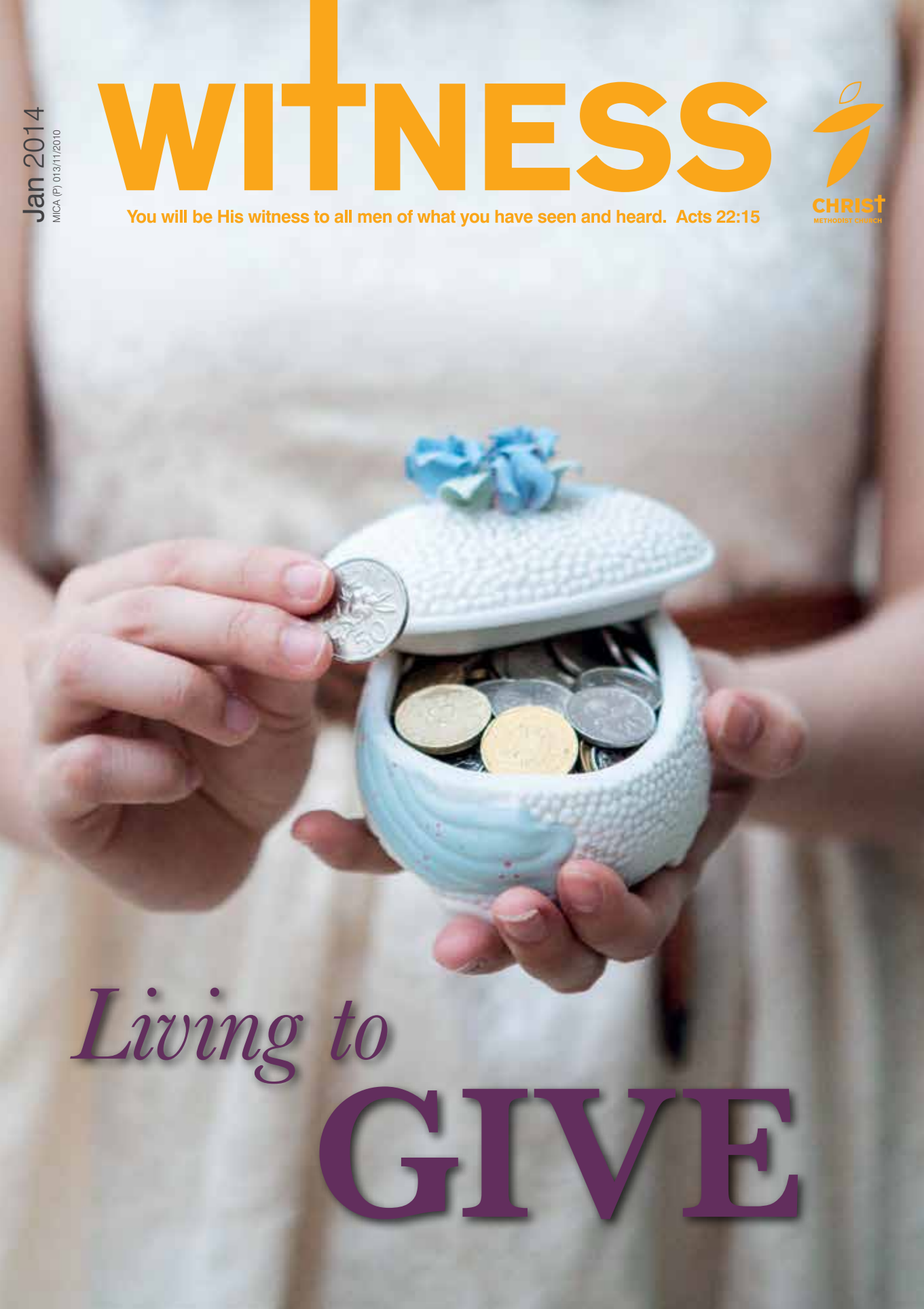


Jan 2014

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WITNESS

You will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. Acts 22:15



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A Word from the Editor

*This is my prayer in the harvest
When favour and providence flow
I know I'm filled to be emptied again
The seed I've received I will sow
~ Brooke Fraser*

I recently watched Disney's latest princessy animated film, Frozen, and found myself thoroughly amazed at the very Christ-like (ie. very un-fairy-tale-like) lesson about "true love" woven into the story by its creators. Without spoiling the ending too much for those of you who haven't seen it yet, I'll say that agape was definitely presented as the truest form of love, and there was more than a touch of irony in the fact that this die-hard romantic felt chastened

in her spirit to have to be reminded BY DISNEY on what it means to truly love another!

