

# New Testament Metaphors of the Church: “One Body”



By Eileen Poh

During Lent, we reflected on the death of Jesus Christ. Perhaps for some of us, our focus was on what Jesus' death on the cross means for us personally or individually.

I would like us to consider the implications of Jesus' death and resurrection for the church as a whole. I will use one of Paul's metaphors for the church to help us explore this issue. A metaphor brings together two terms, which have rather different meanings, to express something new.

In Ephesians 2:16, Paul uses “one body” as a metaphor for the church. Jesus' death on the cross has broken down the “dividing wall of hostility” between Jews and Gentiles. Through his death and resurrection, Jesus has reconciled both Jews and Gentiles to God “in one body, thereby killing the hostility”.

In Paul's day, the Jew-Gentile divide was the most fundamental division between two groups of people. This was evident in the Jerusalem temple, where Gentiles were prevented from entering by a stone wall which bore this warning: “No foreigner may enter within the barrier and enclosure round the temple. Anyone who is caught doing so will have himself to blame for his ensuing death.”

But Jesus has broken down this “dividing wall of hostility”. He has reconciled both Jews and Gentiles, creating in Himself one body (Eph 2:15-16). The emphasis of this metaphor is oneness or unity. If the Jew-Gentile divide is “a prototype of all divisions”, then the church as one body displays a unity that transcends all barriers.

For Paul, this inclusion of Gentiles in God's salvation plan is the “mystery of Christ”, which has been revealed to His apostles and prophets by the Spirit (Eph 3:5). This “mystery of Christ”, Paul explains, is that “the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel” (Eph 3:6). He uses three adjectives, which begin with the same preposition *syn* (‘with’, ‘together’).

This new status of Gentiles reverses the situation of the Gentiles, for before coming to Christ, they were “separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world” (Eph 2:12).

But now in Christ, Gentile Christians are co-heirs with Jewish believers of the full blessings of God's salvation (Eph 1:14). Together with Jewish believers, they are now members of one body on equal terms. And along with Jewish believers, they also share in the promise, that is, God's promise to Abraham through whom all peoples on earth would be blessed (Gen 12:1-3).

This “mystery of Christ” was kept hidden in God for ages past but now has been revealed. The purpose for this revelation is that “now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to His eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Eph 3:10-11).

The inclusion of Gentiles into “one body” with the Jews is not an afterthought on God's part. It has always been His purpose from the beginning. It is through the church as “one body” that God manifests His manifold wisdom to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms.

Who are these rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms? They are the earthly authorities, which include the emperor and governors, and the principalities and powers of darkness in the heavenly realms. All these authorities and powers have been brought under the authority of Christ (Eph 1:21).

God's intention of creating the church is to display His manifold wisdom to both earthly authorities, and the principalities and powers in the heavenly realms!

Tom Wright sees this as “one of the NT's most powerful statements of the reason for the church's existence: the rulers and authorities must be confronted with God's wisdom, in all its rich variety, and this is to happen through the church! Not, we should add, through what the church says, though that is vital as well. Rather,



through what the church is, namely, the community in which men, women and children of every race, colour, social and cultural background come together in glad worship of the one true God.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Tom Wright, *Paul for Everyone: The Prison Letters* (London: SPCK, 2004) 36.

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## A Personal Note

Take a look at the photo on the right. Do you notice something unusual about the ferns?

Instead of the leaves facing upwards, they are all facing to one side, all in the same direction.

The next photo shows why.



The ferns grow underneath a flyover, and therefore get the sunlight from only one direction at an oblique angle. The leaves are angled to absorb as much sunlight as possible. In so doing they are all aligned in the same direction. This was not accomplished by having a meeting amongst the plants and

passing a resolution to all face the same direction (although plants can and do communicate with one another in various ways – see <https://theconversation.com/the-silent-conversations-of-plants-235127>). Rather, the plants grow in the direction of the light source through a process known as phototropism and are aligned as they grow in the same direction.

What about us as a church? As plants seek the sun, so too we, individually and collectively, need to seek the Son and follow Him. Of course, this does not mean we are automatically aligned. Alas, unlike plants, which communicate through chemical signals, we do need to have meetings and discussions, so that we can come to a common understanding and direction, and fulfil the 2025 church theme of *Renewing our Hearts, Building as One*.

In the first quarter, the sermon and Bible studies were on Community. What should the Church look like? Eileen Poh, in the cover article, explores the metaphors of the church in the Bible, starting with Eph 2:16 – One Body. We also start another series on “What does Church look like?”, kicking off with Jeff Partridge’s cell group in Connecticut (pages 4-5). Rev Peter Chan shares about the growth of the Presbyterian Church in Cambodia, initiated by several Presbyterian churches in Singapore over a decade ago (pages 8-9).

PSPC is situated in the middle of the Arts Triangle, surrounded by Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) and LASALLE College of the Arts (forming The University of the Arts Singapore), and the School for the Arts (SOTA). As we seek to reach out to those around us through the arts, Clifford Chua will take us on a journey of Art and Faith. In this issue, he introduces us to the art of the early church (pages 6-7). The art then was meant to evoke Christ. As we reflect now on the completed work of Christ at Easter, one thought that arises is that we are God’s handiwork (albeit in progress). Do we reflect Christ and point others to Him through our lives like the ferns under the flyover collectively pointing towards the sunlight?

*Chia Gaik Bee*

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Do you have any feedback on *The Messenger*? Do let us know at [pspcmessenger@gmail.com](mailto:pspcmessenger@gmail.com)

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If Jesus Christ has broken down the barriers that have separated people, and has created the church as “one body”, then the church should comprise people from different races, colour, languages, cultures, and social status. If our churches are still divided along these lines, then perhaps we have not fully understood the implications of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The church as “one body” provides an alternative community, which displays the wisdom of God to the fractured communities in our world today, where barriers have been erected between people groups and nations on the basis of class, colour, gender, race, or other divisive ground.

Our world has changed quite dramatically in the last couple of months, and more changes are expected in the future. Shared values, which have kept international relations stable since World War II, are shredded by a stroke of the pen or the pronouncements of powerful people. This creates much uncertainty and anxiety for future international relations. Within national boundaries, rival groups use violence to assert their power. On the interpersonal level, some social media influencers have spouted conspiracy theories, and misogynistic messages, which encourage hatred against women.

The third stanza of the hymn “O Christ, the Great Foundation”, written in the last century, could be describing our generation as well:

*Where tyrants' hold is tightened,  
Where strong devours the weak,  
Where innocents are frightened,  
The righteous fear to speak.  
There let Your church awaking  
Attack the powers of sin  
And, all their ramparts breaking,  
With You, the victory win.*

It is indeed time for the church to awaken, to see and fulfil her role as “one body” in our broken world, to present herself as an alternative community, where barriers of race, class, gender, colour, are broken down. A Christian community living in harmony and unity serves as a model of what true community should be. This is why it is important for us to take seriously the recent sermon and Bible study series on “Christian Community”, which emphasises oneness and unity.

The church as “one body” displays the wisdom of God. What does the world think of God when they see a divided church?

## Christmas Service 2024

Photos by Mark Chen, Gary Chong & Ian Ho



# What Does Church Look Like? A Cell Group with a Mission

By Jeff Partridge

*Jeff and Joo Eng Partridge were members of PSPC in the 1990s and early 2000s. Jeff served as a Deacon and cell group leader, and Joo Eng in the Children's Ministry. They moved to Connecticut, USA, in 2002, where Jeff and Joo Eng teach college and attend Valley Community Baptist Church.*

**And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10: 24-25)**

The cell group that Joo Eng and I lead in Connecticut has gone through a transformation that has redefined what church looks like for our group.

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, Joo Eng and I hosted a cell group in our home, just as we did in the 1990s in Singapore as members of PSPC. This Connecticut cell group consisted of mature believers dedicated to the spiritual disciplines of bible study, prayer, worship, and discipling. By the prompting of God, we began to consider ways in which we could not only study His Word together, but apply it together as well.

As God prompted us in the area of applying His Word in service to others, we considered ways we could put our faith into action together. We organised several service activities, like providing meals for the homeless, but these were few and far between, and lacked significant impact. But through these efforts, I believe God was beginning to give us a vision.



Jeff and Joo Eng, with Jamie

When the pandemic hit, we, like the rest of the world, discovered Zoom. Soon after that, God introduced Jamie to our Zoom meeting and our cell group has never been the same.

Jamie is a disabled man who attends our church and was attending my adult Sunday School class prior to the pandemic. I had never considered that Jamie might want to be part of a cell group like ours, and because we don't

have wheelchair ramps in our home, he could never do so. God used the pandemic and Zoom to change all that.

With Zoom, we could welcome Jamie every week into our cell group Bible studies, and it wasn't long before he became a significant part of our group – so much so that once the pandemic tapered off and our church's groups and worship services went back to meeting in person,

our group made the commitment to remain on Zoom so that Jamie could continue to participate.

But God wasn't done with us. By opening up to Jamie, our group began to grow in our awareness of people who live with disabilities and special needs. We started volunteering to serve as a cell group at events held at New Horizons, the facility in our town where Jamie and many other people with special needs live independently in apartments. Then we decided to organise an Easter service for the residents, followed by a summer worship time with music at their outdoor pavilion.

God was now showing us the need at New Horizons – the deep spiritual need of a people who are often left out of church planning and outreach because they are a discomfort, inconvenient, or simply “invisible.” Some have called the disabled an unreached people group living on the fringes of our societies.

Still, God wasn't done with us. Or perhaps I should say, with Jamie. God stirred in Jamie a desire to share the love of Christ with his fellow residents and he came to us with a much bigger vision for our group's role.

So it happened that in September of 2023, we completely refocused our aims and our schedule. We became a cell group with a mission. This was our new plan: for three Mondays each month, we would meet via Zoom for Bible study, and on the fourth Monday at 6pm we would meet in person at New Horizons to share a worship service and fellowship time with anyone there who wished to join us.

Thanks be to God, the facility management allowed us to use a community room and to advertise in their residents' newsletter. Our brother Jamie was instrumental in getting his fellow residents to attend. I remember all of us setting up for the first worship event, wondering if anyone other than Jamie would show. As 6pm drew near,



Worship at New Horizons on February 24, 2024



several residents rode in on their electric wheelchairs and we greeted them with thanksgiving in our hearts. By the time we had sung our first two worship songs, more residents rolled in and the room began to fill up.

As we got to know our new friends, we invited them to join our Bible studies on Zoom, and now we have six regular attenders from New Horizons in our Zoom meetings and a dozen or so individuals attending the monthly worship event. God then put it on our hearts to refashion our



*Tiffanie on Jeff's right is excited to be baptised on Easter Day*

Bible study approach. Rather than serving the needs of our original group with in-depth Bible study for mature Christians, our Bible studies would be tailored to seekers and new believers.

Over the past several months, two of our new friends have made the decision to become followers of Jesus, and one will be baptised at our church on Easter Day.

