

interact

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01

PASTOR'S MESSAGE:

10

HIGHER CAMPERFENCE

14

GOING DIGITAL!

16

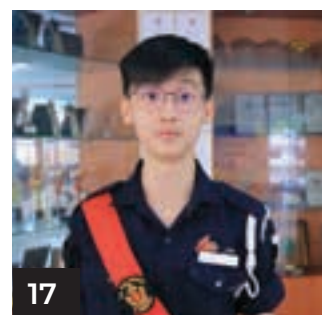
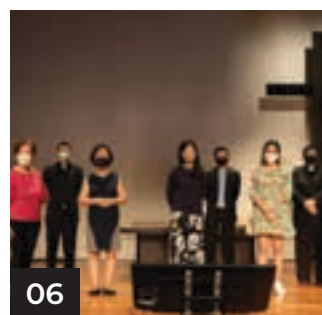
TPMC FAMILY DAY
2021



CONTENTS

ISSUE 02/2021

01	PASTOR'S MESSAGE
05	NEWBORNS / NEWLYWEDS
06	BAPTISM & MEMBERSHIP
07	MEET OUR MEMBER
08	TOA PAYOH METHODIST CHURCH'S 51 ST ANNIVERSARY SERVICE
10	HIGHER CAMPFERENCE
12	MISSIONS IN THE PANDEMIC
14	GOING DIGITAL!
16	TPMC FAMILY DAY 2021
17	PRESSING ON — THE BOYS' AND GIRLS' BRIGADES ENROLMENT SERVICE
20	TPMC GIVES — HAVE A MEAL ON US 2021, THE SECOND SERVING



PASTOR'S MESSAGE HIGHER: HOW WE "ENCOUNTER TO LOVE"

By Reverend Benjamin Lee, Reverend Ming Feong Ching and Reverend Poh Zhi-Hui

2021 continues to be a trying year as the world fights against the COVID-19 pandemic and wrestles with its impact. But the people of God are warned in Scripture of trials that will distinguish genuine faith in God and faithfulness to Him, so that after the time of testing, we may know the fullness of joy of being proven true. (Matthew 24-25; 1 Peter 1:3-9) Perhaps it is now that God has given us a set of core values to adopt, that we may know afresh how to live as His faithful people in such a time as this, and in our living awaken others to hope for the good in God.

Toa Payoh Methodist Church (TPMC) turns 51 this year with August being the month when we celebrate our anniversary. In 1968, Wesley Methodist Church (WMC) and St Andrew's Cathedral collaborated on an outreach ministry in Toa Payoh. Seeing that there were no medical clinics in the new town, the outreach team, led by Rev Michael Wong from WMC, set up a free clinic to meet the needs of the residents. A congregation grew from converts among the patients and Christians who moved into Toa Payoh, and Rev Michael Wong was appointed as the pastor to this congregation in 1970.

Since then, TPMC continues to be a community of God in Toa Payoh, seeking to help the people in Toa Payoh to encounter the presence of God and see that the kingdom of God has come near.

In 2016, the twin purposes was articulated in our vision statement "Encounter to Love", helping us to have always before us the purpose of our existence as a church: to be a people who seek to encounter God and help others do the same, and the fruit of that encounter is a transformation of lives back to the divine image of the perfect love of God (i.e. lives that purely love God and others).

In 2019, the church's leaders sought to answer the questions: How do we as a church know that we are encountering God and being transformed to love God and others? What core qualities or values contained in love would God like for us as a church to develop and exhibit as His people? What common language of these values can we adopt so that it is easy and clear for the whole church to grasp and encourage one another to grow in?

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A period of seeking the Lord and discussions and discernment led to the decision of adopting for our church the core values of **Honour, Integrity, Generosity, Humility, Excellence and Rest (HIGHER)** — values that God had laid on our hearts and were also preached in a sermon series in 2017. All these values are based on Scripture and exemplified by our Lord Jesus Christ. They are expressions of love that God has laid on our hearts to exhibit to one another and to the world. In so living, these values and expressions of love will help those who come

among our church family experience the goodness of the presence of God, witness the nearness of His kingdom and be drawn to Christ.

So let us together learn them well, talk about them to one another, encourage one another in them, and so live HIGHER lives, as we seek to “Encounter to Love” as a community of God beyond our Golden Jubilee.



Rev Benjamin Lee
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Rev Poh Zhi-Hui
Pastor

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Pastor

TPMC’S HIGHER VALUES

HONOUR

*“Be devoted to one another in love.
Honour one another above yourselves.”*

Romans 12:10

This means to regard and **relate to everyone as persons created in God’s image** and to **show respect to a person’s position and office**. Yet first and foremost, Jesus is worthy of all glory, honour, and power [Revelations 4:11, John 5:23].

To give honour to God is to live a life of genuine worship. This can be lived out in three ways:

- a. Honour God with our first and best, not our leftovers, in all areas like our time, effort, gifts, skills [Proverbs 3:9-10].
- b. Honour what God honours and cares about – fellow brothers and sisters in Christ; the body of Christ [Acts 9:4-5]; even outdoing each other in respecting fellow Christians [Romans 12:10]. 1 Corinthians 12:21-26 also teaches us that each person in church is important for the welfare and functioning of the church. We should not allow prejudices or self-serving attitudes to cause strife within the church or towards one another.
- c. Honour everyone [1 Peter 2:17]. Every one of us was wretched, but Jesus honoured us when He became man to die for our sins so that we can be saved. Just as God values and esteems the lost, the lowly, the least, we honour God when we value and esteem others who are not yet in the Kingdom of God to share with them the good news of Jesus Christ.