In a few months' time we will be moving back to our old premises and new building, which we hope will be a beacon of hope to all in the East Coast community (and our various mission fields). January 2014 will usher in a new church-wide focus on loving the community, June will see many of us in Malacca waiting to be filled by God at our church camp, and then, copiously filled, at the end of August we open our doors to the general public in our very first "Thank You Neighbours!" Open House carnival weekend.

In the run up to all this exciting activity, we do need to ask ourselves if we're genuinely ready to love others without reservation, and really live to give. If not, we should be asking ourselves "why not?" Are we afraid of being taken advantage of, and being vulnerable to others? Are we too overwhelmed by our own concerns and tiredness? Do we always expect something in return when we love? Or are we apathetic to others? What is the root of our hesitation? Exposing those roots to someone we consider an accountability partner in discipleship can help us deal with and overcome the inertia to love others. That's what Care Groups and Christian friends are there for – to spur us on to greater heights in loving the Lord and living for others.

So as we march on across the hills and valleys of 2014, let us always keep in line-of-sight this one goal: May every day be one in which we strive to give out of our abundance to those who have less than ourselves – whether they have less money, less acceptance, less capability, less health, less understanding or less hope. Surely CMC, with all that God has given her, can be a force for the devil to reckon with, here and overseas.

Elena Gudgeon
Managing Editor, WITNESS



From Goat Hair to

GEMIS

by Pastor David Gwee

In the book of Exodus from chapter 25 onwards, we read about the building of the tabernacle of God. It was the place where God would meet and reveal himself to his people. It was the place which symbolised God's presence among his chosen race. Exodus 35 tells about the people of Israel coming together to contribute sacrificially and substantially toward the building this tabernacle.

This was an exciting time for the Israelites. They had finally left their life of slavery in Egypt. And for the first time, in hundreds of years, the people of Israel were going to have a place to gather as a community to worship the Lord!

So now God calls them to give towards the building of his Tabernacle.

Ex 35:4 Moses said to the whole Israelite community, "This is what the LORD has commanded: ⁵ From what you have, take an offering for the LORD. Everyone who is willing is to bring to the LORD an offering of gold, silver and bronze; ⁶ blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen; goat hair; ⁷ ram skins dyed red and another type of durable leather; acacia wood; ⁸ olive oil for the light; spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense; ⁹ and onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on the ephod and breastpiece.

Can you imagine their excitement? Can you imagine the thrill that's running through their hearts? They are going to build not just any structure but the House of the Lord!

Like the tabernacle, our new church building is culmination of a dream that God has given us. This church building is going to be a joint effort from every one of us. We are all going to play a part in this rebuilding. Nobody is going to be left out, pushed aside or left on the shelf. Everyone's involved. Children, youth, adults, seniors, we're going to work together. We are going to be part of a great endeavour to build the house of the Lord, just like the Israelites. Everyone contributes. That's what the Israelites did. They all played a part.

The Israelites brought many different gifts to Moses for the building project. Here is a listing of what they brought, as recorded in chapter 35:22-29:

1. Gold jewellery of all kinds: brooches, earrings, rings and ornaments.
2. Blue, purple or scarlet yarn or fine linen, or goat hair, ram skins dyed red or the other durable leather
3. Silver or bronze
4. Acacia wood
5. Blue, purple or scarlet yarn or fine linen.
6. Goat hair.

7. Onyx stones and other gems
8. Spices and olive oil

Notice that there are contributions of varying value. It didn't matter if these gifts were of great price or whether they cost very little because every gift was valuable for building the Tabernacle. Every gift became part the House of the Lord.

The Israelites knew that whatever they gave was going toward something worth building: the tent of meeting, God's symbol of his presence among them.

Individually, their gifts may not have amounted to much. After all, how can a few brooches or a metre of cloth become the Lord's tabernacle? But collectively, all the thousands upon thousands of offerings, put together, that became something significant. All the thousands of gifts, came together to become something marvellous: the Lord's tabernacle!

Now what would have happened if the Israelites had held back, each of them thinking "my contribution is too small, it can't possibly make a difference." If one by one, they had decided not to give their portion, even if it was a small portion, the tabernacle wouldn't have come up.

Instead, each contributed his share or her share, no matter how small the share was. They each brought their own offering to God. Together, that mass of contributions became something special. By itself, each of the gifts were insignificant. Collectively, they became the house of God.

Now today, each and every one of us is in the same position. We are all part of this community. And our community is building the House of God. We are being asked to give our gifts, whether they be large or small. But every contribution means something to our Lord. All our different gifts come together to build something special.

Never in our 83 years of existence have we had a sanctuary that will hold a 1000 people. We are breaking new ground. I want to encourage you to be part of this significant project. Our gifts and service, large or small, can become something significant. It can become something marvellous.

ALMOST THERE...