Now that our eyes are open to the needs of people with disabilities, the opportunities keep growing. Our church recently held a weekend conference on local outreach, and the theme of the final talk was on reaching and serving those living with disabilities in our local communities. The speakers from the New England chapter of Joni & Friends, a ministry established by the amazing Joni Eareckson Tada, talked about the efforts required to make a church truly welcoming to people with special needs. It's not just about providing ramps and disability-friendly toilets. Becoming a welcoming church to people with special needs requires a change of mindset, a willingness to live with distractions in our services, and much more. They were basically asking us, what would church look like if we were to embrace the

opportunity to reach and serve people with disabilities and special needs.

Something Jamie shared with our group really brought this home for us. He said that when he was young, he told his foster parents that he wanted to go to church with them and their able-bodied children. Their response was, "You don't need to go to church, Jamie. You're one of God's flowers." In other words, God's going to save you anyway, so why go to church? In reality, Jamie says, they just didn't want the hassle of bringing their wheelchair-bound foster son to church – and one wonders whether the church was even equipped to serve him.

More significantly, their response belied a false belief that people go to church to earn favor with God and that is the limit of the benefits of Christianity. Today, Jamie is a baptised member of our church and serves on the welcome team. Because of his transportation schedule, he arrives on Sundays an hour early and listens to the worship team's rehearsal. He attends another online Bible study and comes to church on Thursdays for a fellowship group of about 50 people with special needs. His life today is full of the benefits of knowing Jesus.

More than once Jamie has turned to me on a Sunday morning and said with a gleam in his eye, "I love this church."

We believe our cell group is part of a new movement at our church to reach people with disabilities with the love and salvation of Christ. And we have so much to learn. Some of us will be volunteering to serve later this year at a Joni & Friends retreat for families impacted by disabilities where we hope to learn more about serving the needs of this special group of people.

What does church look like? For us, the answer to that question is different today than it was several years ago. God has taken a group of Christians serious about Bible study and made us a group serious about application. By God's leading, we are becoming a cell group with a mission.



# ART & FAITH SERIES

## Early Christian Art

By Clifford Chua

About a decade ago, I took a month off from my role as a school principal to embark on a 'Grand Tour' of Europe for my sabbatical. This grand tour follows in the 17th century European tradition in which socially conscious men and women of means travelled across the European continent to satisfy their fascination for all things Classical, Renaissance and Baroque. They would study the ruins of ancient antiquity, as well as the works of the Old Masters as a way of enriching their cultural sensibilities. This was the learning journey of their day. This sabbatical was especially special because it afforded me the opportunity of a lifetime to see the Art that I had studied, taught and loved but had not seen in the 'flesh'. I had hitherto not seen iconic works such as the Sistine Chapel or the marvellous collection at the Vatican Museum. The experience of viewing these treasures in situ was one of those life-defining moments that one never forgets.

In making a list of works of art that one must see before one's imminent departure, Early Christian Art was categorically amongst the top three. When one mentions Early Christian Art, one thinks of the Byzantine mosaics of the 4th century or the Greek icons of the Orthodox Church. Whilst these Ecclesiastical treasures are worth one's time, my peculiar interest predated these. Two curiosities precipitated my interest in Early Christian Art prior to the edict of Milan (313 AD), before Constantine sanctioned Christianity as Rome's official religion.

I was curious about the art of the persecuted church, how these might throw light on what the early converts thought and felt about their new found faith, how this faith might have characterised their life (and afterlife)

aspirations and what images were being employed to express them. Secondly, I was clueless about the depiction of the Virgin Mary in these early days, before the council of Ephesus (431 AD) officially venerated her as the 'Mother of God' and propagated her adoration/ worship through the proliferation of her iconography in so much of European Christian Art. What was her place/importance in the artistic oeuvre for these early Christians? To satisfy these curiosities, one needed to go six feet under, literally... down to the catacombs.

Early Christians were buried in underground catacombs outside the city because the ancient Romans forbade the burial of the dead within the city walls. The catacombs consist of a network of tunnels with small rectangular niches (called *loculi*) carved along the walls for holding the dead bodies as well as carved out chambers (called *cubiculi*) for the purpose of conducting religious ceremonies.

Everywhere along the walls, one can make out common symbols of the fish, the anchor, the Greek letters Alpha and Omega as well as 'X' and 'P' on its surfaces, scratched out like graffiti on vandalised classroom table tops. We were told these symbols were all monograms for Christ and were commonly used by Christians to identify their allegiance to the faith. We did not see any paintings until we entered the chambers. The frescoes found on these walls had seen better days and had faded with the passage of time through neglect. Beneath the grubby, discoloured frescoed surface, one can make out several motifs from the Old as well as the New Testaments.

Christ as the Good Shepherd is a common image. Unlike the ubiquitous image of the benevolent, bearded



Catacombs of San Callisto in Rome, Italy



Examples of early Christian symbols in the Catacombs







Jesus many of us are accustomed to seeing, Jesus was depicted here as a clean shaven young man carrying a lamb over his shoulders. This depiction of Christ was largely derived from its pagan sources, most notably that of Hermes (the Greek god, not the boutique!), the ram bearer. The mythology of the ram bearer revolves around Hermes carrying a ram around the boundary of the city walls in an act of ritual purification that spared the citizens of the city from the plague. The local cults that sprang up from this mythology honoured Hermes as a protector and regarded him as a mediator between the divine and mortal realms. The image of the ram bearer became a common iconography used in Roman funerary art and culturally understood as Hermes guiding the deceased to the underworld.

Reinterpreted for Christian purposes, it is not difficult to see the similarities, how the image of Christ as the Good Shepherd would have been understood as Christ's protection over the deceased faithful and his willingness to lead them into eternal life. The Christians of the early church had little choice but to appropriate and re-contextualise these pagan narratives for their own purposes since at this juncture of church history, there was as yet no lexicon of Christian iconography or visual vocabulary that artists could rely on to articulate their visions of this new found faith.

On either side of the Good Shepherd were two motifs taken from the book of Jonah; one of Jonah being thrown out of the boat, the other of him being vomited out by the fish (although in the paintings above, the fish was depicted as a sea monster). It may seem odd at first glance to see this Old Testament story appearing in the catacombs. What significance did the story of the reluctant prophet have for these Christians? What meaning did this narrative hold for the deceased in their hope for the afterlife? The early Christians understood Jonah to be a type of Christ and interpreted Jonah's narrative as foreshadowing Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. Such a reading has as its scriptural basis in passages like Matthew 12:40-41 and Luke 11:29-30.

In rebuking the scribes' demand for a sign, Jesus said that no sign would be given them except the sign of Jonah, *"For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."* The message of the Jonah motif is clear; just as Jesus died and rose from the dead, so shall all the faithful in Christ (see how Jonah emerges from the monster's mouth with hands raised in triumph!). There, painted and kept for posterity, were first century echoes of faith and hope. The early Christians were all bound in their faith in Christ alone as Saviour and it was in Him that they placed their hope of salvation. I scanned the room as I left the chambers; I did not see any image of the Virgin Mary.

The strong sense of community as evidenced in the layout of the catacomb touched me. The *loculi* holding the dead bodies were all laid side by side and arranged in rows close to one another. No doubt this was for pragmatic reasons but symbolically it expressed not only their desire to be buried together but also their hope to be resurrected together. There is something very powerful and moving about this. As we emerged from our decorated chamber, we heard singing (in two-part harmony) coming from the next chamber. As the voices filled the chambers and reverberated across the graven labyrinth, they echoed and swelled within the inner chambers of one's heart, transporting one's spirit across time and space, mystically transcending into oneness with those who have gone before; altogether rejoicing that Christ is indeed risen and that death has no more hold on us! The eyes turned misty...O what joy!

*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 first in a series on Art and Faith.*

# 我的小时候 (When I was a kid...)

耶稣叫了一个小孩子站在他们当中，说：“我实在告诉你们，如果你们不回转，变成像小孩子一样，一定不能进天国。所以，凡谦卑像这小孩子的，他在天国里是最大的。”(马太福音18:2-4)

这是我们都非常熟悉的经文。在1月18日的思乐团契中，我却有了更深一层的体会。

那天，气象局原本说会是一个下雨天，但早上的天气却出奇的好，SAAC老人家都安然抵达教会。作为迎接他们的同工，我们都深深感恩，上帝确实垂听了我们在会前作的祷告，相信祂也预备好出席者的心，一起来感受敬拜上帝，分享主爱的喜乐。

当天的主题是“小时候”。像主题经文所说的，我们都当回转，变成像小孩子一样，单纯地来信靠祂，就能经历天国所应许的福份。

那天国的福份有哪些呢？接下来，忆缘(Janice)，欣凯(Charish) 和少杰的分享，述说了他们小时候的奇妙遭遇，在圣灵的穿针引线下，使我们看到上帝如何在我们天真烂漫的岁月中，通过种种经历，塑造我们成为祂蒙福的儿女。



谁能知道，现在长得美丽聪慧的忆缘，小时候竟然跌破过头，差点没命或者成为植物人？少女时期，在郊野的老住宅营地遇到流氓，差点遭害？从小在基督教家庭长大的她，信实的上帝一直都与她同在，在惊险的场面里，人无法做什么的时候，阿爸天父的手却紧紧保护了她。也因为这样真实地经历了主，造就了祂奉献当传道人的决心。

欣凯的遭遇也一样奇妙。在父母因为他升学的需要一筹莫展，迫切祷告的当儿，一位完全不认识的陌生阿姨竟然在圣灵的带领下，如同天使一般地出现，毫无条件地供应了他三年的学费。这，若不是上帝的安排，怎么可能成就？这件事在欣凯小小的心灵里烙下了对上帝不可磨灭的印象，也坚定了他要奉献读神学，一生事主的心！

少杰小时候生长在一个非信徒的家庭里。三兄弟中，哥哥最顽皮捣蛋，时时惹妈妈生气，经常挨打；而少杰是比较胆小怕事的，有时向妈妈报告哥哥在学校里闹事，结果自己也无故遭打。后来，哥哥读中学时认识了一群基督徒的同学，就跟他们去教会，信了主，成为家中第一位基督徒，从此性情改变，上帝使他变成一位好青年，也带领了多位家人信主。



SAAC长者们聚精会神地聆听着这些见证。后来，在宏恩(Samson) 的带领下，他们也响应热烈地分享了自己小时候难忘的记忆。在敞开心的氛围下，大家都像回到儿时一样，相信上帝会亲自向他们说话，见证祂的信实，保护与供应。

是的，我们都是上帝按照祂形象所造的，在我们还懵懂不认识祂的时候，祂就已经爱我们了，并且通过不同的管道与经历谦卑我们，使我们回转归向祂。相信上帝同样在这些年SAAC长者身上有个别的带领与恩典，不管是在哪一个年纪，只要能谦卑像小孩一般，单纯地信靠祂，就能得到天国的福份，这是慈爱的救主应许赐给我们的。



## (English Translation by Ow Yuhao)

Matthew 18:2-4 ESV: And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

This Bible verse is one that we are all very familiar with. However, during the SAAC Chapel service on 18 Jan 2025, I had a deeper understanding and appreciation of its meaning.

