

When Katong Presbyterian Church began “renovating” its congregation in 2010, the church had no idea that it was laying the foundation for an eventual integration with Hope Presbyterian Church. Sited on a freehold site in Joo Chiat Lane, Katong’s more than four decade-old building which had cracks and

leaks was due to be refurbished. This took place after a few years of “human renovation”, said the church’s Senior Minister, Rev Lam Kuo Yung. “Basically, our philosophy was ‘renovate the people first, don’t renovate the building first,’” he said.

“For five to six years,” said Rev Lam, “the church spent time asking each of its members why its building should be renovated, and explored how its people should be ‘renovated’ before work was done on the church’s infrastructure. We talked about important Christian values that we should embrace, and only after that did we start the brick and mortar kind of work.” Physical renovations began in late 2016, and were completed in 2018.

Rev Lam said that as the church congregation contemplated reasons for refurbishing their premises, one clear reason that came from God was “we should share”. “We should share God’s resources with people in the church, as well as people in the wider community – that was a strong conviction given by the Lord to the leadership,” he said.

And so, in 2017 when Hope Presbyterian Church was looking for a new space to worship in, Katong could not say “no”. “It was something the Katong Presbyterian Church leadership could not reject, because we already heard from God that we should share,” said Rev Lam.

Rev Tan Cheng Huat, Hope’s interim moderator from 2018 to 2024, said that over its about two decade history, Hope had generally been on the move without a permanent home. When Hope began its search for a new space, its congregation had been worshipping at Changi Bethany Church. The search took place after Hope failed to secure a new rental deal with Changi Bethany, which was in the process of renewing its land lease with the government.

While Rev Lam said that Hope’s request to share premises could not be rejected, the answer Katong’s leadership gave Hope was not an immediate “yes”. Instead,



By Ng Keng Gene

Katong’s leaders invited Hope’s elders to pray together, so that both sets of leaders could build a relationship. After a year of prayer meetings between the two churches’ elders, Hope moved into Katong’s premises in 2018. “Because a relationship had been built, it was a very smooth transition,”

said Rev Lam. He noted, though, that sharing resources with Hope was still not an easy decision.

“It is one thing to say God wants us to share, it is another thing when it comes to the actual sharing,” he said. “Our leaders were still scared – the two churches were similar in size so when the two churches came together, realistically speaking we anticipated that there would be conflicts and there would be situations where people didn’t see eye-to-eye about certain things,” Rev Lam added.

“But we were encouraged by the reminder that the renovation went smoothly because God wanted us to share his resources with others.” While Hope’s congregation initially did not interact with Katong’s much – Hope held its services on Sunday evenings to minimise disruption to Katong’s operations – it got a taste of Katong’s hospitality.

“In Changi Bethany we were tenants and could only use certain spaces, with other spaces out of bounds. But in Katong we almost owned the building – we were free to use every part of it,” said Rev Tan, who joined Hope in 2018 after the church had decided to move into Katong. The next year, in February 2019, Hope approached Katong’s leadership on a potential merger between the two churches.

Rev Tan, who had been leading Hope for about a year at that point, said that prior to Hope’s proposal, he had asked the church’s leadership if it made any sense for two English congregations of the same denomination to share premises. “I felt that if it was two language streams, it was okay to be independent of each other. But two congregations of the same language (not coming together) – to me, it was a waste of resources,” he said.

From his perspective, merging with Katong was the best option for Hope, which had no senior pastor, no home of its own, and could do with more members in some ministries to hit a “critical mass” and be more effective.

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With each church having more than 200 attendees at that point, Rev Tan said that the potential merger “was not two ailing churches but two active churches coming together”.

While Katong’s leadership did not reject Hope’s proposal, they suggested that the two churches should explore an ‘integration’ instead of a merger. “We felt that the word ‘merger’ was quite commercial, whereas ‘integration’ better described what we should pursue – two groups of God’s people integrating into each other’s lives,” said Rev Lam.

To this end, an “Exploring Togetherness Taskforce” was set up in July 2019, comprising twelve leaders from the two churches – six from each – to discern God’s will for the future.

Although Hope’s leadership thought that the integration effort would be completed in a year or two, Katong’s preference was not to rush into things. “Historically, Katong’s way of doing things is very

slow, Hope’s is very fast,” said Rev Lam. “That was one observable difference in our church cultures. We call Katong a ‘kampong church’ and Hope a ‘city church,’” Rev Tan added.

In the years that followed, the two churches held programmes that allowed its congregants to interact, including combined Easter and Christmas services, as well as pulpit exchanges. “Discernment is not just sitting there, praying and doing nothing. It’s a very active process,” said Rev Lam.

“We kept trying different things, and the whole process allowed us to know each other’s strengths and culture such that when we eventually integrated in January 2024, the leaders already knew each other very well.”

Each set of leaders also had to answer questions and allay concerns that some of their congregants raised over the planned integration. These included why Hope needed to be legally dissolved, or whether Katong would lose a

A Personal Note



Seen on the way to work

The tree in this photo is festooned with bird’s nest fern and other plants. These are epiphytes, plants that grow on the tree but do not derive any nutrients or water from it. The ferns are physically supported by the tree but do not harm it. It is a form of commensalism, the root word of which means ‘eating together at the same table’. Nevertheless, the tree and its epiphytes are still separate.

In Romans 11:17-18, the apostle Paul spoke about the inclusion of Gentiles in the then-Jewish church as wild olives grafted on the natural olive. In grafting, the vessels of the rootstock and the graft eventually fuse together, becoming one, sharing the same roots, water and nutrients.

Synod Sunday on 13 July reminds us that we are one with the larger Presbyterian Church in Singapore. In the cover article, Keng Gene writes about the integration into oneness of Katong Presbyterian Church and Hope Presbyterian Church. This was not something that just happened naturally, but it was a deliberate, prayerful process that took place over a period of time. Prior to that, in Katong’s renovation project, the Katong church first spent time ‘renovating’ the congregation. That is, the church was preparing its people for spiritual renewal before it undertook its physical renewal. Similarly, as PSPC embarks on its own building renewal, this year’s church theme is

“Renewing our Hearts, Building as One.” As a church, are we more like the tree covered with individual ferns or are we like a grafted olive tree? How closely are we knitted as a church community?

It is human nature to gravitate to others of the same life stage or age group, or share the same interests, and we may naturally fall into cliques. Church camp (pages 19-24) is a great opportunity for relationship-building across different segments of church. That was how I got to know more people when I first joined PSPC, and that is why I advocate for buzz groups being designed to mix people together and bring different perspectives.

This is our Missions Month; let us renew our hearts and build as one, so that we can be a royal priesthood (see Eileen Poh’s article on page 18), interceding for and being a blessing to the nations around us.

Chia Gaik Bee

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Do you have any feedback on *The Messenger*? Do let us know at pspcmessenger@gmail.com

the team

Editor ~ Chia Gaik Bee • **Writers** ~ Ng Keng Gene, Lewis Tham, Lim Sook Fun and Noah Tan • **Sub-editors** ~ Debbie Chai, Dorothy Tan and Wang Su Chen • **Elder-in-Charge** ~ Elder Wan Kum Tho • **Art Direction** ~ Serena Lim • **Coordinator** ~ Choo Wai How • **Printing Co-ordination** ~ First Step Communications

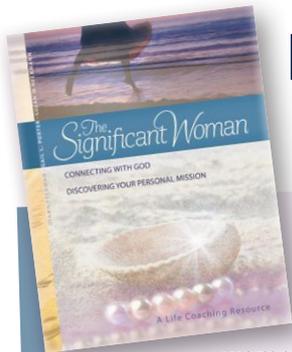
degree of control over its assets – a concern that Rev Lam described as “unbiblical” and gave him the opportunity to reiterate stewardship over ownership.

When the time came around for both churches to poll its members on whether the integration should proceed in end-2022, more than 90 per cent in each church voted in favour of coming together. From the start of 2024, no distinction was made between the two churches, with members free to attend either of two morning services at Katong, and ministries wholly integrated.

Asked how the church is doing more than a year since the integration, Rev Lam said: “The best change management is when people don’t feel there’s any change

– that’s exactly how we feel, as if we have always been worshipping together.”

He added that although the church’s legal name is Katong Presbyterian Church, internally, its members call themselves the “Katong-Hope community”. “In a sense, we have become better because we have adopted each other’s strengths in the way we do church,” said Rev Lam. “Nowadays we move fast when there is a need to move fast – we are not slow anymore,” he said. “We still have the kampong ‘feel’, but we also have a very decisive leadership culture within the church. I think this is possible only because the two churches learned to appreciate each other.”



Ladies’ Ministry Workshop – The Significant Woman

The Significant Woman is a discipleship course that combines biblical principles with life coaching methods to help women attendees live connected to God and discover their personal mission in life. I had the privilege of attending the 8-week online sessions that En Hwee kindly facilitated from February to April 2025. As an intimate group of ten members, we gathered on Thursday evenings to discuss how the six biblically-based principles can be applied to our lives as women. We also shared our life experiences, struggles, challenges, and how God has been faithfully and lovingly present in our lives.

Before taking this course, I had always intended to grow closer to God, but I did not know how to do so with my busy daily schedule. During the course, I learned that our daily schedule reflects our life priorities and that we can be intentional about scheduling the more important activities (the meaningful big rocks) in advance before the miscellaneous items (the infinite sand grains) fill up our calendar space. What a simple yet powerful analogy! In this scenario, prioritising and applying knowledge go hand in hand.

I have personally benefited greatly from the authentic sharing by everyone in this safe and caring environment, which is hard to come by in our busy lives today. It’s truly encouraging to hear from other sisters in Christ and to learn from their deeper faith.

After completing this course, I feel better equipped to live an intentional life, embracing my unique role and life mission as a woman and seeking God in all that I do, moment by moment. I would highly recommend this course to all sisters in Christ who wish to explore their uniqueness, self-worth, and meaning in life through God’s curated plan for us.

– Delphine Neu

I hadn’t seen my parents in four months as we lived in different cities, and when I did, my Dad said, “You are different - you look stronger, happier - I’m so happy to see that.”

In the four months that I hadn’t seen them, I joined ‘The Significant Woman’ study. Being in the midst of a career transition, I was hoping to gain some clarity and God’s guidance on my next steps. I got what I was looking for and so much more.

Over the course of the study, we were challenged to reflect on and analyse parts of ourselves, our personalities, goals, strengths and weaknesses, and what I found really helpful were the questions and quizzes in the study that guided us in this process of discovery. On a practical level, one of my areas of neglect was my physical body, and I felt challenged to take care of my health and be a better steward of the physical body that God has given me. It’s been over a month since I got into an exercise routine and I must say I have not only started to reap the physical benefits of increased activity but am also seeing the mental benefits of discipline and achievement.

I also learnt through the study and sharing of the sisters in my group so much about myself, my unique personality and character, and most importantly, that every day can be a purposeful day – no matter where we are in our journey, whether it is as a homemaker, as a wife, or a mother, or whether we have a career that we love or don’t really care for, as ultimately they are all pieces of a puzzle that just make part of us. God is the puzzle designer and maker, and we can just lean on Him to lead us. My choice to seek God, to lean on Him, to do what pleases Him by following His commands of loving Him and loving those around me is what makes me ‘significant’.

