



## The Birth of Jesus Christ: A Clash of Two Kingdoms

By Eileen Poh

*The Adoration of the Shepherds*  
by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, 1650

In Luke's infancy narrative, Luke ascribes certain titles to Jesus Christ. When announcing the birth of Jesus to Mary, the angel Gabriel called him the Son of the Most High (1:32), and the King of a kingdom of which there will be no end (1:33). Jesus is also the Son of God (1:35).

The angel who appeared to the shepherds told them how to find this King and Son of God: they were to look for a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger (2:12). The angel described Jesus as Saviour, Christ the Lord (2:11), and announced that his coming was good news of great joy for all people (2:10).

Immediately following this announcement, a multitude of the heavenly host joined the angel in praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased" (2:13-14).

At Christmas, we celebrate the good news of the birth of Jesus, for he is the Son of God, King, Saviour of all humankind, the Messiah foretold by the Old Testament prophets, he is the Lord, and the one who brings peace to all on earth.

Luke uses these titles for Jesus deliberately. He would have known that these titles were also used of a man a few years before Jesus' birth. This man was Caesar Augustus, who quashed all his enemies and assumed the role of emperor of the Roman Empire from 27 BC.

This is the same Caesar Augustus Luke refers to in 2:1. He is the only gospel writer who sets Jesus' birth in the context of Caesar Augustus' decree that all the world should be registered, each in his own town (2:1-3). Luke's reference to Augustus' decree is meant to tell us more than the time of Jesus' birth. It tells us more than the fact that God in his sovereignty was using Augustus to fulfil Micah's prophecy for Jesus to be born

in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). It tells us more than that the Jews were under foreign rule, a point Luke emphasises by referring to Augustus' decree a few times in 2:1-5.

Luke sets the birth of Jesus in the context of Caesar Augustus because he is drawing his readers' attention to the honorific titles that were used of him. In an inscription found in Priene (in modern-day Western Turkey) around 9 BC, the emperor Augustus is praised:

*Providence ... created ... the most perfect good for our lives ... filling him [Augustus] with virtue for the benefit of mankind, sending us and those after us a saviour who put an end to war and established all things ... and whereas the birthday of the god [i.e. Augustus] marked for the world the beginning of good tidings through his coming ...<sup>1</sup>*

This inscription contains two parts: a decree to the provinces of Asia Minor that the new year should begin on the birthday of Augustus, that is 23 September, and an acceptance of this decree. In this inscription, Augustus is honoured as saviour and god, the one who brought an end to war and established peace in the empire. His birthday marked "the beginning of good tidings" or good news. The Greek word *euangelion* is used in the inscription, which is the same word translated as good news or gospel (Luke 2:10; Mark 1:1).

Another inscription honouring Augustus reads: "Divine Augustus Caesar, son of a god, imperator of land and sea, the benefactor and saviour of the whole world ..."<sup>2</sup>

1 Translation from N. Lewis & M. Reinhold (eds.), *Roman Civilization II* (New York: Harper & Row, 1955) 64 cited in D. Wenham & S. Walton, *Exploring the New Testament Vol. 1: The Gospels & Acts* (2nd edn.; London: SPCK, 2011) 50.

2 Cited in J. B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) 125.

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The similarity between the titles Luke gives to Jesus and those given to Augustus in the inscriptions is striking. Luke wants to make an important point. By mentioning Caesar Augustus in Jesus' birth narrative and giving titles to Jesus which were used of Augustus a few years before his birth, Luke is intentionally setting the course for the confrontation between the kingdom of God, manifest in Jesus Christ, and the kingdom of Caesar, who was regarded as saviour and god, the one who brought peace after causing wars to cease.

Luke shows us that the true Saviour and Lord is Jesus Christ. He is the Son of God, the King whose kingdom knows no end. His coming is good news for all. His coming brings peace to humankind. Although Caesar Augustus was honoured with similar titles, he was a mere man. As such, the good news of Jesus' birth can be seen as "countering the exalted claims made by and on behalf of Augustus."<sup>3</sup>

According to the commentator Joel Green, "in the Lukan narrative, qualities for which Augustus was extolled are now attributed directly to Yahweh and to God's Son, Jesus; and qualities previously attributed to the Emperor are now called into question. Thus, for example, that God effects peace on earth presupposes that the "peace of Rome" is seriously deficient."<sup>4</sup>

So, in using titles attributed to Caesar Augustus for Jesus Christ, Luke is also making a critique of human power and human kingdoms. Mary has asserted this in her song in Luke 1:46-55. She rejoices that God is her Saviour, who "has

brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate" (v. 52). Augustus would, in due course, be succeeded by other emperors. But the Roman Empire centred on Rome, which Roman poets Virgil and Ovid living during Augustus' period ascribed as "the eternal city" and "an empire without end", came to an end in AD 476.

No matter how great man's power is or how formidable nations are, we must hold on to the fact that the kingdom Jesus inaugurated at his birth is a kingdom of which there is no end. This is an important truth to reflect on as we celebrate Christmas in a peaceful political situation while in many parts of the world powerful men and nations are bent on subjugating others, even at the expense of killing civilians. God "has brought down the mighty from their thrones" (Luke 1:52), and He will continue to do so until the eternal kingdom inaugurated by Jesus comes in its fullness and glory.

As we celebrate Christmas, let us rejoice that Jesus Christ is our Saviour who has saved us from our sins and reconciled us to God. Let us renew our commitment to Jesus Christ, who is our Lord and King. Let us share the good news of Jesus Christ with those who do not know him. Let us uphold in prayer nations and peoples who are in conflict with one another, and let us be God's agent of peace wherever He places us.

3 Green, The Gospel of Luke 134.

4 Green, The Gospel of Luke 122.

## A Personal Note

Christmas trees are up and the crowds are out spending time together, eating and shopping. Walking into shopping centres in December, one's eyes encounter Christmas decorations and gifts, and one's ears are assailed by Christmas carols and pop songs, while one's taste buds are tempted by Christmas spreads.

It's a little hard to get into a festive spirit, though, with conflict raging across many places in the world – in Yemen, Myanmar, Sudan, the Ukraine and now in Gaza. In places where there is no armed conflict, there are ideological wars. There are also natural and climate-related disaster events – fires, floods, typhoons and drought. When we think of Christmas, a peaceful Nativity scene comes to mind, with a star shining brightly, wise men bearing gifts, and choirs of angels singing. Yet in real life, in Matthew's gospel, the birth of Jesus heralded the killing of baby boys in Bethlehem, and Joseph, Mary and baby Jesus had to flee and were refugees in Egypt.

Here in Singapore, we are relatively safe from conflict and natural disasters. Yet, we may not be experiencing peace or joy in our lives. Health, family, work, relationship and financial issues can and do cause pain, anxiety, worry and fear.

In the Advent season, we focus on Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. We are reminded that for believers, these do not come from our external circumstances, but in and through Christ, these can be our reality despite adversity and in spite of global and personal turmoil.

"Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have *peace* with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we *rejoice* in *hope* of the glory of God. Not only that, but we *rejoice* in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces *hope*, and *hope* does not put us to shame, because God's *love* has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." Romans 5:1-5

Blessed Christmas.

Chia Gaik Bee

December 2023

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

# DSPC 180th Anniversary Service

(10 Sep 2023)

Photos by Michael Goh



# PSPC Lease Renewal – Thanksgiving

By Eld Aaron Tan

It is with a grateful heart that I pen this reflection. Indeed God has been, and will always be, a faithful God. Through the past 180 years, He has preserved PSPC and given us a mission to be a beacon in the community around Prinsep Street to shine forth His truth and love, and to serve the last, the lost and the least.

I recounted our lease renewal journey at length in the September 2022 Messenger, but perhaps a brief review here in bullet points may be useful for readers who may have joined us more recently:

- The story of PSPC's lease renewal journey began way back on 7 September 1923, when an indenture was made between the British government and the then Senior Missionary of the English Presbytery. This was the beginning of our 99-year lease which ended on 6 September 2022.

- The Property Development Committee (PDC) was formed by the Elders and Deacons Court (EDC) in April 2012 in response to an invitation by the Presbyterian Synod for PSPC to take a stake in the planned Presbyterian Hub at Telok Kurau. The key concern of the PDC at that time was the possibility that the Singapore Land Authority (SLA) may not renew our lease once it expired in 2022.

- The PDC was tasked to look into the feasibility of taking up a space at the Presbyterian Hub and to explore the possibility of moving our church there. After a careful study, the PDC recommended to the EDC that there were several other Presbyterian churches at the time who were in more urgent need of the space while we still had options we could consider. The PDC then started to dialogue with SLA and officially wrote in to explain our situation and seek their advice.

- In April 2013, SLA wrote back with an in-principle approval to extend our lease by another 30 years with the premium set at the prevailing market rate which would be determined by the Chief Valuer of land in Singapore. The PDC was grateful for the assurance that our lease could be renewed but decided to withhold the renewal as land prices were high and we still had 9 remaining years of the current lease. Along the way, the PDC was renamed as the Lease Renewal Committee (LRC) because its focus had changed.

- Around 2016, the National Council of Churches of Singapore (NCCS) engaged with the Ministry of National Development (MND) on land prices for Places of Worship (PW). The LRC decided to withhold any decision to activate the renewal till the negotiations were completed.

- In September 2018, the MND called a briefing, together with NCCS, to share its new policy for PWs which essentially encompassed cooling measures to help bring down the prices of such land.

- In November 2018, SLA called a meeting with the LRC to seek our consideration to take up a special 3+3 year tenancy agreement and wait for prices to come down. The LRC shared that other than the cost of the renewal premium, our other concern was the duration of the new lease which we hoped could be commensurate with our status as a National Monument. SLA advised that the matter should be discussed with National Heritage Board (NHB).

- On the advice of NHB, the LRC submitted a paper to the Commissioner of Land in July 2019 to provide our inputs including our unique status of PSPC as a monument and the associated costs in maintaining such an asset. A series of meetings ensued between SLA, NHB and the LRC.

- Meanwhile the prices of land for PWs did not improve significantly despite the policy revision and LRC continued its dialogue with SLA and NHB.

- A dialogue session was arranged by SLA on 19 July 2021 with Minister Edwin Tong (Minister for Culture, Community and Youth & Second Minister for Law) where we were updated about a second major review of the land policy and were advised again to take the offer of a 3+3 years tenancy while the policy was being finalized.

- We took the advice to apply for the temporary tenancy agreement when our lease expired in September 2022.

Since that last update, we were thankful that on 28 May this year, the MND announced the revised policy where PW land would be allocated via a ballot rather than a competitive tender. Land prices would be determined by the Chief Valuer based on factors such as location, land area, gross floor area and allowable use, that is, it would be based on the merits of each piece of land as though it had never been transacted before. The price would be made known before the ballot. For PSPC there was no need to ballot as ours was a lease renewal but the price would be determined in a similar way.

We waited eagerly after that announcement as SLA told us that they would prioritise those whose leases had expired. On 18 September 2023, we received the Letter of Offer from SLA with the stipulated premium of \$3.19 million (before GST, stamp duty and other fees) for a lease of 30 years. This was significantly lower than what we had anticipated under the old framework, and all factors considered, it was a reasonable price.

