We READ, but we do not just read. We also OBSERVE and record our observations about what we have read. Then based on our observations, we reflect on how we may APPLY what we have read. Hence we encounter the Word “day

and night” by reading and making observations, then we “act in accordance” to it by applying the Word in our lives. Finally, we DIALOGUE or write down a simple prayer thanking God for what we have learnt or simply praying for strength to apply what we have written. But that sounds like a difficult process. Can we not stick to a devotional that has already been written and which has all those sections prepared for us? Well...yes you can and you may...but why? Simply reading from others’ encounter with the Word will not help you mature in the handling of God’s truth. So we come to our final reason.

– 3. Maturing

Paul in 2 Timothy 2:15 instructs Timothy to “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.” In order to accurately handle anything, one must grow in the ability and confidence to handle it. It is the same for the Word. Imagine Joshua, after hearing the command of God in Joshua 1:8, responding that he would prefer it if someone else would encounter, digest and then tell him what the Word says. That sounds ludicrous I know. But if we were to understand that Joshua 1:8 applies to us as well, that the Word is key, then shouldn’t we also be like Joshua? Taking the step to encounter it for ourselves and then to apply it, instead of always relying on someone else to do it for us - this is the underlying reason for the EJ. It trains us to “accurately handle” the Word. We may find it difficult at first. But we have to start somewhere to begin maturing in this area. We recall Hebrews 5:12-14 where it talks of the need to “accurately handle” in another way, “You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things about God’s word. You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food. For someone who lives on milk is still an infant and doesn’t know how to do what is right. Solid food is for those who are mature, who through training have the skill to recognise the difference between right and wrong.” We hope for all in TPMC to mature. And the EJ assists us in doing so. It will not be easy. But it is certainly worth it.

May all of us encounter His Word regularly.
Apply it faithfully. Mature accordingly.

Rev Reuben Ng

Light of Christmas

by Winston Wong

LIGHT OF CHRISTMAS 2016 (LOC 2016)

was held on 24 December 2016, 12pm to 5pm right here at Toa Payoh Methodist Church (TPMC). Into its second year, LOC has become THE Christmas event which TPMC worshippers look forward to. Jesus is the true Light which gives light to every man. Therefore as disciples of Jesus, there is no better way to celebrate Christmas than by letting the community around us know that Jesus is the Light of Christmas.

On the day of LOC, many visitors came early and started to form a queue even before the event officially commenced. Throughout the whole day, visitors were streaming into the church. We praise God that about 1,850 visitors came to LOC and participated in the activities. From carnival games, live music performances, children's programme, and not forgetting lots of yummy food, everyone from young to old had something they could enjoy. The entire place was constantly packed and no one could forget the very long, long queue at the Bubble Tea station!

Another highlight of LOC 2016 was the 300 beautiful miniature stained glass artwork put up as part of the decoration. These artwork were created by our very own TPMC worshippers (almost 300 of them),

who each took up the challenge to make one stained glass artwork. If you were at LOC, you must have also seen the 3 large stained glass artwork depicting the Christmas story created by the LOC Deco team. Many visitors could be seen taking photos of these artwork including selfies and wefies! I even heard a visitor saying that, "This is the best carnival I have ever attended. I look forward to it every year!" God was truly good to us. He gave us good weather throughout the event. The rain only came near the end of the event. When visitors were stuck in our church due to the rain, it gave us a golden opportunity to show some TPMC hospitality. Our volunteers looked for umbrellas and began to ferry the visitors across the neighbouring blocks. Many of our volunteers were drenched from the rain but no one was complaining!

A big event needs big hearts. LOC 2016 would not have been possible without our 350 volunteers with very big hearts! The welcome team were always smiling from their hearts; the befrienders could be seen having heart-to-heart conversations with visitors; the games volunteers were helping visitors to play their hearts out; the young at heart who helped out at the Children's



programme, and many more. So to everyone who helped at LOC 2016 in one way or another, from the bottom of our hearts, the organising committee would like to say a BIG THANK YOU!

Kudos to the LOC organising committee, who worked tirelessly for 6 months. Although most committee members had never been in past LOC committees, praise God that they were resourceful and worked well together.

We pray that this community celebration has enabled our church to integrate deeper into the Toa Payoh community.

Winston Wong is the chairman for LOC 2016. He also serves in LCEC as Associate Lay Leader.