– Gloria Ong

Reflections on Mother's Day

BY FAITH

Delphine Neu

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." – Hebrews 11:1.

15 December 2022 marked a new chapter in my life as God blessed me with a precious little one whom we named Faith. It was a seven-year journey to conceive, and my mustard seed faith undeniably wavered along the way. As the years flew by, I was no longer certain if motherhood was part of my life's destiny. In 2022, God miraculously brought me to a new work environment that offered a better work-life balance, and I conceived successfully. He knows, and He provided me with this child.

Since Faith's birth, we have been very intentional and hands-on in spending time with her daily. Because we had Faith later in our lives, compared to many of our peers, the time spent journeying alongside her early childhood milestones has become far more meaningful than reaching our own career milestones. We simply want to "be present" with our child, moment by moment. He knows, and He provides us with favourable work conditions.

I was not in the best of health after delivering, and it took me eight long months to recover from preeclampsia, along with other health conditions. I am thankful that my company allowed me to extend my maternity leave for the needed rest, and my husband and helper were also around to tend to the needs of the newborn. Nothing can compare to the parental joy and relief of having a healthy, strong, and cheerful child. God knows my mental capacity limit; I wouldn't be able to cope as a mother if my child were born physically unwell. He knows, and He provides that perfect gift.

The journey of parenthood ahead is long but also short and meaningful for me. This journey has certainly deepened my spiritual faith tremendously. He provides in His time through His will, and we, as His children, need to learn to trust and let go (so counterintuitive, I know), believing that He has the best plan for us in life. I pray that God will grant me favour to see my child grow into adulthood, bestow wisdom upon me as an imperfect mother to raise a godly child, and use my life story to glorify His name. He knows, and He provides all.



REFLECTIONS ON MOTHERHOOD

Candice Lim



It has been three years since I left my corporate job to be a full-time caregiver to my three children. As I reflect on these years, I am grateful for God's hand in my journey of rediscovering identity, rebuilding community, and refocusing on eternity.

Rediscovering Identity

In Singapore, it is very common to ask someone we have just met, "What do you do?" While an average adult does many things, we know that this question intends to ask what our job is, and it is a straightforward question to answer. After leaving my corporate job, however, I used to get stumped by this very simple question. As a millennial raised in a society that prizes status and glamorous work titles, I had not found a job title that gave the same amount of importance and prestige. The conventional titles from my parents' generation such as "homemaker" and "housewife" did not make me sound like a modern woman. At the same time, "stay at home mum" felt very inaccurate, almost misleading, for I spent half of my time out and about. Once, half in jest, I told a friend that I was the "Chief Operations Officer" of the Tan organisation. She was very confused.

In the end, God helped me to search my heart and truthfully accept that, while I was perfectly content with my new role, I was concerned about how others viewed me. Stripped of a "global" job title in an MNC carrying established household brands, I felt less significant. I was not the modern career mum that society expected women my age to be. God gently and graciously prodded my heart to consider His Kingdom and what He holds dear instead, which are not snazzy job titles. Whatever I choose to call my role, I just have to fulfil my job faithfully.

I was reminded that the core of my identity is solidly cemented in Christ and the layers around it as wife, mother, daughter and friend branch out of it, drawing from the source of love and life. Perhaps the next time someone asks, "What do you do?" I could respond by saying: "I live for Jesus!"

Rebuilding Community

Shortly after I left my corporate role, I met up with a few ladies from my PSPC cell group who had been full-time family caregivers for many years, their children old enough to teach mine in Sunday School. If I could string their pearls of wisdom together, they would form a long, beautiful necklace. One stood out in particular: find your



mummy community. True enough, I literally had to search for them because I did not have any mummy friends who were also full-time caregivers. I prayed fervently for Christian friends I could journey with in this new phase of life.

Where might one find fellow mummy friends? It turned out that my children's kindergarten was a catchment area. During school pick up, the school playground would be teeming with potential friends! Today, we are a group of nine who attend Bible Study Fellowship together, pray, exercise, eat and share "aunty deals" with. With the increasing academic pressures that come with primary schoolers inching towards Primary 6, I am thankful for these sisters who remind one another to cast our eyes on the Lord and refocus on equipping our children for eternity in Christ.

Refocusing on Eternity

Despite growing up in a Christian household and attending PSPC on Sundays all my life, I felt that my understanding of the Bible was very shallow and superficial. Sure, I could rattle on about what is right and wrong, but I could not comprehend the nuances and complexities of God's Word. It felt like God was a friendly uncle neighbour I would have morning chats with; sometimes we would exchange friendly pleasantries and other times, we would have deep heart to heart conversations where He would share His words of wisdom and wipe away my tears. However, I wanted to know God as my Father.

With my newfound freedom in the mornings, I heeded my friend's encouragement to join Bible Study Fellowship (BSF) and committed to studying Revelation. Now, Revelation is not a terrifying and intimidating book but one that comforts and brings hope. Amid the daily grind of caring for the children, breaking up fights, helping with schoolwork and picking up food off the floor, it is easy to lose sight of eternity in God. By refocusing on eternity and God's glory, "the things of earth will grow strangely dim" (taken from the song "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus") and the mundane tasks transform into meaningful work in God's eyes. God has challenged me to be intentional in asking myself, "How does this prepare us for eternity in God?" For example, when the children fight, I try to shift their focus from "who started it first" to "what we did was sinful and we can't fight sin without God".

I have also benefited immensely from the Identity Theft book club and The Significant Woman course organised by the Ladies' Ministry. I probably would not have had the bandwidth to attend these had I not become a full-time caregiver. (Caveat: There were other mummies with full-time paid jobs who managed to attend these. It can be done!)

Without the support of my husband and parents, I may not have experienced all the above and I feel eternally grateful to them. As it is, my dear mother is

singing I Surrender All with the children (and breaking up a fight) so that I have the time to complete this article.



BEING A GRANDMOTHER

Joyce Ho

I am the grandmother of Brayden and Kaiden, my two lovely grandsons who come with me to church every Sunday. Grandchildren are gifts from God. Every day, I seek God's wisdom and guidance to bring up my grandchildren in faith. I have learnt to communicate with them with patience and pray ceaselessly to open their hearts and minds to His truth. It is very important to me that they attend Sunday School, join Christian activities and grow their base of Christian friends. This fellowship and community help them to experience care in God's family.



As their grandmother, I keep them in my daily advent prayers for wisdom, strength and encouragement. When they fall ill, I pray fervently for divine intervention and speedy recovery. Everything is in God's hands, and I am dependent on God, resting in His presence. When I rest in His presence, I recognise God's voice in His words and soft gentle whisper.

I encourage my grandsons to pray and cast their anxieties and challenges to God. It's always very pleasing when they request for prayers, and I hear them say, "Thank you God for the food" and "Praise the Lord". I know that seeds are sown in their hearts and pray for a good harvest! Ultimately, I pray for them to understand and accept Jesus as their Saviour for the extension of His Kingdom in their Christian journey.



CHILDREN ARE A GIFT FROM GOD

Pr Carol Ng

Children are a gift from God [Psalm 127:3]. Indeed, they are, and we are entrusted to take care of, nurture and love them in the way of the Lord, whether they are our biological or spiritual children. They can express their joy, love, candidness, curiosity and forthrightness in their daily lives and also about God Himself.

Sometimes it can be a breeze yet at the same time, it can be an uphill task in bringing Big Truths to them, and nurturing them in Godly character. But the Lord touched my heart to simply show children His Word and also show Christ to them through the sharing of my life

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in Him. It's a joy and yet humbling to be real in front of the young ones – showing them the good bits but also the ugly bits of my life. It is wonderful to see how they have grown, but it also pains my heart when they are lukewarm or sceptical towards God and His Word.

However, the Lord reminded me to be ever patient and ever loving with our children. Each child is special and unique. There will be moments of joy and moments of heartache with them. There will be moments of their love and enthusiasm, and also moments of their lukewarm response, disobedience and aloofness towards God, the Bible and His people. I am reminded to exercise God's patience and love towards them, just like God is patient and loving towards me when I turn the other way.

What's my posture towards a child in his journey of faith?

I remember once when a young child approached me and asked "Why does God allow us to sin? Couldn't He just prevent that [our sins]? Isn't He God?" In that flash of a moment I was caught off guard and dumbfounded. For it was not an easy response to a big theological question from a child. However, I am thankful for His Spirit's leading which was to answer the child simply and lovingly. "God does not create humans as robots. He gave us the freedom to respond to Him, to love and obey Him, or to disobey Him. When we sin, we choose the other way and not God's way." The child's eyes opened and with his heart satisfied, he walked away with a smile.

Our Next Designation

By Chia Shao Xiong and Levene Wong



Dear friends, we are excited to share with you that from the start of August we will begin our training designation at **Yamagata Nanbu Church (山形南部教会)**, in the Tohoku region for the next two years. We are really looking forward to partnering with the church to learn how to reach out and serve the Japanese more effectively.



Pastor Oka and his wife Pastor Yoshimi

About Yamagata Nanbu Church 山形南部教会

Yamagata Nanbu Church traces its roots back to the early evangelistic efforts in the Meiji period in 1908! Following that was a particularly difficult period for many Christian churches in Japan, and the early gatherings were eventually forced to disperse due to persecution. However, many of the Christians held on to their faith and gathered again under the efforts of Pastor Kuroda Aiko in 1959. This small gathering would grow to become the current Yamagata Nanbu Church of 45 members. The current pastors, Oka Setsuya and Yoshimi, have been serving the church since 1988. The church moved into their current building, a refurbished Toyota warehouse, in 2017.

When we met Pastors Oka and Yoshimi in March during our centre visit, we were particularly impressed by their commitment to discipleship and evangelism. They also have a passion to raise up the next generation of disciples through children's ministry.

Please pray that we will be able to work well in partnership with Yamagata Nanbu Church so that God's name will be glorified.



Image source: <https://www.nippon.com/en/guide-to-japan/pref06/>

Yamagata prefecture is well-known for its bright red cherries and Ginzan Onsen, made famous by the animation Spirited Away. We will be based in the main city of Yamagata, which is three hours by shinkansen from Tokyo and has a population of 250,000.



Levene had an opportunity to share a kids' sermon on Easter Sunday at Satsunae Lighthouse Church

A mad dash to the end...

We will finish our language studies at the end of July and then move to Yamagata in August. However, there are a number of things that need to happen before the move.

First, Shao needs to convert his driving license. By God's provision we have managed to arrange to buy a car from another missionary.

Please pray that all the tests, administrative procedures, and checks will go smoothly.

Second, we are going to attempt the official Japanese Language Proficiency Test N2 exam at the start of July.

This is considered an intermediate to advanced level (the highest level is N1) and is no joke! We really need your prayers as we juggle our regular classes, family life and studying for this exam.

Pray that we will remember that we are doing this to be better used by God and not for our own selfish ambition.

Third, searching for a new apartment in Yamagata. The process can take quite a long time because Japanese landlords are usually hesitant to rent to foreigners and especially since we are from a religious organisation.

Pray that we will be able to find a suitable place, and that the application process will go smoothly!

