

interact

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MESSAGE**

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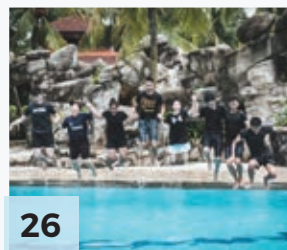
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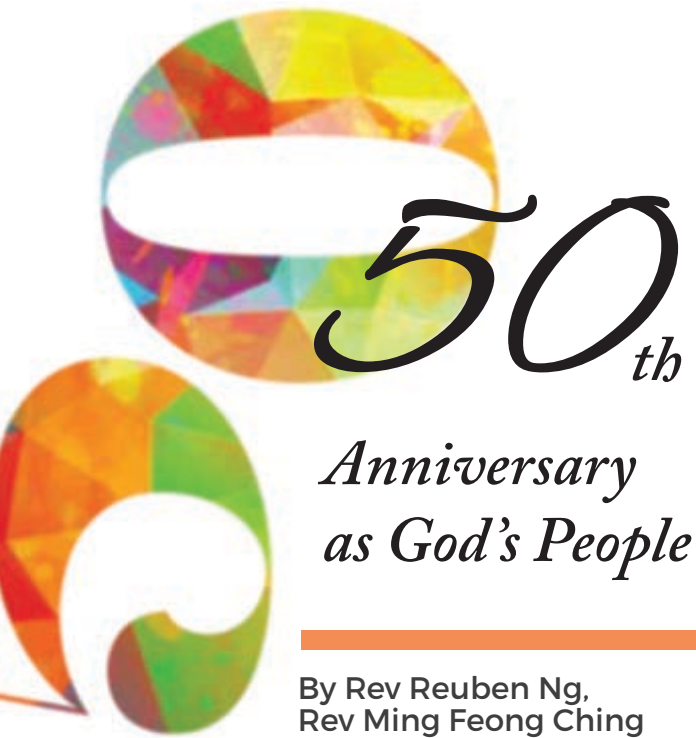
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By Rev Reuben Ng,
Rev Ming Feong Ching
& Rev Poh Zhi-Hui

TPMC celebrates its 50th Anniversary in 2020. In the Bible, every 50th year (the “Jubilee”) was significant for God’s first chosen community of people. It was a year set apart by God for them to observe as prescribed in Leviticus 25. The result of the Jubilee was a resetting of status (such as reverting a “hired worker” to a free man) and possessions (such as restoring each family’s original allotted portion of the Promised Land). Such restorations enabled every Israelite to remember their personal and corporate identities as the people of God under His rule and care. (Ex 19:4-6) Every Jubilee thus reaffirmed and re-illustrated to the Israelites, through all generations, the covenant that God has made with them (Gen 12:1-3; 15:1-21; 17:1-8) and the covenantal relationship they have with God.

The Jubilee helped the Israelites to remember the following characteristics about God:

- i) The one God whom they are to worship and obey is the Lord who identified Himself in a specific way to His people – He saved them from Egypt (Exodus).
- ii) The earth and everything in it (including “the land” and the “people”) belong to God.
- iii) The Lord is their only God and Master – No Israelite is to be bonded in perpetual servitude to another.
- iv) The Lord is compassionate and just, and calls His people to be the same towards one another.
- v) The Lord’s destiny for His people is liberty and life.

The Jubilee also reminded the Israelites that they were called to be a nation of people belonging to God. It was through their living as a community according to God’s Law that others could recognise and marvel at them as the people of the Lord (Deut 4:5-8).

In Christ, these things become true for Christians today as the people of God. What the exodus was for the Israelites, the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ is for us. It is the event in which God delivered us from the kingdom of darkness into His kingdom of light. And it is the event that reveals fully who God is, who we are to Him, and His will for us.

A Jubilee is thus a good opportunity to recall and recommit to what it means to have been saved by the one Jesus Christ into God’s kingdom, and be called the people of God (Gen 12:1-3; Ex 19:4-6; 1 Pet 2:9-12).

This theme of remembering and recommitment is especially significant this year as we face the challenge of the COVID-19 situation that came upon Singapore on 23 January 2020. How do we respond to this situation as a people of God? Should activities in the church compound continue? Should gathering physically for the Sunday worship service continue? What should we do about the Jubilee celebration events that have already been planned? There are no easy answers to these questions, and we will need to continually seek the Lord's wisdom in adapting to the situation as it evolves. But one thing is certain. Our responses have to be grounded in a firm trust in God who so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, Jesus Christ, for the world's salvation, and who has even the power to raise Jesus from death.

To celebrate our Jubilee this year, we had lined up special events. We thank the 50th Anniversary Committee for their service to us in this aspect. In light of the COVID-19 situation, some plans had to be postponed, others had to be adjusted, but some will carry on. Whatever the case, as we go through this year, may we know afresh what it means to be God's people and be re-energised in this identity.

And may our corporate expressions also translate into personal expressions of the spirit of the Jubilee. For example, can you help a sister get a job so she can stand on her feet? Can you finally free a brother from a longstanding offence you have held against him and do a kind act to him? Can you help a fellow TPMC-er increase in faith and grow as a citizen of God's kingdom in love and righteousness by being an active member in a Connect Group? Can you avail yourself if called upon to serve as a Connect Group Leader? Can you affirm and encourage one another's place and sense of belonging in this community of God with acts of hospitality and appreciation?

TPMC – 50 years as God's people. As we go through the year, even in such a time as this, may the Holy Spirit strengthen us in ways that will help to build each other up in the love of Christ, so that those who see us may also come to know and praise God!

“Now to Him
who is able to do
immeasurably more
than all we ask
or imagine,
according to His
power that is at work
in us,
to Him be glory in the
church and in Christ
Jesus throughout all
generations, for ever
and ever. Amen!”

(Eph 3:20-21)

“All information regarding the 50th Anniversary events are correct as at the time of print. They are subject to changes due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation. Please look out for updates on tpmc.org.sg.”