Group shot

On 24th November 2013 some of our church leaders attended what is known as a “Topping Out Ceremony”, held on the rooftop of our new church building. (An area that will not be accessible to the general congregation when we move in – sorry folks, you’ll have to get your thrills elsewhere.) The simple ceremony, involving prayer and just a little cement shoveling, commemorates the completion of the main structure from the basement all the way to roof.

Witness photographer Jeremy Ho was on hand to capture the moment, and also give us a few sneak previews of the nearly-completed interiors. From January to March they will be painting the building, installing the rest of the fixtures and furniture, and doing safety checks to ensure that everything is in order.

By the time the next issue of Witness is published we would probably have done our “soft opening” and moved in to the new building already! How exciting is that?



Top left to right: Climbing up to the roof; Our rebuilding committee chairperson Kevin Loh with representatives of the teams that have been essential in the building project

Bottom: Pastor Edmund at the Topping Out Ceremony; Two supporting pillars of our church



THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR FUNDRAISING EFFORTS AND GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR CHURCH REBUILDING FUND THIS YEAR.

THE NET PROCEEDS OF 2013 MAJOR FUND RAISING EVENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

**DIALECT MINISTRY FUNDRAISING LUNCH (24 FEB 2013)
\$10,079.94**

**WALKATHON (1 JUN 2013)
\$48,120.19**

**FOOD FAIR & FLEA MARKET (5 SEP 2013)
\$26,339.85**

**“GIVE A BRICK” CAMPAIGN (AS OF 5 JANUARY 2014)
470 BRICKS AND \$563,869.00**

**L'AURA HANDICRAFTS CHRISTMAS SALE (8 DEC 2013)
\$6,231**

THERE HAVE BEEN NUMEROUS OTHER UNPUBLISHED CONTRIBUTIONS FROM INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS, AND THE CHURCH REBUILDING COMMITTEE WISHES TO THANK ALL OF YOU FOR YOUR LOVE AND SUPPORT TOWARDS OUR NEW CHURCH BUILDING.

Top to Bottom: The hallway; The new Berckman Auditorium, which will be renamed Worship Hall 1; Our new sanctuary almost ready



GIFT ...exchange?

by Wil Ng



Growing up in a non-Christian environment, it never occurred to me that Christmas was about Jesus Christ. Christmas just seemed like a festive season where people get the chance to give presents to each other. The season wasn't very significant to me, even though I really loved the beautifully decorated shopping malls, reindeers, presents, and hazelnut lattes. Even with the Christmas cheer going in full swing, Christmas celebrations always felt rather hollow and empty.

Last month, I asked a few of my non-church-going friends to do word associations with Christmas. Not unexpectedly, they came up with words like presents, turkey, shopping, and of course, Santa. It's almost as if modern society had decided that even the slightest suggestion of God Almighty coming to earth as Christ Jesus to die for our sins is simply too distasteful. Christmas elves can always be relied on to cover up that truth behind beautiful layers of ribbons, presents, and gift-wrap.

The only remaining Christmas decoration that threatens to reveal the truth of Jesus is the little baby snuggled in Mary's arms that can be found in the sets of nativity scenes of shopping malls. In parts of the western world, the reality of Christ is so far removed from the celebration of Christmas that even the nativity scene has been *banned from public display. After all, no one can risk upsetting the angry atheist with the unsettling image of a plastic baby doll in a dusty, hay-filled manger.

It is easy to see how a non-Christian can miss the point of celebrating Christmas. The reality of who Jesus is and why He was born is not immediately apparent in today's Christmas message of joy and giving. Instead, it is replaced with a much simpler story of jolly old Saint Nicholas who selflessly decided to give gifts to poor children.

To me, the real reason that Christmas is about joy and giving is found in John 3:16-17. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." – John 3:16-17, NIV

The reality of God deciding to give his Son to provide us with an opportunity at eternal life is so incredible, it is almost unbelievable without a decent dollop of faith, yet, it is the true reason why Christmas is joyful. Now that we have a saviour in Jesus, there is no longer a need to hoard and struggle in order to survive. We have eternal life. It is done. We are saved.

Knowing this, we can pour ourselves out in the spirit of giving, and put the needs and sufferings of others above our own desires and insecurities. In short, it is through Jesus' existence that we have a reason to be truly joyful and become able to give selflessly to others.

Christian giving is quite different from the familiar concept of gift-exchange found in society today. In Luke 14:12-14, Jesus' teaching seems to suggest a big flaw in the whole idea of a gift-exchange.

"Then Jesus said to his host, 'When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.'" – Luke 14:12-14

Instead of giving to those who are able to quickly repay the favour, as Christians, we should be deliberately giving to those who would be unable to repay us. Perhaps Christmas dinners and gifting activities (while still fun and meaningful) are not meant to be private affairs between friends and family, but should instead be communal activities that involve those from the poorer and oft-ignored segments of society. Apart from being able to bless others with food and presents, Christmas dinners are perfect opportunities for sharing the reality of Jesus' life, death and resurrection with others.

