

interact

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Bless, Belong, Believe

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**GETTING ON TRACK
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**STEWARDED
YOUR FINANCES**



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PASTOR'S MESSAGE BLESS, BELONG, BELIEVE

Romans 10:15 declares: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

By the time you read this, hundreds of pairs of beautiful feet have gone forth for a second time this year, reaching out to 'One More Neighbour to Love' in our 'Judea and Samaria' of blocks 152, 153 and 154 in Toa Payoh.

In every encounter with our neighbours, we seek to bless them. And it is our prayer that through our acts of blessings and regular interactions, our neighbours will in time experience a sense of belonging with us in Toa Payoh Methodist Church (TPMC), whether it is with our Gardening Community, Beacon Tuition Community, Ukulele Community, Connect Group Community, or our larger Faith Community. As they are drawn into a relationship with the TPMC Community, they will begin to understand what FAITH is about, and experience both HOPE and LOVE.

If you have not already figured it out, this is the '3B Approach' (BLESS, BELONG, BELIEVE) that we have adopted in our church.

BLESS – We bless with practical acts of kindness.

BELONG – We provide a safe place where they can find a sense of belonging, and experience hope and love.

BELIEVE – We journey with them towards faith in Jesus Christ.

Whether it is reaching out to our 'One More in our Spheres of Influence', our 'One More Neighbour to Love' in our 'Judea and Samaria', or even to the ends of the earth, we always seek to bless and invite people into our community and walk alongside them towards faith in Christ.

So church, let the beautiful feet continue to go forth in the power of the Holy Spirit to reach out as God's ambassadors and bring our One More Neighbour into a loving relationship with Jesus!

Shalom



Rev Ming Feong Ching
Pastor

INTERACT is a publication by Toa Payoh Methodist Church (TPMC). All views expressed in Interact are solely those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Church, the Editorial Team or the Methodist Church in Singapore. An online copy is also available at tpmc.org.sg

ONE MORE NEIGHBOUR TO LOVE

By Keith Ho

As one body in Christ, it has always been the intention of TPMC to bring the good news to the people in our community. Over the years, our Church held several outreach activities successfully, bringing the Light to the town.

When TPMC decided to extend the 'One More' Campaign in 2022 to 'One More Neighbour to Love', my spouse Janice and I decided to sign up with some of our Connect Group mates.

Jesus said, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

We thought to ourselves, now that we have encountered God's love in our Jerusalem (home/church), it is only natural for us to reach out to our 'Judea and Samaria' (which include our Toa Payoh neighbourhood) and bring the saving grace of Jesus to the residents.

During our first encounter on 13 February, we visited the residents of block 152 to bless them with red packets imprinted with Chinese words conveying blessings for the Lunar New Year with corresponding biblical blessings. The reception was mixed. While most welcomed us, not all did. One declined any interaction with us while another did so only reluctantly.

"I felt like a salesperson peddling a product. Not easy for a first attempt," we thought. Then again, doing a "cold call" was never easy. At this point, we were reminded of God's message to us in Galatians 6:9 "And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up."

Let us plant the seeds and commit them to God for the harvest, He will make them grow in good time. We will not give up.



NEWBORNS NEWBORNS NEWBORNS

welcome



EMMA

On 12 February 2022, Keith and Velda were blessed with the arrival of their first child, Emma Yeo En Yi.

welcome



ASHLEY

On 14 March 2022, Mark & Shi Jia were blessed with the arrival of their first child, Ashley Goh.