Rev Poh Zhi-Hui
Assistant Pastor

Rev Reuben Ng
Pastor-in-Charge

Rev Ming Feong Ching
Pastor

NEWLYWEDS

Keith Yeo & Velda Tan

tied the knot on
22 | Feb | 2020



Jay Tong & Alicia Lim

tied the knot on
18 | Jan | 2020

NEWBORNS



On **21 October 2019**,
Torrance & Jessica
were blessed with
their second child,
Lauren Tai.



On **19 November 2019**,
Justin & Joey
were blessed with
the arrival of their first child,
Jordan Elijah Chan.



On **21 February 2020**,
Walter & Shu Wen
were blessed with
their second child,
Hannah Yeo Hui En.



BAPTISM & MEMBERSHIP

15 DEC 2019



BAPTISM



Elijah Tan Youen



Ian Ho Yit En



RECEPTION & TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

Chen Sook Chin Corinne
Cheng Poh Sim Mary
Chin Woon Yong David
Ng Kai An
Tan Yong Kit Christopher
Tay Ling Yeo Peter

HELLO KAI AN!

You may have seen him on the chancel as a member of the worship team at the 10.30am service or recall him from a recruitment video for Light of Christmas (LOC) 2019. For this issue, we bring you Kai An, whom many would remember as the enthusiastic guy encouraging others to volunteer for LOC.

Tell us more about yourself.

Hi, I am 29 years old. I currently run a business with my friends providing design, print and manufacturing services for customised corporate gifts, bags, and apparel.

Which ministries are you serving in?

I presently serve as a vocalist in the Worship & Music Ministry. Members of this ministry lead the congregation in worshipping and praising God. I also serve in the Young Adults Ministry where we learn from, share with, pray for and edify one another so as to strengthen our relationship with the Lord and be faithful witnesses.

What are your hobbies or leisure activities?

I like to sing, which explains why I am in the Worship & Music Ministry. I am learning to play the guitar, but my skills are elementary at present. I also like to explore places with good food.

What is your favourite food?

I like Japanese food, especially uni (sea urchin) and amaebi (sweet prawn).

How did you come to know about Jesus? Who invited you to Toa Payoh Methodist Church (TPMC)?

I was born into a Christian family. Hence I knew Jesus from a young age. However, there were a few dry seasons in my Christian life. During one such period, I asked God for a small group of Christians where I could receive support for my Christian faith. Soon after, I discovered that my secondary school friend, Jay Fong, is a Christian from his Facebook account. I reconnected with him and he invited me to worship at TPMC and join his Connect Group. I have been



worshipping at TPMC for close to eight years.

How has knowing Jesus changed your life?

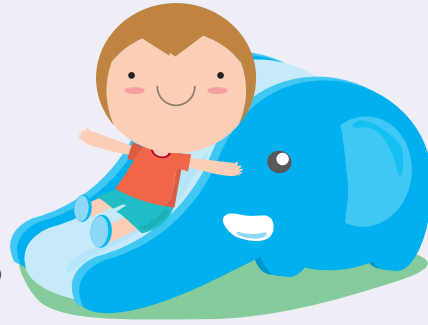
Knowing Jesus at a deeper level has led me to view life from a Christian perspective. I have learned to use my talents and time to love and help others.

Do you have any words of encouragement for your brothers and sisters in Christ?

There may be periods in life when things may not go your way and God does not seem to be present. I encourage those experiencing such times to keep praying and maintaining fellowship with the church and their Connect Group so that they can get the necessary support, and stay the course. God will provide and help you to resolve the issues in His time.

CRAWLERS' MINISTRY

By Nicole Ho



Aside from the first Sunday of every month and special Sundays, the Crawlers' Ministry can be found in its new ministry room (Room 03-04) every week!

Since its beginnings in September last year, the ministry now averages of three to five cuties every week, with a team of around six loving volunteers caring for them. You may ask, being so young, what do they do? Typically, a crawlers' session includes play time, singing, story time, snacks, quiet time and prayer time, so our crawlers can experience God from a young age. These activities also allow the crawlers' parents to attend the main service with a load off their shoulders, knowing that their children are in safe and capable hands.

The past few months have not been all sunshine and roses, as some crawlers took time to acclimatise to the new environment, get familiar with and trust the volunteers. Similarly, the volunteers had to know the little ones and their preferences so that trust could be built and the programme adapted to better benefit the toddlers and their parents. This included letting a parent or helper stay in the crawlers' room while his/her child was getting used to the new environment, and only leaving when the child had fully settled in. Nonetheless, it has been a rewarding experience for all volunteers. One of the volunteers, Jean, has learnt to be more patient and observant when taking care of and keeping watch over the crawlers.

As the Crawlers' Ministry continues to flourish, let us pray for God's wisdom and discernment for all volunteers as they continue to serve and carry out His work, and for all crawlers to be able to experience His love and kindness as they begin their walk with God.



MISSION TRIP TO CAMBODIA - VISITING ODEM

By Lu Thiam Seng

Six members from Synapse 2 Connect Group (CG) visited Odem in Phnom Penh, Cambodia from 23 to 26 August 2019. The team's key involvement was the teaching of English & Mandarin to children and factory workers living in the neighbourhood, and the conduct of the children's ministry and church service on Sunday.

Though short in duration, the trip has been a great learning experience. For a start, the sharing of hotel rooms led to closer bonding among the team members. Despite extensive pre-trip preparations, several last-minute changes had to be made to ensure the effectiveness of our teaching processes. This saw teamwork materialised and team members' gifts exercised and used in complementary ways. Seeing a different side to the various team members in the midst of all the action was a positive revelation. It was also heart-warming for us to see the glitter in the eyes of the children as they enjoyed the programme. Similarly, we were at the receiving end of much enthusiasm from the working adults, all of whom came to the classes directly after a hard day's work.

For the CG as a whole, this trip has brought us closer. Those who remained behind in Singapore supported the team through their prayers. It is through this prayer support that made the positive outcomes from the trip possible. This journey also helped us to catch a glimpse of what the Lord can do when we avail ourselves to His service and the blessings we will receive in that journey.



Play games with the neighbour hood kids.



Singing new songs with children.



Having a meal before starting work.



English Lessons.



Getting ready to bless the Shan in Chiang Mai.