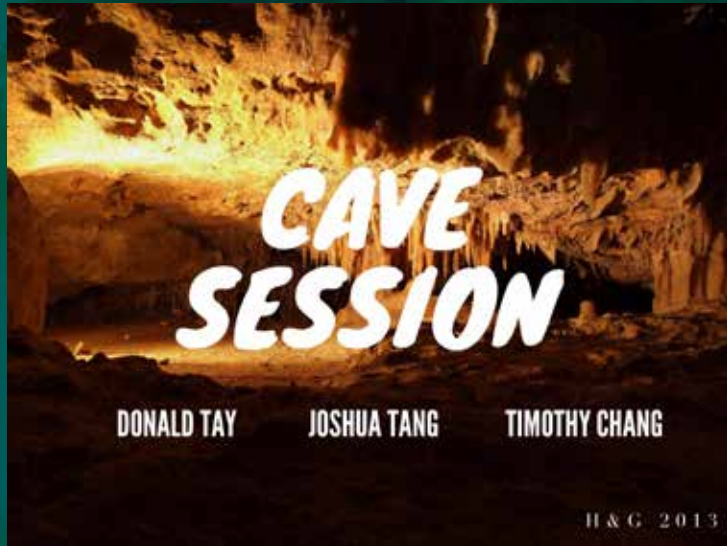
To some of our friends and family members, Christmas season was nothing more than eating turkey and exchanging presents. I know that feeling, but I'm glad I've left it behind. This year, find the chance to give others the best gift that you have ever received. Shower them with the love, knowledge and understanding that you have received through Jesus.

* Read more about nativity scenes banned at Santa Monica park after atheist dispute: <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/lanow/2012/06/nativity-scenes-banned-santa-monica-park-atheist-dispute.html>



Wil runs a small business in the technology sector. He is a chronic caffeine addict who enjoys boardgames, cycling, and a good cup of coffee.





It was a casual, fun time where many friendships were deepened, and some new ones started, but it was also a time of learning and getting serious about being intentional disciples.

Our young men explored the limitations of their human strength through games and learned about the kind of strength God gives a man through lessons by Adriel Loh from Wesley Methodist Church. Our young women were led to contemplate the disciplines of obedience and purity by Pastor Jenni Huan from Kingdom Community Church, in line with their chosen theme from Proverbs 31:30.



Both conferences featured, for the first time, "panel interview" sessions where a number of our own church leaders and young adults were asked to respond to life issues that are frequently faced by young disciples. The men talked about struggles they have faced, and how God used those trials to transform their ideas about strength and change their lives. The women talked about the different kinds of relationships a growing disciple needs and must care for.

The conferences gave our younger youths an opportunity to hear the experiences and heartbeat of older youths and young adults, and gave the older ones a greater sense of responsibility for the spiritual growth and health of the younger ones.



Heart&Gut ended with a time of sharing over dinner where the guys were encouraged to talk about personal situations where they felt that their strength was insufficient. Secret Garden ended with a round-robin time of testimony sharing where many girls expressed gladness and gratitude at how achievable it was, thanks to the examples set by our speakers, to get real with one another about life's struggles. (And there was also much photo taking, as you can see. :P)

Many seeds were planted at these conferences. Please keep IGNITE in prayer as we look to nurture these seeds with God's guidance.

Getting Real with One Another

by Timothy Chang & Elena Gudgeon

On 6th and 7th December 2013, Ignite Youth Ministry held two conferences in the St Patrick's School campus, one called "Heart & Gut", which was especially for young men, and the other called "Secret Garden", tailored just for young ladies.

The Land of *our Lord*

5 – 16 Nov 2013

by Mrs Sylvia Liew

“To go or not to go?” was the question that hung on everyone's lips. The political problems surrounding Israel caused us much anxiety. However, armed with faith and prayer, 41 people including Rev David Gwee and Rev Hoi Kok Fu decided to make the long-awaited trip.

NAZARETH

The visit to the city of Nazareth was an eye-opener because it really made the Bible come alive for many of us. Our guide in Nazareth took us into the world of Jesus, to where He spent his boyhood with his earthly parents, Joseph and Mary. We met a shepherd with his flock of sheep, saw terraced land where olives would have been grown, and were impressed by how they extracted oil from their olives with a simple olive vat using an upright stone and beam, operated by a man and his donkey. When we sat on the stone benches along the walls of the synagogue we were transported to a place of assembly where the Torah would have been read and explained on a Sabbath day. We imagined that we could hear Jesus read from the scriptures in His time.