BAPTISM & MEMBERSHIP

10 APRIL 2022

CHILD BAPTISM

Elizabeth Wee En
Evan Mak Yi Xuan
Nathan Wee Yi Cheng
Viola Elise Hoi Qing Le

ADULT BAPTISM

Caleb Ling Kang
Chua Qiu Tang Venessa
Fu Weizhong Myren
Joel Ting Shi Xiang
Lim Bee Lan
Lim Teck Kiat
Leong Ching Ye Sheryl
Low Seng Chew Simon
Low Si Min Jocelyn
Sim Hui Ling
Steed Koh Wei Teck
Tan Cher Wei Yvonne
Wong Zi Ching Gladys



RECEPTION & TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

Andy Ong Sin Ming
Chow Yuet Lin Carolyn
Chua Qiu Tang Venessa
Goh Wei Jie Joshua
Leong Ching Ye Sheryl
Steed Koh Wei Teck
Tan Zhi Ann Agnes
Wong Meng Choo Irene

MEET OUR NEW MEMBER

INTERVIEW WITH MRS AGNES CHEE

TELL US MORE ABOUT YOURSELF

My name is Agnes and I lead the Finance Ops team in a digital transformation consulting firm. I am also mummy to Raphael, my 5-year-old boy who attends TPMC Children's Ministry. He loves Jesus and is an evangelist at heart.



WHAT LEISURE ACTIVITIES DO YOU HAVE?

I love travelling, especially to countries with a cold climate. I also cycle weekly with a group of good friends. We recently participated in the OCBC Cycle City Ride with 2,000 other cyclists. Though the weather was not in our favour, we still had fun riding in the rain.

HOW DID YOU COME TO KNOW ABOUT JESUS? WHO INVITED YOU TO TPMC?

In 2003, my hairstylist invited me to his church in Melbourne. When I first walked into Waverley Christian Fellowship (now known as CityLife Church), the immersing level of joy & happiness among the congregation was overwhelming. I silently asked God for the joy that they have (which was absent in my life). The following week, I went back to CityLife again and was crying uncontrollably during the worship.

At the end of the Sunday service, Tom asked if I would like to accept Jesus as my Saviour and I said "Yes". I went forward to the altar and the pastor prayed for me. Two weeks later, I had my water baptism followed by baptism in the Holy Spirit.

We came to TPMC as my hubby Chris and I were looking for a Children's Ministry for my son because we want him to be grounded in the Word. We visited a couple of Methodist churches before we decided on TPMC. TPMC Children's Ministry is very fun, and the teachers are very dedicated and committed. The activities are suitable for pre-schoolers and the Word of God is taught at their level of understanding. I was very impressed when my son recited Philipians 4:19.

HOW HAS KNOWING JESUS CHANGED YOUR LIFE? DO YOU HAVE ANY WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT FOR YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST?

I have been a Christian for 19 years and view life in a completely different perspective now. Before I met Jesus, I felt like there was no meaning to life and I fear death. Now I know that Jesus is in control of my life, I can trust him with my future. Jesus has a plan for me, and I am living it to the fullest daily. Day by day, I also know more about Jesus and His love for me, and these beliefs change everything.

After years of praying for the same thing, most of us would give up. Hannah (1 Samuel 1:1 to 2:11) did not. She was a devout and humble woman, and God finally answered her prayers. Just like Hannah, God answered my prayers and gave me a son. I believe in raising my son to follow Christ and promote his spiritual growth.

Paul told us to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). That is exactly what Hannah did. Hannah's story teaches us to never give up, to honour our promises to God, and to praise God for His wisdom and kindness.

LENTEN MID-DAY PRAYER AND FAST

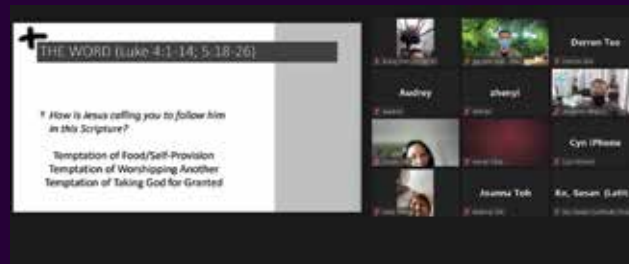
By Rev Poh Zhi- Hui

This year, Lent fell between 2 March and 16 April. Lent is the season that reminds us of Jesus' journey to the cross, and what it means for Christians to follow Him. Fasting, prayer and works of mercy are spiritual disciplines that are especially practised during this season. As Jesus fasted for 40 days in the wilderness (Luke 4:1-14) and denied Himself to give His life for the world, so Christians fast and practise denying ourselves in order that we too may serve others (Matthew 16:24).