MISSION TRIP TO CHIANG MAI

By Diana Chua

Mission Team and Objective

The mission team to Chiang Mai from 12 to 17 December 2019 comprised 15 members, including Pastors Ming and Poh. Our aim was to share the Good News of the birth of Jesus Christ and do outreach. We arrived in Chiang Mai on 12 December. We spent two and a half days with Florence Leow, one of our TPMC missionaries, in two villages in Northern Thailand. Then we spent the rest of the time with Angela Sng, another TPMC missionary, and her church in Mittabhap.

What Did We Do?

Since Christmas was close, the team shared the message of God's love through a skit on the birth of Jesus. Florence did the translation from English to Thai as we acted out the story. Our team was also divided into three groups to visit some 30 Shan households.



Preparing for Christmas outreach in Chiang Mai.

At each household, we performed a short version of the story of Christ's birth. In addition, we sang Christmas carols not only in English, but also in Thai and Shan. For my group, it was very heart-warming to have two local ladies in their late 70s join us for carolling during the home visits, praising God as we went.

For the remaining time, we did two outreach events where the Christmas message was shared through a skit and dance and visited two villages, Mae Ja and Na Wai. At Mae Ja, we blessed the residents of a leper's home with gifts and served lunch. At Na Wai, we witnessed the baptism of a brother at the local church. It was quite stirring.

On 15 December, Mittabhap Methodist Church organised a Christmas outreach event for the Shan community. The event was a carnival with food stalls and entertainment on the church grounds. There was a huge spread of Thai/Shan food and Singaporean favourites. The TPMC team ran two food stalls at the carnival, serving roti prata and ice cream. Following the carnival, performances were put up by various groups from the church. We contributed by singing "Joy to the World" in Shan.

“God didn’t add another day in your life because you needed it, he added it because someone out there needs you.”



Preparing for Christmas Outreach at Arunothai.

Thanksgiving

God was with us during the mission trip. We thank Him for:

1. The weather. We were told that various areas would be cold with temperatures dipping below 10°C on some days. However, the temperature generally kept at 16°C. Truly, “we love because He first loved us” (1 John 4:19).
2. Florence and her team. They prepared all our meals and even delivered breakfast to us at the guesthouse. Such was their love and hospitality.
3. God’s healing. A table we were using gave way and the tabletop landed on my leg. Pastor Ming prayed over me and the pain stopped. Thank God for His immediate healing.
4. God’s protection over the team as we visited households and shared the Christmas message with carols and skits.
5. The outreach events that drew many people. Several came forward to ask for and receive prayers for healing. I prayed for God to heal a family and help them to grow and know Him further (1 Cor 3:6-9). God’s love and mercy endure.



Preparing dinner at Term Fun Home.

My Takeaway

This was my first mission trip. It has opened my eyes as I saw and experienced how blessed TPMC and us as individuals have been. I truly believe that poverty is not a lack of resources but a lack of hope. I am also encouraged when I heard how one of my teammates, Darren, has been sponsoring the expenses of two boys at Term Fun Home for the past four years. It has been impressed upon me that God can use us in small and big ways to bless the Shan youths, helping them to build and fulfil their dreams.



Pastors praying for non-believers during outreach at Mittabhap Methodist Church.



Christmas Outreach at Nawai.



Preparing for Christmas Outreach at Arunothai.



Fellowship with the boys at Term Fun Home.

ONE ANOTHER — BUILDING AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN TPMC

By Agnes Goh

What does it look like to have authentic relationships within a community of Christ-followers?

Authenticity in relationships does require a few key ingredients – trust, vulnerability, acceptance, respect, humility, forgiveness, accountability, and care.

Can you envision such a community? Do you desire to be part of such a community? Do you know that God gave us a mandate to be such a community and the blueprint for it is in the Bible?

Scripture doesn't use the words "authentic relationship" but its substance is seen in another word – ἀλλήλων (pronounced as ah-lay-loan), translated as "one another." "One another" is used 100 times in 94 New Testament (NT) verses, with the apostle Paul writing 60% of these "one another" commands in his letters to the Church. 30% of the "one another" commands deal with people relationships within the Church. Another 30% instruct Christians to love one another, while 15% emphasise having an attitude of humility and respect among believers. The substantial number of these commands should make us sit up and pay attention.

"ONE ANOTHER"

100
times
in 94 NT
verses

60%
written
by Paul to
churches

30%
getting
along with
others

30%
on loving
one
another

15%
on humility
& respect

Just in case one might think these instructions are a good-to-have, let's revisit what Jesus said in John 13:34-35,

*"A new **commandment** I give to you, that you **love one another**, even as I have loved you, that you also **love one another**. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have **love for one another**."
(emphasis mine)*

But how can we live out these “one another” instructions if we simply come to church once a week on Sunday for a one-and-a-half hour service without interacting with others? Building authentic relationships is not easy. Whether the relationships are between spouses, parent and child, friends or in the TPMC community, building them takes time and effort. As the author of the book of Hebrews said,

“And let us consider how we may *spur one another on* towards love and good deeds, *not giving up meeting together*, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

(Hebrews 10:24-25, emphasis mine)



Living Oasis Connect Group



All Bout Christ Connect Group



Lifegroup Connect Group

Why did the author exhort us not to give up? Because building authentic relationships takes time and effort. Along the way, there may also be friction, hurts, misunderstandings, difficulties and differences among believers. But let's not give up!

The Connect Groups (CG) in TPMC are an important platform for community living and working out the mandate of loving “one another” as Jesus commanded. It is encouraging to see many worshippers and members of the church get connected and form strong bonds within the CGs, learning, loving and living together as Christ's disciples. If we understand and apply these commandments correctly, we should not be coming to church and CG with a mindset of “What's in it for me?”. Instead we should be thinking “I'm in it with you.”

If it is your desire to grow as an authentic disciple of Christ, then get involved today in a Connect Group and work out your faith and spiritual growth with one another.