Lastly, arranging for the move and clearing out. A year has passed very quickly for us here in Sapporo and we will need to start packing up our things in July as well as arrange for moving companies to transport our belongings. As you can tell, the coming months are going to be pretty crazy for us with loads of logistical things to handle, so we really hope that you can pray alongside us for everything to go smoothly.

Pray for wisdom, discernment, and time management as we navigate through all the different administrative and logistical matters.

Up Close & Personal Alpha Course 2025

By Lim Sook Fun

The 2025 Alpha course took place over six Friday evenings from 25 April to 30 May. In each session, we watched videos and had small group discussions on various topics: Who is Jesus? How can I have faith? Why and how do I pray? Why and how should I read the Bible? How do I resist evil? Does God heal today? Who is the Holy Spirit, and what does the Holy Spirit do? How can God guide us? How can I make the most of the rest of my life?

I had the opportunity to get to know some of the participants, who generously shared their thoughts on the course.



SHERMAINE LEE

Please share your experience of the Alpha sessions.

Shermaine: The Alpha sessions were deeply meaningful for me. I found myself surrounded by a group of incredibly experienced individuals who had taken time out of their busy schedules to be present, to listen to and answer challenging questions. Meanwhile, ideas that were not biblically sound were corrected. Furthermore, the mysteries of encountering the gifts of the Holy Spirit were expounded.

How did you find our group discussions?

Shermaine: What struck me was how carefully and wisely these questions were addressed, and the responses were not 'black-and-white' answers. There was a sense of respect for complexity and a deep awareness of how we all experience faith differently and at various stages of our lives. I may not fully understand the depth of their wisdom, yet I felt guided and not judged.

What really left a deep impression was the level of empathy and maturity of the group. I was able to share my raw thoughts and emotions about God's love, and they listened attentively, encouraging my responses.

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Moreover, the discussions piqued my curiosity, stimulating me to want to learn more. The experience also reminded me that faith isn't about having all the answers; it's about walking by God's grace.

WANG JI-YUAN

Please share your responses to this course.

Ji-Yuan: I especially enjoyed the discussions at the end of each session. It was a chance to discover how different people encountered their faith, and it provided me with the opportunity to ask questions freely.

Why did you participate in this course?

Ji-Yuan: Growing up in a 'free-thinking' household, I've always been happy with my life. I have had a loving family and enjoyed my studies besides having great friends. There seemed to be nothing missing in my life, so nothing needed to be filled up by religion. Then, about a year ago, I met my girlfriend, who is a Christian, and she has become very important to me. When I realised how important her Christian faith is to her, I desired to understand it better. Hence, I decided to sign up for this course.

JOANNE HO

What has your faith journey been like?

Joanne: I was born into a family who believes in Christ. However, when asked about my faith, sometimes I struggled to explain the reasons why I believe in Christ. I have been attending PSPC for seven years, but I am not in a cell group.

What are your thoughts on the Alpha course?

Joanne: Attending it made me feel intellectually stimulated, laying the building blocks of understanding and helping me to process my thoughts. The contents of the videos were illuminating, and I am thankful for the exposure I had to others' faith journeys as people candidly shared in our small group. I also got to know different people in a short span of time, and I am immensely encouraged by their support in various ways, such as answering my questions and sharing Bible verses in order to deepen my understanding.

Why did you participate in this course?

Joanne: Initially, the intention was to bring my boyfriend to Alpha to offer him greater exposure to Christianity. Personally, I wanted to investigate some of my own assumptions, thinking the quickest way to clear them up was to attend this course. I thought Alpha was like a mechanism — going in with questions and then emerging fully armed with the answers. But after going through the course, I have doubled my questions due to the thought-provoking discussions in our group as well

as the exposure to new information obtained from the videos. In the process, I have established bits and pieces of building blocks.

MICHELLE CHAU AND MERRI LIM

It's wonderful you and your friend have been attending the Alpha course, Michelle.

Michelle: Yes. Although I have been attending church for some time, I gained new knowledge and wisdom about the Christian faith through Alpha. Accompanying my friend Merri through the course was also God's way of showing me His love, faithfulness and heart for His children. I witnessed God's power at work firsthand through the course, which makes me look forward to inviting more friends and journeying with them as they discover and encounter Jesus.

How did you find the course, Merri?

Merri: It is a useful foundational course for not only non-believers but also for believers to relearn Christianity, affirming their faith. The videos and sharing by members have been helpful in answering my doubts, and the community was most welcoming. I really liked attending these sessions and would encourage more people to join them.

RONALD TAN

Please share your thoughts about the Alpha course.

Ronald: Alpha has been great so far; it has broadened my understanding of Jesus and Christianity. I have made great friends, and I hope to be part of the family. I would like to thank Helen Yeo for bringing me here.

It has been an inspiring and meaningful time discussing God's faithfulness and how the Holy Spirit works in different ways and through a variety of people. Furthermore, we might experience faith differently as we encounter various experiences or crises at various stages of our lives. In the closing session of Alpha, in our group, Alex Lee led the discussion about knowing who God is and about our God being a faithful God who always loves us regardless of our circumstances. Andrew Aw and Wong Foo Luen shared how God had journeyed with them through the various stages of their lives and how God has been faithful to them and their loved ones.



Chiang Rai 2024 Mission Trip: Trippers' Testimonies



Ming Ying

Going on the Chiang Rai mission trip was the best gift for me in 2024. There were numerous heart-warming and eye-opening moments, and I'd like to share a few key takeaways.

First and foremost is the need to be faithful as He is faithful. Some PSPC members have consistently joined the Chiang Rai mission trip for several years. I really admire their dedication and the way they exhibited God's love for His people. Shi Mu (late Pastor Li's wife) shared the Gospel in a village without any believers. Everyone shunned her and saw her and her team as Western demons. Shi Mu was disappointed with the outcome and wanted to give up. However, she eventually pressed on and believed that God has His own time for everything. With her persistence, one family came to accept Christ. As Shi Mu said: "With God, everything will be fine!" God is power and authority.

I was also saddened to see drug users with blank expressions and eyes that showed no hope. I asked God: "Do they have a future?" I had doubts. Nonetheless, God led me to a sister in Christ. She told me about how God had saved her from her drug addiction, allowing her to return home to Him. She wanted to use her transformed life to help those in a similar situation overcome their addiction and see hope.

Amen. Anything is possible with God!

So far, I've been on two trips to Chiang Rai and I've gained so much more than I could give.

Having first-hand experience of God working in our midst outside of the local Singaporean context and hearing the villagers testify to His goodness have led me to reflect on my own faith in the God of the universe. While serving, I was challenged to step out of my comfort zone and was greatly encouraged by friends from both the PSPC and BKBC teams as I watched them serve boldly and joyfully.



Sybil

My first time witnessing people accept Christ as their Saviour with my own eyes was through the Chiang Rai mission trip. I started with countless doubts and questions lingering in my mind, but one verse from the Bible put me at ease: "In God, all things are possible."

Whenever I read about how the disciples struggled to believe, I often find myself judging them. Yet, during this experience, I felt as though I were in the disciples' shoes. We often try to analyse everything that happens in our lives, but God's plans cannot be explained by logic. I confessed my unbelief to God and asked for His forgiveness.

The other thing that struck me deeply during this trip was the missional heart of BKBC. Although Shi Mu was Chinese, the congregation was made up mostly of villagers from hill tribes. This deeply moved my heart. The true meaning of the church was beautifully portrayed in this community. Often, we see a limited version of the church, where people of the same tribe or background gather together. But this is not God's will for His church. I thanked God for the existence of this church in that area and for Shi Mu, who possessed such a big heart for the tribal people. This was the greatest lesson I learned from the trip.

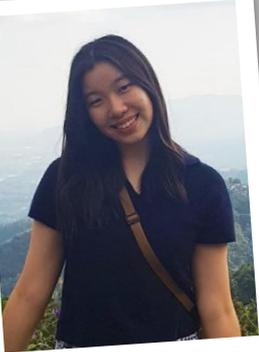
Finally, I would like to express my appreciation for the fervent hearts of the PSPC members during this mission trip. They completely changed my perspective on partnering with foreign churches during cross-border missions. Typically, partnering churches from foreign countries come, organise gatherings in one location, conduct activities, and then leave. But PSPC went the extra mile. They went from door to door to spread the Word, not missing a single villager. Since the villagers were from hill tribes, we required translators to communicate with them, sometimes across two languages from Chinese to Thai to the tribal language. Despite these challenges, the PSPC team never showed signs of fatigue but remained active and diligent in sharing the Gospel, communicating with the villagers, and praying for them. I feel so blessed to have been a part of this. Their dedication has touched my heart and motivated me to press on in future ministry.

Initially, I had few expectations of what I could contribute to this mission trip, but it turned out to be a journey that rejuvenated my soul. For this, I give all glory to God.



Juana

(Continued on Page 10)



Sandra

I was really thankful to be a second-time tripper last year! Nonetheless, it was admittedly difficult not to bring with me a set of expectations. It was, and hopefully will continue to be, a constant prayer for me to be ready to serve God no matter how unfamiliar the opportunity given to serve is and to remember that I am privileged to be a vessel for His glory to be revealed in and through me.

I thank God for the many friendships forged during my first trip to Chiang Rai in 2023, and I feel even more grateful that I could continue building on them this time around in 2024. Having the privilege to once again work with our co-workers from BKBC was such a blessing, as doing the Christmas outreaches with them truly feels like a shared milestone in our walks with God. It was also so awesome watching God work in His mysterious ways, from the way He enabled youths like me to prayerfully engage with the villagers we visited to the way He softened their hearts to receive the Word during Gospel rallies.

Hopefully, I speak for the team when I say that these tiny posts in the Messenger will never be able to sum up even the tiniest portion of everything the mission team experienced physically, emotionally and spiritually, but how meaningful the past two trips have been for me has kept me looking forward to every year-end, in hopes that I might be able to return to the mission field to continue God's work with His people if He wills for me to!!

I first joined the Chiang Rai mission trip in 2023 through the encouragement of my mentors in Lighthouse. During one of the Lighthouse sessions, the mentors gave a presentation on the purpose of missions and the mission work being done in Thailand. I realised how impactful sharing the Gospel was and that it would be a blessing to serve and carry out God's mission. While the idea of missions was unfamiliar, I was determined to experience it at least once.

While we had training sessions that taught us about Thailand's culture, language and religion, along with preparation for the activities and performance items, I felt severely under-prepared on the trip itself. The sessions equipped me with knowledge of what to expect and roles I could take up while I was there; however, I was still doubtful of my capabilities as a first-time tripper.

My anxieties were slowly dispelled during the trip as I witnessed the dedication of the youths from BKBC when evangelising with the villagers who had yet to accept God's Word. Despite the youths being of a similar age as I was, they were devoted to sharing about Jesus' death and resurrection from the cross that saves us from our sins. I was astounded by their courage and prayed to serve with such determination.

Although I was confronted with doubts about my ability to contribute meaningfully to the mission whilst trying to assimilate into an entirely foreign environment, I embarked on the trip feeling optimistic and motivated to serve to the best of my abilities. Truly, participating in missions has been life-changing and inspiring!