INTEGRITY

*“All you need to say is simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’;
Anything beyond this comes from the evil one”.*

Matthew 5:37

Having integrity means more than just being honest. It means to be consistent with biblical truths in what we believe, say, and do. It also implies being whole and undivided, not given to doublemindedness.

We can develop integrity by first regarding biblical truth as the foundation. This requires us to read our bibles and make use of our devotional times with God as a platform to integrate our head, heart, and hands. We will be confronted with issues that we may be struggling with but we can seek God’s guidance on what to say and do in the real-life situations we are encountering. Below are some practical examples of biblical truths to live by, which go beyond honesty, and consistent with biblical truth:

- a. In the workplace, to work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men [Colossians 3:23].
- b. In our relationships, to treat others as we would like to be treated, and not have double standards [Matthew 7:12].
- c. In our words and actions, to say what we mean and mean what we say [Matthew 5:37].

GENEROSITY

“Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give”.

Matthew 10:8

We are exhorted to give for it is more blessed to give than to receive. God exemplifies for us the motivation for our giving. God gave his Son freely to us because He loves us. When we realise the depth of God’s love, we cannot help but be generous to others as well. When we give sacrificially and selflessly, God helps us overcome our selfish nature with the love of God.

Generosity is not just about giving money. There are many ways that we can give to serve others. We can give of our resources (time, relationships, emotions, gifts, and talents etc.) to serve others. When generosity comes from our hearts, we can think of ways to love others through our service.

HUMILITY

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others”.

Philippians 2:3 – 4

God opposes the proud and detests those with a proud heart. Pride is treated most harshly by God because a proud person is full of himself, and there is no place for God in his life. God is unable to use and transform people who are full of themselves.

Yet being humble does not mean thinking less of oneself, passiveness or putting down one’s strengths or even self-worth. Instead, God wants us to be transformed to be like Christ. We demonstrate our humility by placing the interests of others above ours. By doing so, we would have the same mindset as Christ, who humbled himself and died on the cross for us [Philippians 2:4-8]. Jesus has every reason to be proud as He is sinless, blameless, and holy, yet He considered our interests above His.

EXCELLENCE

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters”.

Colossians 3:23

The pursuit of excellence involves putting our heart and soul into an endeavour and doing our best. Colossians 3:23 exhorts us to put our whole heart into whatever we do as an act of worship to God, and not to make a half-hearted attempt. **When we do things with excellence we reflect and represent the God we worship.**

We may be tempted to believe that our work in church is not significant because of the ‘minor’ role we play. However, **if we are faithful in little things, God can trust us to excel in big things.** There is no task too small if we put our best for God [1 Corinthians 10:31]. In the secular world, people seek excellence because incentives are offered. In the sacred world would we ease off as those incentives are not there? In God’s eyes, there is no divide between the sacred and secular worlds.

REST

“Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience”.

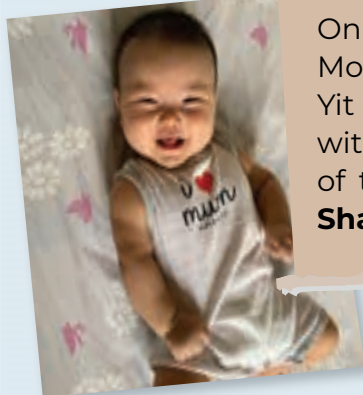
Hebrews 4:11

Rest is not the absence of or ceasing from all activity. **Resting means doing our best and trusting God with the results.** We should not fall into extreme ends of not doing anything at all, neither should we rely on ourselves to do everything and not trust God. When we learn to rest/trust in the Lord, we find our antidote to discouragement, disappointment, and self-dependence. [Hebrews 4:10-11].

We are reminded to be diligent to enter rest [Hebrews 4:11] because the longer a trial or difficult situation lasts, our trust in God may be shaken. Therefore, we must make every effort to centre ourselves back to God. Psalms 23 is a good reminder to trust in the Lord who is our Shepherd, and who will take care of all our needs.



NEWBORNS



On **14 Jan 2021**, Moses and Yoong Yit were blessed with the arrival of their son, **Tan Shao En Josiah**



On **6 May 2021**, Clement and Jean Sim were blessed with the arrival of their daughter, **Elora Sim Rui Han**.



On **7 Jun 2021**, Wesley and Micole Lim were blessed with the arrival of their daughter, **Ada Lim Yu Han**.