We looked into PSPC's reserves, and thanked God that He had provided more than enough to pay the premium amount in full, with a sizable balance for other ministry and operation needs for the years ahead. Arrangements were then made for an Extraordinary Congregation Meeting, held on 22 October 2023, to seek a mandate from members for the EDC to proceed to accept the offer. As members cast their votes, we were reminded by Pastor Darryl that we were not there to just cast a vote but, indeed, we were casting a legacy for the generations to come. We give thanks to God that the congregation voted with 99.73% in agreement to accept the offer.

We are truly thankful to God for His guidance throughout the entire journey, and the provision of the needed amount of funds. We are also thankful that He has taught us to be prayerful, to wait on Him and to trust Him for the outcome, and indeed He has answered our prayers! Now as we wrap up our year of celebration, we can look forward to the next 30 years to continue the mission, pressing on to be faithful to His Kingdom's work, powered by the wind of His Spirit.

May He continue to bless and keep us.



# My Journey as a Treasurer

By Dn Evelyn Ng

I was approached by the Audit Committee to be nominated as Deacon and Assistant Treasurer in 2019.

Two questions went on in my mind at that time:

1) *Do I have the training / experience in Accounting / Finance?*

Yes, that is my vocation.

2) *Will I have time to serve in this capacity?*

Not sure. I will have less “me” time, less time to watch dramas, and more stress if I need to work overtime or rush deadlines over the weekends. So, am I saying I don’t have time to serve?

A friend asked me, “What is your fear?” I answered, “The votes.” But other fears included stage fright, not being able to speak coherently in front of an audience, and so on. A congregant once told me it was painful to see me sing a solo piece in The Believers because I was so fearful. I pray that congregants will bear with me for at most six years because I need to account to God for the whole of eternity.

## WHEN WE AVAIL OURSELVES, GOD IS IN CONTROL

I was installed as Deacon on 28 April 2019 and started to serve as Assistant Treasurer. With an experienced Church Manager and Treasurer, being an Assistant Treasurer was a breeze and I was assigned to look at fixed deposit placements and to implement electronic banking for vendor payments.

Those who knew me then will remember that personally, I was skeptical of Paynow, Paylah, eWallet etc. But when COVID-19 struck in January 2020, a sense of urgency to implement e-offerings rose within me, even though some dismissed this urgency. By God’s wisdom and guidance, the setup and instructions were done, and several users in the Church Office and my cell group helped to test and provide feedback on the draft instructions. After four revisions, these were ready to be used by the congregation in March 2020. On 3 April 2020, the nation-wide Circuit Breaker was imposed. God’s timing is perfect and the operations of PSPC could continue during this period to cope with the safety measures imposed.

Being in the front seat of the sailboat, apart from being able to witness firsthand how God works, we will also get hit by splashes of waves. On 1 May 2021, I stepped up as Treasurer and a series of events occurred, at home, at Church, and at work. Aging parents with medical conditions, a retiring experienced Church Manager, changes in manpower in the Church office, policies to be updated for clearer guidance for a new Church Manager, politicking and backstabbing colleagues at work ... in hindsight, it was only by God’s empowerment, wisdom, and grace that different parts in the body of EDC worked together in unity to overcome issues in Church at that time. God also moved mountains at work and sent angels to help with my parents’ medical conditions. I am thankful for sisters-in-Christ who have been faithfully praying for me and continuously encouraging me. Through the storms, I was reminded that I am not alone. All I needed to do was to bring my prayers to God, be still and trust that HE will hear my pleas and cries.

During these few years, the Annual Congregational Meeting (“ACM”) was conducted online. This meant I could record, re-

record and re-re-record the Finance updates if I stammered and stuttered, so the congregation could be spared listening to what may have seemed like a broken record.

## NEARING THE END OF MY TERM...

In the recent photo-taking for the 180th Anniversary, someone asked me where my tie was. I believe it was asked in innocent jest but it got me wondering if there had been any female Treasurers in the history of PSPC. Given the more conservative culture then, how would their experiences differ from mine in the current context? Some congregants mentioned that it is difficult to be a female treasurer in such a traditional church like PSPC. Apart from some silly comments here and there, I have not been discriminated against, or at least I don’t feel I have been!

By God’s grace, guidance and sustenance, I am into the third year as a treasurer and am privileged that I can play a role in the lease renewal during my term. Under the Charities Code of Governance, members holding the position of Treasurer have a maximum term limit of 4 consecutive years. This means I will need to step down as Treasurer by the 2025 ACM.

## WHO’S NEXT?

The EDC, Audit Committee, and I have been praying for congregants who are trained and currently practising as finance personnel to step out to serve in the Audit Committee and subsequently step up as Treasurer. In our congregation of over 800 people, there must be those who are able to do much more, with God’s enabling.

Let me end with a devotion I shared in one of the EDC meetings. It is extracted from a book by John Ortberg entitled, “If you want to walk on water, you’ve got to get out of the boat”, based on the passage in Matthew 14:25-32.

So, what goes into the making of a water-walker? In summary:

- Water-walkers expect problems but recognise God’s presence;
- Water-walkers discern between faith and foolishness, and get out of the boat in faith when called;
- Water-walkers accept fear as the price of growth and deeper connection with God;
- Water-walkers master failure management and see failure as an opportunity to grow;
- Water-walkers learn to wait on the Lord.

The two verses that encouraged me over these years are taken from Isaiah 41:

- v10 “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.”

- v13 “For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; It is I who say to you, “Fear not, I am the one who helps you.”

So, if we want to experience walking on water, we’ve got to get out of the boat in obedience and trust that He who calls us will uphold us, help and enable or empower us.

The question is, will you step out in faith and serve?

# Climbing Mount Fuji

By Ng Keng Gene

For 12 years of his life, almost every day without fail, Siau Ek Jin would turn up for swimming training. The endless years of training culminated in him bagging a bronze medal while representing Singapore at the Special Olympics World Summer Games 2019 in Abu Dhabi.

But bring him to a pool now, and the 31-year-old, who has intellectual disabilities, will refuse to take a swim. His mother Lucy said that having been trained in a competitive environment with a club for so long, Ek Jin cannot get used to swimming without his training mates, and without the push that racing against them brings.

Following his podium finish at the Abu Dhabi games, Ek Jin's coach urged Lucy to consider trying him out in a different sport, given that his performances had peaked and that it would be increasingly difficult for him to keep up with his younger club mates. She took on the coach's advice, and today Ek Jin has running training at least twice a week – on Mondays and Thursdays – and also spends time on the weekends training to scale mountains or just enjoying nature while on a hike.

The switch in sports has not only allowed Ek Jin to continue to keep active, which helps him to control and coordinate his movements better, but has allowed the Siau family to create new memories together. On 26 August, Ek Jin, Lucy, and her husband King Ing, reached the summit of Mount Fuji in Japan.

They were with a group from the YMCA of Singapore, which also comprised nine other Singaporean climbers with special needs and 14 caregivers, coaches and volunteers. Their trip was more than two years in the making, with Ek Jin joining the Christian social service organisation as a special needs ambassador in 2021.

That year, he scaled 3776m – the total height of Mount Fuji – over the course of about three months, as part of a virtual fundraising challenge as a trip to Japan was not possible due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The challenge returned as a virtual one in 2022, before Ek Jin and his fellow ambassadors made the trip to Japan in 2023.

In each of the challenge's editions, Lucy joined Ek Jin to complete them. In fact, since 2019, she began to join him for hikes when a group of parents of children with special needs



invited them to do so. She recalls struggling to keep up with the pace of the hikes when she first joined this informal group in 2019, but four years later, aged 62, became the oldest member of the YMCA group to summit Mount Fuji.

While Ek Jin and Lucy had been hiking and training every Saturday with YMCA ever since he took on the ambassador role with the organisation in 2021, training for the Mount Fuji climb began in earnest about three months before August.

Participants would find places with elevation to train at, such as Bukit Timah Hill, as well as the Southern Ridges, where they would ascend Mount Faber via Marang Trail, hike to Henderson Waves and descend a staircase there, before doing the entire sequence in reverse – sometimes completing the route multiple times in one session.

Tall Housing Board blocks were also used for training, including a 40-storey block in Toa Payoh and the 47-storey SkyVille @ Dawson. Lucy said that close to the end of training, the team scaled the block five times in one session, taking the lift down four times and descending using the stairs once.

Training for their descent was essential, she said, as the team eventually experienced that “going up Mount Fuji is tough, but going down is tougher”. It was difficult for the climbers to keep their footing when descending, as the volcanic ash often gave way, causing them to fall and land on their bottoms. Even the local guides that joined the group were not spared from these slips while trying to help the YMCA ambassadors, said Lucy.

On 25 August, the day before the team hit Mount Fuji's peak, they began their hike at an elevation of about 2,000m, hiking for about eight hours before they reached a hut where they would spend the night.





The next morning, after sleeping for eight hours and waking up at 3am, they set off for the summit, reaching it at about 7.30am. Lucy said many in the group cried tears of joy, including coaches and parents who had gone through the three months of tough training with their children.

The experience was especially sweet as King Ing had joined Ek Jin and her as a volunteer to accompany another special needs ambassador, said Lucy, who added that her husband could have been positively influenced to join them after supporting them through the 2021 and 2022 challenges.

While their Mount Fuji journey is over, Lucy, King Ing and Ek Jin have continued to spend time outdoors, especially with the group of parents and their children with special needs that they first joined in 2019. Being in nature has been especially therapeutic for Ek Jin, who in 2020 fell into depression after losing his job as a result of the pandemic.

Lucy said it was initially a struggle to convince him to spend time in nature, but her perseverance has paid off as he has over time come to appreciate being outdoors, which has in turn helped ease his depression and allowed him to return to work. During the hikes, said Lucy, the family is often reminded of and thankful for God's creation, which they enjoy.

Having spent most of the past three decades taking care of the family, Lucy – who stopped work when Ek Jin was five to care for him and be a full-time housewife – said the recent years have marked a change in lifestyle for her, with her other two children no longer living at home – Ek Ping is married and has moved out, while Ek Hwee has been studying abroad.

Joining Ek Jin for his training has given her a renewed vigour.

"I never thought that I would have the



chance to do all of this at my age," she said, adding that she has never regretted supporting Ek Jin and encouraging him to go out and be active so that he will be healthier for a longer time. She noted that based on statistics, able-bodied adults typically outlive those with special needs as those in the latter group generally lead sedentary lives.

More peaks lie ahead for the family. Next year, King Ing, Lucy and Ek Jin plan to scale Mount Kinabalu – which at 4,095m is taller than Mount Fuji – and Poon Hill in Nepal.

Lucy said: "I used to rush a lot in the past, making sure the children were studying and eating well, but now I'm like an athlete, frequently hiking, climbing and dragon boating".