Abigail

Before this mission trip, I could never have imagined myself going on one. School was getting busy, and I had a lot on my plate. However, I soon realised that my schedule would only get busier from here – and the chances I had to try out missions would only become slimmer as the years went by. So, why not try now? Overcoming the inertia of trying something new was one of the greater challenges for me, and I had many anxieties moving forward. Praying to God gave me the assurance I needed, and God pushed me to sign up before my tendency to overthink set in.

It was a decision that I would not regret. It was inspiring to see the work of God among the people of Chiang Rai, and the scale of His works was incredible. Villages which I thought would have been unreachable had churches planted among them; families steeped in religious and cultural traditions, which I thought would turn down the Word, were warmly receptive to the Gospel. Even the weather, which had been dreary and unpredictable days before our gospel rallies and house visits, was clear. God had sustained everyone throughout this journey.

I also give thanks to our friends from BKBC, who have been so welcoming and open to us, which overcame the potential language barrier or culture barrier since the majority of the BKBC youth spoke Mandarin or Thai. It was an absolute joy to talk to and play with them over the course of the trip. I've made new friends there whom I can follow up with over the years – and I'd love to be able to go back and see them again. Overall, going on the Chiang Rai mission trip was a fruitful and educational experience, and I am eagerly waiting to serve there again!



Riki

Building Capacity in Ban Klang Village

By Mok Hui Min

Education is often couched as the great social leveller, a path to a brighter future; for the children of Ban Klang Village in Chiang Rai, however, harnessing the power of education to transform their lives has proven to be extremely challenging. With a lack of stable, good job opportunities within the area and household incomes as low as less than S\$5 per day, especially for illegal immigrants¹, education is not a priority for most families. Because of the need to juggle work and school to supplement household incomes, many children are unable to attend classes regularly. There is also a dearth of capable teachers willing to stay in Ban Klang – as a case-in-point, despite the town investing heavily in a Taiwanese principal who expressed interest in relocating there, he reneged at the last minute.

Through efforts led by “Shi Mu” (Pastor Li’s widow, Li Wen Xiu 李文秀), Ban Klang Baptist Church (BKBC) has, over the years, slowly but surely, built capacity for the children in Ban Klang to pursue further education, and in doing so exposed them and their families to the Gospel.



Each year, “Shi Mu” works with Wen Ming School 文明中小学 to shortlist about 10 to 12 children ages between 7 and 15 who demonstrate good character and potential. These children will receive scholarships of S\$160 to S\$280 (or 4,000 to 7,000 THB) per year to study Chinese, which gives them a strong advantage in future university and job applications. This is possible only with PSPC’s support, which can amount to about S\$3,000 to S\$4,000 per year.

“Shi Mu” also sits on the board of two local schools, which allows her to track the progress and development of the children BKBC supports and to influence decisions made by the school board with a biblical worldview. Here, she also plays an important role in ensuring that the children of Ban Klang receive quality education.

BKBC’s efforts have borne fruit, with many of the supported children doing well in school and eventually going on to university. Since 2015, three students have completed/will be completing their university education, including one pursuing a degree in theological education – this was enabled by private funding from PSPC members. This year, three students are expected to complete high school with a bilingual education in Thai and Chinese, and they will be pursuing university education as well.

For the rest of the community, the doors of BKBC are always open. BKBC organises activities and lessons on both Saturdays and Sundays to encourage community bonding, knowledge sharing, and learning more about the Gospel.

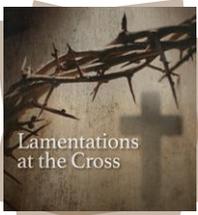
This is largely enabled by the support of a charitable foundation based in the USA, Compassion International², which funds free lunches at BKBC on Saturdays. To date, a few hundred children have benefitted from the Saturday lunch programme, and these same children often return to church on Sunday to attend services and Sunday School. As of mid-2025, BKBC is ministering to about 180 children.

Nonetheless, support from Compassion International is likely to terminate in 2026, as they plan to shift their focus to Myanmar, which they have deemed as a more needy place. BKBC will need to source alternative channels of funding to continue their outreach through the Saturday lunch programme, and we will continue to pray for God’s guidance on how we can best support them.

Indeed, as James 1:5 states: “If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.” It is an immense privilege for BKBC and PSPC to be used by God in serving his promise to the children of Ban Klang, and it is our hope that we can continue doing so for many years to come.

1 The legal minimum wage is now about S\$13 to S\$16, depending on the specific province.

2 For further details, please visit <https://www.compassion.com/history.htm>.



God's Weaving of a Mural: Tenebrae Reflections 2025

Compiled by Joyce Tan

How does a multi-dimensional, multi-sensory presentation like *Tenebrae Reflections* come together as a whole? In past years, *The Messenger* has featured individual reflections and write-ups with photos. Let us delve into the depth, breadth, and spiritual dynamics (the Hand of God), of *Tenebrae Reflections 2025*, through the multiple voices and lived experience of the key players - Producer, Music Director, Prinsep Players, the Arts Fellowship, Logistics & General Support, and Artistic Director. If each were a ball of coloured yarn, only God could weave the individual strands into a beautiful tapestry. Their narratives have in common a sense of awe and wonder at how everything worked together beautifully - by each giving their best, in humility and trust that God was working through others too.



PRODUCER: Kee Kirk Chin

I began conceptualising *Tenebrae Reflections 2025* almost immediately after *Tenebrae 2024* ended. Such was the impact on so many of us that when the final note was sung and the art pieces were taken down, we felt a deep sense of sadness. The longing to once again be part of such a profound spiritual experience moved me to start planning right away.

In preparation for 2025, I immersed myself in studying how *Tenebrae* has been observed across various denominations and churches around the world. What stood out to me was the singular focus on the sombre journey towards Christ's death — with no immediate celebration of the Resurrection. This intentional pause leaves participants in a state of mournful tension, mirroring the uncertainty Jesus' disciples and followers must have felt after the tomb was sealed.

Unlike us today, who know that Jesus rose from the dead, the disciples could only cling to His promises amid their grief. For *Tenebrae 2025*, we sought to lead participants to that same place — to feel the depth of anguish that comes from witnessing the death of their Saviour, with only the hope of His words to sustain them. This vision inspired the theme "*Lamentations at the Cross*" and our guiding verse: "*Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*" Matt 5:4

This new focus fundamentally reshaped how we selected the music and structured the entire presentation. Learning from the traditional 14 Stations of the Cross¹ observed in the Roman Catholic tradition, we organised *Lamentations at the Cross* into our own eight stations, or scenes, each marked by a choral anthem. We were

blessed with great alignment with the Arts Fellowship, who invited eight artists to create artworks inspired by each station, taking participants on a journey from "*We Gather to Mourn*" to "*We Leave Comforted.*"

As this year's Music Director and choir conductor, I began working with the choir, through all the selected anthems, till early February. Tong Jen's part of the narrative will reveal a life-changing event that impacted all of us.

Beyond music and art, the media presentations accompanying each anthem added a powerful visual dimension, drawing participants even deeper into the experience. Administratively, we were richly blessed by an incredible team of volunteers who knew exactly what needed to be done and carried it out with heart and dedication. From ushering, food preparation, sound, lighting, orchestration for instruments, to sanctuary setup and restoration, ticketing, narration and preparing the art displays — every task was carried out with a shared sense of purpose.

Through *Tenebrae 2025*, we truly gathered as a church — to mourn the death of Jesus and to leave comforted by His promises. May we continue to experience this same spirit of unity and reverence as His church at Prinsep Street for many more *Tenebrae*s to come.

¹ The 15th Station is "The Resurrection of Jesus" — it celebrates Jesus rising from the dead on Easter Sunday. It wasn't part of the original traditional Stations of the Cross, which focused only on Jesus' Passion and death (His suffering and crucifixion). But after the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), there was a push to emphasize not just the suffering, but also the hope and victory of the Resurrection.

MUSIC DIRECTOR: Tan Tong Jen

Tenebrae Reflections 2025 came and went. The lights are back on, the art pieces archived and daily life resumed. Yet Tenebrae this year was especially meaningful, and it impacted me and the choir significantly.

The choir has a rotational system with regard to the production of Tenebrae. I was initially tasked to oversee the technical and logistics aspects of organising Tenebrae Reflections and Kirk Chin was the Music Director.

On 8 February, just past noon, I received a phone call from Christopher, Kirk Chin's younger son. I was a bit surprised to see his call appear, as we seldom communicated. With a foreboding sense of premonition, I took the call and it was Kirk on the line. He broke the news that he had met with an accident while cycling and was quite badly hurt. It was apparent from his strained voice that he was in pain. He then asked me to take over as Conductor for Tenebrae.

After getting over the initial shock, I assured him that I would substitute for him and I wished him a quick recovery.

I broke the news to the choir, who had been learning the anthems under Kirk's leadership. They were shocked, but supportive and thankful for my taking over.

Initially, I felt quite overwhelmed by many things that Kirk had arranged thus far that were new to me. I held on to God's encouragement to Joshua, "Be strong and courageous." For I knew that this event was God's own work, and I was His servant.

I was heartened to see everyone putting their best foot forward and working together in one Spirit. The members of the technical and logistics team were capable and experienced, and carried out all aspects of tasks smoothly. This freed me up to focus on the choir and musicians, who were very responsive to my directions. Francis Tsang's contribution as leader of the Logistics and General Support Team testifies to God's provision in our time of need.

Along the way, we met spiritual challenges in the form of illness and bereavements. Yet the choir stood together, prayed together and encouraged one another. It was truly heartening to see God's faithful people living out their love for one another, which 'warmed the cockles of my heart'.

Another source of encouragement came from the overwhelming ticketing response – seats for Good Friday night were fully subscribed within three weeks of release, and by the day before Maundy Thursday, all seats were taken and some people were on the waiting list for both nights. We took this as a sign that there is a large field waiting to be harvested and our efforts over the past few Tenebrae events have paid dividends.

In the meantime, God had been healing Kirk, and amazingly, he could join our singing by March, despite still nursing broken ribs. The sight of him singing with

us was a strong testament to both God's and Kirk's faithfulness, and that greatly encouraged all of us.

Maundy Thursday came and the evening went really well, though we almost had an accident on the darkened stage. Again, by divine protection, no injuries were sustained. Then Good Friday evening came and again, everything went well. In the darkness on both nights, we could truly free ourselves from all material distractions and focus on the message of Tenebrae – though darkness may prevail for a moment, there will always be an eternal Light that cannot be extinguished nor obscured. It was this powerful message that touched the souls of all who were present, and we rejoice that the Gospel has indeed been proclaimed powerfully through our faithfulness.

The whole Tenebrae Reflection experience this year has echoed what the psalmist proclaimed in Psalm 118:5-9:

Out of my distress I called on the LORD;
The LORD answered me and set me free.
The LORD is on my side; I will not fear.
What can man do to me?
The LORD is on my side as my helper;
I shall look in triumph on those who hate me.
It is better to take refuge in the LORD
Than to trust in man.
It is better to take refuge in the LORD
Than to trust in princes.

Truly, we have prevailed in the face of setbacks and challenges, and we have emerged more firmly believing in a faithful God who sees His own work through, despite our weaknesses. Soli Deo Gloria!