We were fortunate to meet an adorable, rosy-cheeked Nazarene boy who immediately became overwhelmed by all the ladies from CMC queuing up to take a photo with him!

CANA IN GALILEE

This was where Jesus performed his first miracle by changing water into wine at a wedding feast. At the Wedding Church, both our pastors conducted a renewal of marriage vows for those of us who are married. The married ladies were pleasantly surprised with a long stemmed red rose, given to us by our guide Moshe. We held it in our hands as we walked down the aisle with our husbands. It was a memorable and meaningful service especially for those of us who have been married for many years. Those who are single or who came without their spouses were also prayed over and blessed.



THE LAKE OF GALILEE

We were excited when we boarded a boat, appropriately named 'Faith', and set sail on the Lake of Galilee. During this sail, our pastors led a meaningful service where we were reminded of how Jesus calmed the storm, walked on water, called his first disciples and made them fishers of men. We were also blessed to have a Messianic Jewish worship team on board with us. We lifted our hands, sang aloud and danced with joy to the song 'Amen', and when one of the them led us in a familiar song of worship - 'How Great Thou Art' - the presence of the Holy Spirit came upon our boat and so many of us were touched and moved to tears.



THE JORDAN RIVER

Yardenit is a unique site of baptism for Christian pilgrims. This is the place where the Jordan River flows out of the Sea of Galilee into the Dead Sea. We praise God that two members within our group came forward to be baptized by Pastor David. Twelve others reaffirmed their faith. They were dressed in white flowing robes, held hands and in a single line immersed themselves completely into the icy cold water. It was a beautiful experience for each of them.

THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

Gethsemane actually means "olive press". This famous garden is located at the base of the Mount of Olives and it was here that Pastor Kok Fu reminded us of how Jesus prayed feverishly to be spared from his impending suffering, and yet ended the prayer with the statement of obedience "not what I will, but what you will". After that we each went our separate ways to reflect on the betrayal, arrest and emotional turmoil that our Lord endured for our sakes.



THE TEMPLE MOUNT

We arrived early in the morning at Mount Moriah. The area has great significance for Jews, Christians as well as Muslims, because of religious traditions regarding the rock, known as the "Foundation Stone". This is the place where Abraham prepared to sacrifice Isaac, and where the second Jewish Temple stood before it was destroyed during the Roman Siege of Jerusalem in 70 CE. A beautiful shrine (not mosque) covered in gold leaf paint and intricate tile work, called the "Dome of the Rock", now stands at the visual center of the platform known as the Temple Mount.



THE WESTERN WALL

We visited a part of a retaining wall that enclosed the western part of Temple Mount. It is also known as the "Wailing Wall" because for centuries Jews have gathered here to lament the loss of their temple. Men and women must pray at different sections of the wall, and the tradition is to say a silent prayer while facing the wall, and then find a crevice in the wall to insert our written prayer requests. It was an emotional moment for some of us. We also took a tour through the Western Wall tunnel underneath the Old City, which showed us remnants of Jerusalem's past dating back to the 2nd century B.C.



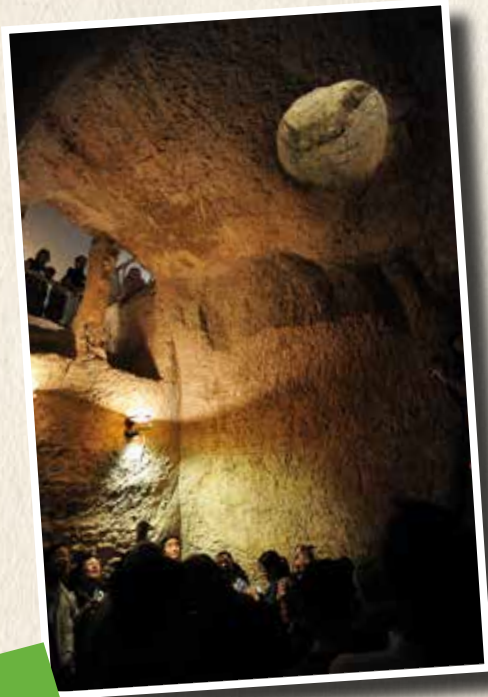
THE UPPER ROOM

Here, Pastor Kok Fu highlighted for us Jesus' sharing of His last Passover meal and the first Holy Communion with his disciples before His death. This is also the site where the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples who were gathered during the feast of the Pentecost, after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus. Our Jewish guide dispelled the perception that Jesus sat in the middle of the table flanked by his disciples. We were given a demonstration of how the Lord would have reclined on the floor, propped up with his left hand and eating with his right.