If you're interested to join a Connect Group, email agnes@tpmc.org.sg or sign up at www.tinyurl.com/TPMC-Connect



ANNIVERSARY & JUBILEE FUND

By Alan Goh

50TH ANNIVERSARY

Toa Payoh Methodist Church (TPMC) celebrates her 50th anniversary in 2020. Besides recommitting ourselves to living as God's people and authentically loving God and one another, the Jubilee Fund will be established and a series of events lined up to live out our vision and reach out to the community to share God's love so as to commemorate the Jubilee meaningfully.

COMMEMORATORY EVENTS

TPMC will celebrate her 50th anniversary with a combined evening service on 16 August 2020. The church will also host the 45th session of the Trinity Annual Conference from 23 to 26 November 2020. The Jubilee celebration ends with the Light of Christmas 2020, TPMC's annual event to share God's love and usher in Christmas with the Toa Payoh community.

TPMC GIVES

To remember that God has given us His only Son, and His commandment to love our neighbours, TPMC will serve and connect with the Toa Payoh community through a bread distribution exercise and a blood donation drive in April.

TPMC gives 2020
Celebrating Jesus - our Jubilee

Bread Distribution	Blood Donation
A team representing TPMC will deliver hot-cross buns to various organisations	Date: 12 April Time: 12.00pm - 6.00pm Venue: Hall 1

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JUBILEE FUND

To mark her 50th anniversary, TPMC has launched the Jubilee Fund. The fund will enable TPMC to make a longer and larger impact to her outreach efforts and overseas missions. The Jubilee Fund will support the following new initiatives:

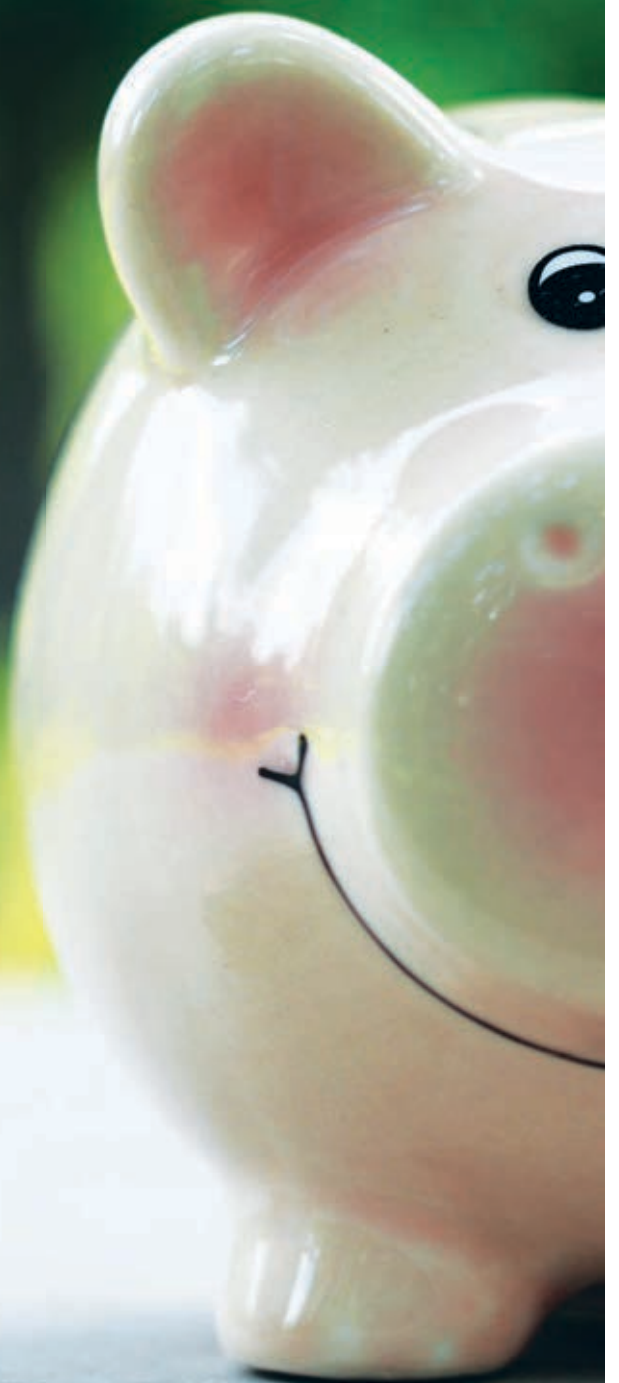
- Increase the number of poor and needy families helped from 25 to 50 over the next five years
- Support the Rough Sleepers Ministry, a night shelter for the homeless, at TPMC for the next five years
- Plant two churches in Southeast Asia over the next five years. The two churches should be financially independent after five years. Mittaphap Methodist Church in Shan, Thailand, is the first church. She was started in late 2019 by our missionary Angela Sng
- Bless a Bible school or seminary with a donation to support its mission to equip and raise the next generation of Christian leaders and teachers

A faith target of \$500,000 is set for the Jubilee Fund. Monies in the fund will be dedicated solely to further TPMC's outreach and missionary efforts. The Jubilee Fund will not be used to cover the events to commemorate the church anniversary — there is a separate fund for the latter.

Collections for the Jubilee Fund have started in January 2020 and will continue for 12 months. Donors can contribute to the fund via cash, cheque or electronically. Details can be found in the 50th Anniversary microsite: <https://tpmc.org.sg/50thanniversary/>.

Children can also contribute to the Jubilee Fund. A piggy bank has been issued to every child in the Children's Ministry. Your child may deposit into the piggy bank. Mass collection of savings from piggy banks will be conducted at the courtyard after the respective services on the first Sunday of April and July 2020. Subsequently, the piggy bank can be retained or used to further contribute towards the fund.

In celebrating our Jubilee, let us remember God's blessings and grace over the years and share them with those around us and the community.



HELPING THE POOR AND NEEDY IN TOA PAYOH

By Paneer Selvam
& Jerome Sim

Even as Singapore continues to prosper and progress, there are segments in our society that find it hard to keep pace and lag behind in their ability to meet the basic needs for themselves and their families. In the latest Household Expenditure Survey 17/18 conducted by the Singapore Department of Statistics, the bottom 20% of households in Singapore have an average shortfall of \$335 between what they earn and their monthly expenses. Such a situation for this segment of society has persisted for at least a decade¹. Not surprisingly, we have such households in Toa Payoh.