*"Worthy are you, our Lord and God,  
to receive glory and honour and power,  
for You created all things,  
and by your will they existed and were created."  
- Revelation 4:11*



# Reflections and Christmas Greetings

By Ariel & Connie Ceballos

## Reconnected and Refreshed

Our visit to Singapore during our recent furlough from mid-June to mid-August brings a feeling of warmth to our hearts as we reminisce about our memorable times with our PSPC church family. It was timely that we were able to join the church camp in Malacca, a time when we had the opportunity to meet many of our church members in one setting. We were together, listening to the powerful sermons of Dr Ajith Fernando, worshipping our God, and enjoying the uniqueness of Malacca Peranakan food during our free time. But one event that stands out in our memory is the fun night when some church members performed heartwarming renditions of familiar songs, surprising us with their talents. What a joy to see the fun side of various members, so unlike the formal people they appear to be when we meet them at church on Sundays. It gave us a different glimpse of them but overall, such light moments foster a spirit of family and wholesome Christian fun together.



It was Missions Month when we were there and we were thankful for the time given to us to greet the church, to thank PSPC for your faithful partnership, making possible our continued service in missions, doing the role of mobilisation coordinators for SIM Philippines, encouraging churches to be involved in local and global missions as senders or goers.

Some of our church members, including our Mission Committee, had the time to meet us over meals. We are thankful for the warm fellowship and also the opportunity to hear updates from you and pray for your concerns. We thank the church for your warm welcome, and your care, assuring us of your faithful support and prayers as we serve the Lord.

We were serving in the Philippines as mission mobilisers for two and a half years, and then we had our furlough. Such a visit during furlough is necessary to reconnect with our senders in order to keep strengthening the relationship between senders and missionaries for us to serve together in love, like-mindedness, and mutual support as we obey the Great Commission.

## Renewed in Passion to Serve

We were definitely refreshed and renewed in our passion to serve after our furlough. It prepared us for a series of ministry activities awaiting us upon arrival: the SIM Philippines Annual Retreat, the Biennial Conference for Ethnic Workers, the regional leadership training in Penang in which Connie is involved in mentoring three younger missionaries serving in India, Hong Kong, and Nepal, the SIM Philippines strategic planning in Dumaguete City, plus a series of teaching and preaching invitations for both Ariel and Connie in churches in Bible school. We have also responded to enquirers interested in missions, processing the applications of those who decide to apply, and journeying with them throughout the process.

All that we do in the ministry contributes towards fulfilling the Great Commission. We serve in love and unity with fellow workers, we equip others for leadership, we proclaim His Word to awaken God's people to respond to the command to reach the lost for Christ through evangelism and discipleship, locally and globally.

## Rejoicing in His Goodness to Our Families

Our partnership with PSPC started in 1994 and is still flourishing up till now. Years have come and gone, and both sides have grown in different areas of our lives. Some church members we first knew as singles now have families, children, and even grandchildren. Some friends who have remained single have encouraged us through their faithfulness in serving God through their availability and growing passion to serve. Yes, every time we visit, we see and feel the changes but we see the same faithful God sustaining us all.

There are blessings that God gives us as we age gracefully. How we praise God as we anticipate the coming of our baby granddaughter as Karin is now pregnant and due to deliver on 28 March 2024! Kevin is now a working student at Moody Bible Institute and Kara hopefully will graduate from university in May 2024.



As we go through different stages of our family life and ministry, we would like to sincerely thank the church for always being there to journey with our family. Thank you for your love, support, and prayers. Please pray with us that our children will also faithfully shine for Jesus wherever God puts them.

## Resolving to Live a Life That Matters

Christmas is a time to remember Christ's first coming as a baby. But He did not remain in the manger. He grew up and fulfilled His mission to die for our sins to give eternal life to those who believe in Him. Christmas reminds us to follow Christ's example based on Hebrews 12:1-2. He endured the cross and its shame for the joy that is set before Him and now He is exalted as King of kings and Lord of lords sitting at the right hand of God. Christmas encourages us to fix our eyes on Jesus, to be faithful, and to run with perseverance the race marked out for us. May we all be resolved to live a life that matters before God: to live according to His purposes and for His glory alone.

Have a Christ-filled Christmas and New Year 2024! Let us live for the King of kings and worship Him this Christmas and every day of our lives!



# With Love & Prayers Across the Miles

Ridge & Connie Orr



Greetings to our PSPC family from our new home in the Forest Apartments! Here are a couple of photos: one of our beautiful flowers on the outside and one of our cozy dining room on the inside, (filled with our pastor and his adorable family). We're including them in this update because we're hoping you'll pray for them. Next May they'll be completing their three-year commitment to our church and will have to decide whether they will remain for another term of service or move into full-time missionary work with OMF. Of course, our church would HATE to see them leave, but we all know that they have a deep heart for a certain unreached people group. Please join us in prayer for them as they seek to hear God's voice and respond with glad obedience.



Our outreach continues much the same. We have three weekly Bible studies we do on Zoom so that we can study not only with Chinese friends here in Pittsburgh, but also those who have moved away. Most of the overseas participants are joining us from back in their home country, but we also have one in Boston, one in New Jersey, one in Taiwan, and one in Japan. Thank you for your ministry to them in prayer – for protection, growth, and a transforming relationship with Christ.



One more prayer request: Most of you will remember that in 2005 Connie had surgery for cancer that included some reconstruction. At that time, the plastic surgeon told her it was not a permanent solution... and he was right. The implant has ruptured and Connie needs another surgery. The operation is scheduled for January 18, but we would really like to have this attended to earlier, so she's on a waiting list in case there's a cancellation. Please pray with us for wisdom to choose the best option and for God's perfect timing.

We are grateful for God's MANY good gifts throughout 2023 and we're certainly grateful for all of you at PSPC. We moved to Singapore in June of 2003 so that means we've been serving together in partnership with you for over 20 years. WOW—a match made in heaven!

## A Letter from Indonesia

From Rini (translated to English by Chat GPT and Chia Gaik Bee)

Dear PSPC.

*We remain grateful and truly thankful for God's presence in our current ministry. We have spent one year and eight months serving in this congregation, experiencing many events allowed by God. Not all have been pleasant; there have been moments that brought tears, but one thing we know is that God, to whom the ministry belongs, is in control of everything. This is what strengthens us in carrying out this service.*

*Facing a congregation that only thinks about living from day to day truly requires wisdom and strength from God to serve them. We are thankful for God's participation in this ministry. There are people whom God uses to equip us in the ministry, especially in the children's ministry. I had the opportunity to enroll in training for puppet ministry and learn ventriloquism. This is something I can use to teach Sunday School in an engaging way, making the children more enthusiastic about attending.*

Please pray for:

1. Luki, Karen, and myself, that we may become a family that glorifies God.
2. Our relationship as husband and wife, that there may be openness between us, so that we may have hearts that continually love God and this ministry, glorifying Him.
3. Pray for every ministry programme, especially those for children, teenagers, and youth. Also, pray for the plan to introduce puppet ministry to Sunday School teachers here, so that they too can be equipped to serve God.
4. Pray for our elderly mother, that God blesses her with joy and health. Also, pray for the cousin who takes care of her. We are very grateful for God's blessings that enable her to care for our mother.
5. Preparedness, both emotionally and physically, to go through the busy ministry months of December and January.
6. Preparation for writing the academic work required for ordination as a minister, scheduled for February or March next year. May God provide for all my needs and grant a heart ready to bear the responsibility of being a minister.
7. Luki, Karen, and I are truly grateful to PSPC for faithfully supporting and praying for us. Thank you for your love towards us. We always pray for the entire ministry of PSPC, that God continues to bless it, making it a source of blessing.

Love, Luki, Rini and Karen.



# How Will You Respond?

By Wulan

Now that I am back in my home country on home assignment, my first couple of weeks indeed needed adjustment, especially for my expectations about transport. I have been living in a city with many conveniences, especially for its public transport with different options such as buses, MRT, trains, and bicycles. And the city is safe for me to travel day and night.

Travel is more difficult in my home country. In my first week after I returned home, I went to another town, travelling for about three and a half hours by minibus and another half hour by car and motorbike. My whole body ached so much after that I needed a massage! I suppose it was due to the rough road conditions and the fact that I am getting older!

Getting used to the local means of transport is one of the adjustments I have had to make. It takes a longer time to travel, as public transport is limited and does not run in the evenings.

For returnees who come back after many years of working and living overseas, challenges such as these are what they experience. Although they will generally accept things as they are, many find it hard and some are even unable to stay on, if they have the choice.

Sandy, for example, has been living and working overseas for more than 15 years. When she returned to her hometown, she faced many such difficulties. She had many issues that she needed to address. She found it hard to find a local community of faith where she feels welcome and can belong to. It was hard for her to find friends as most of her peers are busy with work or their family or grandchildren. There are also no jobs for someone her age. Returnees with a husband and children may find it even more challenging to resettle home.

Statistics from the International Labour Organisation state that there are about 169 million international

migrant workers; these make up 62% of the total number of international migrants in 2019<sup>1</sup>.

For Diaspora returnees, networking with their community of faith from host and home is a very important part of partnership. We are not only planning to build a trusting relationship in a current partnership but also seeking to work together for the longer term. Why is that so? The global landscape is continuing to change even though there was some sort of pause due to COVID-19 pandemic, but people are once again beginning to move from place to place, be it for study, work, or due to natural disasters or because of war.

God in His wisdom and sovereignty has determined the times and boundaries where people live. In our current time, we can see this from migrants who move and live for some time in a country that is not their place of birth. Then they may return to their home country for a year or two before going to another country to live and work. These movements certainly do not escape from God's sight! He allows them to move about, or even God Himself may be the one who brings these people to live in a foreign country with a purpose, that they may be free to seek Him and find Him (Acts 17:26-27).

How are we to respond as His people? How are we to seek God's will in order to partner with Him for His grand purpose and plan? Is it not to treat them like how we ourselves would like to be treated?

Let us reflect again this Christmas on how we can welcome and celebrate the birth of our King and Lord by following His example. He became flesh so that we can be accepted by God. We have received His peace by his suffering, death and resurrection. Now let us who have received God's peace and acceptance extend these to those near and far, and to migrants in our midst.

Merry Christmas 2023!

May the peace of God be with us all!

1 [https://www.migrationdataportal.org/sites/g/files/tmzbd1251/files/2023-11/EN\\_November\\_update\\_\(1\).pdf](https://www.migrationdataportal.org/sites/g/files/tmzbd1251/files/2023-11/EN_November_update_(1).pdf)

# Mummy Circle

By Candice Lim



Two years ago, my husband Greg and I, along with Jane and Adrian Toh, started visiting PSPC couples who had welcomed their first child. As parents, we understood that fathers and mothers both needed support in this dizzying new phase of life, for the nights are long and babies can be surprisingly difficult to understand. Through these interactions with first-time mothers and upon the reflection of our own experiences, Jane and I realised that mothers can sometimes feel overwhelmed and alone. We wanted them to know that they aren't alone.

Thus, Mummy Circle was a natural extension of providing support to mothers of young children. This community is a safe space for mothers to support one another emotionally and spiritually, while we take a moment for ourselves to reflect and recharge.

In 2023, we held a breakfast gathering and a cosy sharing session about disciplining our children. We were blessed with heartfelt sharing, tons of laughter and a big dose of "you too???" epiphanies. While our journeys are all different, there were many moments of connection.

In the coming year, we will hold more gatherings that touch on themes that are close to our hearts and hope that our circle will grow bigger to support more mothers.