THE CHURCH OF ST PETER IN GALLICANTU

This church is located on the eastern slopes of Mount Zion and in the basement there is an array of caves, which includes the jail (or pit) where Jesus was held after his arrest. A mosaic wall depicts Jesus being lowered by ropes into the pit. Pastor David led us in a service of remembrance as we huddled together in that small cave. It grieved me to think of Jesus, all alone and in the dark, waiting for a death He did not deserve, and I was moved to tears. The name "Gallicantu" means "the cockerel's crow" and in the church grounds stands a statue of the apostle Peter during his moments of denial – surrounded by the three persons who had asked him if he was associated with Jesus.



FULL LIST OF SITES VISITED:

Mount Nebo; Petra; Beth Shean; Caesarea Philippi; Nazareth; Cana in Galilee; Lake of Galilee; Mount of Beatitudes; Tabgha (Site of the calling of the First Disciples); Church of St Peter's Primacy; Capernaum; Yardenit; Mount Tabor (Jesus' Transfiguration); Tel Megiddo; Jaffa (Joppa) – House of Simon the Tanner and Church of St Peter's Vision; Mount of Olives; Church of Pater Noster; Dominus Flevit; Garden of Gethsemane; Church of All Nations; Pool of Bethesda; Church of St Anne; Via Dolorosa; Upper Room; King David's Tomb; Church of St Peter at Gallicantu; Temple Mount/Mount Moriah; Western Wall; Western Wall Tunnel; Southern Steps; Jewish Quarter of Old Jerusalem; Jaffa Gate; Garden Tomb; Israel Museum – Shrine of the Book & Jerusalem Model; Yad Vashem; Bethlehem; Shepherd's Field; Masada; Ein Gedi; Qumran; Dead Sea; Ben Yehuda

GARDEN TOMB

We celebrated a memorable Holy Communion service in the tranquility of this garden, which is considered a very likely site of Christ's tomb and resurrection. While the visit inside the tomb was somber and thoughtful, the words "He is not here, He is risen" that were inscribed on the wall brought joy and hope to all who were contemplating the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. About a stone's throw away was the likely site of Golgotha, or "The Place of the Skull", where Jesus was crucified.



THE DEAD SEA

Our final stop on the trip was the dead sea, whose surface and shores are 427 meters below sea level – Earth's lowest elevation on land. It is 9.6 times as salty as the ocean, which makes for a harsh environment in which animals cannot flourish, hence its name. Half the tour group, both young and old, decided to take the plunge. As we entered the water we found ourselves sliding, slithering and sinking into the soft black mud. There were squeals and shrieks as we tried to balance and lay ourselves flat in the water. However, since we were so buoyant it was more difficult to get up!



Our pilgrimage to Israel has been spiritually insightful and uplifting because every site we visited, everything we heard and saw, added to the development and understanding of our faith. We want to thank God not only for His love and protection but for the warm friendships and co-operation within the group. Time was also set aside for review and reflection of the places we had visited.

Israel is not to be missed! Make room for it in your calendar this year!



Sylvia and her family have been worshipping at CMC for many years. She has retired from the education service and is busy looking after grandchildren, travelling, involving herself with drama pursuits, educational seminars and faithfully attending BSF for the past 4 years. She writes poems and songs only when she is inspired. She is also the current President of the Women's Society of Christian Service in CMC.



When an everyday pilgrim encounters God

by Karl Ho



Karl serves chairs the Disciple & Nurture committee and is in "The Lord's Den" care group. He and his wife Sheryl have a 3-year-old daughter.

This is Felicia's story. She was an 'everyday pilgrim' – an ordinary Christian with an ordinary Christian life. It is the type of spiritual journey that many of us can relate to. A life where we attend church regularly, sort of know God, but somehow just never experience the deep joy of a relationship with God that some people seem to be professing.

That is, until the eyes of Felicia's heart were opened when she surrendered herself and encountered God.

Jacob wrestled with God. Paul had an encounter on the road to Damascus. Both were wrecked from their experience, but out of these encounters came a new and profound conviction of

the God whom they encountered. Their lives were changed.

Felicia's story tells of that same spiritual principle. After we truly experience God's mercy and love, we will never be the same. We turn from ordinary everyday pilgrims into Christ's beloved who experience Him every day.

The thaw

"I became a believer when I was in my twenties, but it was a lukewarm type of relationship with God and I stopped going to church for many years. Sometime in late 2001, I encountered severe turbulence while on a flight from the Middle East back to

Singapore. In desperation, I prayed really hard and promised God that I would start attending church regularly again if I made it home safely. After returning, I felt led to come to CMC. As I felt very comfortable at CMC, I started to worship here regularly from 2002 onwards. My children and husband also gradually began to follow me to church. But I was only marginally involved in the life and ministry of the church. I did not learn much, and honestly, did not mature much as a Christian. Nonetheless, I always believed that God was real and loves me dearly."