This year, we observed Lent with a Lenten Mid-Day Prayer & Fast. On every Wednesday and Friday, we gathered over Zoom for a time of prayer during the lunch hour (12.15 – 1pm). Led by Pastors Benjamin and Ming and myself, the meeting included time for listening to and meditating on the life and gospel of Jesus in Scripture, and praying intercessions for the Church, the world, our Toa Payoh community, and one another.

Being divided into small breakout groups to pray, most of us got to know others in the church family whom we had seldom or never seen or greeted. As we prayed and fasted, we were also encouraged, as a simple work of mercy, to donate the money saved from the foregone meals to support the ministry of Methodist Welfare Services (MWS). An average of about 30 people gathered for each session, and about \$4,000 was raised for MWS's work.

May it be that the season of prayer and fasting shape us and our church towards a cruciform way of life patterned after our Lord Jesus Christ – in daily denying ourselves, taking up our cross, and following Jesus to serve others and glorify God.



Peter

I found the format good for the general congregation. It was simple for all to follow. The prayer pointers kept us focused on the issues to pray for during the allotted times. Besides praying, it was also good to know people outside my usual circles when we were divided into small groups.

Rachael

My experience of the Lenten Mid-Day Prayer & Fast and how it helped me to know and follow Jesus can be summed up in 4As:

- **Abba Father** – Putting aside worldly matters during mid-day by meditating on His Word, and desiring His intimacy
- **Accountability** – Having the church alongside & spurring me on to follow Jesus
- **Accessibility** – Through 'one click' (Zoom), accessing the guidance of the Pastors & fellowship of the church beyond Sundays
- **Altogether** Awesome experience – Thank you :))

Stephen

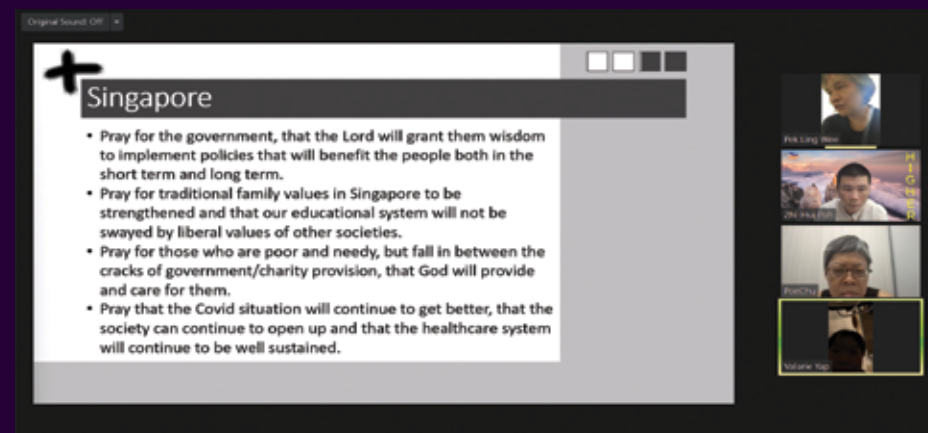
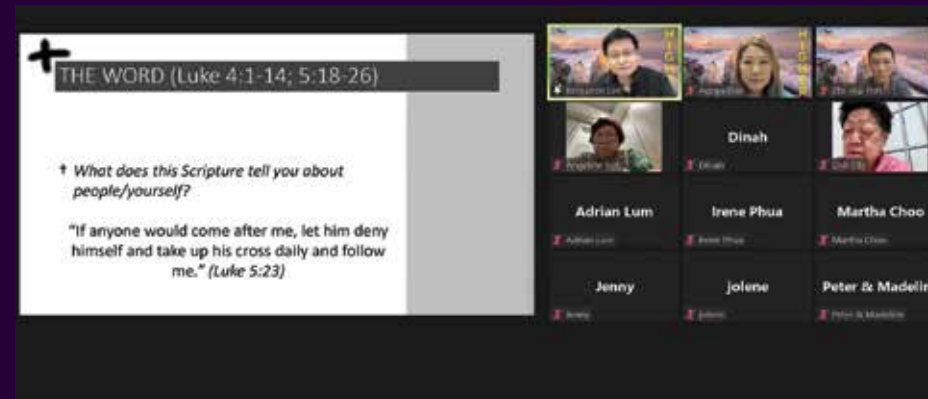
I joined the Lenten Mid-Day Prayer & Fast to come together as a church community to pray. I was happy to meet fellow worshippers whom I have not met in person in church.