That day, although the forecast was for rain, the weather turned out to be amazingly good in the morning. The seniors from SAAC also reached the church safely. As part of the welcome team from church, I felt a sense of gratitude from God hearing our prayers. God must have also prepared the seniors' hearts to enjoy the worship service, and share the joy of God's love with one another.

The theme for the service was "When I was a kid". As the Bible verse says, as we become like children and learn to trust Him with child-like faith, we will enjoy the blessings of the kingdom.

What then are these "blessings of the kingdom"? Pr Janice, Charish and Shao Jie shared their life experiences of when they were young. We saw how under the guidance of the Holy Spirit who worked through their naive and innocent years, God shaped them into who they are today – His children covered under His grace and blessings.

Who would have guessed that Pr Janice, with her beautiful looks, actually fell down when she was a child and almost died or remained in a vegetative state? She was also nearly harmed by hooligans at an old outdoor estate when she was young. However, having been born and raised in a Christian family, she always had faith in the presence of the living God. In these dangerous and life-threatening circumstances, when there seemed to be



nothing man could do, God the Father's hands were always steadily protecting her. These life experiences with God eventually led her to serve God as a pastor.

Charish's experiences were no less miraculous. As his parents were fervently praying for financial help for his studies, a total stranger, having been prompted by the Holy Spirit, stepped forward like an angel and unconditionally offered her support to sponsor Charish's school fees for three years. How could it be if this was not from God? This incident left a very deep impression of God in Charish's heart, which also eventually prompted him to study theology and serve God with his life!

Shao Jie grew up in a family of non-believers. Among his siblings, his brother could be said to be the most mischievous, often incurring his mum's anger and getting a beating. On the other hand, Shao Jie was the timid and reserved one, occasionally reporting his brother's trouble-making in school but also ending up being beaten by his mum too.

Thereafter, his brother got to know a group of Christians from school and went to church with them. He eventually believed in Christ, and became the first Christian in the family. With his life transformed, his life became

purposeful and meaningful as a youth, leading many of his family members to Christ, including Shao Jie.

The seniors from SAAC listened attentively to all this sharing. Then, under the guidance of Samson, they also started sharing their memories of their own youth. Under a relaxed atmosphere, everyone seemed to return to their childhood days. We believe that in this time of sharing, God personally spoke to them and testified to His truth, protection and providence.

Yes, we are all lovingly made in God's image. While we were still lost in our ways and far away from God, He loved us first. He uses different life experiences to humble us so that we can return to Him. I believe God has also led and shown the same grace to the seniors in SAAC. Regardless of age, as long as we humble ourselves and continue to have childlike faith and believe in Him, we will be able to enjoy the blessings of the kingdom, prepared for and given to us by our gracious and loving God.



## The True Renewal of Spring

By Joshua Wee

The Chinese Ministry held a music outreach event, "The True Renewal of Spring", on 21 Mar 2025. Featuring NAFA staff, students and friends on vocals, string instruments, piano and organ, it was an excellent opportunity to share the gospel using the talents that God has blessed the students with. Seated in the sanctuary after a long week at work, the audience was treated to skilful renditions of classical pieces like the 1st movement of Beethoven's *Spring Sonata* and familiar hymns such as *All Things Bright and Beautiful*. The climax of the recital was a medley of *Baba Yaga* and *Great Gate of Kiev* from Mussorgsky, expressing the theme of "The True Light" with grand crescendos and soaring melodies. Although some songs were sung in Mandarin, the universal language of music and helpful accompanying English translations brought the message across to all in the audience, regardless of linguistic ability.

The event's theme of "The True Light" was rooted in John 1: 4-5, which says, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has

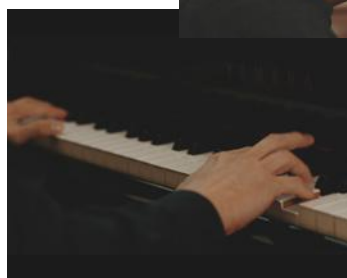
not overcome it." As the music incorporated motifs of darkness and light, the audience was invited to consider how Jesus Christ is our light, shining into the darkness of our hearts and showing us the way into new and everlasting life. After the musical climax, the speaker Rev Tong Ming Hung shared a personal testimony about how he encountered Christ during his polytechnic years and received the light of Christ as he struggled with the early passing of his father and the seeming meaninglessness of everyday life. Although he was initially unsure and uncertain, God answered his



(Continued on Page 10)

request for revelation and made Himself known through Ming Hung's diligent study of the Word, granting him peace and joy that he had never known before. Ironically, although the fear and anxiety that plagued him before knowing Jesus had turned his hair white, the light of Christ restored his life in such a powerful way that his hair returned fully to its original black colour.

The outreach event faced several challenges, including a male and female lead singer both falling ill within a week of the recital, leaving them unable to perform. By God's grace, replacements were found and the event carried on smoothly. Despite these difficulties, the "True Renewal of Spring" event was able to minister to audience members from a wide background, making good use of the abilities and willingness of the musicians to shine a beacon of Christ's light into the darkness of the world and reminding us that as we walk in His light, we can triumphantly overcome even the world's darkest night.



## 《春之赞》音乐布道会后记

By Rev Cheam Wan Xian 詹婉娴

这次中文事工第一次用妙曼的乐章和诗歌，向人述说福音的美好。我们小提琴演奏、圣诗颂唱和福音宣讲，期盼来宾都能感受生命如春的更新！

这次的音乐布道可分为四个环节。

### 第一个环节：春之赞 SPRING SONATA

首先我们以《贝多芬的春天奏鸣曲 Beethoven Spring Sonata》掀开布道会的序幕，借其生机勃勃的激昂乐章，送给向往春天万象更新、欣欣向荣的会众。接着以圣诗《宇宙万物真美好 All Things Bright and Beautiful》来赞美这位自有永有、满有权能的上帝，歌颂祂创造万有的奇功。

### 第二个环节：生命的脆弱 LIFE IS FRAGILE

从充满盼望的春天，我们走向反思人类脆弱的本相。自古以来，人尝试透过知识、宗教和哲学提升自我；然而，我们外表纵然看起来光鲜靓丽，内心却是残缺不全。我们对别人对自己都失望透顶，心灵深处常常发出呼求，盼望有一盏明灯可以照亮内在的黑暗。这时候，敬拜团连唱了三首的诗歌，那就是《深处的呼求 Out of the Depth》、《转回/哦主耶稣深长的爱 Return To Your love/Deep, Deep Love》。

### 第三个环节：认识真光 THE TRUE LIGHT

《展览会之画》，是俄国莫杰斯特·彼得罗维奇·穆索尔斯基的作品，这原为一系列十首的小曲子。我们选了其中的两个小曲《鸡脚上的小屋和基辅的大门 Baba Yaga (DARK) from Mussorgsky's pictures at an exhibition continue into Great Gate of Kiev (LIGHT)》来配合这个环节，董明汉牧师在信息中宣告了福音的大能，因为耶稣是真光，祂的光要照亮你的内心，使你出黑暗，入光明。

### 第四个环节：信心的回应 RESPONSE BY FAITH

《生命的主 O Lord In My Life》是一首韩国牧师的原创诗歌，呼召我们以信心回应耶稣的救恩，让祂在你的心中做王。最后，敬拜团合唱了最后一首诗歌《上帝的儿女何等有福！Children of God How Blessed You Are》圆满结束这场音乐布道会。

生命赞歌，如春花盛放，春雨滋润！感谢上帝保守这次音乐布道会，让我们有机会欣赏醉人的音符和感人的歌声，更重要的是，体现老旧生命的更新！



# Cambodia – A Land of Gospel Opportunities

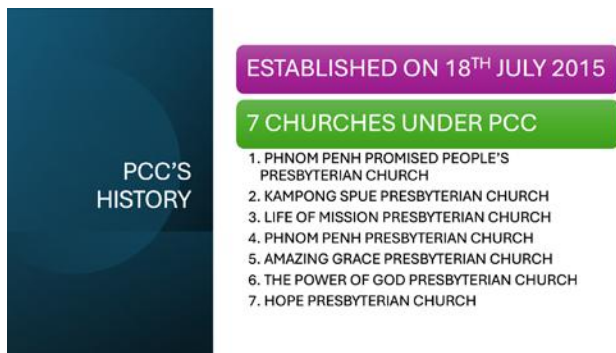
By Rev Peter Chan

*Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field.” – Matthew 9:37-38*

In 2015, I was requested by Synod to spend a week with pastors from Cambodia, teaching them Presbyterianism. It was a challenging task, as I was then teaching a course on Presbyterianism at Trinity Theological College (TTC) that took one semester to complete. Moreover, the language proficiency of the Cambodian pastors in the English language was an added challenge.

So, I spent one week with the five Cambodian pastors. Thankfully, they were intellectually sharp and were very keen to learn. Despite language difficulties, we had a good time learning together.

The Synod Missions Council (SMC) set up a Synod of the Presbyterian Church in Cambodia (PCC) with seven indigenous churches. Five of these churches were planted by our PCS member churches – People’s Presbyterian Church, Chen Li Presbyterian Church and Amazing Grace Presbyterian Church.



## Ten Years Later – The Mustard Seed Had Grown

Fast forward to a decade later: in May 2024, I was invited by PCC to speak at its annual PCC Pastors’ Family Retreat in Kampot. I had the privilege of having an attentive group of pastors and their spouses, learning how to enrich their marriages and families. I was glad to receive very positive feedback from the pastors and spouses.

Rev Kai, Senior Pastor of 5P Church was my host. He was one of the five Cambodian pastors who spent a week with me learning Presbyterianism. He fondly remembered the time we spent together in Synod House at 132 Sophia Road.

Rev Kai briefed me on the developments of PCC over the last decade. Indeed, the Gospel ministry, which began as a mustard seed, has grown and mushroomed into a “Synod” with 16 churches and preaching stations. One of the key elements of growth was the passion and diligence

of the pastors and congregations in bearing witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Each of the churches first planted by PCS member churches took responsibility to evangelise and disciple others. Each of these churches gave birth to many daughter churches and preaching points.

While membership size and worship attendance have grown, PCC is still very much in need financially, as many of the churches are in rural and outlying areas. Even churches in Phnom Penh are in need of financial support. Thus far, only 5P Church is almost financially independent.

Rev Kai also arranged for me to preach at AGPC Phnom Penh for Sunday worship service. It was an encouraging experience preaching there. The entire service was led by a group of youths and young adults. Many of these young people came to know Christ through their stay at the church hostel. Both AGPC and 5P churches run a hostel providing free accommodation to poor students coming from the rural areas. During their stay they had conditions to abide by, such as cleaning duties in the hostel and church, and attending church service and Bible studies. Both churches also assigned their pastors to provide supervision and mentoring to the youths.