The encounter

"The year 2008 marked a significant turning point in my life. I was diagnosed with a major sickness, which turned out to be extremely trying for me. It felt like an endless downward spiral of medical tests which brought with them a string of bad news. I was already feeling physically and emotionally devastated by each negative turn, and then I was told that I needed to go for surgery. By then my focus was primarily on dealing with the illness, and I 'forgot' about God for a while.

It was only on the eve of my surgery that I finally remembered God was still in my life. I had come to a point of extreme fatigue from all the anxiety when the verse "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28) suddenly became so real to me. It was then I prayed and fully surrendered my life to God in a way that I had never done before. Miraculously, I instantly felt the peace of the Lord flood over me and it was like the burden of that heavy load in my heart had been lifted. It was a confirmation that God had answered my prayers.

Knowing now that I indeed had God by my side, I braved through the surgery and the treatment regime that followed. I experienced peace throughout. Never once did I question God as to why I had to go through the trials. Instead, I began to learn the greatest lesson of my Christian life, which is that God can use even the hardest trials as opportunities to strengthen us. Don't give up on God! I was convinced that the trial facing me did not stem from God's condemnation, but was meant to help me grasp the deep forgiveness, grace and mercy that could only come from Him.

This experience allowed me to mature as a Christian.

It was also during my illness that my son encouraged me to be more engaged with believers in CMC. He registered me for the Alpha Course in 2009, and it was through this that I grew in knowledge of God and experienced the joy of the Christian community life. I am thankful to GIG care group, which I joined through Alpha, for loving me as part of this amazing family.

The new life

My life is no longer the same. God is showing me new mercies every day and I know my greatest blessing is the joy of knowing Him daily. Just recently, I felt a sharp pain in my right thigh. During a Sunday Service when Pastor Edmund preached on healing, he encouraged those who had a need to stand up and be prayed for. I stood up, was prayed for, and felt the pain subside that very day. I knew that God had healed me.

I know that God's presence is real and that He has and will always be there for me. In the past few years, my husband and children have also come to know the saving grace of Christ.

I am sharing my story because I know that God has given me a chance to sing of his glory. I want to serve Him as faithfully as I can, so that hopefully, others can also come to experience and know God the way He has blessed me.

"I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the Saints, and His incomparably great power for us who believe."

~ Ephesians 1:18

If you are emotionally, mentally or physically unwell (or have a family member or friend who is unwell) and seeking healing, CMC runs a prayer ministry called "The Healing Place" every Saturday morning from 9am – 12nn at the church office. Come with an expectant heart, and we will pray with you.

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Senior Ministry Executive
(Dialect Ministries)



Rev Hoi Kok Fu
Senior Ministry Executive
(Outreach Ministries)



Miss Elena May Gudgeon
Senior Ministry Executive
(IGNITE Youth Ministry)



Mrs Amy Loh
Senior Ministry Executive
(Christkidz)



Rev Edmund de Souza
Pastor in Charge



Rev David Gwee
Pastor



Rev David Ho
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Ministry Executive
(School Ministry, Ping Yi Secondary School)



Mr Daniel Gan
Senior Ministry Executive
(Care Groups)



Mr Kevin Wang
Media Executive



Rev Dr Peter Wong
Outgoing Pastor
(Jan 2014)



Rev Shaun Chong
Incoming Assistant Pastor
(Jan 2014)

Administrative office:

Ms Mabel Wat, Mr Steven Sim, Mr Timothy Wong, Mrs Alice John, Miss Abigail Koh

Local Church Executive Committee 2013-2014



Mr Kevin Loh
Church Rebuilding



Mr Wee Hock Ho
Glowing Years Ministry



Mr Peter Soh
Prayer



Mr Andrew Wee
Witness & Evangelism



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Lay Leader



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Miss Michele Soh
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Mr Rodney Chia
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Schools



Mr Mark Chan
Steward (Outreach)



Mr Alan Tan
Associate Lay Leader
(Connect)



Mr Winston Wee
PPRSC Chairperson
Associate Lay Leader
(Grow)



Mrs Christine Yu
Assistant Treasurer



Mr Ling Ting Soo
Christalite Methodist
Home



Mr Karl Howe
Discipleship &
Nurture



Mr Daniel Wang
Mandarin Ministry



Mr Samuel Choo
Youth



Mr Jonathan Ong
Steward (Young
Adults)



Mr Lim Fung Peen
Associate Lay Leader
(Serve)



Mr Barry Hung
Associate Lay Leader
(Reach Out)



**Mr Thangaveloo
Suppiah**
Archivist



Mr Stanley Lee
Christian Outreach
and Social Concerns



Mrs Pee See Hua
Family Life



Mrs Mary Lee
Missions

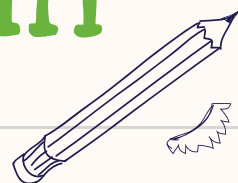


Mrs Sylvia Liew
Women's Society of
Christian Service



Mrs Tay Poh Luan
Honorary Steward

Why not Adopt a Cambodian Student in 2014?