Ambrose

It has been a good season of fasting, praying, and reflecting on God's Word, and discerning his direction for me. The sessions gave me an opportunity to pause and deliberate on God's purpose for me each week.

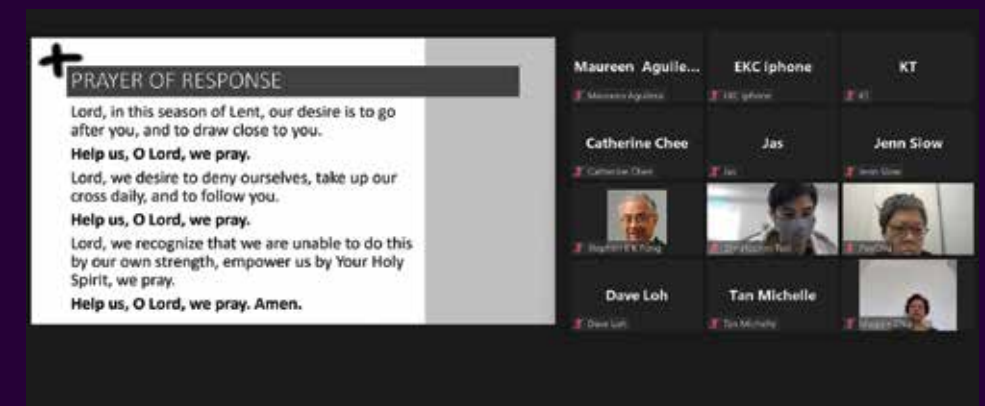
Martha

I am grateful to all who came together to pray, our TPMC staff who administered the Zoom session, and our pastoral staff who led us in the hour of prayer. God surely is concerned for the world and each and everyone.



Valarie

I joined the Lenten Mid-Day Prayer & Fast to grow closer and in faithfulness to God through discipline and prayer. It was really meaningful, and I also enjoyed getting to know more people from church.



Chit Tee & Li Hwa

Our experience in the Lenten Mid-Day Prayer & Fast can be summarised as follows:

- We enjoyed praying with fellow church members.
- It was nice to meet members whom we had not known, especially those who attend a different service.
- It was very nice to hear each other praying together as one.
- We were very encouraged by the zeal and fervent prayers of our church members.

GETTING ON TRACK WITH GOD

Trackers is a three-month discipleship programme where participants grow deeper in faith in God and do life together with group mates and mentors. Trackers has a lecture phase and a local outreach phase. During the lecture phase, we were taught different aspects of Faith, such as hearing God's voice and learning how to read the Bible. For the local outreach segment, we were split into four groups. Two groups went to Methodist Welfare Services (MWS), while the other two proceeded to Youth With A Mission (YWAM) at Geylang. Below are our testimonies from the programme.

by Yeo Anne

The three months of Trackers were super busy, but fun, exciting and memorable. The friendships I made were a crucial part of my entire Trackers journey and will be held close to my heart. Not forgetting my mentors who never failed to support us and were by our side all the time, journeying with us on our walk with God.