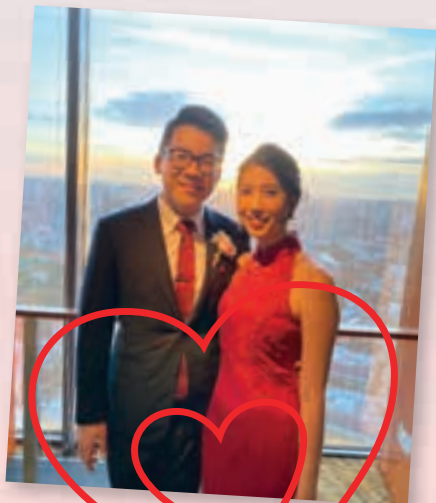


On **26 July 2021**, Myren and Ruth Mak were blessed with the arrival of their son, **Evan Mak Yi Xuan**.

NEWLYWEDS



Audrey Ang & Joel Tang tied the knot on 31 July 2021.





BAPTISM & MEMBERSHIP

18 APRIL 2021

CHILD BAPTISM BY SPRINKLING

1. Matthew Kueh Jia Hao
2. Nathan Kueh Jia Le

RECEPTION OF MEMBERSHIP

1. Baris Jerma Grace Comedido
2. Chin Siao Yen Joycelyn
3. Kong Peng Ee Steven
4. Lim May May Abigail

RECEPTION OF MEMBERSHIP (TRANSFER FROM NON-METHODIST CHURCH)

1. Tan Gek Choo Veronica
(transfer from Gospel Light Bible-Presbyterian Church)
2. Tan Seok Choo Jenny
(transfer from Trinity Christian Centre)



MEET OUR MEMBER

INTERVIEW WITH JERMA GRACE BARIS

Tell us more about yourself.

Jerma Grace Baris (Jerma): I grew up in the Municipality of General MacArthur in the province of Eastern Samar in the Philippines. It is a small town that faces the Pacific Ocean, so we are in the path of typhoons. I was born into a Christian family in a Catholic majority country where non-Catholic traditions are often considered as a different religion. My church back home is called the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. It was formed by American missionaries from Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopal and other evangelical churches. I came to Singapore in December 2014 and have since been worshipping in Toa Payoh Methodist Church (TPMC).

In which ministries do you serve?

I serve in the Tech team at the 8.00/8.30am service and in the Filipino Ministry. I am also in the Governance committee.

What hobbies or leisure activities do you have?

I like hiking nature trails and yoga.

What is/are your favourite food(s)?

I love bah-kut-teh and the traditional kuehs in Singapore.

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

My parents introduced me to Jesus and my knowledge and relationship with Him just developed over time. I came to know about TPMC through the Internet. When I came to Singapore 6 years ago, one of the first things I searched over the Internet were churches where I could feel at home during my stay. I "Googled" for churches which are affiliated to my church back home. I chose to try out TPMC first because of its location, being between Somerset (my office) and Woodlands (where I live). I also thought that it is a convenient location for service or mid-week prayer meetings. I decided to stay as I felt at home after my first 8.30am service.

How has knowing Jesus changed your life? Do you have any words of encouragement for your brothers and sisters in Christ?

Jesus Christ is my Saviour, the Saviour of my brothers and sisters in Christ and the Saviour of the world. Jesus is the constant of our lives because He is always faithful. I pray that we fix our eyes upon Him and if we stray from Him, we will find our way back to His loving arms. God bless!

TOA PAYOH METHODIST CHURCH'S 51ST ANNIVERSARY SERVICE

By Alan Goh

Toa Payoh Methodist Church (TPMC) celebrated her 51st anniversary with online services on 15 August 2021. During the first quarter of the year, it seemed as though more worshippers would be able to attend in-person services to honour God's continued faithfulness as the COVID-19 pandemic was brought under control. After having to commemorate our Jubilee last year at home, this was eagerly anticipated. However, a surge in community infections in May 2021 that continued into early August led to the decision to suspend in-person worship services for a season, including our anniversary service, out of a concern for the safety of our worshippers.

Nonetheless, 1 Thessalonians 5:18 reminds us to "Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus". And we are thankful that God's work endures, as TPMC continues to serve Him, invites new believers, and ministers to the community.

During the service, God's faithfulness was remembered in a corporate prayer and video chronicling TPMC's beginnings in 1970 with a congregation of 12 in a shophouse at Lorong 7 Toa Payoh to the Light of Christmas 2020 community event where more than 400 volunteers delivered Christmas gifts to residents in rental flats.

TPMC's choirs are also a significant part of her history. A photo montage recounted choirs over the years, as the synchronised voices of the virtual choir sang 'I Will Sing Praise' to worship God. Through the photos, the faithful service of some members of the virtual choir is evident.

Trinity Annual Conference President, Rev Stanley Chua, was the guest preacher for the anniversary service. In his message, Rev Chua reminded us that we sometimes have to take a "River Edge's faith" like Jochebed, Moses' mother. To save her son's life after Pharaoh decreed that all male babies had to be

thrown into the River Nile, Jochebed placed Moses in a waterproofed basket before setting him adrift in the river. Jochebed planned the time of the release to coincide with Pharaoh's daughter's swim in the hope that he would be saved by her. Jochebed also placed her daughter Miriam at a strategic point along the river to act accordingly. However, despite Jochebed's careful planning, there was no certainty that Moses would be picked up and saved by Pharaoh's daughter, much less be returned to Jochebed.