The Outreach and Social Concerns (OSC) Ministry of TPMC looks into the needs of the disadvantaged and underprivileged within the church and the Toa Payoh community. This ministry seeks to express God's love, compassion and grace through outreach programmes that provide practical help to identify individuals and families, bringing hope and impacting lives. One such programme is the financial assistance scheme which is currently helping close to 30 families in Toa Payoh. The profiles of those in need vary. They include large families with young children, single parent families as well as the elderly who are usually single and live alone.

Besides our in-house assistance programmes, the ministry also collaborates with other agencies to better assist those in need. For instance, our volunteers administer the Family Development Programme under the Methodist Welfare Services to help beneficiaries clear their debts and build up a habit to save for the future. In addition to financial aid, these beneficiaries also require care and concern through friendships. These are met in no small way through regular visitations from our volunteers as well as invitations to special events such as a blessing lunch and the Light of Christmas community blessing event.

Lastly, the Beacon Tuition Programme provides Primary 4 to Primary 6 children in the neighbourhood with free tuition so that they can better cope with the demands of their studies. Through this programme, it is our hope that these young children will be able to have a better footing in their education, continue to do well in the future and break out of the poverty cycle.

¹Ref: <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/household-expenditure-survey-inequality-income-basic-needs-11840660>

ROUGH SLEEPERS

By Angelito Mojico

**“They need safe
and sound sleep.”**

These are the words from representatives of Catholic Welfare Services (CWS) when we explored the provision of shelter to the homeless or whom they call “Rough Sleepers”, people without a permanent place to stay. Sleeping on the streets, they are perpetually exposed to danger, be it accidents, robbery or harassment, and the weather. Contrary to what many may believe, not all rough sleepers are poor and homeless. They are on the streets for different reasons. Some are abandoned by their families because of relationship issues while others have chosen to dissociate themselves from their loved ones because of guilt and shame.

We heard the need, prayed, and acted. Together with the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) and 25 other government agencies and community

partners, Toa Payoh Methodist Church is part of the Partners Engaging and Empowering Rough Sleepers (PEERS) network, a group put together to help the homeless. With the help of MSF and CWS, we provide a temporary shelter to a maximum of five rough sleepers in the church premises while social workers work with them on their personal issues and long-term housing. We also have a team called the “Rough Sleeper Buddies” who join CWS on the third Friday night of every month to befriend and give food to the homeless in Toa Payoh.

This Jubilee Year, we want the love of God to shine brighter in our community. May we as a church bless the homeless by welcoming them in our midst and showing the love of God to them.



MITTABHAP METHODIST CHURCH

By Audrey Ong

SPREADING THE GOSPEL

Angela Sng is a missionary sent by Toa Payoh Methodist Church (TPMC) to reach out to the Shan people of northern Thailand. She lives with her husband, Reverend (Rev) John Preedakasemrung, and their two sons, Jed and Zachary, in Chiang Mai. Rev John and Angela started their ministry in 2011 by running a home for Shan boys from disadvantaged family backgrounds. The home, known as Term Fun Home (in Thai, Term means to fill up, while Fun means dreams), provides education and a stable Christian family environment for up to 10 Shan boys. When Rev John and Angela started Mittabhap Methodist Church (MMC), the boys played an important role in supporting the Sunday services.

MMC started as a cell group of one family of Shan believers in Shineforth Methodist Church, Chiang Mai (Thailand) in 2010. Rev John and Angela formed the cell group to disciple the Shan believers using their Shan language as they were not fluent in Thai.

BEGINNINGS

By 2013, the cell group had grown to include three more families. The families attended the Thai service at Shineforth Methodist Church where Rev John and Angela were serving. In June 2016, Rev Chinnakorn, the Pastor-in-charge of Shineforth Methodist Church, encouraged Rev John and Angela to start a service for Shan believers, so that they could worship God in their own language. After much prayer, Rev John and Angela sensed God's leading in this endeavour and the Shan ministry was started as a preaching point under Shineforth Methodist Church, specifically to meet the needs of the Shan community. Every Sunday, about 20 adults would gather in a room at Shineforth Methodist Church. Boys from Term Fun Home, served as musicians, worship leaders and ushers at the Shan service. The congregation grew in size and by 2018, the Sunday service had to move to the school hall of Vineyard Methodist School, which was located next to Shineforth Methodist Church.



Baptism Service

GROWTH

In 2019, the Shan ministry was established as a local conference and MMC was started. (In Thai, Mittabhaph means friendship.) In the same year, Rev John was ordained and appointed as Pastor-in-charge of the church.

Today, the church continues to grow. Attendance at MMC's Sunday service averages between 40 and 45 worshippers, with 6 cell groups that meet regularly. We thank God for the growth of MMC and the leadership of Rev John and Angela in discipling the Shan believers.

HOW CAN YOU PRAY FOR MMC?

You can pray for:

- Her members to continue to grow in the Lord.
- Wisdom and favour to be upon the ministry staff as they serve amongst the Shan and Thai communities.
- MMC to have the resources needed for her own church premises.
- MMC to work towards becoming self-sufficient and self-governing.

HOW CAN TPMC HELP MMC?

Teams from TPMC have visited the Shan ministry which Rev John and Angela started. We have organised workshops and participated in their Christmas outreach programmes. We will continue to help MMC grow and be self-sufficient. Besides contributing financially as a sponsoring church, TPMC is looking into supporting MMC's plan to grow her members by

a) Conducting training in the following areas:

- Worship
- Leadership
- Marriage and family life
- Discipleship

b) Organising a youth camp or retreat for MMC members.



Ladies Fellowship



Members of Mittabhaph Methodist Church

If you are keen to contribute in the area of training, please email to missions@tpmc.org.sg

REDEVELOPMENT

By Jerome Sim & Alan Goh

Noticed the sleek new Welcome Lounge? Or realised that waiting time for the lift has been reduced as worshippers have the option of using a new lift nearby? These are but some of the improvements to her premises when Toa Payoh Methodist Church (TPMC) embarked on her second joint redevelopment with Toa Payoh Chinese Methodist Church (TPCMC) in July 2018. After some delays, the redevelopment was completed in early of 2020. The table below summarises the new and improved TPMC and common facilities from the Redevelopment Project.