There were times when I felt frustrated and impatient in wanting to hear God's voice. But the truth is I have much to learn, like distinguishing whether it is His voice or mine. Sometimes I have questions and doubts about God. Is He really there? Will He ever show Himself to me? However, I have come to realise that God does not have to reveal Himself to me in a big way. He has shown Himself and His love by blessing me with a community in Trackers that I appreciate, as well as the opportunity for me to grow in my faith during the three months.

During Trackers, we had a local outreach phase that lasted two weeks. My team went to YWAM. One of the things that we did was a community art painting project, where we sketched different places of Geylang on huge canvases. We then brought the canvases to the public and got people to paint with us. While painting, we had conversations with the people and shared the Gospel with them! There were of course occasions when people were not very receptive.

However, I learnt that even if it was a short and simple conversation, it could mean a lot to someone. I am glad that I chose to embark on this three-month journey to grow closer to God, get to know Him better and have an eye-opening experience!



by Samuel Soh

I had an exciting experience in the Trackers programme. There were lectures on the Christian life and I got a deeper understanding of the Bible. There were also practical sessions and an opportunity to make new friends. Some lectures gave me new insights that I could use to grow as a Christian. The practical sessions were meaningful, as we can apply them in real life, and were fun.

There were also two weeks of local outreach, where my group helped out at the Christalite Student Care Centre that is operated by MWS.

My group's goal was to show God's love to the children through our actions and grow as a team and as an individual. It was a period where we could practice what we had learned in real life. Overall, I really enjoyed these three months and hope to put what I have learned to good use!



by Tang Waiyen

I was quite hesitant at first to join this programme. However, I have no regrets devoting three months of my break to following Christ! Trackers helped to instil spiritual disciplines in me to sustain my spiritual life. These disciplines include meditation (such as *Lectio Divina*) and daily devotions. I find these spiritual disciplines to be very beneficial as they train us to trust God. Furthermore, by taking time to rest, regardless of our busy schedules, we are putting our faith in God to help us complete the day.

The mentors in my team made a conscious effort to characteristically push everyone in the team. Thanks to the grace of God and the strength of the Holy Spirit, I managed to overcome the challenges!

Now I can say with certainty that I have grown in my faith in Christ, acquired more knowledge of the Bible and become more confident. This programme is something that I highly recommend to anyone with the time!



SHARING THE BREAD OF LIFE

In conjunction with the yearly Blood Donation Drive organised by the Red Cross Society and TPMC on 16 April 2022, volunteers from the Outreach and Social Concerns (OSC) and Filipino ministries came together to pack and distribute 1,075 loaves of bread to the Toa Payoh community. The recipients included stall holders of the “Have a Meal on Us” programme, cleaners, the homeless, bus captains and families in rental blocks 160 and 161.

By Christine Tan

This year, the bag in which the bread was given out broadcast God’s message.

“HE IS THE BREAD OF LIFE
...ABUNDANT BLESSINGS.”

The bag served two purposes, as an advocate for Christ, giving hope and a new life to those who seek spiritual bread, and as protection for the physical bread. Prayerfully, this paper bag would change hands many times, reaching more than the intended 1,075 recipients.

OSC welcomes all who share the same passion to reach the lost as well as help the disadvantaged and underprivileged within TPMC and the Toa Payoh community to join the ministry. The ministry seeks to express God’s love, compassion and grace through its outreach programmes that provide practical help to identified individuals and families, bringing hope to them, and impacting their lives.