Similarly, there may be situations in life when we need a "River Edge's faith," be it finding medical solutions to an illness, or reviving a deteriorating business. Having a "River Edge's faith" involves letting go and trusting in the almighty God. Doing so does not guarantee that one will get what one wants,

but it assures that one can have peace and joy in God along the journey as we trust God to fulfil His will for our lives which is always better than our own. As Jesus prayed, "Not my will, but Thine be done." (Luke 22:42)

In closing, Rev Chua reminded us that while we do not know what the future holds, if we are prepared to let go of what we are struggling with or cherish, and trust in God, He is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think (Ephesians 3:20). This reminder is invaluable in the context of a pandemic that has stretched more than one and a half years and led to death, disunity, separation, unemployment, and much anxiety. As we celebrate 51 years of God's faithfulness, let us walk on faithfully in the Lord with a "River's Edge faith", so that we may have peace and joy in the Lord, and help others find it.





HIGHER CAMPFERENCE

By Jerome Sim

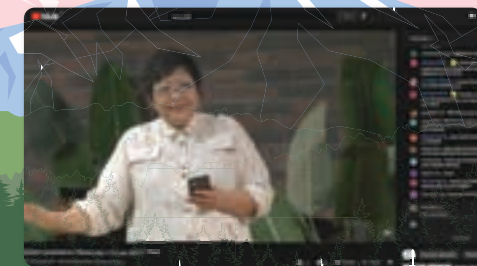
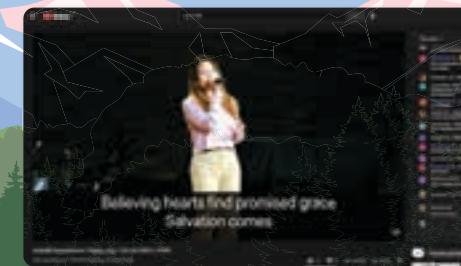
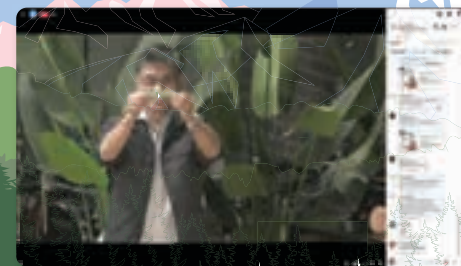
“HIGHER Campference? What’s a campference? Is there even such a word?”

Well, our church members would know by now that ‘Campference’ is a combination of two words — camp and conference. Our aim was to organise a conference to launch Toa Payoh Methodist Church’s (TPMC’s) HIGHER core values — Honour, Integrity, Generosity, Humility, Excellence and Rest — and incorporate fun and togetherness, elements that you would expect in a camp.

The global pandemic necessitated the postponement of the 2020 Church Camp twice (to 2021 and again to 2022). Although the regional situation had not improved enough for us to travel overseas, the state of affairs in Singapore had been relatively stable coming out of 2020. Hence, the planning committee envisaged a hybrid campference (with a mix of in-person and online audiences) which included a fun-filled Family Day to round off the 3-day event from 10 to 12 June 2021 on a high. Alas, the emergence of new infection clusters meant that, for the safety of our worshippers, it was no longer feasible to have an in-person component and Family Day.

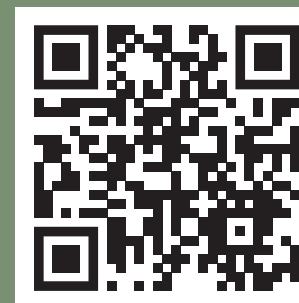
Notwithstanding these challenges, our pastors guided the team as we brainstormed on designing the programme for a fully online audience. There were many ‘firsts’ in our attempt to provide a new and engaging online experience for participants. At the plenary sessions, we experimented with ‘Green Screen’ technology to vividly present Pastor Benjamin’s sermon illustrations. Participants could also contribute and interact through interactive apps to answer quizzes, form word clouds as well as pose questions to our invited speaker, the President of the Trinity Annual Conference, Reverend Stanley Chua.

All these were possible with our new livestream capability using cameras and video mixers. Kudos to the Audio Visual and Info Tech team! They demonstrated a very high level of Excellence to make livestreaming a reality. Going forward, this capability will enable everyone (in-person or online) to participate in our Sunday worship services together as one church at the same time. At this juncture, it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the support from the church leadership in these initiatives as well as stepping up to facilitate the workshops.



On the morning of 12 June 2021, TPMC was abuzz with online activity as over 250 people participated in 6 concurrent workshops on the HIGHER values. This too was an amazing feat!

If you’ve missed out on the HIGHER Campference, fret not! You can still access video recordings of the plenaries (including the visual notes) and workshops of the HIGHER Campference webpage via the link <https://tpmc.org.sg/higher-campference/>



Now, let’s hear what some of the participants have to say about their experience at the Campference:

“The selection of speakers was excellent. Online tools (Poll, Most Used Word, chats, etc.) were exploited for maximum participation.”

“The ‘Q&A’ presentation between two pastors made the plenary refreshing and interesting.”

“The videography with the use of a green screen and stunning visuals was commendable. These skills should be applied to future events, especially Sunday services.”

“Clear visual aids and post-event infographics made by Youth Fusion were helpful and concise.”

Youth workshop – “It was fun, and I learnt how I can improve my life with Integrity”

Excellence workshop “Participants were allowed to give their views through discussions. This allowed us to think through what we had learnt.”