"It was solemn, inspiring, and brought the whole church closer as it caused everyone, I believe, to see that they were not alone in their daily struggles. As a family, we left that day being very hopeful knowing we are surrounded by a family that cares."

~Michele Cowan



Christmas Reflections

by Roslyn Sim

Roslyn is the Adults Age Group Coordinator, a CG leader and member of the Worship Team.

"Broken hearts. Broken lives, He will take them all."

~ So You Would Come by Hillsong United

The birth of Jesus, The Hope, was celebrated on Christmas Day. It was very heart-warming to see several lives coming forward to "shout" how God has been this hope for them, without speaking a word.

It may have looked like a simple task to hold up a large board, and to flip it

forwards and backwards to tell a story. But I was personally very touched, and felt very blessed, to witness those willing to come forward to tell everyone how God had answered their prayers. Much more than that was the courage it must have taken to publicly reveal a not-so-rosy past.

The stories left many teary-eyed and I believe that many found new hope in their own situations that Christmas.



"We were reminded to pray for the people from where we stood during the presentation. This became the focal point that allayed our fears and anxieties to be on 'public display', such that one's mind could only think of aligning with God's purpose, trusting that somewhere out there, people identifying with our testimonies would be convicted to receive Christ or renew their faith!"

~Rachel Chew





AWAKEN YOUTH CAMP

by Ivan Low

Youth Camp, AWAKEN, was held on 19-22 Dec 2016. Rev Shaun Chong, Pastor at Christ Methodist Church, was the keynote speaker. The youth camp was well-attended by almost 80 youths. Parents, leaders, Pastors and some pastoral staff went on the final night to minister, encourage and pray for the youths.

Ivan, a Sec 4 youth shares his experiences at the Camp

Friends, fun, and laughter. Games, cards, and sleepovers. Heart-to-heart talks, a burning passion for Christ, and invigorating encounters with God. Awaken was not just a youth camp for fun and fellowship. Indeed, there was an overwhelming spirit of fun and fellowship, but with the presence of God flooding the atmosphere and radical love brimming from youth to youth, it was truly a wondrous experience.

Yes, we had an amazing race, and wet games, and an eye-opening exposure to serving His people through bread distribution and other community work - but what really mattered was God working in all of us.

What really mattered was standing amidst an atmosphere overflowing with an intensely deep-rooted yearning for His mercy in all our lives.

What really mattered was that when we struggled, when we were utterly helpless, when we needed a sign that God was real and present, a sign appeared.

What really mattered was that we stepped out of camp fully trusting God. The God that we all knew - through the stories told to us in Sunday School and the hymns we sang mechanically - transformed into mesmerizing encounters and love songs filled with a remarkably different kind of love: His love.

Seniors Ministry

Seniors' Fellowship

Thursdays from 2 February to 25 May 2017
(Break for school holidays in June and December)

Time: 1.30pm to 4.30pm

Venue: Hall 3 Level 3 & Courtyard

Outings (Dates tentative)