	TPMC (TRAC) Facilities	Common Facilities
Level 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New meeting room (#01-02) 2. Refurbished Welcome Lounge 3. New cabinets in refurbished courtyard 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Two new lifts 2. Renovation of existing toilets 3. Metal grating for scupper drains 4. Extended canopy for Level 2 corridor 5. Upgraded Lightning Protection System for entire building 6. New light-up feature for cross on church's façade 7. New pedestrian gate beside carpark gantry
Level 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Refurbished classrooms for Kindergarten and Children's Ministry 	
Level 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expanded and refurbished Hall 1 and upgraded audio-visual systems 2. New Hall 4 (converted from former church office) 3. Renovated prayer rooms 4. Renovated Halls 2 and 3 	
Level 4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Two new prayer rooms (which can be combined into a larger room) 2. New location of church office 	



Welcome Lounge



New Church Office

New Lift D

The completed redevelopment project has brought numerous benefits to worshippers at TPMC, but just as important, the furtherance of God's kingdom. There is an increase in the number and size of rooms for discipleship, ministry and prayer. Visitors can be warmly received in the Welcome Lounge. The new lifts reduce congestion by improving the traffic flow of the congregation, reducing waiting time for worshippers who are less mobile, and providing back-up for existing ones.

As Jesus welcomes children (Matt 19:13-15), so does TPMC. With the redesign and renovation of prayer rooms on levels 2 and 3, dedicated spaces are created. Utilising the new spaces, a crawlers' ministry for toddlers aged 8 to 14 months has since started. Surprise, joy and delight could be seen in the eyes of the children studying at TPMC Kindergarten when they entered their renovated classrooms on the first day of school in 2019.

The redevelopment has also provided space for the poor and homeless in our community. One of the new prayer rooms is used to accommodate them, so that they can have a safe place to rest. This is a new ministry where the church collaborates with the Ministry of Social & Family Development and Catholic Welfare Services to provide shelter for homeless people. (See page 17, "Rough Sleepers")



Crawlers' Room

The redevelopment project was tendered to a contractor at around \$4.2 million. However, the total cost has not been finalised due to variation works. Costs for common facilities are equally shared with TPCMC, while outlays for works at proprietary areas are borne by the respective congregations. TPMC's share of the costs came from our reserves that has been built up through years of God's blessings and prudent stewardship. A series of fundraising events also helped to raise about \$60,000.

We thank God that there were no reported injuries during the redevelopment. We are also grateful to Him for helping us to persevere and continue with most of the ministry activities and kindergarten lessons during the redevelopment. We also wish to acknowledge Mr Peter Khoo, Co-Chairperson of the Joint Redevelopment Committee, Mr Francis Cheang, who supervised the finances of the committee, and Mr Lye Kuan Loy, who gave much of his time and expertise to steer the project to completion. Finally, we wish to thank all who have contributed to the redevelopment with donations, participation in activities,



New Hall 1

ENCOUNTER RETREAT

A DAY WITH THE LORD

By Agnes Goh

Authentic is the quality of being real, true or genuine.

Have you considered and reflected if you have an authentic relationship with God? Is your daily routine a flurry of activities with God left to a passing thought or are you continuously pursuing the presence of God?

For 40 individuals, it was the desire to draw closer to God and learn how to be still, listen and wait upon Him that led them to sign up for the Encounter Retreat on either 16 or 30 November 2019 – to spend a quiet day with the Lord. For many, it was also about learning how to remove distractions, meditate on Scripture, rest in the Lord and worship Him. There was no agenda, except the desire to enjoy His presence, His word, His creation and listen. Really listen.



On both days, the weather was perfect, cloudy with a cool breeze. The morning started with worship and a sharing of Scripture to focus our attention on sitting at the feet of Jesus, discovering what it means to have a heart of devotion, and surrendering areas that threaten a dedicated heart. Each of us then found our individual quiet spots, either at the Botanic Gardens or on the premises of OMF International. The guiding questions and surrounding nature helped us to seek His face instead of His hands and gifts which are often how most of us approach God in our daily lives.

Everyone agreed that the time of retreat was relevant and helpful to their spiritual growth and saw the importance of spending quiet time with God. Everything begins with an encounter with God. May we continue to pursue and grow an authentic relationship with Him in this Jubilee year.





By Evelyn Chua

MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

Sometimes it is easy to lose the true meaning of Christmas in the excitement over twinkling lights, gifts, parties and holiday food. But Christmas is beyond all these. It is about recognising, receiving and honouring our Lord Jesus Christ who is the Light of the World. He brought light to the darkness on this earth and gives love, hope, peace, wholeness, restoration and life.

Like Jesus, we are called forth to be the light of the world (Matt 5:14-16). As we comprehend what this means, one way where we let our light shine before others so that God is glorified is to serve others “without regret, complaint or questioning”. During His ministry on earth two thousand years ago, Jesus served people both in groups and individually, being aware of their personal needs.

Here are a few things you can do to bring joy and happiness to others:

- Find a way to help someone who is struggling to make ends meet by making a small donation
- Offer to clean a family member's or friend's room or perform other small acts of service
- Share a scripture verse with a friend or loved one who is in need of inspiration
- Greet everyone you see with a big smile
- Ask God how you can be an answer to someone else's prayer
- Think of a neighbour whom you do not know very well and bring him/her homemade goodies or a thoughtful gift
- Invite friends and family of other faiths to attend a Christmas worship service with you
- Think of the things that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ has done for you and share them with family, friends and on social media

It is amazing how much such little acts of service can affect someone's life. Simply smiling or starting a conversation with someone who may seem alone can impact his/her entire day. I love these little acts of service because not only are you helping someone else, but you also become more joyous and selfless, and it makes you want to serve even more.

I am blessed in so many ways to be able to serve. From outreach to the Shan community in Chiang Mai, Thailand to helping at the Light of Christmas 2019, I make sure that I do not miss out on every chance I have to serve. Even if we are uncertain where to serve, we can “first OBSERVE, then SERVE”.