Humility and Integrity workshop – “Gabriel and Walter made the session lively and interactive and gave practical examples.”

Excerpt from Pastor Benjamin’s foreword in the HIGHER Campference webpage, on the purpose of the Campference.

“...It is about us, as a family, becoming the kind of community that will be so compelling; that it inspires us to want to continually grow into it and enjoy it; that it draws others to want to join it and participate in it; and that gives a glimpse of what heaven may look like to all who witness how we love God and love one another.”



MISSIONS IN THE PANDEMIC

By Carol Ong & Florence Leow

Carol Ong is a missionary from Toa Payoh Methodist Church who is serving in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

2020 was indeed a year that will remain in our memories for a long time as COVID-19 hit the world resulting in, on the one hand, a pause to her activities, and on the other, a change in the way we do things.

When the government of Cambodia suspended schools and learning institutions as well as worship services and gatherings, we had to follow suit with our language classes and Sunday ministries at Odem in Phnom Penh. As the situation improved, things were allowed to return to normal. However, this did not last long. An event, now known as the “20 February Community Incident”, resulted in a spike in infections, leading to a three-week lockdown in Phnom Penh and parts of the surrounding Kandal province. Even though the lockdown has since been lifted, daily infections persist in the range of 200 to 800. As a result, schools have gone online, while large gatherings and in-person church services remain prohibited. Hence, our Sunday services and language classes have also moved to the Internet. Nonetheless, challenges abound.

The first challenge is Internet connectivity, with sporadic periods of stable and intermittent connections. The second challenge is a lack of computing devices. Some children do not have devices as their parents do not have the means to purchase them. When I conducted online lessons, the children who had devices shared them with those who do not. When the Internet connection was stable, we were delighted to be able to learn together. When the connection was poor, we came away feeling frustrated. Things came to a point where we had to suspend the language classes so that students whose Internet connection was weak would not be left behind. We hope to pick up again when the situation improves or when we find a solution.

For worship services, we persevere with conducting them online despite issues with Internet connectivity. We need the services to stay connected, encourage each other, and keep each other in prayer so that we can stay healthy in body, mind, soul, and spirit during this stressful period. One good thing that has emerged from this episode is having newcomers join us online for Sunday fellowship! Praise the Lord! As for the children’s ministry, we prepare a take-home pack for each child to collect weekly. Besides the Odem ministry, I am also involved in the COSI ministry through sharing weekly staff devotions. This too had to go online for a period during the lockdown.

COVID-19 has unsettled school-going children and youths. Many of them feel they have learnt “nothing” for a large part of last year. This worrying situation has carried on to this year. This may be due to teachers not being able to adapt to or not putting in effort on their online lessons, which frustrates their students, who then lose interest in their studies. If this carries on, there may be a generation of school dropouts who will be lost, without the education and skillsets to engage in meaningful work. Some may even find themselves in gangs and other vices.

People on the lower rungs of the social and economic ladder have been impacted more badly by COVID-19 than others. They include daily wage earners who are often without work and desperately need a helping hand. Hence, we have carried out donation drives for food, masks, and hand sanitisers to partially alleviate their difficult situation, and share God’s love, care, and His priceless gift of salvation.

Join us in our efforts to reach out to the people of Cambodia by praying that:

1. The community around the Third Place ministry, who are mostly factory workers, will be resilient and ride out this pandemic.
2. The children will continue to learn and grow even as school has been disrupted for many of them.
3. The churches in Cambodia will be creative in reaching out, staying relevant and meeting the needs of the people in practical ways during this challenging period.

Florence Leow is a missionary from Toa Payoh Methodist Church who is serving in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

It has been about one and a half years since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout these 18 months, we have had to change, adapt, and pivot our ministry work. Even though our meetings have been restricted, we thank God that, with technology, His work continues.

Most of our meetings — Sunday worship services, training/workshops, small group meetings, etc. — have gone online. Going online has also helped us stay connected via Zoom with our overseas supporters who have not been able to visit due to travel restrictions. It has also created new opportunities for service for our volunteers. For example, we have a group of worshippers from Toa Payoh Methodist Church who are teaching conversational English to a team of Thai ministry workers every week. We thank God for this team that has continued to serve faithfully despite unstable Internet connections and occasional power failures.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also brought greater challenges to the missions field. Many locals face financial difficulties after losing their jobs. Some who come to the city to work have returned to their villages. In the villages, farmers have difficulties selling their harvested crops. As a result, worshippers are careful with their finances. This has resulted in church funds from offerings being reduced significantly.

Nevertheless, God’s work continues despite trying times. Through the body of Christ,

God’s love remains evident to those in need. The church, through the provision of simple necessities, has been able to render practical help to families affected by COVID-19.

During this time, my team and I are thankful that we have been able to gather for our weekly prayer meetings. Through these meetings, we encourage and remind one another to lean on God and continue what we have been doing despite our weariness. Indeed, may God be glorified in such and all circumstances.

As I look back over the past year, I am thankful to God for preserving us, and teaching us to do ministry work creatively. Indeed, God’s work does not stop even when the world seems to have come to a standstill. We pray and hope this pandemic will end soon.