# *“God asked us to push the rock, but He will move it...” - Peter Lim*

By Lewis Tham & Ng Keng Gene

At the Singapore Prison Service (SPS) Volunteer Awards in August 2023, a new award category – the SPS Throughcare Hero Award – was introduced, and church member Peter Lim was among those who received it.

The new award reflects a growing emphasis by the SPS on throughcare – a rehabilitation approach that focuses on reforming inmates while they are incarcerated, as well as post-release, instead of having minimal guidance and leaving them to reintegrate into society by themselves. It is believed that by following through with inmates during and after their time in prison, the chances of ex-offenders reoffending are minimised, and they can return to and contribute to society.

Peter and the organisation he worked with – Prison Fellowship Singapore (PFS), have believed in the throughcare process long before it was taken on by the SPS. The PFS is an ‘inter-denominational Christian non-profit organisation that reaches out to prisoners, ex-offenders and their families in Singapore.’

Peter first started ministering to inmates around mid-2011, after completing a Master’s degree in Christian Studies at the Biblical Graduate School of Theology (BGST). Despite being wary about the job and uncertain if he could make a difference, Peter put his trust in the Lord and joined PFS as a full-time staff member, serving for more than a decade before leaving in mid-2023. During his first three years with PFS, he served as an ‘out-care volunteer’, focusing on rehabilitating inmates upon their release from prison.

It was in mid-2014 that Peter got involved in throughcare, when he took on the role of an aftercare coordinator at PFS, and entered prison to preach to and counsel inmates. From then on, he journeyed with offenders from the moment they were arrested until they were reintegrated with society.

Peter said the SPS’ goal of throughcare is to rehabilitate individuals into society, help them find a job and ensure they stay away from crime for at least a period of two to three years. On top of this, his goals include integrating individuals into a church and even reconciling them with their families. This is particularly important to him as a family’s support can change and reform their loved ones.

However, in Peter’s experience, rehabilitating inmates has been no easy feat. He said one challenge is that most inmates do not see their crime as an offence, instead believing it is someone else’s fault or simply a habit of theirs. “It is hard to identify innocent people in prison because everyone thinks they are innocent,” said Peter. He added that “if they [inmates] want to be helped, help is always available. They themselves need to take the first challenge to want to change. If family and community are supportive, change is possible. The inmates must also be willing to have God work in their lives.” Given how difficult it is to change a person’s mind, PFS staff members spend hours a day, for years on end, just to encourage the thought of acceptance and repentance in inmates.

Daily life as an In-care coordinator was onerous, and one that Peter rates “an eight out of ten” in terms of difficulty. Work lasted a full day – administrative work in the morning, client visits in the afternoon and training programmes in the evening. On many occasions, his weekends were dedicated to his work as well. Twice a year, he attended a course to sharpen and develop his people-management skills and learn from his counterparts in other organisations. He also made time for his family – His wife Lydia and daughter Sophia – and is thankful for their support and understanding, given his unpredictable schedule which could cause a change in their plans at the last minute.

Since leaving PFS on 30 June 2023, Peter has continued to serve as a volunteer with the organisation. He visits prison fortnightly and since leaving his full-time role has had more time to focus on individual inmates. He also devotes his time to a class of 20 inmates run by PSPC and gives personal aftercare to three to four inmates.

To keep himself going, he puts strong trust in God. He may not reap from the work he has sowed but believes that God will eventually come to the inmates. “It’s [changing the inmates] like a rock,” he said. “God asked us to push the rock, but He will move it. At the end of the day, our muscles get stronger and we learn to persevere.” Peter understands that tough times are an inevitable part of life, and he firmly believes that God is always with him through these moments, providing comfort and guidance. In the face of challenges, he turns to prayer, seeking strength and seeking solace in the presence of God. Over the years, Peter has had successes and milestones in his journey, including starting throughcare work in 2014 and receiving his recent award.

The SPS Throughcare Hero Award is not Peter’s only one; in 2017 he received an award for long-term service of three years for volunteer work inside the prison. He is due to receive his long-term service award next year for ten years of volunteer work.

For Peter, seeing God help the inmates start anew has been more important to him than these awards. One particular case he shared is of ‘Robert’ who has been in and out of prison over ten times. It took Peter five years from 2011 to 2015 to help Robert reconcile with his family.

Peter said that with more volunteers, PFS could potentially help to rehabilitate more ex-offenders. The organisation currently has 1,300 volunteers and works with 90 churches to help rehabilitate prisoners alongside PCS. In 2011, the prison population was about 18,000. Today it lies at just over 10,000. It is the work of aftercare volunteers like Peter who are committed and focused on planting and watering the seeds of change.

If you would like to know more about the prison ministry and how you can contribute, do approach him!



# To Listen Better

By Shaun Lee

How well do we listen? Did you know that listening isn't just about hearing, but also involves the interpretation of sounds and using that information meaningfully? How well we listen is a function of both our *hearing ability* as well as the amount of *focus and attention* we give to something. About five months ago, my then eight-year-old son Dylan and I both embarked on journeys to listen better. For Dylan, a cochlear device implanted in his left ear meant that both his ears were now sending different signals to his brain and so he needed to *relearn how to hear*. As for myself, I was just beginning my Prinsep Internship Programme (PIP) journey, committing to *focus my attention on discerning God's call* to full-time ministry.

Although different in context, our circumstances are very much intertwined. You may recall a bulletin article a while back about what led me to take up the PIP. This sharing provides some insights into Dylan's situation as well as our daily walk together since.

Dylan was born with moderate-to-profound hearing loss in both ears and had been fitted with hearing aids since he was seven months old. With the hearing in his left deteriorating drastically, he was recommended for cochlear implant surgery in that ear at four years of age. However, the way forward was hindered by a series of events. A tumour-like growth behind the eardrum forced the initial surgery to be postponed, and even when that was finally resolved, COVID-19 hit, causing "non-essential" procedures like his, to be de-prioritised. It was unclear if and when Dylan would ever receive his implant.

Towards the end of last year, we got a call from the hospital. It appeared that we would finally be able to move forward with Dylan's hearing plan. After a four-year wait, Dylan was scheduled for his cochlear implant surgery on 20 June 2023. The news was welcome, but sudden. It did also come in the wake of other developments from school. It was around that time that teachers had just finished their meetings with us, and we had received disturbing news about our younger son.

"Mr and Mrs Lee, we are very concerned about Dylan's recent behaviour: switching off his hearing aids in class; using inappropriate volume and language; distracted and drawing during lessons; vandalising school property..." As the voice of the teacher got more exasperated, I felt a certain sadness loom. Dylan was neither deviant nor defiant. He just couldn't hear well. But just as I couldn't blame him for his impairment, neither could I pass judgement on his teacher's ignorance.

It needed some insight to realise that Dylan's "acting out" was because he was feeling a growing disconnect with his environment. The words of his teachers were garbled. Their instructions no longer made sense. Communication with friends was challenging. It's hard to maintain friendships when you can't understand or be understood. In reaction to these circumstances, Dylan pushed back, pushed away and ultimately withdrew.



Dylan's implant

Hence you can only imagine the sense of joy and hope as we sat in the hospital office, audiologist, speech therapist and doctor, each taking turns to explain the benefits of the cochlear implant. This was God-sent, an answer to prayers indeed. The key challenge shared with us would be the post-implant care and rehabilitation. Therapy would be intensive, and the hospital visits frequent. This would be necessary to calibrate the device with precision and to support a long but crucial process of re-learning how to hear.

After a rigorous discussion, we came upon the option to conduct his therapy at home. This would significantly reduce cost, minimise disruption and greatly enhance the effectiveness of the rehabilitation. After exploring the feasibility, we finally worked out a plan for me to continue with my internship, but in part-time capacity, so that I would be able to conduct the therapy sessions for Dylan. My rapport with Dylan, coupled with relevant knowledge and experience made this our most viable and optimal way forward.

Following Dylan's successful implant, I have since been leading a most interesting dual life. Most mornings and weekends are devoted to working and serving at church. In the afternoons, I swap out the intern hat for therapist and caregiver roles to my two boys. The "part-time" label can be rather misleading. Many times, the duality has left me unusually stretched and spent. It is in these moments that God has poured out His boundless grace and mercy. He has provided enough light and energy to sustain me, but not so much that I may grow complacent. For this I am both humbled and grateful.

The PIP is a well-conceived programme, designed to help interns clarify God's calling through *theological equipping, ministry development and spiritual formation*.

I've been given the opportunity to attend a course at the Biblical Graduate School of Theology (BGST) on New Testament Studies to help introduce me to the rigours of seminary studies while equipping me with strong foundations in the New Testament for my ministry deployment.

Meanwhile, I have begun my rotation of the various ministries at PSCP which will expose me to the community of service at church and allow me to be disciplined by the different members of the pastoral team and church leadership. I'm currently serving as a mentor with Prinsep Lighthouse and YACHT ministries, while continuing to worship and read the scripture at main service, as well as singing with the Believers Music Ministry.

Spiritual formation is something quite new to me and it's been a most enriching experience to be introduced to Lectio Divina (Sacred Reading) and Visio Divina (Sacred Seeing). Both practices focus on entering a reflective posture to contemplate God's Word and His creation respectively. I have felt myself grow closer to our heavenly Father through participating in the spiritual retreats and exercises together

with brothers and sisters seeking to deepen their walk with Him. One does not need to be an intern to encounter God in this way and I would gladly recommend it for all in the faith.

It must be said that the highlight of the internship has been working together with church staff, a truly privileged and blessed experience. Aside from the guidance of the pastoral team, the church admin team has also been most welcoming and nurturing, allowing me opportunities to support and learn about the operations of PSPC, everything needed to keep the church running smoothly. Most notable was the organising of the PSPC 180th anniversary service, which gave me a first-hand appreciation of the synergy and teamwork of all involved.

So what happens after my mid-day transformation from intern to dad? These past months, Dylan and I have been working on his audio-verbal therapy and rehab, putting in at least a good couple of hours at home every day after school. Every session begins with a prayer, thanking God for the gift of hearing and this opportunity for Dylan to hear better. We have been re-introducing sounds, reconciling noise, calibrating device settings and re-learning speech.

On one of our recent neighbourhood walks to reorientate him to common environmental sounds, I was so moved when he turned to me and asked, "Papa, is that a bird?" You see, high frequency sounds had typically been out of his audible range, but the implant has since opened up a whole new spectrum of new sounds to him.



Dylan and Robo-Duck

I have to affirm Dylan's resilience throughout this entire process, although truth be told we did have rather a rough start. When you have the chance, ask him about "Robo-Duck". That's the nickname for his implant.

To get him onboard with the rigour of daily training and therapy, I cooked up a tale of a little robotic duck living in his implant. The little duck really wanted to learn human speech and would need to work with Dylan to level up. Let's just say young children respond well to stories and games and Dylan is no exception. Since then, it's been a most enjoyable and gainful time learning and growing with Robo-Duck. We even got him a real body so he can move between living in the implant and a giant duck plushie.

Thanks for taking this time to "listen in" on us. This adventure has really taught me the importance and significance of listening, as well as seeking to listen better daily. If we seek more to understand than to be understood, what a different world this would be. Even as I continue with the internship and Dylan's hearing improves, I give thanks that God has nestled one final gem in this whole experience. With each day that passes, Dylan and I are both learning to listen better...to each other.