I felt touched to see the variety of God-given gifts expressed through art, music & song with devotion and care. During the musical, I found myself tearing up at some parts... too deep for words. "Thank you Lord for being our Great High Priest, for offering Yourself as a sacrifice for our sins."
- Debbie Chen, member



(Continued on Page 14)



PRINSEP PLAYERS: August Minh Anh

By God’s grace, the PSPC Players were invited to participate in Tenebrae Reflections in 2024 and again in 2025. Though initially

unfamiliar, it became a deeply meaningful experience that reminded us of the heart of our calling to serve and glorify God through music. We continue to pray for His guidance and, if it is His will, hope to continue serving in 2026. It is a privilege to take part in something far greater than ourselves.

While all musical service is ultimately an offering to God, the Tenebrae Reflections carried a unique sense of reverence and reflection. It draws us into the final hours of Christ’s life and invites us to journey with Him to the Cross. The experience goes beyond music. Through collaboration with the Choir, Arts Ministry, and fellow believers, we serve together

Thank you for inviting me to participate in Tenebrae 2025. Although it has been a personally challenging journey to observe Lent this year, it was moving and meaningful to experience Christ’s sacrifice on the cross in artistic-musical, creative ways.

**- Ng Guat Tin,
contributing artist**

to help others encounter the depth of Christ’s love. It is less about performance, and more about creating sacred space for worship and remembrance.

Each member of the Prinsep Players brings unique gifts, but we are united by a shared desire to serve in humility. Gary Goh, our clarinetist and arranger, serves alongside his wife, Yuan Wen. Hugues Malphettes supports with both oboe and choir participation. Dr Philip Satterthwaite contributes musically on bassoon and choir participation, and spiritually as a preacher. We are blessed with Hoe Kit on cello. Beyond rehearsals, what holds us together is prayer, fellowship, and a commitment to growing in Christ.

Tenebrae Reflections has been a powerful reminder that faithful service, however small it may seem, has eternal value when offered to God. It deepens our understanding of worship, not just as music, but as a way of bonding together and leading others to the heart of the gospel. Each time we serve, we are reminded of the beauty of unity in the Body of Christ, and the power of the Cross to transform lives.

We give thanks to God for the privilege of serving in Tenebrae Reflections. May every note offered in faith speak of His love and draw hearts closer to Him.

LOGISTICS AND GENERAL SUPPORT: Francis Tsang

This is my second year serving in the Tenebrae service. When I first agreed to take on this role last year, I had little idea of what it would involve. Still, I said yes with a simple conviction in mind: God doesn’t look for ability – He looks for availability. He desires a willing heart more than talent, and I held on to that truth as I stepped forward again this year.

This year, as we approached the date of the event, I realised that my wife and I had a holiday scheduled just before the most critical week of preparation. Naturally, I felt uneasy - how could I possibly fulfil my responsibilities? Yet in His grace and perfect timing, God brought in Kum Tho as an additional helper to share the workload with me. That experience taught me that God always provides. His plans are not dependent on our perfect scheduling, and His purposes will never be hindered. What He begins, I know He will carry through to completion.

Throughout the planning process, I have had the privilege of working alongside various teams, each bringing different perspectives and strengths. It reminded me of Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians: the body of Christ is made up of many parts, and every part plays a vital role. Of course, there were times when members had differing opinions on various matters. In those moments, I had to first keep my own pride in check. Each time, God

gently prompted me with a single word: “Restraint.” I’m thankful I heeded that nudge. It allowed me to step back, listen, and trust that God was working through others too. In the end, everything came together in ways I couldn’t have orchestrated on my own.

Serving in Tenebrae has once again reminded me that I need to constantly work out my own salvation in my ongoing journey of faith: there is always something for me to learn, and always room to grow. I am reminded that when we walk with Jesus in humility and with a servant’s heart, there is no act of service too small and none wasted. Truly, there is never a dull moment walking with God.

I was amazed by how God guided each artist to create each art piece. The whole programme was meaningful & very well done. The reading of God’s Word, the singing and the art pieces all came together beautifully! Praise God!

**- Leong Yiat Teng,
contributing artist**



THE ARTS FELLOWSHIP: Andy Choy

The first Tenebrae I participated in opened up the partnership of art and faith.

Art creates opportunities to share our faith with friends and family. It deepens our worship and helps people bond.

This year, we started the preparation with the artists four months ahead of the event.

God works in amazing ways in that, every year, He never fails to send us dedicated artists to tell His Good Friday story.

Through prayer, reading of verses from Scripture, and silent meditation in a dimmed sanctuary, our artists were immersed in the Tenebrae setting. This helped inspire them in their creative art process.

The Arts Fellowship (TAF) team members were assigned to accompany each artist throughout the creative journey. They prayed together along the way, over difficult life events for some, till final completion of the artworks. It was a privilege for the TAF team members to see first-hand how God inspired and led each artist to create a meaningful final



artwork. I am sure this blessing of friendship will continue even after the event.

One of our TAF mission statements is to build up and encourage the community of Christian artists beyond PSPC, to shine for God. This year, God has blessed us richly in this area. We have made connections with various artists' networks. Our neighbouring church has a group of artists who shared with us how they are embarking on a similar journey as TAF. We hope to develop future collaborations with these partners.

God has blessed our church with incredible talent. Seeing how art and music come together beautifully in this

event gives me great joy. We are stewards of God's gifts and when we work together through music and art, God's presence touches the hearts of everyone who comes. It's a moving moment each time the artists' work is displayed on screen along with the choral singing.

This amazing journey testifies that we are blessed, and we are one Body in Christ.

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR: Serena Lim

How does Art fit into Tenebrae Reflections?

Tenebrae Reflections is primarily a sensory experience. The visual images and art pieces support the songs sung by the choir, staging the theme visually without necessarily being literal. This approach allows exploration of different perspectives while guiding attendees into a similar mindset, which deepens the song's message.

What challenges do you encounter when preparing the visuals for Tenebrae Reflections?

The music director carefully selects each song to represent a specific moment in Christ's journey to the cross; to draw the attendees' focus as they follow the story with each song, finding the right images that set the appropriate tone or illustrate a particular section is essential. Occasionally, the ideal image cannot be found; when that happens, 'customisation' is required – compositing different images into one.

Besides the images, the visual concept set for the Tenebrae service is to have the key words from the songs flash on screen. The timing of these words is based on the flow of the notes being sung. Thus, adjusting the timing to synchronise the words with the music better may involve multiple settings and practice rounds.

What do you find most rewarding and enjoyable about serving in Tenebrae Reflections?

Many believers who attended respond to the choral and visual arts with deeper personal reflection before celebrating Easter Sunday. For seekers, the experience deepens the message of God's love through His Son.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of involvement in Tenebrae Reflections is the sense of unity we share as fellow Prinsepian; serving together with a common goal – to do our best. Everyone involved worked hard and played an important role, from those upfront to those working behind the scenes. This collaboration highlights 1 Corinthians 12:27: "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it."

What thoughts came to mind at the end of Tenebrae Reflections?

I thank God for providing the opportunity to share His story through the Arts. His presence was evident at every step of the way, soothing hiccups and granting strength to those who were unwell, allowing them to persevere. And it would not have been possible without prayer warriors partnering with us. I am also grateful to the music director and producer for trusting and allowing me to explore my creativity, which helped speed up the process and made the journey more enjoyable.



ART & FAITH SERIES: Art and the Church

– The Rise of Iconography

By Clifford Chua

The Edict of Milan, issued in 313 AD by Emperor Constantine, marked a pivotal moment in Christian church history which ended the persecution of Christians and legalised their worship across the Roman Empire. With this newfound freedom, Christianity transitioned from a persecuted underground faith into a public and increasingly institutionalised religion. Imperial endorsement and patronage throughout this period of early church history saw the flourishing of a distinctive Christian culture as art moved from private homes and catacombs into public spheres. This seismic shift was most dramatically manifested in architecture as pagan temples and roman basilicas were repurposed and transformed into churches and baptisteries, many of which were magnificently adorned with religious images fashioned in mosaic, stained glass and marble. The newfound confidence that came with this freedom saw the beginnings of a uniquely Christian visual repertoire inspired by biblical subjects/themes. Visual representations of Christ, Mary and the saints became widespread and served the purposes of educating the illiterate faithful, reinforcing orthodoxy through the indoctrination of approved theology and fostering personal devotion as aids for prayer and contemplation.

One of the most enduring and influential expressions of this transformation was the development and proliferation of Byzantium iconography. Inspired by Roman imperial portraiture and late antiquity aesthetics, icons became common in both public churches and private homes. One of the most important icons that emerged during this period is that of the **Christ Pantocrator (Ruler of all)**. The earliest surviving example of one such icon, dated to the sixth century can be found in the St. Catherine's Monastery in Sinai, Egypt. Here, we see a frontal depiction of a bearded Christ, his head framed by a golden cruciform halo, (this superimposition of the crucifix over the halo is reserved for Christ) with the letters "O", "QN" (The One who is) inscribed. This is a reference to God's name, "**I AM Who I AM**" revealed in Exodus 3:14, pointing to Christ's equality with the Father. On closer inspection, one notices the asymmetry in the facial features, especially in the eyes. This is deliberate and intended as symbolic of Christ's dual nature as God and man, reinforcing the theological doctrine established at the Council of Chalcedon in 451AD concerning Christ's divine and human natures co-existing as one, "*without confusion, change, division, or separation.*" His left eye (right eye from our point of view) looks directly at the viewer, its stern expression accentuated by the slightly furrowed eyebrow and more pronounced cheekbones, which point to Christ as judge and ruler of all. In his left

hand, he holds the jewel-encrusted gospels signifying not only his identity as the Word of God but also pointing us to the standard by which he would judge the world. The features on his right are softer in comparison and point to his incarnation and humanity. The right hand raised in a sign of blessing that gestures the Greek letters ICXC (commonly used as a christogram) signifies his compassion and benevolence. Seen holistically, the image can be understood as a Christological synthesis of Christ's dual role as judge and redeemer underscored by his duality as God and man.

Icons like these are not meant to be portraits of an individual. Rather, they are windows to spiritual truths pointing us to the divine. The idea that material reality points beyond itself to higher realities is rooted in Neoplatonic metaphysics of dualism, most notably in Plato's philosophy on the *Theory of Forms*. Drawing from this perspective, early Christian thinkers taught that an icon is not merely a piece of decorative art but a sacred object that serves not only as a tool for theological instruction but also as a gateway between the faithful and the divine; a means for spiritual encounter. As such, icons are venerated in both the public and private spheres of worship with worshippers bowing before them, lighting candles and offering prayers in front of them. These practices continue to be prevalent in many Catholic and Orthodox churches today.



Christ Pantocrator of St. Catherine's Monastery, 6th century

The 'Iconoclash'

Despite its popularity, icons ignited heated debates/hostilities between the factions of the iconophile (icon-lover) and the iconoclast (icon-hater) which eventually culminated into the **Iconoclast Controversy** that lasted for more than a hundred years. Long before the iconoclasm (destruction of icons) associated with the



Khudov Psalter (detail), 9th century. The image represents the Iconoclast theologian, John the Grammarian, destroying an image of Christ. (State Historical Museum, Moscow)

Protestant Reformation, disputes concerning the legitimacy of the use of representation in worship had begun to surface amongst the Jewish and Muslim population of the empire who regarded such practices as violating the Second Commandment. But open hostility only

erupted when in 726 AD, Emperor Leo III initiated a ban on icons and removed them from churches to be destroyed. His successor Constantine V continued the purge and in 754 AD, at the Council of Hieria, icons were declared heretical and their veneration forbidden.