Join us in our efforts to reach out to the people of Thailand by praying that:

1. Church members will be anchored in their faith despite not being able to attend in-person church services.
2. The local COVID-19 situation will be under control so that we can physically meet again and restart some of our ministries.
3. We can be a blessing to the community and make God’s love shine through in these difficult times.
4. God will continue to protect and keep us safe and healthy.
5. The local team will have the wisdom and skill to facilitate online Bible studies.

GOING DIGITAL!

By Audrey Ong & Florence Leow

Bintan

Every 3rd Friday of the month at 4pm (Singapore time), a group of volunteers from Toa Payoh Methodist Church and Christ Methodist Church will meet virtually with a group of children from Gloria Senggarang Centre, an outreach point at Senggarang, a village that is short boat ride away from Tanjung Pinang, the largest town in Bintan. Over Zoom, the volunteers and children have an hour of worship, Bible storytelling and a Bible quiz.

We thank God for the technology that has enabled us to continue keeping in contact with the children and be a blessing to them as well as the staff who run Gloria Senggarang Centre. In blessing, we have also been blessed.

Here are some pictures of our activities with the children. If you will like to join us every 3rd Friday or know about the outreach, do drop us an email at missions@tpmc.org.sg.

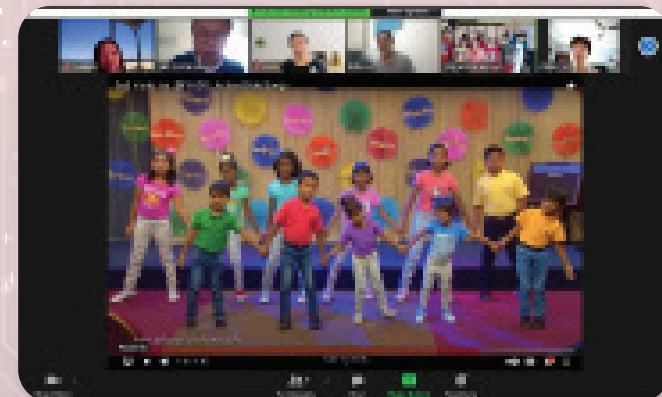


Thailand

While COVID-19 has largely restricted us from travelling, the work of missions has not stopped. The work continues through the faithful service of our missionaries and their teams who play an important role in reaching out with the Gospel to local communities. Our missionaries have also been able to extend care through providing necessities to the local communities, helping those whose livelihoods have been affected by the pandemic. We thank God for keeping our missionaries and their families safe so that they can continue to advance His kingdom.

Back home in Singapore, we continue to connect with the missions fields, albeit virtually. Since September 2020, volunteers from Toa Payoh Methodist Church have given their time to teach conversational English to the ministry team serving alongside Florence Leow, our missionary in northern Thailand. The ministry team comprises locals who help Florence to bring the Gospel to the Shan people. The volunteers and ministry team have met regularly, despite poor Internet connectivity and the occasional power outage. We thank God for their faithfulness and perseverance.

Below are snippets from our volunteers on their online experience. We hope that they will encourage you to join us in connecting with our brothers and sisters in Christ across borders.



Conversational English with Thai Field Workers

a. **Connie** — “It was a privilege to teach English to the Thai co-workers. Together with teacher Lucilla, we were entrusted with two students, Mon and Thip. With great excitement, we kicked off our first English session on 10 October 2020. After about 2 months, we reviewed our lessons during the December break, and decided that it would be more practical and useful to the students if we focused on conversational English instead of teaching grammar and vocabulary.

Hence, we started lessons on conversational English in 2021. With God’s help and guidance, Lucilla and I taught the use of English in different settings, making the lessons lively and enjoyable for the students. Mon and Thip have a good learning attitude. Despite their busyness, they make every effort to attend the weekly sessions punctually. Though they find the lessons difficult, I am encouraged to see that they do not give up. Both have slowly but surely improved from when they started, and now display some confidence conversing in English.”

b. **Shyama** — “When I was asked to teach English to students in Thailand, I was wondering whether to accept it, as teaching the girls in Cambodia a few years back was very challenging. Nonetheless, I started teaching WuWu

at the end of last year. We started with the alphabet and proceeded from there. It has not been easy, but God has helped me to strive on, and be a blessing to WuWu who tries hard to learn English.”

c. **Lucilla** — “It is an interesting experience teaching conversational English to two Thai co-workers. Many English words that we take for granted are unknown to them. We need patience and lots of repetition to help them. We also have to keep changing lesson plans to suit their needs. My co-teacher Connie uses formal resources while I employ the same or similar words from her lessons to create a storyline for the students to converse, so that they can apply what was learnt and more easily relate to others. With the Lord’s grace and favour, may they persevere and continue to improve.”

d. **Shirin** — “Doing lessons via Zoom definitely comes with a set of technological challenges. By far the most common issue is an unstable Internet connection, leading to us missing entire sessions. Yet, through the lessons, we have been blessed with many great experiences. Taeng is keen, hardworking, and intelligent – a model student. I truly look forward to our lessons on Saturday afternoons!”



TPMC FAMILY DAY 2021

By Jonathan Choy

“3,2,1... Wait! Hang on! Stop!”