29 April to 1 May 2017 - Kelong @ Bintan

13 to 15 July 2017 - Makan-Makan Trip

Seniors' Open Meeting

Workshop on Dementia

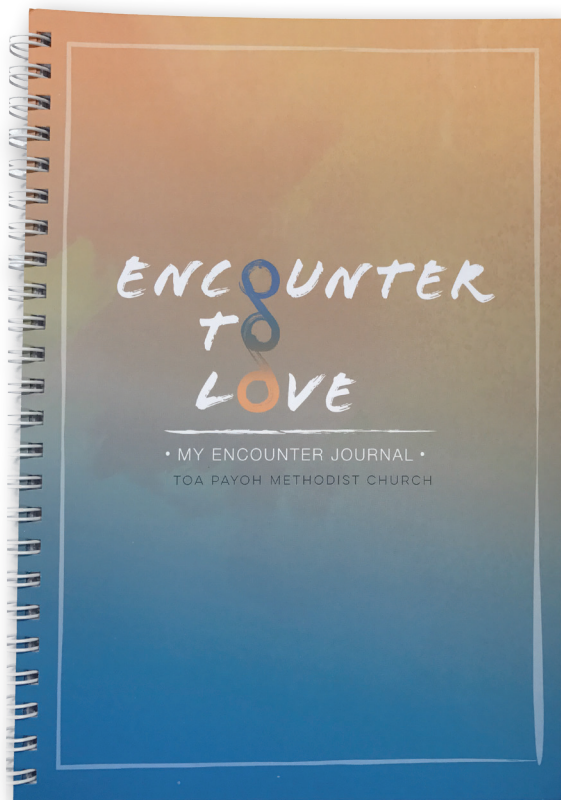
Speaker: Rev Irene Thung

Date: Saturday 13 May 2017

The seniors are an active group of people who love good food, warm fellowship and fun. The activities organised for them are usually well participated, often with attendance more than expected. Programmes are carried out in different modes and timing to cater to the varying needs of the seniors. The weekly Thursday meetings have taken a new format: 1.5 hours of fellowship and Bible Study, followed by another hour of food fellowship. There is also the quarterly Open Sunday meetings where experts are invited to speak on topics on health, Medishield Life, Caregiving etc. Such meetings are usually held on a Sunday to enable more seniors to participate as some are unable to come on weekdays mainly due to work or caring for their grandchildren. There are also outings like Chinese New Year Shopping and trips to Kelong and Malacca. Besides participating in the events organised by our church, our seniors also participate in events organised by the Conference level such as GYM hi-tea where they get to know and interact Seniors from other churches.

If you have an elderly parent or relative, do encourage them to join the Seniors Ministry. A list of coming events can be found here. You can email seniors@tpmc.org.sg or call the Church office for more information.





For A Better Daily Encounter

by Kenneth Yeo

Kenneth Yeo serves in LCEC as Lay Leader and leads a CG, Faith@Work.

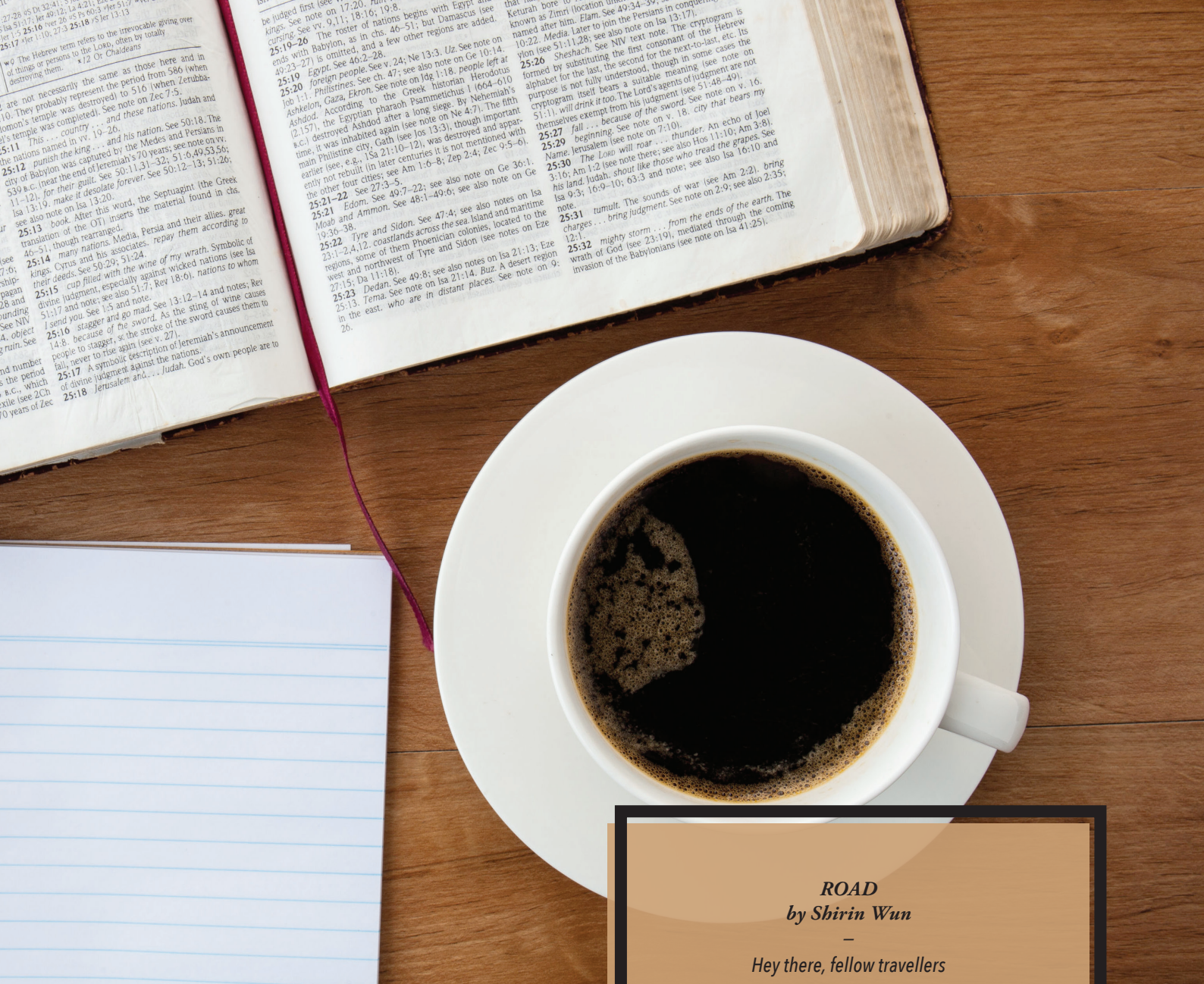
But his delight is in the law of the Lord,
And in His law he meditates day and night.
He shall be like a tree
Planted by the rivers of water,
That brings forth its fruit in its season,
Whose leaf also shall not wither;
And whatever he does shall prosper.
Psalms 1:2-3