## SMC Visit to Assess and Envision

SMC visited Cambodia from 14-17 November 2024. The purpose of the trip was to visit some of the PCC churches to assess the work already done and to envision the future of PCC. Within four days, we visited 11 churches and preaching stations. It was an exhausting trip, travelling and interacting. We brought along a young married couple to help produce a video clip to help inform and inspire PCS churches on our work in Cambodia via PCC. Go to <https://tinyurl.com/CambodiaMission2024> to view the video online.

The SMC team was very encouraged by what we saw and heard. The passion, joy, and spontaneity in these churches inspired us. We saw the potential of PCC, with so many children and youths in the churches. In one of



Cambodia Mission 2024 | Synod Mission Council



the rural churches, more than 200 children gathered to welcome us. We joined them in a time of lively worship. I observed the faces of these children around me singing, jumping, and moving with joy as they praised the Lord! We also witnessed the same joy and spontaneity in another church with many young children. In yet another church, we saw many youths and young adults. There is so much potential for growth in these churches

### Glory, Hallelujah, the Truth is Marching On...

During the SMC trip, we also had a meeting with all the senior pastors of PCC member churches. We listened as each of these SPs shared their vision, goals, and needs.

When we returned to Singapore, we identified the following goals and plans for the next decade of PCC's growth:

- Evangelise and disciple continually with vigour;
- Plant churches across the country, targeting at least one PCC church in every province (currently, we have PCC churches in 6 out of 25 provinces);
- Identify, send, and support two young persons for seminary training yearly (Fees US\$2.2K; married US\$300 monthly; single US\$150 monthly);
- Help PCC purchase land for church buildings in the longer term;
- Strengthen dormitory ministries to evangelise and disciple young people;
- Encourage and support PCC pastors and families – e.g. through annual retreats like PCC Pastors' Family Retreat.

I have been given the privilege of being invited back to Cambodia for the PCC Pastors' Family Retreat on 13–17

May 2025, to speak on the theme “*Mental Well-Being and Self-Care*”. This topic is needed as Cambodia is going through a lot of economic development that is impacting people economically, socially, psychologically, and spiritually.

### Calling PCS Member Churches...

Cambodia, as a developing country, is hungry for economic growth and development. Understandably, a country with a median age of 25.8 years is poised for changes and transitions, for better or for worse. I told the PCC pastors that they were being positioned in a pivotal moment in Cambodian history, and thus they should lead their churches to be an integral part of the nation-building story. They should do so by preaching the Gospel and producing disciples who become contributing citizens, the salt and light in society. The Christian movement in Singapore was very much a part of our nation-building story, as described by Dr Bobby Sng, in his book, “*In His Good Time: The Story of the Church in Singapore (1819–2002)*” Third Edition.

PCC was started by three PCS member churches – People's, Chen Li, and Amazing Grace. They set foot in Cambodia to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and plant churches. But, for the work of PCC to grow deeper and further, we need to rally all the 35 congregations in PCS to walk and work with our brothers and sisters in Cambodia as servants of the Gospel!

May the Lord of the harvest open our eyes to Cambodia – the land of Gospel opportunities!

*Rev Peter Chan is the PCS Synod Executive Secretary for Ministry (Missions, Youth, and Education).*



# Chiang Mai 2024 – Sharing the Gospel Through Mother Tongue Literacy

By Angie Chang

“P’ (elder sister) Oi says, next year visit five schools,” Tse Yuen texted the team along with some photos of Wycliffe’s Christmas party. It was a simple message, but it spoke volumes about her appreciation of the 2024 PSPC Chiang Mai mission team’s partnership.

As head of Wycliffe’s Lanna team, P’ Oi and her team visit schools on a weekly basis to conduct Lanna literacy classes. Through these classes, students learn to read and write their Lanna “mother tongue,” a language spoken by Northern Thais, and in doing so, preserve their local heritage and culture. She was also instrumental in arranging for school visits in Chiang Mai city during our 11-day mission trip in December. Due to last minute programme changes, the team only managed to visit two schools in 2024. P’ Oi’s enthusiasm to take the team to more than double the number of schools this year was exciting news as it reflected positive feedback from students and school authorities.

## Chiang Mai City School Ministry

During the school visits, the Wycliffe Lanna team would first engage students with songs and reading contests, before the Singaporean team put on a nativity skit and taught English Christian songs. We could see God’s hand working in this. Although P’ Oi only knew about the content of our skit when we arrived in Thailand, the Lanna team had started teaching passages regarding the coming of the Messiah which integrated wonderfully with the message of our play. Before each nativity skit, the students would read portions of the Gospels and Isaiah regarding the birth of the Saviour, which were “made flesh” through the live acting by the PSPC team.



Many of the weekly Lanna language classes which the team conducted throughout the year were based on materials from Scripture. This was the result of many years of faithful ministry by Wycliffe in translating the New Testament, so that people in Northern Thailand could now read Scripture in their mother tongue. In fact, the Lanna New Testament is one of the few publications in the Lanna language, and the only one where the Lanna script is used! The mission



team was blessed to see copies of the Gospel of Luke in Thai and Lanna script available for students, so that they too could read the Word of God for themselves.

## Baan Bo Luang Ministry

Wycliffe’s ministry is not just restricted to Bible translation for large populations, such as the Northern Thai Lanna language with approximately six million speakers. When the Chiang Mai mission team travelled into the mountains to Baan Bo Luang (BBL), where approximately seven thousand people spoke the Eastern Lawa language – there too, Wycliffe had been working.

In 2012, Wycliffe missionaries Greg and Rosie Blok arrived in BBL and started working with a small group of Christians to create oral Bible stories for evangelistic outreach amongst Eastern Lawa villagers. Subsequently, they started production of short portions of written Scripture and developed materials to be used in schools as part of a literacy project. Alongside the language work, Rosie started a sewing group where women would gather to ‘gossip’ the Gospel and supplement the family income with the creation of ethnic crafts.

For the last seven years, an annual Eastern Lawa ‘cultural outreach’ has been organised at the local municipal compound (a symbol of acceptance and respectability in rural communities) with song items and even a gospel sermon! This has been a highlight for previous Chiang Mai mission teams, and something which the 2024 team was similarly involved in. We started helping with the venue setup – including tapping into previously unknown ‘gifts’ in skirting creation and stage decoration. On the actual day, the team sang some Thai-English Christian songs and shared the story of Christ’s birth through the nativity skit. We were thankful that this event provided gospel opportunities in diverse forms – from conversations with believers, and chats with students, to presenting the Christian message to the district chief official.



## Pray for the Harvest

Whether through involvement in large scale outreach events such as the Eastern Lawa outreach or supporting sustained school engagement programmes in Chiang Mai city, our prayer is that just as the name Lanna stands for millions of rice fields, may there be an equally great spiritual harvest in Northern Thailand.



# Chiang Mai 2024 - Sharing by Trippers

## Leng Li Li

Our morning devotion for the first day began with the verse from 1 Peter 4:10: Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as

faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. I asked myself: what gift do I have that I could use to serve on this mission trip or to the pre-believers in Chiang Mai?

Initially, I was stressed with the learning of the songs in Thai, memorising the lyrics, actions and my lines in the nativity skit. However, God saw me through, granting me patience in learning, guarding my time, perseverance to keep going, and He demonstrated to me that if I put my trust in Him, He will see me through to the end.

I learnt to appreciate their culture and serve with humility as we performed skits, sang songs, shared the gospel, cooked and served dinner to the rally attendees, and interacted with the local church staff and missionaries in Chiang Mai. Despite having fewer resources than we normally have, the local church made do and shared what they had.

Through this mission trip, God has given me empathy and love for the Lanna people, and a desire to serve more. Come and discover the power of God and how He uses our varied gifts in missions.

## Lawrence Goh

In preparation for the Mission Trip, we spent significant time working on a Christmas skit about the birth of Jesus. I wondered how it

would impact our audience. God put my concerns to rest through a vivid experience at a primary school that we visited. After the skit, we asked the students to name the baby in the story. One boy raised his hand and confidently answered, "Jesus!" Then we asked about the baby's purpose in life. Another boy replied in Thai, "To save His people from their sins!" It was amazingly evident that God had used the skit to plant the seeds of His Word in these young minds. He showed us that our mission was to sow the seeds and, through the boys' answers, He assured us that the seeds had landed on good soil. Our efforts were not in vain. What an incredible reminder of the faithful God we serve!

## Gregory Ng

During this mission trip, we met a Korean couple who had recently moved to Chiang Mai after having served in another mission field for years. I was moved to see their passion in teaching the local children Christian songs, Bible verses and even teaching English as a form of outreach, despite English not being a language that they are most proficient in.

I kept wondering what motivated them to persist in the face of the many challenges in the mission field. Their dedication to God's work in the land was inspiring.

This made me reflect on my own heart and I asked myself: Am I willing to step out of my comfort zone to embrace the challenges He is calling me to? Honestly, I am still working out my response, but one thing I know: being involved and getting equipped is the path ahead of me.

## Jon Yeo

As a newcomer to PSPC, I felt unsure of where I could serve, especially since I didn't feel like I had any standout gifts. But when I saw the opportunity to join the Northern Thai mission trip, I thought, "What could go wrong?" Little did I know, there would be many challenges along the way. Plans constantly changed, and we faced unforeseen limitations —like cooking for over 100 people in less-than-ideal conditions. Despite these obstacles, I realised that God was in complete control. While things didn't go as perfectly as I had hoped, it was clear that everything happened according to His plan.

Looking back, I see that God used this experience to help me discover my gift of service — something I didn't even know I had. It was a reminder that sometimes, serving is the way God reveals the talents we didn't even know we had. I encourage you to step out in faith and serve — don't be afraid to discover what God has planned for you!

## Sophia Lim

Something I learnt from this trip is to really trust God's guidance, clichéd as it sounds. I was initially hesitant to join any mission trip, but after hearing multiple announcements, I figured that I should go at least once. I was truly surprised that I enjoyed the trip and am grateful for God opening my eyes to see His work in Thailand. During the trip, I experienced the generosity and kindness of both the fellow trippers and the locals we met. It is truly humbling to see people go out of their way to accommodate or help someone they

barely knew and owe nothing to.

The trip also deepened my walk with God, and gave me a chance to slow down and step away from my hectic schedule in Singapore. Seeing the stars in the clear sky and vast expanse of trees filled me with a renewed awe and appreciation for God and His creation. Through the trip, I saw that I could serve with whatever gifts God had given me, instead of being worried about being perfect. I intend to join future Chiang Mai mission trips and am praying about how I can serve in church.

All in all, the trip was extremely thought-provoking and a valuable experience. I strongly encourage you to consider going as you will find yourself benefitting in unexpected ways as you help the people there!