No one expected that Phase 2 (Heightened Alert) in May would derail our plans to have a Family Day as a closing event for our church’s inaugural Campference. Nevertheless, the Young Adults’ Committee was determined to proceed with the event. We shelved our plans, waiting for a later date, so that our church family could have a shared experience.

Thankfully, restrictions were relaxed by the second half of June. However, we needed some time to inform our church members to sign up with their families and friends. Hence the event was rescheduled to 10 July 2021. It was not the best time for families and students, as the June holidays had ended, and the rigours of work and school were back. Nonetheless, 19 teams registered for the event! All age groups and demographics in our church were represented. We had children, youths, young adults, adults, Filipinos, and even seniors!

Participants were grouped into teams of five. They were given a list of locations to reach and could start anywhere across the island. Some locations were clearly stated, while others had to be deciphered from a clue

or puzzle. Points were assigned according to the difficulty of getting to a location or decoding a clue. Thus, teams had to work out a strategy to accumulate the highest number of points within the allocated time. All modes of transport were applicable. Bonuses were given if a team had seniors, or if the team found “Wally”, who was roaming around the island during the race.

The race took teams to places both familiar and unfamiliar. They included the Bukit Brown Cemetery, World War II Marsiling Tunnels, Wesley Methodist Church, Marina Bay Sands, and the iconic dragon playground.

Fun Fact: Did you know that the giant bench you see at Marina Bay is named “Horizon” and was fabricated from the last remaining batch of timber plank seats at the former National Stadium?

Bet most of you didn’t! It was something the teams learnt as they put their minds together to solve the clues that day!

Everyone who participated had fun, and we thank God for this shared experience among members, families, and friends.



PRESSING ON — THE BOYS’ AND GIRLS’ BRIGADES ENROLMENT SERVICE

By Reverend Poh Zhi-Hui

Toa Payoh Methodist Church sponsors the Boys’ Brigade (BB) 10th Company in Beatty Secondary School, and the BB 76J and Girls’ Brigade (GB) 16P Companies in First Toa Payoh Primary School.

Every year, a BB & GB Enrolment Service is held to enroll the Boys and Girls as members of their respective Companies, and dedicate the Captains, Officers, Helpers, BB Primers and GB Warrant Officers for Christian service. The Enrolment Service traditionally takes place during a Sunday worship service for our church to welcome and affirm the Boys and Girls with our presence, and witness and praise God for His grace at work in their lives.

More than a formality, the Enrolment Service can be formative for the Boys and Girls. It helps them develop a sense of responsibility as they learn the value of and live up to the promise that they make during the service. The Enrolment Service also helps them have a sense of purpose as they commit to their respective missions, grow in sound moral character and be an example to others. The Boys and Girls also grow in confidence as they stand before the church which affirms and applauds them for their commitment. As the Boys and Girls see their Captains, Officers, and other leaders dedicating to serve for their good, they are presented with

the vision for a life of selfless service. Finally, the Enrolment Service encourages the Boys and Girls to put their faith and hope in Christ as they see a Christian community for them.

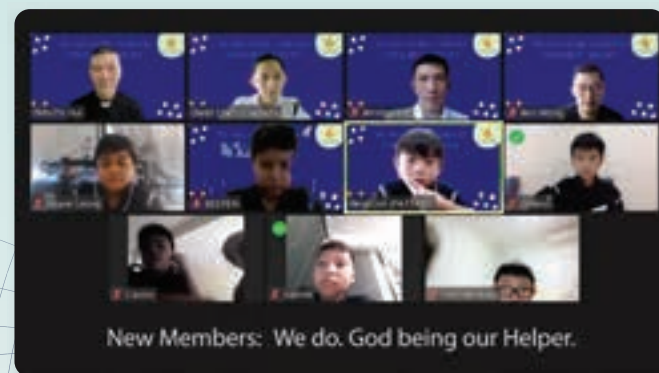
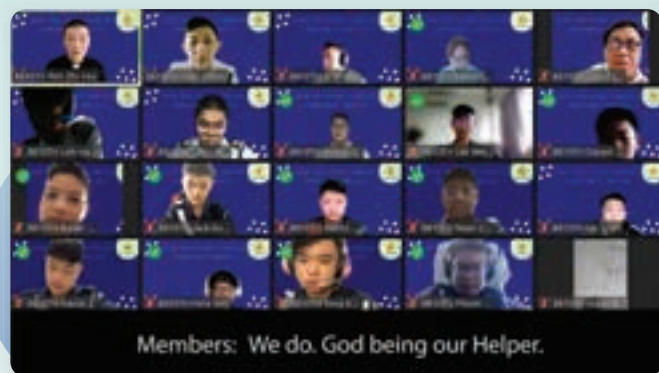
The Enrolment Service could not be organised last year due to the evolving COVID-19 situation. At the start of this year, with the situation having stabilised, the Companies planned to hold the Enrolment Service on 30 May 2021 and were hopeful that secondary school Boys from the 10th Company could be physically present. The primary school Boys and Girls would be presented via video due to school safety measures. Preparations were underway when community infections began to increase, and the Enrolment Service had to be postponed.