The true reason for celebrating Christmas is to remember that Jesus came to serve.

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many” Matt 20:28

So let us learn to serve whoever, wherever and whenever we can. And remember that we are the “LIGHT OF THE WORLD ALL YEAR ROUND”. Every day is an opportunity to be a little more like Jesus in our individual lives.

WHEN WE SERVE OTHERS, WE SERVE GOD

LIGHT OF CHRISTMAS 2019

By Alphis Tay

2019 was the fifth consecutive year that Toa Payoh Methodist Church (TPMC) held its now highly anticipated annual Christmas event, the Light of Christmas (LOC). This was also the third year that the event was held outside the church compound, and the second year that it was conducted over two days. With the benefit of collective experience garnered over the years and the grace of God, LOC 2019 proved to be an immense blessing – not only for our visitors from the Toa Payoh community, but also for myself and, I am sure, every single TPMC volunteer.

The theme for LOC 2019 was “Christmas Around the World”. As the last Christmas of a decade that has experienced rapid globalisation, and yet witnessed international strife, we saw this as an excellent opportunity to showcase to the community how the one incredible story of Christ’s birth has impacted and bound together different nations and cultures near and far.

Starting from February 2019, the committee worked tirelessly to put together all aspects of LOC 2019. From the visual displays to the food and retail vendors to the craft stations, the different sub-committees worked hand-in-hand to bring the theme to life. As with previous years, we worked with Care Corner to sponsor 500 needy families and provide them an opportunity to partake in the food, fun and games that we have lined up.

On 21 and 22 December, the Toa Payoh Central amphitheatre was transformed into a kaleidoscope of lights, colours and sounds that transcended borders. Visitors learnt how to make traditional Filipino parols (Christmas lanterns) after feasting on Hungarian chimney cakes while their children played with Latin American piñatas (containers filled with treats), before taking family photos next to the beautiful silhouetted nativity scene.





The event was graced by Minister for Defence Dr Ng Eng Hen, and saw a total turnout of more than 3,000 people. Local artistes Joshua Tan, Darren Lim and Evelyn Tan shared inspiring and very personal testimonies, and together with various other performers and vendors, contributed to the festive atmosphere. Not even the short but intense shower on the first day could dampen everyone's spirits and enthusiasm.

Our goal for LOC 2019 was to reach out and touch the community, to share the story of Jesus Christ and to bless them with our love. Seeing how the 300 volunteers and church staff, young and young-at-heart, worked to bring joy and laughter to the people of Toa Payoh gave me a blessing that I will never forget.



YOUTH CAMP 2019

By Linus Ang

The annual Youth Camp took place from 26 to 29 December 2019 at Pulai Springs Resort in Johor Bahru (JB). We had 108 campers joining us for a time of fun and worship. As the Vice-Chairperson for the camp (named Kampung'19), I was heartened to see how God worked within the youths as they not only forged closer bonds throughout the camp, but also grew together spiritually in their walk with God.

Some may ask, why Kampung? The 2018 camp EVOLVE, encouraged campers to strive to seek God passionately. However, this should not be just a personal endeavour. The meaning of Kampung is being a community and working together towards a common goal. Thus, the theme verse for the camp, 1 John 1:7, reminds us that if we walk together in the light that is Jesus, we will be purified of our sins. With that in mind, the committee for Kampung'19 envisioned Youth Fusion to be a place of authentic relationships, filled with joy and laughter, as we journey together in this walk of faith.

With every camp comes laughter and fun. This year's camp kick-started with an Amazing Race, as the youths travelled around various locations in Singapore before gathering to head towards JB. However, the fun did not stop in Singapore, as the resort was filled with shouts of joy and laughter over the following few days. On the second day, the youths started off with station games, competing to secure points for their respective groups. This was followed by wet games where it got dirty and soapy, but this did not deter the youths from having fun as we saw wide smiles across their faces even after a long day of activities.





The speaker for the camp was Pastor Joey Asher Tan, a youth pastor from the Grace Assembly of God. We were privileged to have him share God's Word with us. His sermons not only blessed the youths spiritually, but also touched many hearts as he shared his personal testimonies. The sermon that left the biggest impact on me was his sermon on forgiveness. We forgive because Christ first forgave us, and we must first know our debts before forgiving, for the essence of forgiveness comes from the heart, not the mind. As Pastor Joey concluded his fourth and final sermon session, he left us with this statement, "It is not about building an authentic relationship, but it is about being an authentic community".

As Kampung'19 concluded, we hope the youths will continue to be living testimonies for Christ. We also pray that God will continue working within Youth Fusion as we foster an authentic community in this journey of faith towards Christ.





By Melissa Foo

GIRLS' BRIGADE – OUTREACH MINISTRY BY TPMC

The Girls' Brigade was formed from the union of 3 organisations, The Girls' Life Brigade (1902), The Girls' Guildry (1900) and The Girls' Brigade of Ireland (1893) in 1964 and confirmed in 1968 when its inaugural meeting was held. Locally, the 1st Singapore Company of the Girls' Life Brigade was started by Mrs Elsie Lyne at the Methodist Girls' School. Mrs Lyne was also responsible for starting companies at Paya Lebar Methodist Girls' School and the then Geylang Methodist Girls' School and Fairfield Methodist Girls' School. Today, The Girls' Brigade Singapore (GBS) has companies in numerous primary and secondary schools in Singapore. GBS's mission is:

“Developing each girl
and officer to her
fullest potential by Equipping,
Empowering and Enabling:
Every Girl a Leader
Every Officer a Servant Leader”

Toa Payoh Methodist Church (TPMC) sponsors the Girls' Brigade 16P Singapore Company at First Toa Payoh Primary School (FTPPS). Girls who have joined the Girls' Brigade echo a similar sentiment: The Girls' Brigade transformed them into more mature and confident women who are taught to care for the needy and elderly. The girls are challenged to venture into new areas and try out new things. When they make mistakes, their officers would correct and guide them back to the right path, removing their fear of failure.