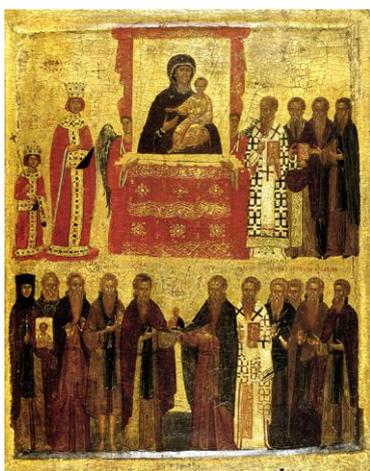
Their arguments for the prohibition were as follows:

- 1) The Second Commandment prohibits all religious images,
- 2) Christ's divine nature is invisible and cannot be manifested materially; the only provision is through the sacrament of the Eucharist (Lord's Supper),
- 3) True worship must be in spirit and in truth and not through the senses, and
- 4) Veneration of images is idolatry.

The iconophiles' argument, most fiercely defended by John of Damascus and Theodore the Studite counteracted with the following:

- 1) The Second Commandment does not forbid religious images, since God gave instructions for images of angels to be fashioned in Solomon's temple, but rather the worship of them,
- 2) The Incarnation validates imagery since God became material in Christ; He can be depicted in His human form,
- 3) Icons aid in devotion, stir repentance and help preserve orthodoxy,
- 4) Veneration is honour and not worship; the honour given to the icon passes on to the prototype and not to the material.

This first phase of iconoclasm lasted until 787 AD when Empress Irene, acting as regent, reversed the iconoclast ruling at the second Council of Nicaea and reinstated the



The Icon of the Triumph of Orthodoxy, 14th century (The British Museum)

reinstated the veneration of icons in the churches. This was in turn, overturned by Emperor Leo V in 814 AD who ushered in a second wave of iconoclasm which lasted until 843 AD when it was finally put to rest by Empress Theodora who reaffirmed the decisions made at the second Council of Nicaea. This victory by the iconophiles was celebrated as the Triumph of Orthodoxy

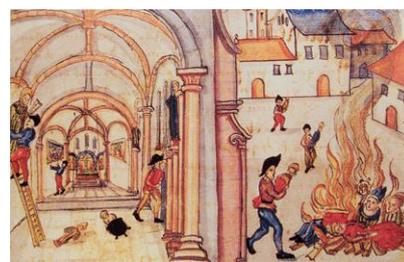
and subsequently institutionalised into the Christian calendar of the Orthodox Church to be commemorated every first Sunday of Lent. The prominence of Iconography in the liturgical/devotional practices of the Church remained unchanged thereafter even though tensions remained. These would ultimately flare up in the 16th

century in the wake of the Protestant Reformation when Iconoclastic fervour swept across northern Europe resulting in mass removal/destruction of statues, frescoes, and icons, including those depicting the Christ Pantocrator. For reformers, this cultural purge was a necessary step towards redeeming and recovering the purity of worship. The assertion of 'Sola Scriptura' as the standard for every aspect of the Christian life meant that iconography had no place in the liturgical practices of the Church. Their arguments against icons were articulated as follows:

- 1) Worship should be regulated only by what is explicitly prescribed in Scripture,
- 2) Scriptural over Sensorial mediation: The Word, not image, is the proper means of teaching and devotion,
- 3) Veneration of icons, in the bowing, kissing and offering of prayer before an image, is functional idolatry.

The iconoclastic sentiments among the reformers were by no means unilateral. Figures like Calvin and Zwingli strongly opposed religious images, which they believed compromised the purity of the Gospel. Luther allowed the limited use of images for teaching and instruction purposes but forbade their veneration. The Scottish and English reformers took a strong stand against iconography and spelled this out categorically in their Confessions and Church Standards. We read in Question 51 of the Westminster Confession's Shorter Catechism, for example: *What is forbidden in the second commandment? "The second commandment forbiddeth the worshipping of God by images, or any other way not appointed in his Word."*

The development of Christian iconography after the Edict of Milan represents one of the most profound intersections of art, theology, and worship in Church



Destruction of icons in Zurich 1524

history. Icons like the Christ Pantocrator are more than artistic masterpieces — they are theological statements, liturgical instruments, and spiritual windows into the mystery

of the Incarnation. Yet, as the iconoclastic controversy revealed, their use provokes serious questions about how the divine should be represented, how faith interacts with the senses, and how the Church mediates between heaven and earth. These debates are not merely historical — they continue to influence Christian worship, aesthetics, and theology to this day.

Clifford Chua has a background in Fine Arts and Art History and is currently the Academy Principal of the Singapore Teachers' Academy for the aRts (STAR). This article is the second in a series on Art and Faith.

New Testament Metaphors of the Church: “A Royal Priesthood”

By Eileen Poh



In his first epistle, the apostle Peter uses a few metaphors for the church in Asia Minor, which comprised both Jews and Gentiles (1 Pet 2:5). In 1 Pet 2:9, he calls them “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation”. These terms refer to Israel’s mission to the nations (Ex 19:6). Old Testament priests mediated between God and the Israelites. Israel as “a kingdom of priests” must mediate between God and the nations. The church as a royal priesthood must be a witnessing community, proclaiming God’s salvific acts to non-believers.

To fulfil this missional role as “a royal priesthood”, Christians in Asia Minor must continue to relate to non-Christians. They have previously withdrawn from their past sinful lifestyle shared with non-Christians (4:3-4). Peter exhorts them to continue abstaining from sinful desires (2:11). However, they must not isolate themselves into “an enclave of the redeemed”. Instead, they must “live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us” (2:12 NIV).

Peter uses two metaphors to depict how Christians are to live among non-Christians: they are aliens (*paroikoi*) and strangers (*parepidemoi*) in the world (2:11; see also 1:1, 17). They are aliens and strangers in their own society because of the alienation they experienced from their non-Christian friends and family members when they became Christians (4:3-4).

He then exhorts them to do good with a view to winning non-Christians to Christ (2:12; 3:1-2). He addresses three specific social relationships (2:13-3:6). Doing good and good works is a predominant theme. Peter’s exhortation for them to do good relates to their relationships with non-Christians, which are portrayed as hostile. This is Peter’s strategy for them to fulfil their missional purpose where they lived and worked.

How can the church as a royal priesthood and Christians as aliens and strangers in the world fulfil their missional role? I will focus on 2:13-17, where Peter addresses Christians in their relationships with non-Christian governing authorities (the emperor and governors) and fellow citizens. His injunctions must be understood in the context of the imperial cult, the practice of which was prevalent in Asia Minor in the first century AD.²

The emperor was the head of political power and the guarantor of peace in the empire. Thus his well-being was held to be very important for the welfare of his subjects. The initiative for establishing the cult came from the people themselves, thus expressing their loyalty to the emperor. The main feature of the imperial cult was the

imperial festival. Everyone in the city, from the governor to the ordinary person, participated in these festivals. Prayers and sacrifices were offered to the emperor in the imperial temples. There were processions through the streets; householders were required to sacrifice on altars at their gates. The doors of their houses were adorned with laurels and lamps; people wore festive clothes. The rich and elite paid for banquets and gladiatorial shows that were put up for all the people to enjoy.

Upon conversion, Christians in Asia Minor could no longer participate in these imperial festivals. They became subject to “the ignorant talk of foolish men” (2:15). This came from their neighbours and fellow citizens, and not from Rome. They would have been accused of disloyalty to the emperor, and perceived as anti-social, not caring for the well-being of the community. When the people of a city honoured the emperor, they expected some privileges and benefits from the emperor. The Christians’ refusal to participate in the imperial festivals would jeopardise such expectations.

It is in response to such a situation that Peter instructs Christians in Asia Minor to submit to the governing authorities but he qualifies this with the words “for the Lord’s sake”. This means that they cannot take part in imperial festivals. But to show that they care for the well-being of their community, they are to do good to their fellow citizens. In the ancient world, doing good can refer to public benefactions, which include supplying grain in times of necessity, erecting public buildings or adorning old buildings, refurbishing the theatre, widening roads, helping in the construction of public utilities, going on embassies to gain privileges for the city, and helping the city in times of civil upheaval. These acts would be seen and commended publicly.

It is possible that there were some rich Christians in Asia Minor who could render such acts of public benefaction. However, the injunctions to submit to governing authorities and to do good in 2:13-15 are addressed to the whole Christian community, rather than to a particular group. I think Peter might have envisaged the church, as a whole, performing acts of public benefaction, rather than a few individual rich members.

Peter’s exhortation to “do good” and “honour the king” in 2:11-17 must refer to “actual concrete behaviours” that can be observed by people in authority and others as good and worthy of commendation. Some examples of good works by individuals in the ancient world were:

1 J.H. Elliot, *1 Peter: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 2000) 440.

2 There were more than eighty imperial temples in the cities in Asia Minor.

helping someone with money, paying someone else's debt, giving a loaf of bread in a time of famine, pointing out a spring of water to a thirsty man, giving useful advice and sound precept, protecting someone's reputation, attending to one who is sick.³ These good works by Christians would show their concern for the welfare of their non-Christian neighbours and fellow citizens.

Doing good in the Graeco-Roman world was not confined to public benefactions. It also included obeying the laws. The phrase "praise those who do good" in 2:14 means "to praise those who were properly obedient", those who did not do wrong. All Christians could "do good" by being good citizens and obeying the laws, subject to the qualification "for the Lord's sake". By doing good, they would show their commitment to the community in which they lived.

In Graeco-Roman society, doing good was especially pertinent to one's response towards one's enemies. In answer to the question, "How shall I defend myself against my enemy?", Plutarch (first century AD) replied:

By proving yourself good and honourable. What, think you, would be their state of mind if you were to show yourself to be an honest, sensible man and a useful citizen, of high repute in speech, clean

in actions, orderly in living, outdo your enemies in diligence, goodness, magnanimity, kindly deeds and good works. These are the things which, as Demosthenes puts it "retard the tongue, stop the mouth, constrict the throat, and leave one with nothing to say."⁴

Peter knew the social conventions of his day, and by exhorting the Christians to do good, he anticipated a similar outcome in 2:15: "For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men."

I think Peter's strategy of doing good is applicable today. Our *Love in Action* programmes reaching out to seniors, students, rough sleepers, as well as inmates and their families are examples of how PSPC is demonstrating that we are a royal priesthood. While we live as aliens and strangers in the world, we can live as law-abiding citizens, and do good to non-Christians so that others can see our good works and glorify God. As we approach Missions Month, let us consider how we can participate in the church's missional purpose to bring the gospel to those who do not know Christ.