Working with Dylan

## The Little Flock

In 2000, PSPC adopted an unreached people group, codenamed the Ming. Over the years we have been supporting the ministry of several of the pastors, including Pastor A who shares his testimony on the right. PSPC has also sent a family to minister there for a time, and the Sunday School children as well as PSPC congregants have also contributed to the school fees of a number of the children in the community.

Recently, a small group of ladies visited Mingland, to meet with and encourage some of the brothers and sisters there. They visited one of the house churches, and met with three families from the main congregation. Their livelihood depends on collecting plastic bottles and peeling garlic and onions. The ladies bought and gave each family rice, eggs and cooking oil.

It was so good to see everyone again. Many had suffered during the COVID period but are still faithful to God. Many of the school-going children have stopped schooling as their parents are unable to pay their school fees. The pastor and his wife are helping to pay for some who are doing well at school.

Several seniors in PSPC are providing lunch for about 20 undernourished children from the congregation every Sunday after the church service. This was initiated by Charles and Doreen Lim when they were there for two weeks in June. Their daughter Ai Lin organised a Vacation Bible School for 300 children from the local churches.

By Eld Evelyn Loh

### Pastor A's testimony

By God's grace, A, a native Ming was led to the LORD in the mid 1990s. Soon after, his family threatened him with violence and he had to flee. By God's providence, A met and married Y and they had children. Not long after that, God called A to full time ministry. Being a relatively new Christian didn't deter A and he graduated cum laude from a seminary. He had offers for further studies in Europe and to lead a big church in the capital city. But his heart was set strongly for the Ming people and to reconcile with his family. He returned to his home city in the early 2000s and through partnering with other God's peoples, he started a church plant.

Almost twenty years have passed and thanks be to God, through many trials and tribulations, Pastor A is now fully reconciled with his family. Some of his relatives have even become secret believers. This would have been completely unimaginable 20 years ago. Pastor A's faith is stronger than ever and he is even more determined to continue his Little Flock Ministry despite the opposition and pressures that he and his family still have to endure. Please pray for their faith, so they may stand firm in witnessing for Christ, so that God's name can be fully proclaimed. Amen.

# HELLO Christmas Party (3 Dec 2023)

By Lewis Tham

Stepping into the conference room, one would immediately have his attention drawn to the ensemble of meticulously packed goodie-bags with presents filled to the brim. Whatever inch of the gift table not covered with the bags lay more prizes wrapped beautifully in Christmas-themed paper. At the same time, one's olfactory senses would take in the smell of a splendid spread of food at the adjacent end of the room. Looking towards the front, the cool air of the conference room sets in together with the joyful sounds of people laughing and conversing heartily as cheerful Christmas music play in the background. The eyes meet the words 'HELLO Christmas Party. Welcome!'

The HELLO Christmas Party held on 3 December 2023 was organised by the teachers, namely, Colin Koh, Huey Bing, Lawrence Goh, Angeline Chan, Kim Yeo and Irene Wong. Each year, they organise this party to share the Christmas spirit with their students, who are mainly domestic workers from the Philippines, Indonesia and Myanmar. This year, roughly 20 people turned up for the event, including two newcomers.

The event kicked off with introductions of the newest members of the HELLO Class, followed by a games segment to break the ice. After the rules were explained by Angeline, a game of Bingo! began and the room turned into a flurry of excitement as the players rushed around to get signatures of people who matched the descriptions on their bingo sheet. The same level of energy was kept up throughout the games segment as the participants played blow-wind-blow and scavenger hunt.

Soon after, a session of carolling took place and the harmonious singing could be heard from the fellowship hall. Even though the participants were divided by ethnicity, they sang joyfully in the same language. They spoke Tagalog, Burmese and Indonesian but through HELLO Class, they

were able to understand one another better and sing together. After the wholesome singing, the room quietened down for a message by Lawrence Goh.

Though it was a simple message,

it was certainly to the point. First, Lawrence pulled out an envelope and asked, "Inside here is something as good as money; do you believe me?" One particular reply was, "No, because I don't see it." It was then revealed that inside was a \$5 NTUC Fairprice voucher. He then taught them the importance of believing, elaborating on accepting it and the importance of saying 'thank you'. He then gave a voucher to each participant, making sure they each accepted it and said thank you. Then, he pulled out another envelope and said, "In this envelope there is something even better than money. Do you believe me?" This time, the crowd replied immediately, "Yes!" Inside was just a simple note that read 'Jesus'. Lawrence explained that Jesus was God's gift to the people, again revisiting the main points of his message - Believing, accepting and saying thank you. The participants must believe that God loved them, and that Jesus died for them, and they must accept that Jesus is their Lord and Saviour. At the very end, they must thank God. This simple message highlighted beautifully the fundamentals of Christianity.

Before the event concluded with a sumptuous buffet lunch, several participants gave their testimony to encourage their peers in the HELLO Class. One particular sharing was by Judy from the Philippines, where her only daughter is currently residing. Through the Filipino ministry that merged with the Indonesian and Myanmar ministry a few years ago, she became a Christian. Church to her became a second home when away from her family in the Philippines. She finds God gives her joy as a big sister to her friends in church. At the same time, the people in HELLO Class give her support, as she misses her daughter each day and more so during the passing of her father and brother within the span of two months. "God gives the Holy Spirit as a guarantee," she said, "as long as we put our faith and trust in Jesus."

The resilience of the participants certainly reflects the importance of HELLO Class as their community especially since they are far away from their homes. As the teachers continue to minister to the participants, pray for and organise classes week after week, God works in the hearts of the HELLO Class members and gives them strength for each new day.



# The Men's Ministry

By Eld Wilson Teng

PSPC's Men's Ministry was started on 1 May 2008 by a core group of like-minded men who felt the need to band together to encourage and edify one another in their journey of faith as Christian men in the family, workplace and church. In keeping with our initial theme of Proverbs 27:17, we sharpened our focus to be more Christ-centred in 2015 with a renewed ministry verse from Colossians 1:28 to "present every man complete in Christ."



Our ministry values are:

- **Spiritual Friendship**  
We journey not alone but together as a band of brothers in Christ.
- **Accountability**  
We foster mutual accountability for spiritual growth and maturity.
- **Learning**  
We encourage one another through the learning of and obedience to His Word.



In this postmodern world which emphasises secular humanistic values, many are confused and struggle with their identity as human beings. Moving forward, our Men's Ministry emphasises what it means to be created in God's image, both male and female. As the Triune God's image bearers, we aim to help men understand and live as faithful Christian men in our world today.

Come join our insightful Men's Ministry events in 2024. Please contact Eld Wilson Teng, Lionel Gan or Jonathan Khoo for further information.



# PCS Synod Tree Planting Day (18 Nov 2023)

By Eld Wilson Teng



As the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Singapore, we gathered on a sunny Saturday morning on 18 November 2023 to plant 50 trees. We were doing our bit as part of Singapore's "One Million Trees movement" which aims to transform Singapore into a City in Nature. This is in addition to the 2.6 million trees already planted across Singapore since its independence.

More importantly, this is in line with our Synod Theme of "Strengthening Faith, Strengthening Family". Our Synod Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Chris Chia, reminded the participants about the importance of trees and plants in the Bible – from the garden of Eden to the fruitful tree in Psalm 1 to Christ's teaching on the barren fig tree, His dying on the cursed tree to the tree of life in Revelation 22. He encouraged us to pray and work towards being truly rooted and built up in Christ to bear eternal fruit for God's Kingdom and for our future generations.

PSPC was represented by Pr Dawn Tan, Dn Lai Kian Fong and Eld Wilson Teng. Eld Jonathan Kok also planted a tree in his capacity as chairman of the Presbyterian Community Services. We were allocated a spot for our tree planting together with PCS Synod, English Presbytery, Chinese Presbytery and Glory Presbyterian Church. After the tree planting session, participants were encouraged to pray and walk around the park, interceding for each of our Presbyterian churches and organisations represented under our PCS Synod.

The planting location was adjacent to Bedok Reservoir, Car Park B, north of the 1500m NParks marker on the footpath. Our planted tree is of the **Purple Simphoh (Dillenia excelsa)** species which is native to Singapore. It is a favourite with birds for its fleshy fruit, and its bright yellow flowers are rich in nectar as well. This free-flowering plant is sun-loving and requires moderate amounts of water.\*



\* NParks Facebook.

# Walking with Fellow Sisters...

## My CBD Journey (Connect. Bond. Discover.)

By Helen Yeo

Since July 2022, the Ladies' Ministry (LM) has embarked on a series of "the men don't get it" walks, taking place once every two months on average. One of the objectives of the walks is to encourage ladies in our midst to lead a healthy lifestyle through taking regular walks together. To date, we have formed a walking interest group of 40+ ladies in PSPC. In line with our Church's 2023 focus, "Celebrating God's Faithfulness, Continuing the Mission", we decided to incorporate some outreach efforts to the walks this year. Ladies are encouraged to invite newcomers or their female friends or loved ones who are pre-believers, to join in the walks. It is also our hope cum prayer that through the laughter, chit-chats and support we bring to one another as we walk together, God's love and grace may be shared and felt more organically over time.

The walking trails the ladies have covered so far include the Civic District Tree Trail, Marina Bay Walking Trail, the Green



*It is said that walking is the easiest and cheapest form of exercise. It does not require much preparation and effort, neither does it cost you much even if you do it frequently.*

*- The Ladies Ministry cannot agree more.*

Corridor, Sentosa Coastal Trail, Lower Seletar Reservoir Park, Labrador Park and Rifle Range Nature Park. Recently, we even did a Singapore River Walk in the evening, with both lighted lanterns and umbrellas in our hands! That was also the first time it rained during our walks! We were all somewhat drenched but that did not stop us from continuing the walk and enjoying the lanterns. I believe everyone who was present that evening was immensely encouraged by the good faith and good

cheer exhibited by all the walkers despite the adverse walking conditions. Personally, it was simply heart-warming to witness two ladies who had just met sharing an umbrella, engaging in conversation in the rain, and looking out for each other, cheering one another on. Our ultimate reward came after the wet walk when we could enjoy the famous Char Kway Teow at Zion Riverside Food Centre, where more fellowship could take place over yummy food!

### Allow me to summarise my personal experience and takeaways from these walks:



Taking these walks has not only allowed me to connect or reconnect with some of the ladies whom I either only 'know by sight' or have not been able to catch up with substantially in church, but also connect with God through nature. Often, walking out there puts me at ease, gives perspective to my situations and allows me to feel and enjoy His presence in ways other social contexts cannot. Every tree and the rustling of leaves speak a greeting from God. The chirping birds commune with me, bringing me indescribable joy, reminding me to praise God for His Power and Creativity in Creation.



Walking together with my fellow sisters strengthens the sense of community I experience here in PSPC based on our shared faith. This happens through conversations, planned or unplanned, that naturally take place. Walking and talking come hand-in-hand. It is almost impossible to walk with another person or a group silently, not for long at least! Practically anything can start a conversation. I recall one instance when I had to wait for a sister who was delayed and ended up walking with her alone for a good 15 minutes before we caught up with the rest. I must say it was one of the most enlightening and enriching 15 minutes I have experienced on a walk as we managed to find out more about each other's personal life. During the walks, we sometimes also encounter detours and challenges with the routes. Through trouble-shooting, resolving issues and even making decisions together, we align and unite through our differences, thereby connecting more deeply.