Come and journey with OSC’s beneficiaries as we lead them to believe in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. Please contact Angelito at 93374329 or email him at angelito.mojico@tpmc.org.sg



GIVING BLOOD, SAVING LIVES

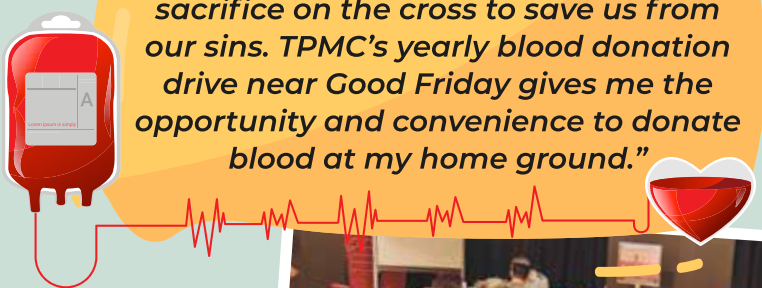
By Christine Tan

On 16 April 2022, in remembrance of Jesus’ sacrifice for mankind on Good Friday, TPMC members came forward to follow their Master in “shedding” blood at a donation drive jointly organised by the Singapore Red Cross and TPMC. People from all walks of life also responded to the call. In all, about 100 donors gave their blood to boost our nation’s blood bank.

The Outreach and Social Concerns (OSC) ministry from TPMC coordinated this event and gave each donor a loaf of bread which symbolised Jesus as the “Bread of Life” (John 6:35). The giving of bread, symbolising the body of Jesus, together with the symbolic giving of blood, was our way of remembering Jesus’ sacrificial giving of His life for the forgiveness of our sins (Matthew 26:26-28).

Wayne Kok, a member of TPMC and yearly blood donor at the TPMC blood donation drive since 2020, came with two like-minded army friends to donate blood after their weekly run and breakfast fellowship. Wayne, also an advocate of blood donation, said,

“It is a meaningful event for me to reflect on our Lord Jesus Christ’s sacrifice on the cross to save us from our sins. TPMC’s yearly blood donation drive near Good Friday gives me the opportunity and convenience to donate blood at my home ground.”



Reflecting on 1 John 1:7 and Ephesians 2:13,
**JUST AS OUR BLOOD CAN SAVE LIVES,
LET US ALL CONTINUE TO SHARE THE
GOOD NEWS WITH THAT “ONE MORE
(PERSON)” ABOUT THE BLOOD OF
JESUS THAT CLEANSSES US FROM ALL SIN
AND BRINGS US NEAR TO GOD.**



HOLY WEEK SERVICES

By Alan Goh



Tpmc was blessed to have Bishop Emeritus (BE) Dr Robert Solomon preach God's Word to us during this year's Holy Week services.

PALM SUNDAY

BE Dr Solomon started his week of sharing by relating the reactions of different groups of people when Jesus entered Jerusalem on the back of a donkey on Palm Sunday. The first group viewed Him as a political leader who would lead them overcome the Roman occupation of Israel. On the contrary, Jesus is a spiritual Messiah who has a far larger perspective, the redemption of our souls.

The second group was people who went to meet Jesus for the miracles that He performed. They risked missing Jesus as Saviour and Lord. The Pharisees were the third group. To them, Jesus was a religious competitor who was unsettling their privileges. Hence, they plotted to kill Him.

The fourth group were Jesus' disciples. They spent three years observing, listening, and learning from Him. However, they were slow to understand Jesus and only realised the meaning of His words when Jesus was glorified (John 12:16) and the Holy Spirit came upon them at Pentecost.

Hence, to meet the real Jesus, we must view Him from the correct perspective (as the Son of God who died for our sins, the risen Lord who is interceding for us at the right hand of God the Father, and the King who will return to settle all things) and respond accordingly.



MAUNDY THURSDAY

During the Maundy Thursday service, BE Dr Solomon shared how Jesus took on the cup of God's divine wrath against human sin. By doing so, He not only tasted death for everyone (Hebrews 2:9) but, in a self-sacrificial exchange, gave us the cup of salvation (Psalm 116:13) in place of the poisoned chalice of judgment against sin. As such, partaking in the Lord's Supper has far more significance than participating in a ritual or memorial. It reminds and gives us the assurance that **God is for us** (Romans 8:31) regardless of the frustrating, painful, or uncertain situations that we are in. **God is also with us** as nothing in all creation can separate us from the love of God through Christ Jesus (Romans 8:35-39). Amidst the poison of the past (original sin) and the pain of the present, through faith in Christ, we discover the love of God and share in His promise for the future.