Busy is synonymous to Singaporeans. We often forget the power of God's Word that works powerfully in our lives. It brings true health, fruitfulness, prosperity and success to the things we do. Yet, in the myriad tasks we kiasu-ly undertake in pursuit of the 'better' life, we forget the true treasure that lies within the pages of our ancient book - the Bible.

While simply reading the Bible is beneficial,

as easily distracted Singaporeans, we often rush off to the next task of the day without the encounter and the wonder - losing yet another opportunity to process the head knowledge to heart application. We have lost the art and discipline of meditating and journaling our reflections...

At our leadership retreat a week just before this Lunar New Year, the pastors and leaders met to seek what God has been putting in our minds and hearts through 2016. We were passionate about focussing our efforts as a church to encounter God in a meaningful way through 2017. Through the exercise, we felt led to encourage TPMC to develop a habit of reading the Bible and journaling with the help of our developed (and published) Bible reading plan - the Encounter Journal (EJ).



Our prayer as the leadership is that while we as individuals in the TPMC congregation diligently, tenaciously and meditatively embark on this better daily encounter, we will discover for ourselves intimacy with God and the wonders of the truths He will reveal to us - truths that will bring true health, fruitfulness, prosperity and success to the things we do.

Find out how the Filipino Ministry has launched the use of EJ in their ministry.

The EJ Reading Plan and video tutorial can be found on our website - <https://tpmc.org.sg/media/bible-reading-plan/>. A hard copy of the journal is available free-of-charge at our Information Counter on Sundays.

ROAD *by Shirin Wun*

*Hey there, fellow travellers
Embarking on this road
Side by side we'll handle challenges
And share our uncertain load*

*We'll go exploring together
For while it's familiar to one
It may be uncharted to another
But God and friends will see it done*

*To Read is to find what is truly God's Word
To Observe is to learn what was said
To Apply is to do as your heart is stirred
To Dialogue is to pray as you're led*

*So let us encounter His presence today
Steered by the light from the Son
Let us journey along this biblical highway
To a kingdom that is second to none*



THE LEARNING ACADEMY (TLA)

Organised by Discipleship & Nurture Committee

Can Anxiety and Peace Co-exist?

Speaker: Mr Eddie Ho
(Asst Pastor, TPMC)
Date: Mar 22 (Wed)

We feel anxious occasionally. How does the presence and promises of God release us from its grip? What is the source of enduring peace that Christians have while facing life's challenges? This seeker-friendly talk is aimed to help both believers and pre-believer friends overcome anxiety.

Finding Your Purpose and Ministry at Work

Speaker: Mr Barney Lau (Pastor, Covenant Evangelical Free Church)
Date: Mar 29 & Apr 5 (Wed)

Work is instituted by God. But is Christian ministry more sacred than our work in the marketplace? This course is to help us rediscover the biblical teachings on work and the ways to honour God in our vocational life.

Book Study: 1 Corinthians Part 1 (Chapters 1-7)

Speaker: Mr Eddie Ho
(Asst Pastor, TPMC)
Date: May 17, 24 & 31 (Wed)
Courses 1 – 3 will be held at Hall 3 (#03-03) from 8pm-10pm.
No registration is required.