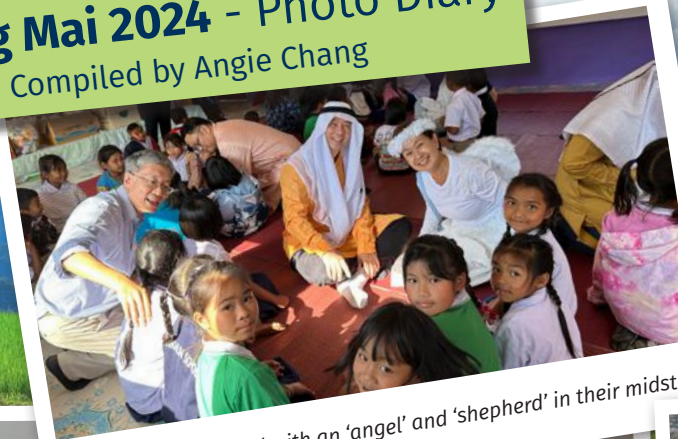
Pointing out our surprise to see PSPC highlighted in the Christmas Lanna banner

## Chiang Mai 2024 - Photo Diary

Compiled by Angie Chang



Sharing the gospel through songs at the village's kindergarten



Games at school with an 'angel' and 'shepherd' in their midst



Sharing about the security we have with Christ in the vessel



Nativity skit proclaiming the birth of Jesus the Saviour



Praying for Baan Bo Luang after an outreach event



Home visitation and prayer



Praying for the sick



Kong Loy Preaching Station



Blessings Home Church



Na Fon Church



# Chiang Rai 2024 - Acts of Kindness

By Mok Hui Min

## A Land in Need of God's Hand

The highlands of Northern Thailand are a land of beauty and heartbreak. Here, amidst the stunning natural landscapes and rich cultural heritage, many hill tribes live in squalid conditions, without proper shelter, electricity, or clean water. Vice is rampant even among young children; with a lack of education and job opportunities, many lose meaning and purpose in their lives, turning to alcoholism and drug addiction for relief. The illegal drug trade, especially cross-border trading, supports this. It remains a major source of income, given its relative profitability and the location's proximity to the "Golden Triangle" at the border between Laos, Thailand, and Myanmar. Yet the population continues to grow, with a constant influx of refugees from Myanmar escaping civil war – to them, despite the harsh living conditions, the highlands of Northern Thailand provide a safe haven from conflict.

Amidst this dire backdrop, God's compassion shines. It shines particularly brightly through a church nestled within the Mae Salong district, less than 20km away from the Myanmar border – the Ban Klang Baptist Church (BKBC). For over three decades, BKBC has been slowly but surely spreading God's love and uplifting the lives of the people in the region. Through prayer, financial, and mentoring support, education levels have risen, and many more have come to Christ. The transformative effect of God's goodness, manifested through BKBC's kindness, is evident in the stories of three individuals.

## THREE ACTS OF KINDNESS BY BKBC

### Act 1:

#### **God's Plans For Us Are Often Far Greater Than We Can Ever Imagine (HUANG EN SI'S STORY)**

*Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future"*

When 16-year old Huang En Si's family first arrived at Ban Klang village a decade ago, they had nothing with them, except hopes of being able to integrate within a wider community. They were of the Lahu tribe and had travelled from the nearby Ja Pue village where there was little community, looking forward to a brighter future in Ban Klang.

However, they were not given the welcome they expected to receive. En Si's parents found themselves unable to find a means to support the family – villagers were hesitant to employ them, as both had some developmental issues. The trio moved from house to house, relying on the kindness of strangers willing to take

them in, and even this was scarce at the time. Eventually, when the family had to contend with staying in a pigsty, her father decided to leave Ban Klang. Being left to fend for themselves, En Si and her mother were unable to afford even the \$4/month rental for staying in the pigsty. Without further support, En Si would have little choice but to cease her education and look for work.

But God had greater plans for En Si. Fortunately for her, her family had been attending church services at BKBC, with En Si attending Sunday School as well. When En Si's father left, BKBC decided to step in to help. By God's grace, they saw the immense potential in En Si, and with the help of PSPC, managed to rally sufficient support to continue funding En Si's education. BKBC also built a small shelter for her and her mother at an open space under the church, giving them a modest, but comfortable, permanent home in BKBC. Her mother now works for the church, doing odd jobs such as washing dishes, which has also allowed her to contribute back meaningfully to her community.

Today, En Si is a positive-minded, bright young girl, who is among one of the top students in her high school at Mae Sai town. Her potential is recognised beyond BKBC, and a Taiwan foundation has also decided to grant her a scholarship to subsidise her high school education costs. She has hopes of continuing her university education at the Mae Fah Luang University in Chiang Rai, though she does not preclude studying abroad in China, in line with her "Shi Mu" (Pastor Li's wife, Xiu Wen)'s plans for her.

Despite the difficulties she has been through, En Si does not bear the slightest resentment when asked about her journey; as she shares with gratefulness (translated from Chinese): *"I am where I am today because of God's blessings, and because I grew up with God's love and the help of others. If I did not grow up in such difficult conditions, I would not have met God. God has always helped me and I believe he has the right time for everything. The best thing I've received is God's guidance and direction in my life – I would never have dreamt of having the opportunities that I currently have."*



En Si and her mother at the shelter built by BKBC



## Act 2:

### **God's Kindness Should Reach Even Our Enemies and Strangers (HANDI HENG YONG HUA'S STORY)**

*Hebrews 13:2: Do not neglect to show kindness to strangers; for in this way, some, without knowing it, have had angels as their guests.*

Handi Heng was originally not the most morally upright person, nor a fervent believer in Christ – a near-death incident at Bangkok Airport more than a decade ago changed that. Then, he was on his way back to Singapore when he had a sudden heart attack. In desperation, he cried out to the Lord in prayer, promising to dedicate his life to God if his life could be spared.

God heard his prayers – he lived through the incident. He kept to his word since then, spending most of his time doing humanitarian work. He was particularly called to Mae Salong, and spent 13 years teaching English at the local church on a volunteer basis.

Unfortunately, he passed away in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, alone and of a heart attack in Mae Salong. Then, no one was willing and able to step up to conduct a proper funeral and burial for him. Reasons cited were fear of contracting unknown diseases from him, or that he was a foreigner that didn't belong in Mae Salong.

Nonetheless, God's compassion never fails, and always manifests itself in ways that we least imagine, at timings that we least expect. Fortunately for Handi, he had three Singaporean friends who were alerted to his premature demise, including a regular short-term mission tripper with PSPC. Together, they sought the assistance of "Shi Mu" to provide a proper funeral and burial for Handi. Despite Handi being a complete stranger to BKBC, "Shi Mu" leaned forward to persuade the BKBC Board to provide Handi with a proper burial plot and funeral for free. To this day, Handi rests in peace in the BKBC cemetery.



Handi Heng's Singaporean friend at his burial site

When asked why she chose to help, "Shi Mu" says (translated from Chinese): *"Handi dedicated 13 years of his life to serve the Lord here. I understand that it was his desire to be buried here, and that he did not want to return to Singapore. I'm not sure of the specific reasons why, but his local church, despite all his contributions, chose not to fulfil this small wish of his. Since they were unwilling, we came forward to help. If we cannot even do something small like this, how are we to be a living testimony of Christ's love and kindness to others?"*

## Act 3:

### **God Will Move Hearts In His Own Time (HE JIAN LAN'S STORY)**

*Ezekiel 36:26: I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.*

He Jian Lan's family travelled far and wide, to finally find a sanctuary in Ban Klang. Hailing from Kokang at the Shan State-China frontier near Yunnan, to escape conflict in the area, they travelled on foot all the way southwards through Myanmar. Throughout their journey, they crossed difficult terrains – literally mountains and rivers – and at times went for days without food.

After a long and treacherous journey, they arrived at Northern Thailand starving and exhausted. However, like En Si, they were unfortunately not greeted with the warmest reception when they first arrived in Ban Klang. They similarly led a nomadic lifestyle, moving from house to house, relying on the compassion of strangers who were willing to take them in, in exchange for any form of work. Their faith journey was equally tough – they came from a lineage of staunch Buddhists, and Jian Lan's parents were initially very resistant to any influence or support from the church.

Despite all these, God's compassion and kindness managed to find its way into their hearts, through BKBC's persistence. Similar to what they had done for En Si, BKBC reached out and invited them for Sunday services, helped to build a shelter for them, provided them with daily necessities, and with PSPC's support, helped to fund Jian Lan and her siblings' education. They have now opened up to the wider community, with most of the family having accepted Christ.

However, there remain many needs for this family. While Jian Lan, through her dedication and hard work, has managed to land a place to study Chinese at a local university, she will not receive an official degree certificate without proper national identification. Being considered stateless, she and her family will continue to face difficulty finding employment no matter what

(Continued on Page 18)



(Continued from Page 17)

their credentials are. Jian Lan's father, while no longer opposed to his family believing in Christ, remains himself resistant to accepting Christ. His health is also rapidly deteriorating, having been diagnosed with liver cancer in the past year. We can only continue to pray for God's healing and favour for this family.



CR team paying Jian Lan's father a visit and praying for him

### Our Part in God's Mission

When it comes to short-term, cross-cultural missions, it is intuitive to wonder – what is our role and impact here? What can we do to help? This comes particularly when we meet cases like Jian Lan's family, where there is a real limit to how much our financial and prayer support can bring. But it is in these moments when we find ourselves incredibly blessed instead – not financially, nor in the way we evangelise, but in our spiritual growth and relationship with God. We see God's work in a much bigger way, through the joy he brings over time to an ever-growing group of people who come to know of him, no matter their circumstances. In our helplessness, we learn to let go of our desire to control, to humble ourselves and rely on God to lead the way. Amidst poorer living conditions, we gain a renewed sense of gratitude for all that God has given us.

As "Shi Mu" rightfully puts it (translated from Chinese): **"We cannot support every single need and every child. But we do what is within our ability, and for each child we support, we are also supporting their family. What we can only hope for is for these children to also learn to help others in the same way, to be inspired to pay it forward."** May each and every one of us, in the same spirit, be inspired to be evermore purposeful and intentional in spreading God's kindness and compassion to all the lives that He brings before us – after all, life is an entire mission field in itself.



First gathering as a team to start off our journey

## Chiang Rai 2024 - Photo Diary

Compiled by Samantha Ho



Getting to know more about the youth from BKBC



Reaching out to the kids that attend BKBC on Sundays



Visiting the people of Hui Village with our gift packs as a token of appreciation for inviting us into their homes





The adults from Hui Village participating in our outreach activities prepared for them



Our gospel rally at Da Mo Village



Visiting an old couple from Gei Du Village who allowed us to pray for them



A short time spent bonding with the youth from BKBC



Visiting our FIRST ever school, Mae Salong High School



Visiting the cell groups from BKBC to share our testimonies as well as hear from them



Attending the Christmas Service @ BKBC



Scrumptious Christmas lunch prepared for everyone to enjoy



Spending our last night together with the BKBC Youth saying our goodbyes



Spending our time at Uncle Francis' for rest and reflections



# Christmas Flash Mob: Behind the Scenes

By Noah Tan

Last Christmas, the Ukulele Band, Believers and Prinsep Players all worked together to provide the church congregation with a surprise performance to celebrate Christmas. The flash mob was organised after the regular 8:45am service, and featured many performers working together to sing the hymn “O Come All Ye Faithful”. It was too bad that I was sick that Sunday and could not see this for myself! I have interviewed one of the masterminds behind the flash mob though, Auntie Catherine, and will be writing about the work that went on behind the scenes to create this wonderful performance.