GOOD FRIDAY

On Good Friday, BE Dr Solomon shared on the profound mystery of the cross. Looking at it, we realise our **sinfulness** (no matter how good we may view ourselves) and that the punishment on the cross was meant for us.

At the cross, we also behold the **sacrifice of Jesus**, hanging, bleeding and pierced for the sin of mankind. It is at the cross where God's wrath against sin was spent (on Jesus) and where we seek refuge.

Finally, we witness the **kingship of Jesus**, as proclaimed by the sign (in Hebrew, Latin and Greek) on the cross (John 19:20). Our response to the cross should then be repentance (from sin), belief (in the sacrifice of Jesus for our salvation) and submission (to Jesus as our Lord). In doing so, we will enter the abundant life that He promises us.



RESURRECTION SUNDAY

BE Dr Solomon concluded the Holy Week sermons on Resurrection Sunday by sharing on the resurrection of Jesus. More than 300 verses in the New Testament were written about this event. Till this day, the empty tomb continues to proclaim that **Christ is risen**. Disciples over the centuries also testify to the risen Lord through their deeds and confessions. Hence, we should believe and take hold of the power of the resurrection by drawing closer to Him, enabling Him to reign over us and allowing Him to overcome the strongholds in our hearts. For the Christ is now here with us and He has the present and future in His hand.



SHARING JESUS WITH ART

By TPMC Creative Arts Ministry

Worshippers attending in-person Sunday services from 27 March to 10 April 2022 and Holy Week services would not have failed to notice the art installations that were displayed at the sanctuary foyer. They were the joyful works of the TPMC Creative Arts Ministry. We spoke to members of the ministry to find out more.

WHAT IS YOUR INSPIRATION FOR THE ART INSTALLATIONS? WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO CONVEY?

R: The art installations were inspired by passages from the Bible. The helmet reminds us of the helmet of salvation in the armour of God that we put on to stand against the devil's schemes (Ephesians 6:10-17). The Roman helmet was chosen as it is widely familiar. And on the one hand, it reminds us of the story of Jesus in which the Roman soldiers participated in His crucifixion; on the other hand, it reminds us that there were Romans who were Gentiles like us who put their faith in Jesus (such as the Roman centurions in Luke 7:1-10 and Acts 10) and who played a crucial role in spreading the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ (like Lydia of Thyatira (Acts 16:14-15) and Phoebe (Romans 16:1)).

The word "coin" (from the installation on 27 March 2022) represents the price of thirty silver pieces (analogous to the price of a slave in Exodus 21:32) that the priests and elders of the people paid for Jesus to be delivered to them (Matthew 26:15).

The word "cup" (from the installation on 3 April 2022) signifies the cup of suffering that Jesus willingly took in obedience to His Father (Mark 14:36).

The palm leaves on Palm Sunday symbolise the branches and leaves that the people of Jerusalem cut from trees and spread on the road to welcome Jesus as He entered the city (Matthew 21:6-9).

The word "crucify" denotes the crucifixion of Jesus (Mark 15:24) on Good Friday about two thousand years ago. The red sash represents the blood that was shed for humanity by Jesus on the cross.

Finally, on Resurrection Sunday, He is risen! (Matthew 28:6). The purple sash on the cross symbolises the royalty of the King of kings while the helmets represent us gaining salvation through Jesus Christ.

Through the art installations, we hope to spread the message of salvation and the sufferings endured by Jesus to secure our freedom from sin.



WHERE DID YOU GET THE MATERIALS FOR THE ART INSTALLATIONS?

R: Most of the materials were recycled from empty carton boxes, old newspapers and used envelopes. We used papier-mache methods to re-utilise the materials. We even had help from a cleaner who passed us used items that she collected from neighbouring blocks.