Drawing from Paul's teachings on various issues that troubled the Corinthian church, embrace challenges, gain spiritual insights and live out in obedience on what it truly means to be Christ's body – the church.

Parenting with Confidence

(Toddler module, Age 0-6)
Facilitator: Mrs Roslyn Sim (Certified Parenting with Confidence Trainer)
Date & Time: Apr 1, 8, 22 & 29 (Sat) :: 9am-12pm
Venue: Hall 3 (#03-03)
Fees: \$120/person; \$180/couple

Practical parenting workshop that aims to equip you with essential tools you need to raise independent and resourceful children. Learn how to better understand your kids and your own parenting style while being effective and loving to your child.



Alpha

May 6, 13, 20, 27, Jun 3, 10, 24, Jul 1, 8, 15 & 22 (Sat) 2pm – 5pm
(15 Jul, 9am-6pm)
Venue: Upper Room (#04-01)

Have questions about Christianity but don't know who to ask? Want to know why Christians believe what we believe? For non-believers and new Christians alike, to understand the principles of the Christian faith. Includes interaction time with facilitators.

For registration or enquiries, please email discipleship@tpmc.org.sg.

In the age of fake news, one sensational
headline is asking for clarification:
"Saviour of the World rises from the dead after 3 days".

Fake or Real?

NO BODY

DATE: 16 APRIL 2017

TIME: 8:30AM & 10:30AM

**VENUE: TOA PAYOH METHODIST CHURCH
SANCTUARY**

One young lady, Annie Ting is all out to "clarify and correct" this news.
To do so, all she has to do is to locate the body, which for some reason is missing from the tomb.

But to locate the body, everyone has to first experience a little music, songs and dance,
visual media, some rhymin' and rappin' ; some funny stuff; some serious stuff, in
this unusual and entertaining look at the true Easter story titled "NO BODY"

So, "Nobody" should miss this!
Bring a friend. Find the body - or Not.

"No Body" is written courtesy of www.truebluebamboo.sg
Drop in and do some good.



Children's Ministry

by Sarah Lim, Pastoral Staff



Children's Camp

The 2-day camp was held on 24 – 25 November 2016. The theme was F.R.I.E.N.D.S and Pastor Raymond, in his usual animated and engaging style of teaching, taught the children what it meant to be a good friend to others. Through the camp, we also introduced to the children the greatest friend of all – JESUS!





Candy Cane Christmas

Candy Cane Christmas was organised in partnership with RC's IAAC (Indian Activity Association Committee). Held on 18 December 2016, the purpose was to share Christmas cheer and joy with the kids in church and the community. The highlight of the party was the dressed up competition and a young boy swept the grand prize!



CNY 2017

The teachers and children went to the Toa Payoh Community to bless the less privileged households in Toa Payoh just before CNY.





Filipino Ministry Launched EJ Time!

by Angelito Mojico, Pastoral Staff

One of the most rewarding ways in growing in the Lord is to have a personal encounter with Him every day, and what better way to do this than to use Toa Payoh Methodist Church's (TPMC) very own Encounter Journal (EJ).

Since last year, everyone at the Filipino Ministry is given an EJ to record our personal reflection in our daily reading of God's Word. At first, many of us find it difficult to read and write our reflection; but the Read-Observe-Apply-Dialogue (R.O.A.D.) guide has proven to be quite helpful. First we Read God's Word, then we Observe what God has to tell us. After which we ask ourselves how we can Apply God's prompting and finally we commit ourselves to God in our Dialogue with Him.

After getting more familiar with it each day, this March the leaders at Filipino Ministry (FM) are confident enough to start sharing their respective reflections in the FM Facebook. We hope through open sharing on social media, more people can be inspired to grow deeper in their devotional lives and spur one another to spiritual maturity and good works.



Visit our Facebook Group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/TPMCFM/> to know more about what our FM has been doing encourage everyone in EJ Time.

Filipino Ministry (FM) meets at 10.30am at Hall 3 (#03-03) every Sunday except 1st Sundays and weeks with combined services.