3 Seneca, *Ben.* 1.2.4-5; 2.35.3; 3.8.2-3; 3.9.2-3.

4 Plutarch, *Mor.* 88B.

Chinese Ministry Church Camp 2025 来经历福音的大能！

Compiled by Rev Cheam Wan Xian 詹婉娴

金波 Jinbo

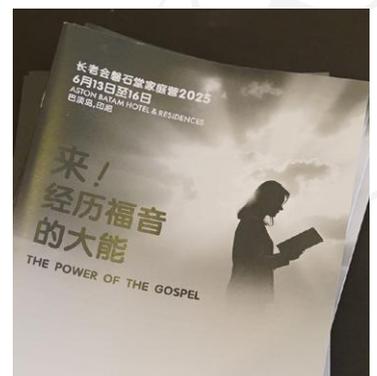
感谢上帝赐我们有一个愉快的教会营，讲员美玲传道透过福音书里的叙述文体，幽默和深入浅出的信息，每一场讲道都会与会众有特别的互动，使我们与神的话语有了更深的连接，反省自己是否也是众人眼中的“撒该”，学习过有价值而非有价格的人生，并再次确认耶稣是我们生命的主。



陈美玲 Mei Ling

这是一趟探索之旅

上帝大能已经彰显—然而，可‘看见’？
天父的爱一直等待—然而，可‘领受’？
真理圣言已经启示—然而，可‘触动’？
唯有醒觉才有回转，唯有信任才有投靠，
生命之旅从心灵之旅开展！



(Continued on Page 20)



顾青 Vanessa

在香港神学院读书的时候，美玲传道因为节俭经常去打包免费的剩饭。作为一个传道，竟然沦落到要与戒毒所里的人一起分享剩饭的地步，她心有不甘。但正是这样，她才切身领悟到，自己与戒毒所里的人同样都是罪人。传道的这番话，深深地敲打着我的心，是啊，我也是因为上帝的恩典，才成为一个蒙恩的罪人。接下来当我们一起高声赞美时，歌声道出了心声：
何等恩典，你竟然在乎我？
何等恩典，你宝血为我流？



程欣凯 Charish

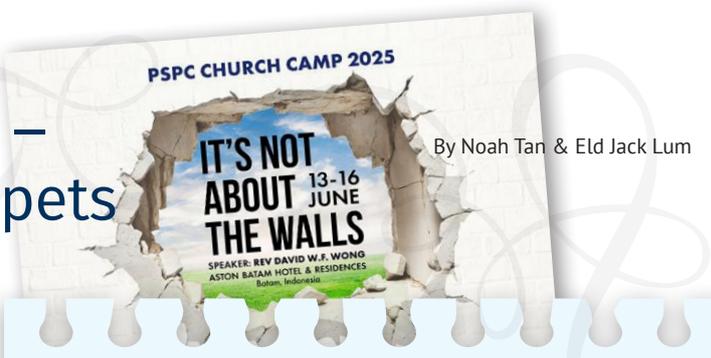
这次教会营不仅让我深刻体会到属灵亲人欢聚一堂的喜悦。更警醒我，我的眼光在注视世界的哪里，让我如此不安？我人生的焦点又原本应该是谁？耶稣基督的救赎所带来的力量并不是狭隘的，而是在我们人生所有的层面祂都有足够的力量，来带领我们扭转、克服并重新得力。

愿我们所听的道和所领受的感动，不只是停留在教会营，更是真实地活出在未来的每一天！
荣耀归给神！



PSPC Church Camp 2025 – Lessons and personal snippets

PSPC CHURCH CAMP 2025



By Noah Tan & Eld Jack Lum

Day 1, June 13, 2025 (first day)

NOAH

Lighthouse had planned three talks separate from the main Church Camp talks, and today, Sybil gave a talk about the Supremacy of Christ from Colossians 1. The talk was based on Colossians 1:19-20, which says, *“For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.”* This really spoke to me, as I was reminded of how Jesus is essential to all Christians, as without the resurrection, there is no Church and no salvation. I thought that this talk was very insightful and emphasised how we must always put Jesus first in our lives because he is superior.

In the evening, I joined the rest of the congregation for Movie Night. The title of the movie was The Forge, which was about a 19-year-old being mentored by his boss at work to become a faithful disciple of Christ. This movie really encourages us to look deeper into our relationship with Jesus and reminds us that when Jesus said to take up our crosses and follow him, we must also leave our earthly wants behind.

ELD JACK

Our speaker, Rev David Wong, encouraged us to have one takeaway each session. To ‘write it down, review and share with someone’. Good advice.

Talk One power phase – Build the city for the people. And build the people for the city.

Talk One learning point – Who you become is more important than what you do.

The movie, The Forge, was really inspiring. I thought I’d watch a bit of it, but ended up staying for the whole thing. Made me think about how the church needs a mentoring programme and also how we need to take time to love and understand others, especially those from different age groups and backgrounds.



(Continued on Page 22)

Day 2, June 14, 2025

NOAH

PLHers, including me, had to wake up extra early to board the bus. The destination? The *House of Shalom*, a Christian organisation that cares for needy youths in Batam. During the visit, we were split into groups to play icebreaker games with the youths.

Next, the youths from the *House of Shalom* led the PLHers in a time of worship and also shared their testimonies. I felt that the testimonies given by some of the youths were really moving, and it is incredible how God has provided for them. After the worship session, we moved on to arts and crafts organised by PLH. I was in charge of this activity, and we folded origami cranes, boats and doves to represent different elements of the story of Noah's Ark (*NOT my idea, by the way*). After the individual origami creations were completed, we also did a group paper collage to represent different scenes in the story. I was extremely glad that everyone enjoyed themselves.



+++++

After lunch, we visited one of the slum areas in Batam. Each group of five PLHers was tasked to visit five homes within the slum and pray for them. When I saw how some of the people there lived in darkness, I felt extremely sad that their living conditions were so poor. I was thankful that PLH had chosen to come to this area so that we could pray for them and also



offer them some aid in the form of gifts and food, albeit not much, but still something to help them through their day.

ELD JACK

Rev David Wong has such interesting introductions to his sessions. Love his deer and hunter illustrations!

Talk Two power phase – If you do not come face to face with the devil, he and you are walking in the same direction.

Talk Two learning point – Expect opposition and difficulties when we do God's work. Solution is to: (1) pray (2) keep working, don't give up (3) encourage the others who are serving together with you.

+++++

We had our CG dinner at IBC (Ikan Bakar Cianjur), the place where we, together with Fei Mei, Kok Choo, and Michelle tried when we first arrived a day before the start of camp. Andy declared that it was the best fried fish he had ever eaten! Sure boh?? Anyway, glad that everyone enjoyed the dinner.



Day 3, June 15, 2025

NOAH

The talk today on Colossians was about the traps that we encounter when walking the Christian Life. When Paul wrote to the Colossians, there was a very similar ideology, known as Gnosticism, which adopted Christian practices but believed that everything in the flesh was unholy and that one could earn one's way to Christ through one's works. However, this is not, in fact, true. One verse that struck me was Colossians 2:8, "*See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.*" This verse reminds us how easy it is to stray from the Christian way and stop following Christ, and what really scares me is that Gnosticism is only different in subtle ways from Christianity, making it easier for many to lose their way.

+++++

Many workshops for campers to attend in the afternoon, but I did not attend any because I had forgotten to sign up for any workshops!

+++++

Worship Night, in the evening, was not only super fun for everyone involved but also a time for reflection and glorifying God. The PLH and Yacht ministries teamed up to produce a small skit with worship songs integrated into the skit for their segment of the Worship Night. The skit centred on Owen, a young boy growing up in PSC who did not know what worship meant at first. However, as he grew up, he learnt more about how worship is an integral part of praising and glorifying God and its true importance. Everyone put in a lot of effort to make the performance entertaining, and I also had a lot of fun watching it. Good job, everyone!

ELD JACK

Talk Three power phase – Whose responsibility is it to feed you, the preacher or yourself?

Talk Three learning point – "Do not merely listen to God's Word, but be doers of it. Do not deceive yourself," James 1:22

+++++

Helper duty for Batik painting session. Wah...lots of artistic talent in PSC! Put my name in for the ballot for the central piece. Hope to get it! (Afternote: Kit Min got it. Sigh...)

+++++

Attended the Inter-gen dialogue. Very helpful and well moderated by Rayner. It is good for Prinsepians to attend such a workshop/dialogue. We get to understand one another more and appreciate the different challenges and issues different generations face.

+++++

I really enjoyed Worship Night. I was really glad to see the youths in PLH, especially those I had mentored and taught some years ago, growing up and maturing in the Lord. May they be faithful men and women after God's own heart.



WORKSHOPS



(Continued on Page 24)

Day 4, June 16, 2025 (last day)

NOAH

The days have gone by in a flash! All the other PLHers and I went back to the Dahlia Room for one last talk on Colossians 3. This talk, given by Mentor Shaun, was about the recipe to a Godly Christian life. One verse that stood out for me was Colossians 3:17, "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." This verse reminds me that we live only to worship God, and we should centre our lives on Him.

As I boarded the ferry back home to Singapore, I felt happy that I had decided to attend this year's Church Camp, and felt blessed for the many experiences God has given me during this trip. I hope I will be able to make it to next year's Church Camp, and that it will be as memorable as this one.

ELD JACK

Talk Four power phase – For God's glory and our good.
Talk Four learning point – All that we are and all that we have, are to be used for God's glory and for our good.

The reflection questions for Talk Four:

- a. What areas of my life need rebuilding, repairing, restoring?
- b. Am I a faithful steward of my finances?
- c. Does my lifestyle honour God?
- d. Are my decisions helpful or harmful in the long term?

The camp was over in a flash. My heartfelt thanks to the camp committee and all who had served diligently one way or another to make it a meaningful and God-honouring one. For God's glory and our good.



Children's MINISTRY CORNER

By Pr Carol Ng
Sunday School Superintendent

Sunday School Easter Programme (20 April 2025) Come and see the Crown of Thorns. Come to the Cross.

And that was what we did for our Sunday School Kindergarten to P6 children for this year's Easter programme.

The theme was "The Cross & I". We shared the meaning of Good Friday and Easter through a video titled "The Story of Easter for Kids" by Saddleback Kids. The children were taken through different segments of the video and quizzed based on the video shown. We also showed the children a mock-up of the crown of thorns and invited them to touch it. The purpose was to help them ponder what Jesus had done for them.



Thereafter, we invited them to pen down their sins or wrongdoings and bring them to the cross. The children "witnessed" how their sins were pinned or nailed on the cross. We also shared that we are reconciled with God because Jesus had paid the penalty for our sins.



Do pray for our young ones that they "Come and see the Crown of Thorns" and "Come to the Cross" and grow in their journey of faith in Christ. We commit our children to God. May they be assured of God's forgiveness because of Jesus' resurrection. "If Christ is not raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins." 1 Corinthians 15:17

(Continued on Page 26)

Children's Ministry: Sunday School Training (26 April 2025)



"Come and be equipped to build up the NEXT GENERATION for God."

And that was what the nine Sunday School teachers, assistant teachers and parents did when they came together for Sunday School training at Singapore Bible College. This training was on "Biblical Literacy: Helping Children Read, Understand and Apply Scripture", conducted by Esther and Elvin Ng from KidminSG and with our keynote speaker, Dr Peter Ho from Singapore Bible College. Below are the takeaways from some PSPC participants:

Chiam Li Li:

"Dr Peter Ho delivered a clear and powerful keynote, reminding us – through the Old Testament – of the Church's and parents' vital roles in keeping the next generation from falling away spiritually. Elvin and Esther from Kidmin Singapore then led a very insightful and engaging session on what it means to be biblically literate. Through their sharing of the Read-Understand-Apply (R.U.A) framework, we are better equipped to interpret God's Word responsibly and accurately. Most eye-opening was knowing that certain popularly quoted Bible verses have often been quoted out of context and inappropriately applied. I left the session feeling challenged and encouraged, both as a parent and a Sunday School teacher. The call to responsibly care for the spiritual growth of the next generation is indeed a high calling."