CONTINUE >>>

WHEN DID YOU START PLANNING AND BUILDING THE ART INSTALLATIONS?

R: Oh, we started in mid-January 2022. We remember that meeting! It is always exciting when we come together to discuss the concept for the first time. After that, we collected the materials that we needed, and spent many enjoyable hours constructing the helmets, building the structures to house them, forming letters to present the bible verses, and painting them accordingly.

Some of us also brought home the unfinished articles to work on them so that they could be completed in time for display in the three weeks leading to Good Friday.

HOW LONG DID YOU TAKE TO SET UP EACH ART INSTALLATION?

R: We spent one to two hours, depending on the complexity, to set up each art installation. Set-up was carried out on Saturday afternoons or evenings for the Sunday services on the following day. For the Good Friday services, we set up the art installation after Maundy Thursday service was completed. Thankfully, we managed to complete the arrangement by 10pm.



HAVE YOU RECEIVED ANY COMMENTS FROM WORSHIPPERS?

R: We received positive comments from worshippers. Their feedback and support provide great encouragement to our team.

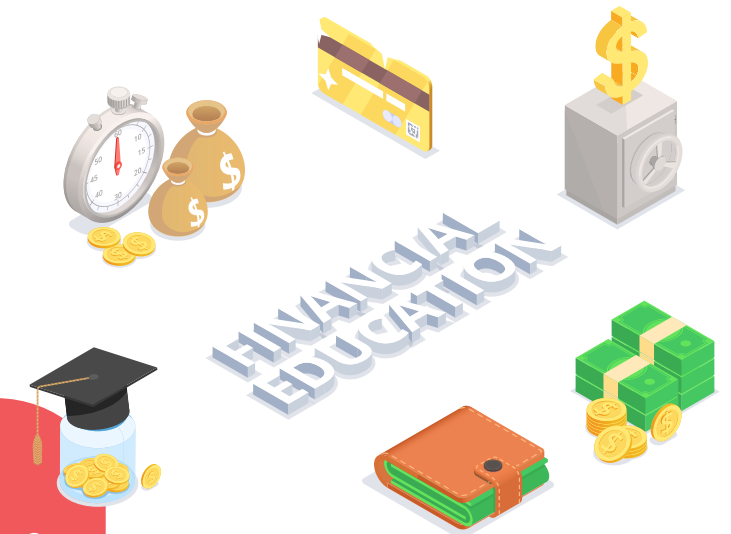


STEWARDING YOUR FINANCES

"Is making money wrong?"

What should I do with my money?"

Can I be a Christian and love money?"



By Ansell Chiu

We all have questions about how money and faith interact. Some people say that money is bad, and we should steer clear. But is that really what God tells us through his Word? (1 Timothy 6:10) We are taught in Scriptures not to love money, but to steward it well.

Stewarding one's personal finances is a crucial step of growing up as a young adult. As Christians, we need to know how to steward our resources in God-honouring ways. We were greatly encouraged to see many young adults show up on 9 April 2022 to learn more about this crucial topic from our homegrown finance panelists.

Francis Cheang, Joseph Tan, Low Kay San, and Jay Fong brought a great depth of experience and breadth of opinions to share. First, Jay guided the attendees through Budgeting 101 and Wealth Accumulation 102. The three other panelists then weighed in with their own unique thoughts and perspectives.

The event rounded out with a discussion on stewarding earthly finances in light of the Kingdom of God. Attendees also had opportunities to ask questions through a moderated Q&A session.

After the event, panelists and attendees alike gathered for cold brew coffee and congenial conversations in the Welcome Lounge. We saw both new faces and old friends chatting and sharing their life experiences together. As the COVID winter thaws into a new spring, we will be seeing more of such events for young adults in the near future. See you there!



Francis, Joseph, Kay San, Jay (left to right)



WELCOME HOME WELCOME
WELCOME HOME
WELCOME HOME
WELCOME HOME