## The Concept

The concept of performing in a flash mob format before Christmas first came about when Auntie Catherine was talking casually about how to provide more exposure for the Ukulele Band. It was also to help the congregation to get into the Christmas Spirit and bring joy to them through song. As the ukulele players had less than two weeks to organise and practise, they just wanted to have a small performance with ukulele players only. However, the idea became bigger when they decided to include the Believers and Prinsep Players.

## The Performance

One major issue faced by the team was the acoustics in the Fellowship Hall. There were insufficient microphones for all the singers and ukulele players to share amongst themselves, making it harder for the singers to project their voices. This was compounded by the loud ceiling and wall fans in the Fellowship Hall. However, the surround-sound effect that the performers wished to create was still achieved, as the singers and ukulele players positioned themselves well at all ends of the Fellowship Hall.

The spontaneity of the performance was also crucial to its success. With minimal setup, the congregation was unaware that there was going to be a performance in the Fellowship Hall. Hence, many were pleasantly surprised, and started to sing along, spreading the Christmas spirit.

All the performers also loved that they could glorify God by sharing their gifts with the congregation. Auntie Catherine said that she really enjoyed strumming and singing because she wanted to bring Christmas cheer to the community and glorify the Lord with a joyful noise.

## Takeaways

Auntie Catherine said she wished she had come up with the idea for the flash mob earlier, as that would have given her more time to practise and organise the event. However, she does think that the flash mob was still a success, as it allowed

the performers to share their gifts from God with the rest of the congregation, and use these to edify, encourage, build up and bring joy to the body of Christ.

All in all, while the Christmas Flash Mob took a lot of time and effort to organise behind the scenes, by God’s grace, the effective communication among the Believers, Ukulele Band and Prinsep Players really helped the flash mob succeed at bringing joy to the congregation for the Christmas celebrations.

## Planning and Practice

Initially, Auntie Catherine thought that Shaun Lee and four to five other Believers would suffice. However, Uncle Shaun managed to get more than twenty singers to perform with the ukulele players, adding everyone to a WhatsApp Group. The carol “O Come All Ye Faithful” was picked because most if not all of the congregants would be familiar with it, and also because it is easier to strum and sing for the ukulele players.

Almost all the instructions and coordination required for the flash mob were distributed over Whatsapp, and there was only one in-person practice session for the ukulele players. However, everyone involved in the flash mob managed to follow the guidelines agreed upon prior to the actual performance.





# Children's MINISTRY CORNER

By Pr Carol Ng  
Sunday School Superintendent

## Let's follow Jesus!

*Jesus replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." Matthew 22:37*

We welcomed our children back to Sunday School with much thanksgiving and delight! We also thank God for our teachers and assistant teachers who have stepped up to teach God's Word and share their faith with our little ones. May our children continue to learn and grow in God's Word. May God continue to watch over our little ones and teach them to love Jesus more and more each day. May God continue to work in their lives to follow Jesus all the way!



**TODDLER CLASS: Teachers:** Deborah & Connie  
**Assistants:** Ruth, Chai Har & Ci Han



**KIDDY CLASS: Teachers:** Michelle, Christine & Hannah



**P2 CLASS: Teacher:** Rosalind



**P3 CLASS: Teachers:** Li Li & Adeline



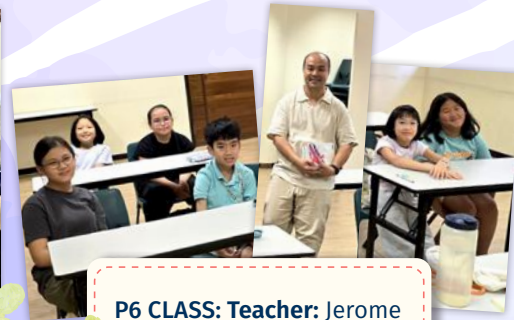
**P4 CLASS: Teacher:** Donovan



**P5 CLASS: Teacher:** Andrew



**P5 CLASS: Teacher:** Shwu Hoon



**P6 CLASS: Teacher:** Jerome



# Girls' Brigade (GB) 7th & 8th Companies

## ~ 1st Quarter Update



By Jess Goh  
Captain

7th Company Girls' Brigade

### UPDATE FOR GB 7TH COMPANY

We brought the girls to Universal Studios on 11 February 2025 as part of a bonding activity.

Here are some reflections by the girls who went on the outing.



I enjoyed the USS trip very much. It helped me face my fear of heights. I had at first planned not to go on any roller-coaster but later ended up going on three of them. I feel proud that I could go on three despite my fears. I loved the food, too, especially the Shrek waffles. I stayed until 6pm to go on rides and make full use of the \$75 entry fee. I really enjoyed this experience and wish to go with my family again when my brother gets older and is not afraid of roller coasters. – **LCP Mithra**

The trip to Universal Studios was unexpected but very enjoyable. I bonded with the girls and was surprised to learn more about them, how brave they were to go on some rides and their past experiences in the place. Spending time with one another outside of CCA in school is really thrilling as the chance to interact with them in such places, especially USS, is rare, and I am so grateful for the opportunity to experience a wonderful moment with the girls. I honestly feel closer to them, and through more interactions, I think the light in the friendship shines brighter and brighter. Thank you so much for organising this trip; it will forever be an unforgettable memory. – **SSGT Sarah**

The USS outing was my first in several years going into the park. From it, I made several discoveries and gained new experiences. One of those discoveries was my tolerance for roller coasters. I never thought that I would ever go on such a terrifying ride like Cylon (the grey/blue one) or Human (the red one). However I was proven wrong when I decided to go on it anyway just to get a taste of it. And it was my first time riding roller-coasters. Although the rides were intense, I was able to brave through them and got off feeling amazing rather than terrified, seeing a side of myself I never could have seen without such an exhilarating experience. – **SSGT XinYuan**

### CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATION CUM PARENTS INTERACTION

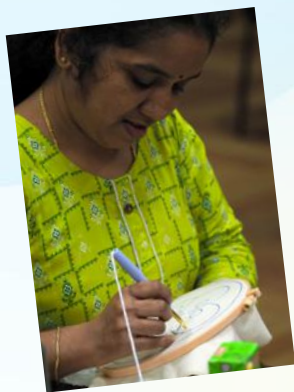


On 8 February, we invited the girls' parents and siblings to have a bonding time with the girls and to join our CNY celebration. As this is part of our annual gathering, we also invited the Sec Ones who were keen to explore joining GB, the graduates from Pioneer Secondary and Westwood Secondary. This year, we also had the honour of having the school VP and CCA HOD join us.

We were very encouraged by the support from the parents. Five out of the nine girls' parents came. We also took this opportunity for the parents to give out the awards to their daughters.







A few of the Pioneer graduates came, and it was a good time to catch up with them because all of them are now working adults. Some of the Officers shared that it is such bonding that kept them serving in GB all these years.



## UPDATE FOR GB 8TH COMPANY



As this is our first year at Yusof Ishak Secondary, we did not know what to expect. However, we had a fun time conducting 12 sessions of CCA experience to "market" GB to all the Sec 1 girls.

During a 45-minute session with us, we had a video of Sharin sharing about her GB journey from being a Sec 1 girl to now a GB Officer. We also played bingo with them to help them get to know us and their classmates better. After the fun, we got them to paint a brick bear that represents themselves. Most importantly, we had the opportunity to chat with and get to know them better.

This year, 23 girls will be joining us. We are thankful that we have sufficient volunteers to help us reach out to them.



## Every Girl a Leader, every Officer a Servant Leader by Rhoda Lau

I had heeded the call to serve as a volunteer in the Girls' Brigade 8th Company at Yusof Ishak Secondary School but wasn't expecting that I had to become an Officer in order to serve. I must admit that when I found out that I was to attend the Basic Officers' Training Course (BOTC) over two Saturdays, I felt inadequate and intimidated on so many levels. The reality of the commitment hit me like a bus right there and then! It has been at least 44 years since my last GB experience, and that's a really long time ago! It literally felt like Alice sliding down the rabbit hole — there's no turning back now.

*"The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest."*

- Matthew 9:37-38

But God had a plan for me, even though I wasn't quite sure how I could contribute to this ministry; my main concern was how I would be able to fit into this uniformed group's culture.

At BOTC, I was comforted knowing that I was among like-minded individuals who had also come armed only with a raw desire to serve. Many of us had benefitted so much from our own GB experiences and felt compelled now to nurture the next generation of young girls and pay it back.

*"...let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."*

- Matthew 5:16

The BOTC syllabus covered the organisational structure and the knowledge of its history, drills, uniforms, and how to plan the programme and activities. Besides the knowledge of the organisational structure, we had to learn the proper rules of engagement and governance, which I found very helpful and practical. Basically, everything we needed to know to be initiated as a proper Officer was taught to us. I can't remember the last time I had to hand in assignments and the stress over making the grade or not!



The most important part of the training for me was the time of reflection and sharing during the debrief. Like black ants carrying a big red apple, we are a team working to further God's kingdom wherever He sends us. I am assured of my place in this ministry. If I had to leave a legacy to the girls, I want to be remembered for my faithfulness.



We covet your prayers as we embark on this journey of nurturing and teaching the young girls under our charge to become useful citizens living out the values of humility, honour, generosity and courage.



# BOYS' BRIGADE (BB) 1<sup>ST</sup> COMPANY

## ~ 1st Quarter Update



THE BOYS' BRIGADE

By Ho Yew Keong  
Captain  
1st Singapore Company

We started the year with a parade on 3 Jan 2025. We briefed the Boys on the year's programme to prepare them for what is going on this year. We also want them to reserve those dates for camps and not plan anything during those dates.

The Boys had their BB Day celebration in school on 10 Jan 2025 with the new principal, Mr Chen.

1st Company celebrated our BB Day Service in PSPC on 12 Jan 2025. We had a parade followed by the service in the sanctuary. It was attended by about 180 Officers and Boys from other Companies.

The boys had planned and executed three uniformed group experiences for the Sec 1 Boys to attract them to join BB. They had tag archery, tent building, and a talk about why they should join BB.

In total, we have ten Sec 1 classes this year. The Boys executed the experience very well with feedback and observations from the Officers so that they could improve.

The Boys continued with their lessons on drill, global awareness, leadership and community service while we waited for the announcement of new Sec 1 Boys joining us. Some of the senior Boys had planned for a games day for the whole Company on 28 Feb where the Sec 1 Boys join us. Praise and thanks be to God, 30 new Boys joined the Company on 25 Feb.