**DISCOVER**

Through these leisure walks and casual interactions with the ladies, I also observe and discover more about the strengths and talents of various participants. It is very humbling for me as there is just so much I can still learn from everyone. For instance, during the last walk when we were quite worried that the rain may dampen some spirits, the jesters among us immediately emerged to poke fun and tell stories to lighten the atmosphere and make everyone laugh. Those moments were so precious. On another occasion, I observed how two of the sisters, who appeared to be “not as fit”, pressed on and reached the top of the park, at a pace even faster than some of us! They continued to be all smiles despite the sweat and hot weather. I was very inspired and encouraged by their mental strength and was reminded not to “judge a book by its cover” and create stereotypes.



**Now, let's hear what some of the other ladies have to say about their walking experiences thus far:**

*I am grateful to God for each fellowship walk that allows me to walk with the many dear ladies in the Church. I am also overwhelmed by His providence of beautiful weather that gives me the opportunity to witness and behold His creation. I would like to thank LM for their effort and time in organising all the walks, enabling us to know one another better during our walks and continuing the spiritual friendship when back in Church. – Christine See*

*I enjoyed the ladies walk as I feel that people can open up more easily to talk in such settings. It is a good way to foster relationships. There is much exchange of laughter and joy. This is something that we usually cannot do at Sunday worship during the exchange of peace. I am grateful to LM for organising these activities as it opens a window for people to socialise in a relaxed atmosphere. It helps to slow down the pace of life when we walk and enjoy God's creation together. – Maisie Kang*



*The walks provide an opportunity for me to explore nature and 'unknown' parts of Singapore. Being in nature reminds me of God's beautiful creation which displays His creativity and love for all flora and fauna. Thank God for the wonderful fellowship and blessing each one of us with excellent health to be able to join in the walks. Look forward to more walks with the ladies and get to know all of them better. – Tan Shu Hui*



*What a good way for fellowship and improving our health too! LM started this project in mid-2022 and I was drawn to it from the very first one. The 2023 series of walks kickstarted with the focus on participants bringing a friend along. I brought my*

*friend Karen who enjoyed the walk and also got to know some of our sisters and other invited friends. We get to visit some scenic spots and delight in nature, ending with a wonderful fellowship meal each time. – Hazel Cheong*



*“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”*

– Hebrews 10:24-25



LM is very encouraged by the enthusiasm and positive feedback towards the walks thus far. The walks will resume in 2024 with a new line-up of venues. Stay tuned for more! If you are reading this and the Lord brings to mind some new interesting venues for walks, we invite you to share your thoughts and suggestions with us.

Ready to make a walking date with LM?

# New Members' Testimonies 洗礼见证

## 萧乃彬 Siew Nai Pen 我信主的见证

自从踏入社会工作以来，我一直任劳任怨地赚钱养家，希望给家人最好的生活。工作之余，我时常和朋友一起吃饭喝酒和打高尔夫球，对信仰不认真甚至有点迷信。时间久了，我感到生活没有意义。很多亲戚朋友都鼓励我去教堂听福音，我都一一拒绝了他们。我的太太一直以来都耐心地鼓励我跟她一起去教堂，我回答她说我需要时间考虑。随后，我开始读了一些关于基督信仰的资料。一年后，我跟太太说我要跟她去教堂。在教堂里听了福音，也明白了神的救恩，我真心地承认自己是个罪人并愿意接受耶稣基督做我的救主与生命的主。信主之后，我自己充满了信心。因为神施恩拯救了我，赦免了我的罪，使我得救重生。我的心充满喜乐和平安，不再有恐惧和犹疑。感谢主。



## Siew Nai Pen (My Testimony of Knowing God)

Ever since I stepped into the workforce, I have always been working hard and earning money to support my family, hoping to give them a more comfortable and better life. Apart from work, I often accompanied my friends for meals and drinks, and golf too. I did not have a serious attitude towards faith and religion in general, and could also be considered superstitious.

As time passed, I felt a sense of emptiness and lack of meaning in my life. A lot of my friends and family encouraged me to attend a church service and to listen to the gospel of Christ, but I rejected them all. My wife had also patiently asked me to attend church services with her, and at that time I told her I needed some time to consider and think about it. During that time, I started reading up information on Christianity on my own. A year later, I told my wife that I would go to church with her, and it was after hearing the gospel preached in church that I truly understood the grace of God's salvation. I confessed that I was a sinner, and willingly accepted Christ as my Lord and Saviour. After knowing God, I began to have more confidence in Him, knowing that He has saved me from my sins and forgiven me through Jesus, giving me a new life. My heart is now full of joy and peace, with no more doubts and fears. Thank you Lord.

## 方以乐 Hong Yile 我的属灵生命成长过

我从小在基督家庭中长大，每周都会跟随家人去教会。然而，我只是麻木地去教会，认为只要有参加教会活动就算是基督徒，却并不理解身为基督徒的真正含义。那时的我口中说着相信，却经常做一些上帝不喜悦的事，比如和同学一起说脏话、撒谎、作弊、发脾气等等。直到我上小学时，上帝透过他人的教导让我理解了基督的真正意义和救恩的重要性。我在圣灵的感动下决定接受耶稣基督成为我个人的救主和生命的主，从而真正成为了一名基督徒。我开始改变自己的行为 and 思想，摒弃不良习惯，参与教会的事工，学习神的话语，也在教会中结交了一群在基督里的兄弟姐妹。直到2020年，我前往新加坡念书，由于防疫政策的影响，我长时间未能返回新山的教会参加聚会。在上帝的带领下，我加入了磐石堂，并且下定决心受洗。尽管我的生命未经历过太多的大风大浪，但在每一个方面，无论是学业、事奉还是微小的经历，我都能感受到上帝的引领。感谢神赐予我一切的恩典！

## Hong Yile (My Spiritual Life and Journey)

I grew up in a Christian family and attended church with my family every week. However, going to church felt mundane and obligatory, where I believed that if I participated in the church activities, then I would be called a Christian. In fact, I did not know the true meaning of being a Christian. At that time, even though I was a believer of Christ by name, I did things that were not pleasing to God, including using vulgarities with my school mates, lying, cheating in exams, raging in anger, and so on.

At one point during my primary school days, God had arranged someone to instruct and guide me to the true knowledge and importance of Christ and His salvation. Moved by the Holy Spirit, I decided to accept Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Saviour, thereafter truly becoming a believer of Christ. By the grace of God, I slowly started to change my thoughts and behaviour, forsaking the old self and immersing myself into church activities while diligently learning God's Word. I also managed to forge close friendships with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

In 2020 while I was pursuing my studies in Singapore, COVID hit, and I was unable to return to my church in JB for gatherings and fellowship. Under God's guidance and leading, I joined Prinsep Street Presbyterian Church, and decided to get baptised. While my life journey thus far has been relatively smooth, I can feel and experience God's presence and leading even in the small things in life, be it in studies, or service. All praise and thanks to God for His grace!





### 陳蕙翠 Tan Huay Chwee 上帝让我改变

感谢弟兄姐妹的分享和鼓励，正是这些成为我生命道路中的转折点。我终于克服困难，顺服上帝的旨意，做出了受洗的决定。今后，我将顺服主的教导，并做出信实的见证！上帝的恩典和大爱永远伴随着我，直到永远，阿门！

### Tan Huay Chwee (God Has Transformed Me)

The constant encouragement from my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ has been a huge factor in leading me to Christ, as I faced a crossroad at a certain stage of my life. By the grace of God, I overcame the difficulties in front of me, followed God's leading and ultimately decided to be baptised. From now on, I will obediently follow God's will and be a faithful witness for Him! May God's grace and love follow me all the days of life, forever and until eternity! Amen!



### 郑清瑞 Tay Cheng Swee 我愿意信耶稣

I had been a free thinker all my life. A pivotal moment occurred in 2022, when I was critically ill. It was in the midst of this challenging period that my wife and I decided to commit our lives to Jesus. My wife and I would like to thank Helen Yeo and Doreen Lai who have been our friends since 2016, rendering their support and assistance in the last eight years. We believe deep in our hearts that Jesus will wash away all our past sins so that we can have a new beginning in Him. We look forward with refreshed spirits to our new life in Christ.



### 吴桂仙 Wu Kuay Sian 感恩有主

More than a decade ago, my mother-in-law invited me to accept Jesus as my Lord and Saviour. I accepted her invitation but was not baptised. Life has been tough but I have never ceased to give thanks in all circumstances, especially for the people God has sent to my husband and myself in challenging times. I thank Prinsep Street Presbyterian Church for their love and support to us. I would like to publicly proclaim my faith by undergoing baptism.

### 陈美珍 Tan Lay Tin 我的母亲 (by Jane Ho)

My mum was a staunch Taoist-Buddhist who worshipped many gods. She would take friends to temples for prayers. Her believing children have been praying for her salvation for over 20 years. Mum was especially displeased with me whenever I tried to share the Gospel with her. Even my sister would remind me to be less persistent. Having experienced the amazing grace of God, I felt compelled to share the Good News with her. Like most folk of her age, she had grown accustomed to her beliefs. Yet, interestingly enough, she acknowledged that Jesus is supreme over all other gods. She heard it from her paternal aunt who was a believer.

After Mum had a fall in 2018, my brother brought two ladies to the hospital to witness to her in her mother tongue and on 12 June 2018, by the grace of God, she accepted Christ. Unfortunately, her regular church attendance was interrupted by the COVID-19 restrictions. When the restrictions were finally lifted, my brother was unable to send her to church due to work commitments. That was when I felt the burden to invite her to PSPC's Chinese service in 2022. She has since settled in and adjusted well, so well that she wanted to partake in the Holy Communion without understanding the need to be a communicant member. That was when we took the opportunity to explain and ask if she wanted to be baptised. And to that, she said yes! In her limited ways, Mum has witnessed about God's hand upon her. She even testified to willing listeners about how the Lord answered her prayers for daily provision, for example, about how a young man got her a taxi and paid for the fare; and how God stopped the rain in the nick of time for her outings. Though mundane, what is amazing is that she attributed these provisions to be from God. Through this episode, I have learnt that nothing is impossible for God.



# SAAC Christmas Event (16 Dec 2023)

吴韵薇 报道  
Photos by Michael Goh

## 寻星记



12月16日上午10时，49位红山思乐活跃乐龄中心的年长者鱼贯进入磐石堂的圣殿，迎接他们的是一群带着温暖笑容的教牧与同工。

圣殿里充满了圣灵所赐喜乐的气氛。今天，他们将会经历一段奇妙的旅程，因为我们的义工团队和牧师，将带领他们一同体验寻找超自然伯利恒之星-救主耶稣基督的过程。我们都很期盼，到底老人家会有怎样的感受与回应？

这次，不同于以往聚会的形式，我们穿插了讲道与诗歌，把整个寻找伯利恒之星的过程，结合了理性与感性的元素，清楚地呈现出来；不但加强了会众的参与感，也留了空间让大家思考自己心里对主的回应。

一开始，平安夜的序曲开启了经文路加福音1章28,30-33节的诵读，读经员生动地描述了马利亚与天使之间的对话，就是关于马利亚将由圣灵感孕生下救主耶稣的喜讯。这时，敬拜团带领会众站立，一起高唱“普世欢腾”与“这位奇妙的婴孩是谁？”“至高的新生王竟然卑微地降生在马槽里！主席也述说了耶稣来到世上的目的，就是要按照上帝的旨意传讲福音。而这一切的成就，都有上帝在掌权。诗歌”祂来“提醒大家，”耶稣为世人的罪过，流血牺牲，爱到毫无保留，而祂深爱的人啊，悖逆不认识祂...”