Missions Trips

by Sarah Lim, Pastoral Staff



CAMBODIA

Since 2009, the primary school graduating cohort of P6 children has been going on a missions trip. Two years later, the Sec 4 youths started joining them on this annual trip. Last year was no exception. By far the largest group, 25 children and youths, accompanied by five teachers from the Children Ministry, went on a missions trip to Cambodia from 7-12 December 2016. During the 6-day stay, the group performed skit, did village outreach work, shared their testimony and even helped to paint the playground. While most Sec 4s had gone for a missions trip when they were in P6, it was a first for most P6s. Here is a testimony from one of the P6 trippers, Eliza, who shared her experience during the worship service.

“

I joined the P6 & Sec 4 missions trip to Cambodia last December. It was my first missions trip so I was hesitant as I did not know what to expect and I was unsure if I would enjoy it, but I'm glad I went.

One of the reasons I enjoyed the missions trip was because I had a really good time getting to know and bond with the kids through many games, getting to know their lives and seeing how contented they were even without many things that I had - for example, a handphone - made me reflect upon myself and it really taught me to be appreciative of all that God has blessed me with. I was also glad to be a blessing to the children there by making jelly for them and helping them to build and paint their playground. It was a really good and interesting experience for me as we would never get a chance to do things like this in Singapore and I was more than happy to let God use us to bless the kids there.

There were many flies and insects but when I saw how brave the kids were, it helped me to overcome my fear of the small insects. It also taught me not to be so particular and I'm thankful for being brought up in such a clean environment.

I also observed that the children sang many Christian songs without having to refer to the lyrics and this stood out to me as it showed that they took the effort to memorise the songs in full and that they really focused on God and took Him seriously. Another observation was that the kids were not shy to worship, sing loudly and dance during the services even in the midst of strangers, and they were not afraid of people judging them. This showed me that when we worship God, we should not worry about what others think of us and we should just give God our all because God deserves our best and we worship to please God and not men.

”

Overall, I'm thankful to God for the entire experience.

Missions Trips

by Audrey Ong

Chairperson, Missions Committee



THE MARRIAGE CONFERENCE IN THAILAND

ABOUT THE SHAN

The Shan people group in Northern Thailand are largely refugees who have escaped from Shan State, Myanmar. Most of them do not have identification documents and therefore they have lived near the border between Thailand and Myanmar almost all their lives. For those who managed to obtain identification documents or permit to work, they would move to the cities to find work and a better life for their families.

In Shan culture, to be a Shan is to be a Buddhist. Marriages are celebrated in a Buddhist ceremony. However, not all Shan would go through a wedding ceremony because they could not afford to hold a celebration. The couple would come together to live as husband and wife. Without identification documents, their marriages are not also registered,

i.e. not legally married. Many couples would also separate when they cannot get along with each other and remarry when they meet someone else. This was a concern of our missionaries, Florence Leow and Angela Sng, who then approached TPMC to conduct a marriage conference for the Shan believers.

THE MISSION

A team of seven went on a missions trip to Northern Thailand from 7 to 11 Sep 2016. The objective of this trip was to conduct a marriage conference for the Shan churches. Rev Joshua Loo and Roslyn Sim led two conferences at Na Wai and Chiang Mai where the team shared on what the Bible teaches about marriage.

For each session, we had one of the couples from the team (Roger and Carmen Yeo, Edwin and Lucilla Soh) share their experiences and lessons from their marriages, relevant to the topic, with the Shan participants.

At the end of each conference, a ceremony was held to bless the marriages of six Shan couples at Na Wai and nine couples from Angela's Shan cell group at Chiang Mai.

EDWIN & LUCILLA SHARED:

"I thank God for enabling me and my wife to be able to participate in the missions trip as it was first time we went for such trip. It helped me to count our blessings God has seen our marriage through the years. I learnt from the people of Shan to be humble with one another, showing their love for God and truly encouraged those who heard their sharing as well."

We have encountered God's goodness and protection as we travelled around Chiang Mai, Arunothai and Na Wai.



INDIA

A team from TPMC organised and conducted a conference at the Indian border, to stir up 70 Bhutanese youths to fulfil the Great Commission in their homeland. Many youths were encouraged by the lessons and testimonies, and responded positively. The team members are Pastor Eddie Ho, Audrey Ong, Ong Teong Hoon, Joseph Kim, Agnes Goh, Isaiah Tee, Rachelle Sim and Daniel Lee.





Extravagant *Love*

CONFERENCE

17 JUNE 2017 • 9AM-5PM
TOA PAYOH METHODIST CHURCH