(Left to right):

**1st Row Seated:** David Seet, Kenneth Long, Ng Kum Chuen, Rev Darryl Chan, LG (RET) Winston Choo, Dr Frederick Lee Chiang Tee, Prof and Mrs Lawrence Chia, Jensen Low, Ang Kok Wah

**2nd Row Standing:** Ho Yew Keong, Pang Wei Chuan, Jack Lum, Joe Lee, Sharin Huang, Janice Ho, Joseph Chen, Carol Ng, Peter Wong, Richard Cheung, Andrew Leong, Eddie Cheung, Wong Foo Luen



Our Sec 1 Boys





On 21 Feb, a team of Nepal church pastors came to visit us at PSPC and in school to see how we ran our parade. They were here on a study visit to various Companies to see how we run our parade from Preschool (Explorer Programme), Primary school (Junior Programme), Secondary school (Senior Programme) to Tertiary level (Primers Programme) and not forgetting the role of Officers and volunteers.



## BB CALENDAR 2025

17-18 Mar  
Standard First  
Aid Course

12 Apr  
Annual  
Enrolment  
Ceremony at  
VISS

5 Apr  
BB Blaze -  
a national  
adventure  
competition

23-25 Jun  
Adventure  
Camp

## Prayer Requests

1. Thank God for the good recruitment that we had.
2. Pray for strength for Teachers and Officers as we continue to nurture the Boys.
3. Pray that we can be a good testimony to the Boys to see and follow.
4. Pray for safety and wisdom as we carry out the planned programmes.
5. Pray for more volunteers to come and join us.

# Up Close & Personal

Interviews by Lim Sook Fun

*It has been a privilege to talk to PSPC new members who come from a variety of backgrounds ranging from medical, finance, and operations as well as human resource lines.*



## Interviewing new member Yeo Jia Xin

### Please share about your family background.

I come from a Taoist/Buddhist family; growing up, my extended family would go to the temple where my grandparents' altars are and pray to them for protection

and good grades. During Chinese New Year, we would go to a different temple, and pray to the deity for all our desires. In my family, it was understood that ancestral worship is a Chinese tradition and part of filial piety, so it was not something we could opt out of participating in when we were kids. Otherwise we would be seen as being unfilial.

As I got older, this was something that I often disagreed with my parents about. I struggled to believe and participate in ancestral worship, lamenting that I "had" to undergo the entire process. Disagreements started to become a little worse after my father passed away when I was 16. This tremendous loss took my family a long time to get over, and many of my family members needed ancestral worship to keep his memory close and alive. Nevertheless, it was the pivotal event that solidified my dissent towards this practice.

(Continued on Page 26)



### **Please explain how this crisis confirmed your dissatisfaction with ancestor worship.**

As I continued ancestral worship, I felt emptiness as no one was speaking to me then.

### **When and why did you join PSPC?**

I started coming to PSPC in November 2023 upon the suggestion of my boyfriend, Joshua Ng. His family has been members of this church for a long time and he recommended that I join them on Sundays to learn about Christ. During that time, I was going through a rather difficult time in my life, in that I felt lost about my place in the world and didn't know where to look for help, so I decided to take on his suggestion.

Each week when I showed up, for some reason, I would be experiencing something difficult, but the sermon for that week would be exactly what I needed to hear to navigate through it. It wasn't just me noticing it; Joshua noticed it too. Over time, I realised that God has been watching over me after all.

### **How has your experience at PSPC been?**

The blessings that I've experienced since knowing God have been in abundance, especially of patience, love and forgiveness. As a result, I think in the last 1.5 years, I have grown so much in those areas as well. PSPC has also been pivotal in that growth.

I joined Joshua's cell group and they welcomed me with open arms, always checking in on Joshua and me. I am always inspired by how everyone in the cell group is so genuinely kind and sincere. Sometimes I feel like I share or talk too much, but they always remember what I last shared with them and would follow up the next time we met. It's a simple thing but I find it a rare blessing because you know they are truly listening and they remember.

On top of that, all the other members of the church whom I've had an opportunity to meet through the cell group, and Joshua's parents, are all so open to friendship that it really warms my heart. I can't see myself in any other church.

### **How did your family members react to your conversion?**

It took a lot of courage to tell my mother that I was coming to church and was going to stop all ancestral worship practices and temple visits. I feared her disappointment the most as I've always wanted to be a good daughter to her. But I was struggling with the "double life" I was leading and felt like I was also letting God down by continuing to participate in the occasional ancestral worship.

I was prepared for a massive disagreement, but little did I know, my older brother, whose opinions my mum respects a lot and who is a practising Buddhist, spoke up for me and encouraged my mother to let me go my own way, and she respected that. I was honestly shocked at how unexpectedly easily it went. This was one of the toughest things I had to grapple with because family is everything to me, and I hated the possibility of not getting along. Knowing my family, I do not think it would have been this easy without God. He paved the way for me to go on this journey, exactly as I needed to. They might not be jumping for joy, but it was more than I could ask for - my mother and younger brother are even attending my Baptism, and my older brother asked to have it video recorded as he would be overseas.

### **I am happy for you. How do you feel about this outcome of events?**

I think it's proof of God's hand in my life.

### **How has your life been transformed since coming to faith in Christ? A comparison of before and after would be helpful.**

The life I lead now, externally and internally, is entirely different from the one I led before I believed in God. What was once filled with sadness and a complete lack of direction is now filled with love and excitement for what's to come.

Despite everything that I've gone through, God led me to Joshua, without whom I wouldn't even have made it to PSPC and found God here. I know He has always been looking out for me; if not, life would have been a lot worse. My cup is so full I now have the capacity to share and to serve! In the middle of last year, I started to serve in the Believers' ministry, and I hope to be able to serve in the digital ministry this year as well.

### **How has the experience in the Believers' Ministry been for you?**

It's been fun! I am getting to know a lot more people in the church and it's always enjoyable to sing in an ensemble; so empowering!

### **What would you like your readers to take away?**

To keep an open mind and heart and I hope my experience can help someone who is struggling out there to find direction in this life. If we keep our hearts open, listening to God reaching out to us, all we need to do is to answer Him.

**Thank you so much for sharing Jia Xin, it has been illuminating. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.**





## Interviewing new member Lydia Lee

### When did you start considering Christianity?

Through the Mass and daily devotions at my Christian secondary school, the pastoral team shared about Jesus and His love for us. The messages were often centred on kindness and love, and I saw that the pastoral team was also always ready to lend a listening ear and share a kind word. The messages and actions resonated with me, and coupled with my original ambivalence towards Buddhism, I started considering whether Christianity was what I had been seeking in life.

### When and how did you realise you were not growing in your faith?

I realised that I was bitter about feeling let down by the people I met at church, that they were only friendly on the surface to have you returning to next week's service, and their thanksgiving moments was an opportunity for them to brag about their lives. When I started having these thoughts, I realised I wasn't living a Godly life either.

### When and why did you join PSPC?

Girvan and I came to PSPC in November 2023 for the first time. Back then, we were looking for a church to attend together. Being very practical people, we pulled up Google Maps, and searched for churches that would be accessible to both of us. There were a bunch of churches in the vicinity of PSPC, but we felt called to attend PSPC instead of the others.

After a few more services and meeting the 'Not A Scam' cell group, we were very comfortable and sure that we wanted PSPC to be our home church.

### Please describe your initial experience at PSPC.

From the outset, though PSPC service is very different from what I was familiar with, it felt 'right'. The message was focused on God's Word, and I appreciate how it is very educational / 'scholarly' with notes and cross-references. The same goes for the cell group studies because the leaders put a lot of effort, ensuring the content is sound and accurate for our learning.

### In your opinion or from your personal experience, do you think we make the effort to draw closer to God only when we face a crisis?

I wouldn't say someone must experience a crisis before making an effort to draw near to God, but it is when we realise that our own human efforts are insufficient, and that it has never been us paving our own way to begin with. It has always been God.

### I totally agree that whatever the circumstances, we need to give thanks to God and trust in His plan for us. Can you share how you and Girvan have learnt and grown in the PSPC community? Did you meet him here?

Girvan and I met volunteering with the Singapore Red Cross. Coming to church together was a conscious decision, and we both grew a lot through the cell group and the services.

### Please share your experiences with your cell group.

The 'Not A Scam' cell group is very welcoming and the leaders are always making an effort to ensure everyone feels included. I really appreciate that every activity/study is planned/prepared with the CG members in mind. For example, we have had bonding outings that were well organised. Everyone is really loving and caring as well, and I think it's a reflection of the church's values.



## Interviewing new member Girvan Tay

### How did you come to know about PSPC?

I knew about PSPC first when I was in the Boys' Brigade, first as a member then subsequently as an Officer. My cousin, with whom I attended Adam Road Presbyterian Church, also got married here.

I started worshipping here with my fiancé, Lydia, in November 2023. We chose to visit PSPC as it was in between our homes – hers in Tampines and mine in Toa Payoh.

(Continued on Page 28)



### **Please describe your experience here.**

What struck me about PSPC was how warm and welcoming it was. It was not overtly welcoming in the uncomfortable, in-your-face way, and we both felt that it was a place which focused primarily on the Word. I felt that PSPC was a place where Lydia and I could learn and grow in our faith together as a couple, and be well supported by a community of like-minded people.

Through our later participation in classes such as Discipleship Essentials, Membership and Wedding Prep, Lydia and I grew to understand more about Presbyterianism as a whole, strengthening our faith in the process.

Looking back, we are both very glad that we decided to visit PSPC nearly one and a half years ago, and we look forward to journeying together with those around us as one Christian community.

### **I understand you grew up in a household in which you were already exposed to Christianity. Please describe your journey as a follower of Christ and how, in the process, it has strengthened your faith? As an instance, how has overcoming the ups and downs of your life strengthened your faith, nurturing the person you are today?**

Every crisis, I find, forces one to utilise all that one has to overcome it, and in the process awards emotional weight to the mechanisms which are instrumental in surmounting the challenge. By extension, I believe a personal relationship with God is strengthened tremendously after one has undergone a challenging period in one's life.

Growing up in a Christian household, my understanding of the Bible was rudimentary at best. Whatever I knew was whatever was taught at Sunday School and in the Boys' Brigade, of which I was a member. To be honest, being brought up in the faith was akin to just taking and regurgitating whatever was being told to me, and I bumbled along as such until I entered secondary school, where I began to explore the faith more and develop my own personal relationship with Christ.

In secondary school, perhaps the greatest challenge to my faith then was trying to reconcile the idea that God could create individuals who may be good hearted but yet not believe in Him. With the majority of my peers and friends at the time being non-Christians, I remember many long discussions I engaged in on the foundations of the Christian faith. These discussions made me strip away much of my faith down to its roots, which I distinctly remember were threefold:

- First, that there can logically and philosophically be only one God, who is omnipotent, omniscient and eternal.

- Second, that all men are inherently sinful, hedonistic and flawed, and that it is only through God's mercy that we still exist.
- Third, that as undeserving recipients of God's grace we ought to exhibit the same love He has shown us to those around us.