此时，董明汉牧师上台，讲述了三种人对耶稣降生不同的反应。首先，天使向地位卑微的牧羊人显现。看到主的荣光，牧羊人起初很害怕，但天使让他们不要害怕，因为基督的降生是关乎万民的大喜的信息。天使叫他们到伯利恒去寻找一个诞生在马槽里的婴孩耶稣，牧羊人就急忙去了。他们的谦卑信服得了上帝的喜悦。（路2：8-13，15-16）。另外，东方的博士也带着积极期待的心，要寻找“那生下来作犹太人的王”。他们看见那颗能指引他们的星就欢喜。进了房子，看见耶稣，就俯伏拜祂，并把黄金，乳香与没药献给祂。（太2：2，10-11）。与此同时，还有另一个人物-高高在上的希律王。知道耶稣的降生后，却因为害怕耶稣会对他的王位造成威胁而企图杀害祂。当星象家没有照着祂的指示把耶稣诞生的地点通报祂之后，竟怒而命令手下把伯利恒附近两岁以下的小孩全部杀死！（太2：16）

董牧师进一步让会众反思各人目前的状况，是否有什么拦阻，使他们还无法完全接受耶稣。牧师列举一些常见的拦阻：1) 怕亲友取笑；2) 不愿意离开罪；3) 认为还有很多时间可以等；4) 不知道哪个是真神，每个神似乎都一样。

在诗歌“到我这里来”的引导下，会众再次被提醒：凡有愁苦重担的人都可以到祂那里去，祂就使人得安息。歌声安静我们的心，引导大家把重担放下，跟随耶稣。而最后一首回应诗”进入我心“也带领大家向主呼求，让主亲自向我们说话。之后，年长者在同工的陪谈下，分享了他们对这次敬拜与信息的感受与得着。之后的游戏与午餐时间，同工们在轻松的氛围中跟进与老人家的接触，并继续与他们分享主耶稣的爱。

我们感恩，看到参与的长辈们都有领受，知道每一次的聚会，主都必启发他们的心，一步步引领他们更加认识祂，也更愿意敞开心接受祂的救恩。



## English translation by Ivy Ng

On the morning of 16 December 2023 at 10am, 49 elderly individuals from Sarah Active Aging Centre joyfully entered the sanctuary of PSPC, greeted by pastors and volunteers with warm smiles. The sanctuary was filled with joy bestowed by the Holy Spirit. Everyone embarked on a marvellous journey as our coworkers led us in experiencing the process of seeking the supernatural Star of Bethlehem – our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Unlike previous gatherings, this time, the pastors interspersed preaching with worship songs, combining elements of reason and emotion to vividly present the entire process of seeking the Star of Bethlehem. This enhanced the congregation's sense of participation and left room for everyone to reflect on their response to the Lord.

With "Silent Night" as a prelude, we recited Luke 1:28, 30-33, which described the dialogue between Mary and the angel, bringing the good news that Mary would conceive the Saviour Jesus through the Holy Spirit. The congregation sang "Joy to the World" and "What Child is this?" The Almighty Newborn King was born humbly in a manger! The pastor also spoke about the purpose of Jesus came to forgive the sins of the world: to preach the gospel according to God's will. The accomplishment of all these is under God's sovereign control. The song "He is Coming" reminded everyone that Jesus came to forgive the sins of the world. He sacrificed Himself and loved us dearly, yet the people He loved could reject Himself...

Then, Rev Tong Ming Hung took the stage, narrating the different reactions of three groups of people to the birth of Jesus. First, the angels appeared to the lowly shepherds. Seeing the glory of the Lord, the shepherds were initially afraid, but the angel assured them not to be afraid because the birth of Christ was good news for all people. The angel told them to go to Bethlehem to find the baby Jesus born in a manger, and the shepherds hurriedly went. Their humility

and faith pleased God (Luke 2:8-13, 15-16). In addition, the wise men from the East sought the "King of the Jews" eagerly. They rejoiced when they saw the star that could guide them. When they saw Jesus, they bowed down and worshipped Him, presenting Him with gold, frankincense, and myrrh (Matthew 2:2, 10-11).

Meanwhile, there was another character, King Herod, who feared that Jesus' birth would threaten his throne and so he attempted to have Him killed. When the astrologers did not inform him of the exact location of Jesus' birth as instructed, he became furious. He ordered the massacre of all boys under two years old near Bethlehem (Matthew 2:16).

Rev Tong further encouraged the congregation to reflect on their current situations and think about whether any obstacles were preventing them from fully accepting Jesus. He listed some common barriers: 1) Fear of ridicule from family and friends; 2) Unwillingness to leave sin; 3) Thinking there is still plenty of time; 4) Not knowing which god is the true God, as all seem the same.

Guided by the song "Come to Me", the congregation was reminded again: All who are burdened and heavy-laden can come to Him, and He will give them rest. The song soothed their hearts, guiding everyone to lay down their burdens and follow Jesus. The final response song, "Enter My Heart", led everyone to call upon the Lord, asking Him to speak to us personally. Afterwards, the elderly, accompanied by volunteers, shared their feelings and thoughts about the worship and message. During the game and lunch that followed, the volunteers continued to engage with the elderly in a relaxed atmosphere, sharing the love of Jesus with them.

We are grateful to see that the participating seniors understood the message from the Lord, and we trust that in every gathering, the Lord will inspire their hearts, step by step, leading them to know Him better and to be more willing to open their hearts to receive His salvation.



# BGB Christmas Lunch (10 Dec 2023)

Photos by Michael Goh & William Nai



# SMF Christmas Celebration (16 Dec 2023)

Photos by Deborah Yong



# Children's MINISTRY CORNER

By Pr Carol Ng  
Sunday School Superintendent

The Sunday School celebrated Children's Day on 8 October with the theme "You are God's Masterpiece", taken from Ephesians 2:10 "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

We celebrated with songs of praise and worship, sharing by Uncle Nick Smith and a special craft activity related to the theme. We thank God that the sharing helped the children to remember that each of them is God's Masterpiece, created to do good works for the Lord.



Our children enjoyed creating their own special masterpieces using air dry clay. We hope they will remember and recall the lesson from Uncle Nick's sharing and be encouraged to do good works for God!

Our Sunday School teachers presented a special heart-warming video where they shared their personal wishes for the children and included some bloopers which brought smiles, laughter and glee. We are thankful that we are involved in teaching and nurturing our PSPC children and appreciate our partnership with their parents in their faith journey.

Our Toddlers and Nursery-level children also enjoyed their Children's Day programme prepared by their respective teachers and helpers. We give thanks to God that they were able to celebrate in a special way with gifts and activities that were specially planned for them.

The parents of our Sunday School children generously contributed a feast of scrumptious finger food and drinks. It was indeed a special celebration, a day for the children to enjoy and to remember that they are blessed to do good works for the Lord!

We thank God for our Sunday School parents, teachers and helpers who came alongside to support this special event.

Having fun with air dry clay...and some yummy finger food after



(L-R) Jerome, Carol, P6 graduates: Julian Eng, Lily Huang, Sophia Lu, Gabrielle Ong, Charis Goh and Natalie Wat.

# Girls' Brigade (GB) 7th Company

## ~ 2nd & 3rd Quarter Update



By Jess Goh  
Captain  
7th Company Girls' Brigade

### GB ASIA OFFICERS' CONFERENCE



This year, I had the opportunity to be part of the Girls' Brigade (GB) Asia Fellowship organising committee, representing Singapore, to plan a 3D2N camp for the GB Asia Officers' Conference (AOC) in Thailand. The team was made up of representatives from Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and The Philippines.

The camp saw close to 120 officers from the different countries, including Brunei and Cambodia, as well as men from Boys' and Girls' Brigade Philippines and the Young Men's Brigade Thailand. It was a fruitful time of reflecting on how God has worked in our lives and in the GB ministry, as well as sharing and learning from the different countries' culture and GB practices.

"Rise in Strength" was our theme for the camp to remind and encourage officers to rely on and draw strength from God as we continue to persevere in the work of the GB ministry. While there are challenges and disappointments along the way, we can be assured of God's faithfulness, that He will use GB as a platform to reach out and plant seeds in the girls' hearts that they may seek, serve, and follow Christ in His own perfect timing.



Isaiah 40:31 says "but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." This verse has been an encouragement for me whenever I have felt exhausted. May it encourage you too to keep serving the Lord in whichever ministry you're in.



Sharin Huang





## NDP 2023



I learnt about teamwork and patience from participating in this year's National Day Parade. This is because we had to practise pulling out the flag at the same speed when running and the flag would be slanted if we were running at a different speed. The training process was very tiring because we had to be in the sun for quite a while and it could be very hot and humid.

I got to know many people from different CCAs and they were all very friendly and kind. It was very nice hanging out with them because there was lots of fun and laughter. Every training session was memorable because everyone made it a very cheerful and enjoyable event.

**CPL Ong Jin Wen**  
(Sec 2)



## MY FIRST YEAR IN GB



My experience in GB so far has been fantastic! I've had the opportunity to learn new skills, such as marching, making keychains, etc. GB has also given me an opportunity to make lifelong friends, and contribute to meaningful community projects. It's been an empowering and enriching journey. I got to go on overnight camps, to different schools like Methodist Girls' School where I learned about their school culture and made new friends, and visited one of the newest schools, Yusof Ishak Secondary School. I'm grateful to be a part of this journey.

**LCP Hajanajbudhin Azmina**  
(Sec 1)



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

## ~ 2nd & 3rd Quarter Update



THE BOYS' BRIGADE

By Ho Yew Keong  
Captain  
1st Singapore Company

We had a great comeback after the June holidays with highlights consisting of the school's National Day Parade (NDP), BB cares, year-end final exam, school open house and BB adventure camp.

We have a new teacher in charge, Mr Patrick Ang (3rd from left). He was a teacher at Changkat Changi Secondary School and teacher in charge of BB 40th Singapore Company. We are blessed to have him on board as he is familiar with the BB operations and supported us greatly.



The first highlight after the June holidays was the school's National Day Parade. This was our first time doing the parade as a company. NCC and NPCC already had theirs in 2022 when the students were in Sec 1. We spent quite some time with

the Boys training them and bringing them up to the level of their peers. Although they were still behind the rest, the Boys had put in a lot of effort to showcase BB.



We participated in one of the brigade events, the BB Community Activities Rallying Everyone to Serve (BBCARES). We went to Bright Hill Evergreen Home to host the elderly for games of Bingo, tea and distributing goodie bags to them. The Boys had a good time with them.