Overcoming the disappointment, the Companies persevered to hold the Enrolment Service in some form. While an in-person service was ideal, the COVID-19 situation was uncertain and various possibilities were discussed. As it turned out, the situation was such that the service had to be fully virtual.

In preparation for the service, online Enrolment and Dedication Ceremonies were conducted and recorded for each Company’s leaders and members using the

Zoom platform. A limitation of Zoom is that individuals cannot respond together to the enrolment and dedication questions because their voices will be out of sync resulting in a cacophony. As the personal response has the important significance of an individual's word, a way to overcome this limitation was sought. It was finally decided that one to two representatives from each group would give a verbal response while everyone else would affirm using the "Yes-Reaction" button in Zoom and their responses would be displayed on the screens.

In addition to the ceremonies, a video showcasing the activities of the Companies was produced and the testimony of Sergeant (SGT) Lee Wei Hao of the 10th Company (also an alumnus of the 76J Company) regarding his BB experience was recorded. All the videos were put together and constituted the Enrolment & Dedication segment of our Sunday worship service on 25 July 2021. The online service links were shared with the Boys and Girls of the BB 76J and GB 16P Companies so that they could join from home via YouTube. Some had family members beside them as they participated in the service. The Boys of the BB 10th Company also met on Zoom to join the online service together.



The company was honoured to have the principal of Beatty Secondary School, Mr. Ling Khoon Chow, and the BB teachers-in-charge gather with the Boys, Officers and Primers on Zoom.

The realisation of this year's Enrolment Service showed the dedication of the BB and GB Captains and leaders in striving for ways to continue in ministry to their Boys and Girls, the adaptability of the Boys and Girls to new ways of doing things, and the partnership that we have with their schools and families in building up the lives of the Boys and Girls. For all these, our church is grateful to God.

As our church continues in the BB and GB ministries, may the Boys and Girls whom God has brought to the Companies grow in the knowledge and ways of Christ, and so be built up in character, increase in confidence and discover God's call for them towards love, righteousness, peace, and joy.

To find out more about the BB or GB or how you can also be a part of these ministries, please contact Pastor Zhi-Hui at zhihui.poh@tpmc.org.sg.



My time and experience in BB so far has been amazing and I am excited to see what else is in store for my time in BB.

TESTIMONY OF SGT LEE WEI HAO

Good morning everyone, I am Wei Hao, the Company Sergeant Major of the 10th BB Company. My experience in BB so far has been amazing and I am excited to see what else lies ahead. I feel that BB is the best Co-Curricular Activity (CCA) as I can make friends and be accustomed to the environment quickly.

One of my favourite parts of BB is the Bagpipe Band. I learn the importance of teamwork when training and harmonising with other pipers and drummers. I also feel the spirit of excellence and achievement when we perform at events.

Another activity of BB which I enjoy are the camps and outings. They allow us to bond and understand each other better. On the last night of each camp, we will have a hike around the camp area to spend time with each other. Our Captain and teacher-in-charge also ensure that the boys are well-fed.

Our Saturday parades are also something that I look forward to as they are filled with games. We learn something new every few weeks and are rewarded with badges.

There are also competitions like Blaze, where we run, cycle and kayak around Singapore, overcoming obstacles along the way. The competition usually takes several hours to complete and is very strenuous. Hence, our officers and primers will train the company prior to the competition so that we are prepared. We also participate in the drill competition, which also attracts companies from other schools. Drill practice for the competition trains us in discipline and teamwork.

BB is a great CCA, and I hope that more boys will be interested in joining the company and it will continue to grow.



TPMC GIVES — HAVE A MEAL ON US 2021, THE SECOND SERVING

By Audrey Ong

Last year, as part of our 50th anniversary celebrations amid the COVID-19 pandemic, we were able to bless 50 hawkers around Toa Payoh Central by paying forward 2,500 meals to whoever needed it. This act of giving was well-received by hawkers and the Toa Payoh community as many from the neighbourhood came to redeem a meal, with no questions asked.

We will continue the goodwill established with our hawkers by paying up to 5,000 meals, double of what was served in 2020. 100 low-income beneficiaries will benefit by being blessed with up to 50 meals each, which they can claim between 16 August and 31 December 2021. During this period, beneficiaries can redeem a meal at any of the 50 Have a Meal on Us stalls by producing the voucher.

The pastoral team went out from 14 to 31 July 2021 to invite hawkers to participate in this project. As we spoke to them, we heard how their businesses were greatly affected, with earnings dropping to as low as 30% of the income from an average month before the pandemic. Therefore, many are grateful for the little relief that will come from the meals being paid by Toa Payoh Methodist Church (TPMC) and eager to help the low-income beneficiaries.

Members and worshippers of TPMC participated cheerfully in the project by donating for the meals, practicing the HIGHER value of generosity.

We thank God for those who have contributed to this blessing project, a part of our outreach to the community.





*May God bless you with Joy,
Peace and Love this Christmas.*



24 Dec (Fri), 7.30pm
Christmas Eve With TPMC Ensemble

25 Dec (Sat), 8am & 11am
Christmas Day Celebration

31 Dec (Fri), 11pm
***Watchnight Covenant
Renewal Service***



To join us, visit **tpmc.org.sg** for In-person Services registration and Online Services.

*Subject to prevailing Government regulations and guidelines on events.