These beliefs, forged in the discussions and debates then served as my working theological framework for how I viewed the world for many years. Yet, truthfully it remained as a mere mental model, and in retrospect lacked emotional connection. It was perhaps only when I encountered an extremely difficult period of illness during my university days that this framework was tried and tested, and I felt genuinely convicted of Christ's steadfast love and developed that emotional connection to my faith.

### **On the other hand, if you had not been exposed to Christianity at an early stage, would it have made a difference in the manner by which you coped with the crisis?**

To say that a crisis, therefore, is the impetus that drove me to draw closer to God, would be to discount the many years of learning, rationalising and developing the foundations of what is my faith today. While I feel that the challenge of my illness at university did strengthen my faith, if not for the foundations built earlier – I feel that I may have resorted to less healthy coping mechanisms which may have had the converse effect of weakening my relationship with God.

In essence, a good analogy would be that of a blacksmith's fire – that if the blade was not adequately tempered and forged before it was heat treated, it would have cracked instantly on exposure to the intense flame. Only a blade which has a good foundation of hard work before being exposed to the harshest of tests has the chance to emerge from it stronger.

### **Can you share how you and your fiancé Lydia learn and grow in your cell group here as compared to your previous experiences in other cell groups, if any?**

We found that most of our learning has been through our cell group, 'Not a Scam'. We particularly enjoy the weekly discussions and sharing from each member of the group. Both of us were never really active previously in cell group ministry in our previous churches, but we found ourselves warmly welcomed into our cell group here at PSPC since Day 1 and have since grown comfortable and at home with our CG mates.

Perhaps it's the fact that we are all at a similar stage in life that we are able to connect over shared experiences and challenges.



## How did your relationship start and develop, committing to and growing in faith individually and together?

I met Lydia when we were both volunteering in the Singapore Red Cross. Over time, we both became Volunteer Leaders in our respective programmes, and would often meet when conducting training sessions and at events for our volunteers and the community.

## You mentioned your gifts in Shepherding, Exhortation and Mercy. Please elaborate.

I had previously served in the Boys' Brigade 47th Company as an Officer in my previous Church. To be honest a lot of the challenges I faced in the BB had to do with my nature, that of a very quiet and introverted person who does not like being in the limelight. As an Officer however,

I was expected to conduct classes and discipline the boys when required, which was something that I was not comfortable with. What I enjoyed though, was interacting with the boys one on one, learning more about their interests, and developing a personal relationship with them. I often find that the most influence one can have on another is only through walking the talk together with the other, and perhaps that lends itself to my spiritual gifts being classified as such.

As for mercy showing – I've always believed that our skills, knowledge and time are undeserved gifts from God for us to bless those around us, and in so doing glorify Him. Perhaps that has translated directly into my choice of profession as a doctor as well as my keen interest in volunteering with the Red Cross to support individuals at risk.

# Baptisms, Confirmations & Transfers (20 April 2025)

## BAPTISM



Hi, my name is **Christopher Chan Kong Loong** and I am from Malaysia. I have been working in Singapore for almost two years. I knew about PSPC through Pastor Kong (from my church in Malaysia). I started to worship at PSPC in May 2023 and I have learned a lot about the Christian faith. I hope one day God can use me to glorify Him and I am always ready to serve Him.



Hi, I am **Isabel Tia Hui Li**. I have been attending services regularly at PSPC since August 2023, when I first knew about PSPC. I enjoy singing and often sing with The Believers. I hope that God will continue to use me to serve Him and be a blessing to others.

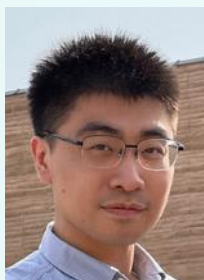


My name is **Cheng Yuan Wen** and I came to Christ in 2022. I attend the 11am service and play with the Prinsep Players. I have a one-year-old daughter and I love reading. The greatest gift I have received is God Himself and becoming one of His children.



Hello everyone, my name is **Yeo Jia Xin**. I have been coming to PSPC since November 2023, at the suggestion of my boyfriend, Joshua Ng, who has been in this church since birth, and I haven't looked back since. I can't imagine what my life would be like if I hadn't taken that suggestion because since then, I've been blessed

with more than I could ever think of - a relationship with God, the support and friendship of the people I've had the opportunity to interact with at church, and immense growth within myself. When I'm not here at church, I occupy my weekdays working 9-5 at an asset management firm, as an operations manager (the team that makes sure you get what you bought). And when I'm not working, I enjoy spending time with family, reading and non-performative singing.



I'm **Peter Fu Ruiqi**, and I am currently teaching in a secondary school. I attend the 8.45am service, the Prinsep Pals cell group on Fridays and serve at the Prinsep Lighthouse. Do catch me for a chat if you see me in the Fellowship Hall.

(Continued on Page 30)

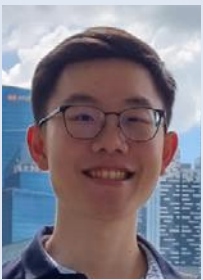


## BAPTISM



Hello! I am **Lydia Lee Qing**, and I'm in the Not A Scam CG led by Amanda & Rayner. Together with Girvan (my fiancé), we are glad to call PSPC our home church. I work as an HR specialist, helping companies with their HR processes. Outside of that, I enjoy catching up with friends over meals and matcha.

## CONFIRMATION



Hi everyone I'm **Girvan Tay Yang Hong**! I'm currently working in Tan Tock Seng Hospital Emergency Department. My fiancé Lydia and I worship at the 8:45am service. Looking forward to getting to know more of you!

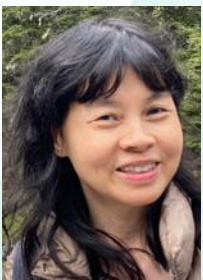


Hi! I'm **Sybil Lim Shi En**. I'm 20 years old and will be graduating from polytechnic soon. I like science, dance, music, and some creepy-crawlies. Thank you to all who have guided me so far; please pray that I'll grow in my love for and knowledge of God to serve and worship Him!

## TRANSFER



Hello, I'm **Angie Chang Pei Hua** and glad to 'meet' the family of Christ at PSPC. I first heard about a Creator God and the love of Jesus as a young child in school. Through the years, He has continued to call me to Himself, mould and shape me to be more like Christ.



Hi, I'm **Irene Liu Lai Peng**. I am from Kuala Lumpur, but I prefer not to say it, because people wonder why I cannot speak Cantonese! I enjoy hiking, watching badminton matches, reading, listening to worship songs and spending time with God.



Hello, my name is **Wu Gaofeng**. I came from China to Singapore for my studies, built my career, and started a family here. Growing up in a Christian family, faith has always been important to me. I'm blessed with two children and look forward to worshipping together!



Hello, I am **Isaac Lim Li Wei**, previously a member of St Andrew's Cathedral. After much prayer and reflection, I am excited to be transferring my membership to Prinsep Street Presbyterian Church. I look forward to deepening my faith together with the body of Christ and contributing to the vibrant community in the various areas of service that God has called me to. Blessings!



Hello PSPC fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, I'm **Ally Ow Xing Yee**. Thankful to be a child of God and to be led to worship our Heavenly Father in PSPC with all of you. My other identity is as the wife of Isaac Lim and we look forward to growing in faith and serving God together here. Blessings!



# IN & AROUND PSPC

## Infant Baptism

**Tessa Joy Chan** (Parents: Fanshen & Tiffany Chan)  
25 December 2024



We give thanks for the arrival of Tessa Joy into our growing family! True to her middle name, she has brought immense joy and has been a blessing to us and the people around us. We dedicate her life into God's hands, and pray that she will always have joy in her heart from knowing the Lord.

## New Birth

**Azriel Woo** (Parents: Raymond & Amanda Woo)  
4 January 2025



We are thankful to God for the addition of Azriel into our family. We hope that his name will remind us that God is our help.

*"Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."*  
Isaiah 41:10

## Weddings

### Andrew Chan & Nethania Low

Hello! We got married in PSPC on **15 February 2025** after dating for about five years. We're thankful to our PSPC friends who journeyed with us, especially our marriage mentors. God bless!



### Peter Fu & Dorcas Zhang

We got married on **8 March 2025**. Dorcas was born in a Christian family in China and is integrating into our Chinese congregation. I have been serving in the Prinsep Lighthouse since 2014. We are grateful for the family and support we have had at PSPC during my growing years and our wedding. We pray that we can grow deeper in God's Word and love and share the same care and guidance with other members of Prinsep.



## PSPC Updates (January 2025 - Present)

### Deaths

**Yeo Teow Kim**  
22 JAN 2025

**Richard Ang Kee Lin**  
16 FEB 2025

**Michael Koh Nai Hong**  
23 FEB 2025

**Nancy Foong**  
6 MAR 2025

## HELLO CLASS ART WORKSHOP (12 January 2025 @ PSPC)







# PLH CNY Hotpot Fellowship

By: Issac Wat

As the renowned Italian-American chef, Giada De Laurentiis, once said, "Food brings people together on many different levels. It's nourishment of the soul and body; it's truly love."

When the idea of having a PLH hotpot lunch was first announced, I couldn't understand why of all choices, a hotpot was chosen. However, as I thought about it, it began to make sense – it was CNY season, and the communal nature of hotpot aligns with our church theme of community! It's also a great opportunity to interact with people whom we usually don't talk to. Doing it at church seemed a bit bizarre but I suppose it would be impractical and expensive to all go to Haidilao.

On the day of the hotpot, I wasn't sure what to expect. However, upon arrival, I was impressed to see a dedicated space set up just for us, complete with a well-organised layout. There were specific steps we had to follow, reflecting the meticulous and thoughtful planning by our mentors. I was truly surprised by the effort that went into making everything run so smoothly. From enjoying the delicious food to engaging in great conversations with friends, the experience turned out to be both enjoyable and memorable.



## Service@PLH – Serving with Purpose

By: Sophie Leow

The Service@PLH programme offers us a platform to serve in different areas, allowing us to explore our interests and talents while fostering personal growth and meaningful friendships. It has strengthened my bond with my brothers and sisters in Christ. By actively participating in planning and executing PLH events, I have deepened my sense of connection within this community.

To me, serving is a meaningful opportunity to give back for all that I have been blessed with as part of this family. With each of us bringing our unique gifts to the table, we can achieve so much more together in building up the body of Christ. With the guidance and support of our mentors and MINTs (Mentors In Training), we get to turn our ideas into reality!

To all PLHers, I hope you cherish your time serving in PLH!



## Building Community Through Class Time

By: Lily Huang

PLH class time is something that I look forward to every session. In short, it's free time for us to bond in our DGs, and to relax in one another's company. For this round of class time, my DG opted to order in McDonald's and to play some board games. While a simple activity, we shared good memories and lots of laughs, and grew closer as a Christian community. For all of us, it was a much-needed break from the busyness of daily life and a wonderful opportunity to connect with our fellow PLHers.