The students also learn to empathise with the less fortunate and not take things for granted through activities like the Fast-Food & Fuzz Camp (FFFC) and visits to nursing homes. FFFC is an experiential camp that simulates the harsh conditions that children from developing countries face daily. The experience helps the girls to appreciate what they have, give thanks in all circumstances and pray for people in need.

The girls are also given the opportunity to help the less fortunate in the community through visits to nursing homes. They learn how to love, respect and work with one another as they do their best to bring joy to the elderly. Through such activities and the sharing of biblical stories, strong friendships are forged at the Girls' Brigade and values like respect, love and responsibility acquired.

Seah Ai Chi, a Primary 6 student at FTPPS, testifies that joining the Girls' Brigade and participating in its activities has made her a better person and a responsible leader. She shares that she has learnt to bravely tell the truth and face the consequences of her actions, rather than lie to avoid punishment.

Vera Tan, also a Primary 6 student at FTPPS, affirms that the Girls' Brigade has moulded her into a mature and confident person, even though she initially felt that her character would not change. She enjoys the Friday sessions in school where biblical stories are shared and values taught from the stories.



²Source: The Girls' Brigade Singapore website

Sharon Leong shares her experience as a volunteer in the Girls' Brigade with us:

There was an appeal in one of TPMC's worship services to help out at the Girls' Brigade 16P Singapore Company as they were short of volunteers to continue this outreach ministry to touch and impact the lives of girls at FTPPS. At that time, the Holy Spirit prompted me to volunteer and serve in partnership with God. Subsequently, I started as a helper with the Girls' Brigade in 2016.

It has been a very enriching experience serving at the Girls' Brigade. GBS organises courses and camps to equip volunteers in carrying out their mission. By the grace of God, I am happy to be a part of this awesome mission. Activities which I have participated and found enriching include:

- **Basic Officers Training Course:** An introductory course for officers-to-be. The course entails training on uniform etiquette, protocol and drills. It also improves our understanding of GB programmes so that we can better serve and guide the girls.
- **Fast-Food & Fuzz Camp**
- **Officers' Retreat:** An annual event where officers gather for a time of fellowship.

GBS also organises the GB Friendship Day, an annual event that aims to establish a national platform for the girls to collectively serve special segments in the community through befriending the lonely, elderly, needy and those with special needs.

From my experience, I strongly encourage TPMC's members to serve in the following roles as part of this outreach ministry:

- Leaders and/or coordinators for devotion, games, badgework and project-based activities;
- Ukulele or tambourine instructors;
- Drill instructors (training will be provided);
- General helpers for outdoor activities/outings/camps/meetings

Your commitment will generally be on:

- Fridays from 7.30am to 9.30am at First Toa Payoh Primary School; and/or
- Saturdays from 8.30am to 11.30am at Toa Payoh Methodist Church



WATCHNIGHT SERVICE

By Alan Goh

In many Christian traditions, the watchnight service is held on the night of New Year's Eve. For the Methodist Church, it is an important event for covenant renewal and reaffirmation of her commitment to God. Hence, the liturgy for the service is included in the United Methodist Book of Worship.

The Watchnight Service on 31 December 2019 held special significance for Toa Payoh Methodist Church (TPMC). The year 2020 marks her jubilee. The service was a meaningful time of thanksgiving for God's grace, mercy, patience and provision, and also a recommitment to Him, His laws and His service. Reverend Reuben Ng concluded the sermon series on "Practical Wisdom" from the Book of James with the reminder that though life is often like a rollercoaster, we must continue to persevere and pray (James 5:13-18) and be patient like the farmer who waits for the harvest as he watches his crops grow (James 5:7).

Following the sermon, TPMC renewed her covenant with God. The covenantal prayer is a solemn reminder to us what it means to be a Christian – setting aside time daily for prayer, turning away from sin, relying on God's promise of grace and strength, and resolving to stay the course.

The sanctuary was filled with songs of praise and worship of God. When the clock struck twelve, the TPMC Ringers ushered in 2020 with the resounding ringing of handbells. This was followed by TPMC's first Holy Communion of the year, where we recalled the sacrifice of Christ on the cross about 2000 years ago which has enabled us to approach God's throne of grace with confidence.

We are now in our jubilee year as a church. Let us continually remember and thank God for His faithfulness throughout the years. Let our jubilee also be a time to strengthen our relationship with God and spread His Word and blessings to those who have yet to hear or experience them.



WINNERS OF COLOURING PAGE

Congratulations!

For the winners of the Interact Colouring Page, please collect your prize at the Information Counter by 15 April 2020.



Vera Hoi



Dorothea Ng Ke Xin



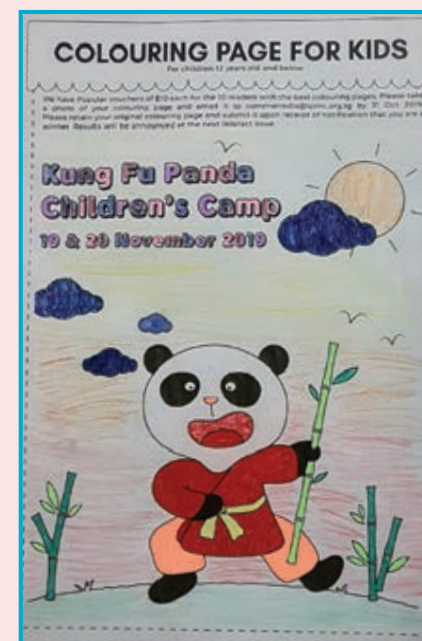
Delanie Ng Ke Jia



Shania Tan



Jason Teo



Charlotte Loo



Jocelyn



Meredith Lim



Rayner Law



Olivia Gozali



THE PASSION

S E R M O N S E R I E S

Join us Online @
tinyurl.com/service-recording



PALM SUNDAY, 5 APR

REV POH ZHI-HUI

8:30am & 10:30am

MAUNDY THURSDAY, 9 APR

REV MING FEONG CHING

8:00pm

GOOD FRIDAY, 10 APR

REV REUBEN NG

8:30am & 10:30am

RESURRECTION SUNDAY, 12 APR

REV REUBEN NG

8:30am & 10:30am



TOA
PAYOH
METHODIST
CHURCH
50 Years
1870 - 2020 *of God's people*