"Visiting the elderly home reminded me of the importance of cherishing every moment and valuing the knowledge and stories that come with age. The genuine connections and conversations I had with the elderly left a lasting impact on me, prompting a deeper appreciation for the beauty of life at every stage." - Armest

"I enjoyed the experience and seeing the elders' faces light up made me happy. Playing Bingo with them was incredibly fun and after that, my perception of them changed for the better. Additionally, they were very kind and kept cracking jokes to keep us laughing. Hopefully the elderly benefitted from this experience, just like we have."  
- Lim Song Yao

We had our inter-squad Bowling competition at SAFRA Punggol. Delta emerged as champion after two hours of three intense games. The Boys had a great time together with the officers.



Yusof Ishak Secondary School had their open house on 18 November 2023 for P6 students to visit. Our officers and some Boys came one day before to prepare for the open house under the guidance of Mr Ang while the rest of the officers came on the actual day.

The last event of the year was our adventure camp where we had our practical and theory test for the Boys' Adventure badge. A total of 20 Boys and 12 officers attended this camp. We built bashas, a temporary shelter, and cooked instant noodles in the field. We also embarked on a 14km navigation exercise, and ended the day with a laser tag game. The camp came to a close with our award and promotion ceremony.

## ADVENTURE CAMP



Officers who were present for the camp



During the award ceremony, we gave out challenge trophies for games like Captain's Ball and bowling, as well as the Best Boy and Highest BB week collector. Of course, all the boys who were present were promoted to their next higher rank of Lance Corporal. We want to thank Rev Darryl Chan, Chaplain of 1st Singapore Company, for gracing this ceremony.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my officers, Rev Ron Tan, Richard Cheung, Lai Kok Choo and

Joshua Chen for their selfless time and effort spent with the Boys. Also to the teacher in charge, Patrick Ang for his support and partnership in 1st Coy.

Please join us to pray for wisdom and strength as we review 2023 and plan for 2024.





THE BOYS' BRIGADE

By Pr Carol Ng  
Acting Captain  
1J Singapore Company

# BB1J ~ 2nd & 3rd Quarter Update



## "BB CARES" AT SARAH ACTIVE AGING CENTRE

Our BB 1J Boys had the opportunity to serve the community in Sarah Active Aging Centre on 29 August as part of "BB Cares". Five of our Boys, accompanied by BB Officers, Teachers and Church helpers had a fun day with the elderly participating enthusiastically in guessing games using nostalgic themes. They even sang spontaneously when they heard familiar songs. The Boys handed out small tokens to those who got correct answers. We are thankful to God that our Boys witnessed the excitement and enthusiasm of the elderly and were heartened that they could share the joy with them.

Our Boys shyly presented two songs and were encouraged when the seniors cheered them on, clapping and singing with them. One of the nostalgic songs was "甜咪咪" (Tian Mi Mi –

a Chinese song by Teresa Teng). Another enjoyable activity was doing simple movement exercises accompanied by familiar songs. It was a happy fun-filled day!

Our Boys also had the opportunity to serve the seniors with an afternoon snack. One Boy commented that he felt a connection with them as they reminded him of his own grandparents. Even though there were language barriers, our Boys rose to the occasion by trying their best to serve the elderly with much respect, care and love. Indeed, they learned not to cast the elderly off in the time of their old age nor forsake them when their strength failed (Psalm 71:9), but instead showed God's love and compassion through their patient interaction with the elderly.

## BB – Archery

Our Boys were taught Archery on 19 September and 7 November. Praise God that we have our own instructors – Ho Yew Keong and his former coach cum BB Officer Anthony Tan, to teach them. They learnt basic archery skills but safety was the most important aspect of their training. The Boys paid attention and gradually gained confidence in handling the bow and the arrows. We could see that they enjoyed the challenge of mastering this newfound game. The photos only give a glimpse of what they had enjoyed!





We thank God that our Boys could experience the thrill and fun of shooting arrows. Our Officers and Teachers also took on the challenge of shooting arrows. You can see their intense concentration in acquiring the skills of this sport. We hope the Boys have learned much from their Archery lessons and it will go well with them beyond Archery.



Four of our P6 Boys received the Gold Award.



Tharun, P6



The BB1J Company received the JM Fraser Distinction Award for 2022 from BBHQ on 27 May 2023.

# In & Around PSpC

## NEW BIRTHS



**Parents:** Benjamin & Cheryl Kee  
The arrival of **Abigail Kee Yue Xin** on **2 May 2023** brought so much joy to us. We are grateful for the wonderful support our families have given and pray for God's guidance to bring up our child in a way pleasing to Him.



**Parents:** Justin & Sharon Chua  
We give thanks to God for the birth of our baby girl **Jamie Chua Hui En** on **8 August 2023**! We are extremely grateful for the support given by our marriage mentors (Uncle Francis and Auntie Joanna) and friends. And we pray for God's wisdom and guidance as we embark on a new chapter as a family of three.



**Parents:** David & Sharilyn Chien  
We thank the Lord for blessing us with our beautiful and healthy baby boy, **Declan Chien Rui Kai**, on **22 August 2023**. Declan's name means "man of prayer". It is our prayer that Declan will always walk in close communion with the Lord!



**Xzander Wong Zhe Yu (6 September 2023)**  
**Parents:** Ocean & Lynn Wong  
We are forever thankful to God for our happy and healthy baby Xzander Wong Zhe Yu. We are also grateful for the love and support from family and friends. Baby Xzander's favourite hobbies include eating his yummy fingers and doing sing-alongs with papa and mama. Pray that God will give us the wisdom to imbue him with Christian values as he grows.



**Parents:** Eric & Eunice Cheung  
It has been challenging taking care of **Dalene Cheung Rui En**, born on **7 September 2023** while managing both Nathan and Janaye. Dalene means valley, a natural creation by God which reminds us that we are his creation, wonderfully made. The name is also the short form of Mary Magdalene and we pray that Dalene will grow up to be a faithful servant of God. We give thanks for the great family support and we pray for God's continuous wisdom and grace to bring up all three of them as children of God.



**Parents:** Jonathan & Mildred Chien  
We thank God for the smooth arrival of our family's latest member, **Astrid Chien En Ting** born on **5 October 2023**. Although she made her mother's pregnancy term very difficult, she has been a blessing ever since she was born. Thanks to Astrid, her father could defer a reservist training trip to Australia and be excused from mobilisation manning activation. He also had four months of paternity leave and could make himself a matcha latte everyday.

## WEDDING



*Greetings everyone! We are **Rayner Chua and Wong Ye Wen**. After four years of intentional courtship and having our prayers answered, we got married on **8 July 2023**. We wish to express our heartfelt gratitude to our esteemed marriage mentors, Uncle Aaron and Auntie Lee Choo, whose guidance has enriched our journey toward marital union. As we embark on this new chapter in life, we are filled with anticipation to become an integral part of the PSpC family. We look forward to growing in faith, and contributing to the congregation with the gifts that God has given!*

## JOYFUL VOICES (26 NOV 2023)

Sharing the gospel with families and friends through a short skit and songs.



## SENIORS' SUNDAY (26 NOV 2023)



## SENIORS' LUNCH FELLOWSHIP (31 AUG 2023)



## PSPC Updates

(July - Present)

### DEATHS

Paul Chin Kwee Yong  
25.07.23

Tay Cheng Swee  
23.11.23

# Infant Baptism (25 Dec 2023)



## Astrid Chien En Ting

**Parents:** Jonathan Chien & Mildred Chan

Our family is thankful for the opportunity to infant baptise Astrid as it is a great reminder for us parents that it is our duty and responsibility to nurture our children in faith. We pray that she will grow up to be a faithful child of God.

## Claire Heng En Qi

**Parents:** Friedrich Heng & Sharon Ng

Last November, we welcomed Claire into our family and it has been a relentless journey of learning and many, many "firsts". Through it all, we have been constantly reminded of God's grace through the support, and advice provided by friends and family alike.



We bring Claire forward for baptism with the understanding that this act is but the beginning of Claire's lifelong journey of faith. As parents, and with the help of the Church, we endeavour to raise and support Claire in an environment of faith and love with the hope that Claire matures to become a God-fearing woman.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank one and all for sharing this milestone with us and to wish all a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.



## Abigail Kee Yue Xin

**Parents:** Benjamin Kee & Cheryl Giam

Abigail's arrival in our lives came at a timing so wonderful, so coincidental that it could only be explained as God's perfect timing. As her name means "The Father's joy", she has indeed brought immense joy to us and our greater families with her smiles.

We are indeed privileged to present Abigail for baptism, knowing that it signifies a greater commitment for us and the church to raise her as a child of God.

Our prayer for Abigail is that she will bring much joy to all she meets and for us as parents to exemplify Christ-like behaviour for her to emulate. We are grateful for everyone's support thus far and wish you all a Blessed Christmas!

## Quentin Lum Qian Xin

**Parents:** Lum I-Zack & Julia Lee

Presenting our third child, Quentin, for his infant baptism! He was born on 27 Feb 2023, and will be around 10 months old when he is baptised.

It is easy to make the baptism vows, but it is a whole different story carrying them out, especially when things are so hectic at home with three kids!

But we are thankful so far that our older two kids are coming to know the Lord through family prayers, conversations, and bedtime Bible stories. We hope that we can continue in the same vein as Quentin grows in understanding.

Please pray for us as we try our best to bring up our three children to walk with Jesus!



## Faith Liew Ruo En

**Parents:** Kelvin Liew & Delphine Neu

Hi all, we joined PSPC five years ago in 2019 and Faith was born in December 2022. We thank God for this very precious gift, Faith is a healthy, happy and sensible child. We named her Faith in the hope that her life will be a reflection of her strong faith in God. We look forward to Faith growing up in PSPC and being a part of this church community!



## Elisha Ong Yong Zhi

**Parents:** Julian Ong & Lydia Toh

We have three cheeky kids: Emma, Ezra, and Elisha. We are immensely thankful for the countless ways God has provided and continues to provide for us in big and small ways – and especially through the love and support of families and friends. As we commit Elisha this Christmas for infant baptism, we are reminded of God's love that came down to us so many years ago in the form of our Saviour, and pray that His love will continue to grant us grace in our journey of parenthood.



## Gabriel Tan En Ze

**Parents:** Rev Ron Tan & Karene Ng

As a family, we are thankful to God for the covenantal grace that was shown to us and to our son, Gabriel.



# Lighthouse Camp 2023

8 - 10 December 2023 • Praisehaven Salvation Army

Camp theme: Deeper

*(We learnt to grow deeper in the Word and in Prayer)*

Activities: Bouldering at Boys' Town

*(We also learned more about their ministry)*

Nature Walk and Reflection at Dairy Farm

*(We had a session of Visio Divina – praying with our eyes)*



## GRADUATION:

We give thanks to God for yet another batch of Seniors who have graduated from PLH. We pray that God will continue to lead them and guide them in all that they do.



## MENTORS APPRECIATION:

With sadness and also thanksgiving for their years of service to PLH, we also bid farewell to Eld Jack, Andre and Esther as they step down from service. We pray that God's strength and wisdom will be with them in their new areas of ministry.



For enquiries, please contact Rev Ron Tan at [rontan@pspc.org.sg](mailto:rontan@pspc.org.sg)