Elder Andrew Ong:

"Dr Peter Ho (below, third from right) issued a challenge on raising up our next generation of children so that they truly come to know God."



Cornelia Tay:

"The session was helpful in informing us about approaches to teaching children about the Bible, such as the R.U.A. method. Planning lessons based on age groups was a good reminder. The sermon (by Dr Peter Ho) also prompted me to keep in mind that it is important to pass down the faith to the children, so that they too can pass down their faith to their children in future. When teaching truths about the Bible, we need to make sure that they are biblically accurate, and that children may experience God's Word in their lives. I also benefitted from getting so many resources for myself and my students."

Ong Shwu Hoon:

"My key light bulb moments came from Peter Ho's keynote speech:

1. Reminder to live out and pass down a genuine faith that one generation can pass on to another; that's our duty!
2. Pray more for our children.

From Esther and Elvin's session, the key takeaway was to always understand the Scripture in context, and always draw lessons centred on God, rather than on us."



Amanda and Ian Ho:

"Learning takeaways:

1. Our role as parents: to live out our faith and pass it on to the next generation, by showing our children that God is real;
2. Teaching the Bible faithfully by reading carefully and in context;
3. Teaching the Bible effectively by catering for age-specific cognitive and social development levels."



Girls' Brigade (GB) 7th & 8th Companies ~ 2nd Quarter Update

By Jess Goh
Captain, 7th Company Girls' Brigade
Acting Captain, 8th Company Girls' Brigade

ENROLMENT SERVICE



7th Coy



Girls who enrolled:
Westwood Secondary School, one Sec 2 and seven Sec 1s
Yusof Ishak Secondary School, 22 Sec 1s



8th Coy

For once the white outnumbered the blue!



TWO SEC 4 GIRLS RECEIVED GB'S HIGHEST AWARD - PBB

SSGT Ong Jing Wen

NCOTC - NON COMMISSIONED OFFICERS TRAINING CAMP



SSGT Ong Jing Wen and MSGT Sarah Liao were awarded the Pioneer Brigadier Brooch



MSGT Sarah Liao



The girls learn drill, leadership skills such as facilitation, effective communication, and designing and planning games.



MSGT Chen Xinyuan who has been a GB girl since Primary 2, with our Guest of Honour, Ms Sharon Liat, President of GB Singapore



MSGT Sarah Liao and her parents



BOYS' BRIGADE (BB) 1ST COMPANY

~ 2nd Quarter Update



THE BOYS' BRIGADE

By Ho Yew Keong
Captain
1st Singapore Company

MARCH



The main highlights for the 2nd semester were our Standard First Aid course in March, the annual Enrolment Service in April, and the Adventure Camp in June.

Eighteen Boys attended the Standard First Aid with CPR(HO) & AED course on 17 & 18 March. They all passed and will be awarded the First Aid badge.

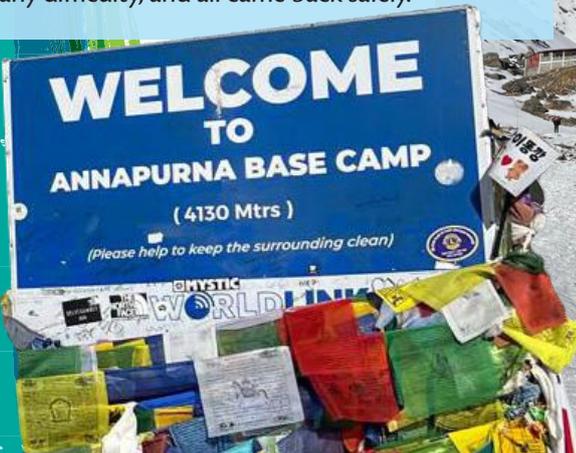


APRIL

On 9 April, two teams of five Boys each went for the Annual BB Blaze competition, which required skills in navigation, kayaking, teamwork and sports. This was the first time that our Company participated in this competition after two years. The Boys were not familiar with the demands of the competition and did not have any expectations. But they felt that it was a good competition for them to know where they stood.



In April, a group of Officers and Alumni went trekking in Nepal via the ABC trek. They comprised Eld Jack Lum, Ang Kok Wah, Felix Chua, Andrew Leong, Leong Kweng Kwok and Sharin Huang. They completed the route without any difficulty, and all came back safely.





As we started to equip our Batch 3 (Sec 1) Boys with their new uniforms to prepare them for the Enrolment Service, we also took this time to check on the other Boys to make sure that they were properly attired. We held our annual Enrolment Ceremony together with The Girls' Brigade (GB) at Yusof Ishak Secondary School on 12 April. The GB President Sharon Liat was the Guest of Honour as it was the inauguration of the 8th GB company at the school, and she was a former 8th Company Girl.

MAY



On 9 May, 26 Sec 3 Boys fulfilled their requirement for Community Spiritedness by visiting Bright Hill Evergreen Home, where they played Bingo with the residents, served them snacks and gave out goody bags to the elderly. This was part of the Community Spiritedness that the Boys had to fulfil every year to inculcate in them the spirit of caring and sharing.

IN & AROUND PSPC

New Births

Parents: Yii Zheng-Wei & Liu Jialin

We thank God for the gift of our firstborn daughter **Hannah Yii Mu Xi** on **28 May 2025**. Her Chinese name means "Shepherd by the river", a summary of the serenity and the tender care of our Lord spoken of in Psalm 23. We are grateful for the little village that God has given her in PSPC, and pray that she will grow in the grace of God each day.



Cody Tan, 26 March 2025

Parents: Samuel Tan & Sheryl Chng

Parents: Justin Chua & Sharon Tam

We are so thankful that God has blessed us with another baby girl, **Jasmine Chua** on **5 May 2025**. We pray that we continue to rely on His grace and wisdom as we continue to learn to parent our girls and bring them up to walk in His ways.



Parents: Mark Chen & Liu Huimin

We give thanks to God for blessing us with **Nathaniel Chen Qing En**, the latest addition to our family, on **25 May 2025**.



Wedding



Hello everyone, we are **Joshua Tan and Yvonne Teo**, and we recently got married on **31 May 2025**. We have been part of Aldran's cell group for the past two years. Yvonne grew up in PSPC and currently serves in the church choir, and together we have decided to continue worshipping here. We would appreciate your prayers as we begin this new chapter of marriage.



Parents: Ian Ho Yee Keong & Amanda Lim

We thank God for blessing us with our second child, **Josiah Ho Yong En**, born on **25 June 2025**. His arrival is an answered prayer and a testament to God's perfect timing and grace. We are thankful for the prayers and love we have received from our church family, and we pray for His guidance as we raise Josiah in His ways.



Installation of Elder & Deacon

Elder Sim Kang & Deacon Shaun Lee

Graduations

Samson Yu, Master of Ministry, Trinity Theological College
Dorothy Koh, Master of Theology, Trinity Theological College



PSPC Updates

(April 2025 - Present)

Deaths

Nancy Foong-Tan
6 MARCH 2025

Lim Heng Hoe
27 MAY 2025





writing this letter, Paul seems to be oddly optimistic and cheerful despite being under house arrest, a very bad situation. However, he assures us that our faith will bring joy. He states that true joy doesn't come from our circumstances but from the restoration and renewal that God works in and through our lives. This is what allowed Paul to rejoice in the face of hardship.

Another takeaway is that believers should stand united. The world that we live in seems to be more interested in establishing differences and painting diversity as an uncrossable divide. Paul reminds us, however, that despite our differences, we are united by what matters most: we are all children of God. Thus, we should strive to come together as a community to support one another.

Having takeaways is good and all, but how should we implement them in our daily lives? Well, I've tried staying optimistic regardless of the situation and how bad it might be. I've also attempted to follow the teachings of Christ.

Philippians Study

By Issac Wat, Middlers

Philippians is a rather short letter consisting of four chapters. However, there are a few key takeaways that I gained from its study, as well as how one could apply this to one's life.

One takeaway is to centre our lives on Christ and take Him as our perfect example. Early in the letter, Paul devotes a lot of time to outlining and precisely detailing what Jesus did, painting Him as a humble servant. Paul contemplates the work of Christ, on His humility, obedience and love, and urges us to use this example to guide our lives.

The next takeaway is that faith leads to joy. While

LIGHTHOUSE EASTER RETREAT



Tenebrae Reflections

By Natalie Wat, Minions

During the PLH Easter Retreat, I had the chance to attend the Tenebrae service, and it was certainly enlightening. It was my second time attending the service, and I felt a much deeper understanding of Jesus' path to the cross as compared to the first time I attended! When I listened to the various songs being sung, I better understood the pain and suffering Jesus went through because of us, and I feel so much more grateful for His sacrifice.

I was also amazed by the wonderful artworks drawn, as it opened my eyes to different perspectives towards Jesus' death that I have never considered before. After the service, the PLH committee even organised a reflection activity, which I felt was a meaningful way for me to consolidate my thoughts after the Tenebrae service.

The reflection activity not only involved prayer, but also gave us the opportunity to make a collage out of magazines, which I found was a very creative way for us to better understand how we were feeling by expressing ourselves through pictures. Overall, the Tenebrae experience was very insightful, and has helped me gain a deeper insight to how it was like during Jesus' death.



Last Supper Activity

By Noah Tan, Middlers

During PLH's annual Easter Retreat, the mentors organised a special activity to commemorate how Jesus encouraged all Christians and his disciples to be servant leaders by washing His disciples' feet. For the activity, we laid out several picnic mats in the Fellowship Hall and had a meal that was prepared by one of the mentors. We had some traditional Jewish treats to simulate how the disciples ate with Jesus during the Last Supper.

My favourite dish from the selection was the mutton soup, as it was both tasty and also felt really close to what would have been eaten during the time of Jesus. We then participated in an activity before the dinner where we had to wash the feet of one of our friends. I learnt that being Christians, we must always help and serve our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ just as Jesus once led by serving the disciples.

During the dinner, I felt like I was really in biblical times, and I also felt more connected to Jesus and God. I also thought the food was really delicious, and I enjoyed the quality time that I was able to spend with my fellow PLHers. I feel like this activity both brought me closer to God and also helped me understand how Jesus felt when He was dining during the Last Supper and when He was washing the feet of His disciples. I think I learnt a lot from

this experience, and would like to participate in similar activities in the future.



Easter Retreat

By Ean Er, Juniors

I am grateful for all of the PLH mentors who have contributed to planning the camp, as it allowed us to worship God and learn more about Him. I enjoyed the activities that were planned and I most enjoyed the part where we had the Last Supper.

After the retreat, I learnt a lot about God and what Jesus ate before He was crucified on the cross, and thoroughly enjoyed the food that Uncle Shaun prepared. The Tenebrae Reflections was a solemn but meaningful activity as well – it was my first time attending it and it allowed me to realise the significance of Christ's death on the cross.

I hope that we will have this again next year!