by Zhaoting Low

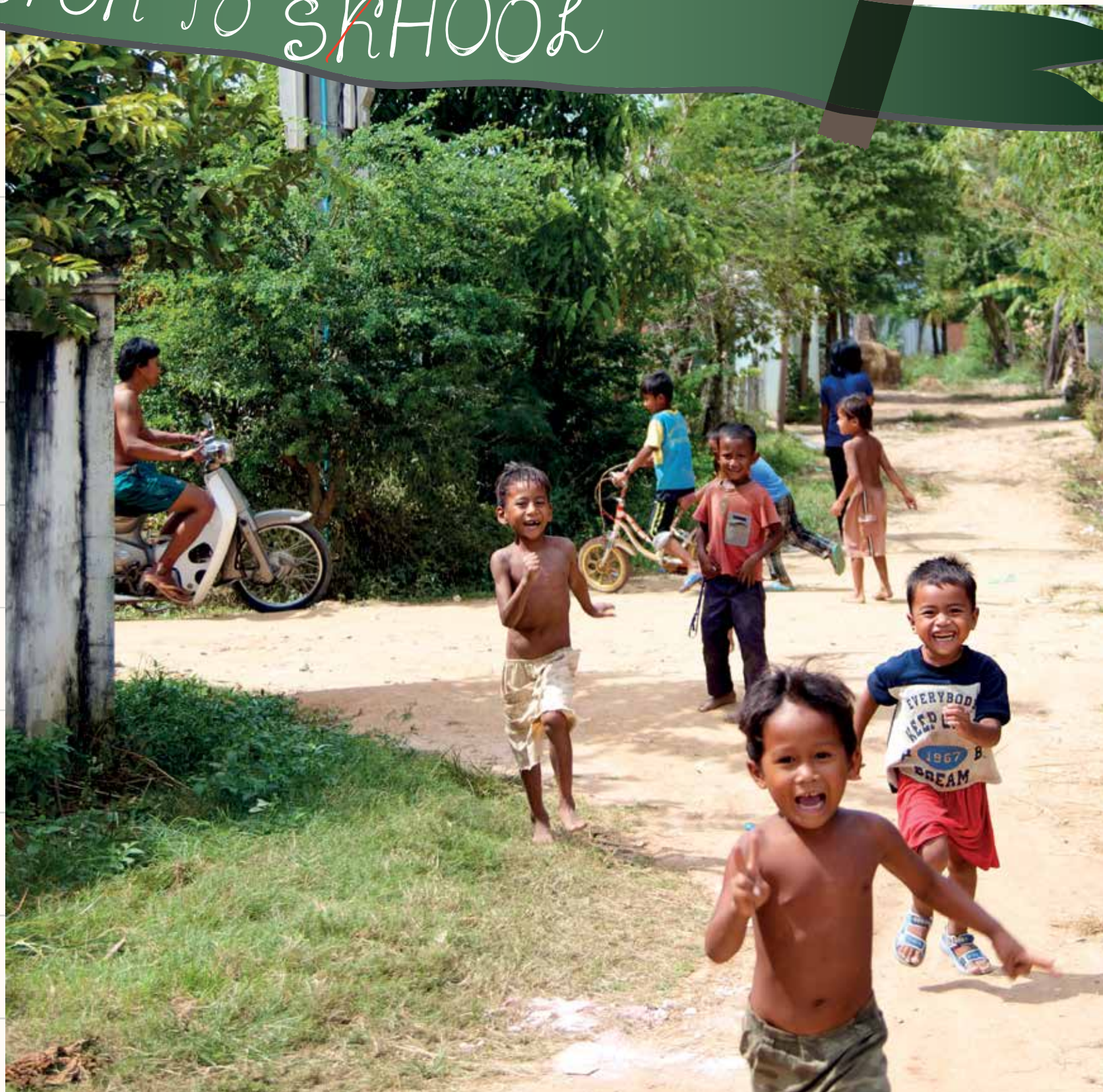
In his book, *Crazy Love*, Pastor Francis Chan profiles the characteristics of the 'Obsessed', the ones consumed with Christ:

"People who are obsessed with Jesus live lives that connect them with the poor in some way or another. Obsessed people believe that Jesus talked about money and the poor so often because it was really important to Him."

(Read Luke 18:21 – 25, 1 John 2:4-6, Matthew 16:24 – 26)

Have you been thinking about how you can connect with the poor or reach out to people who are in need? Here is an option you can consider.

Most of you are probably aware that the CMC Missions Committee sends teams to Krang Svay, a village located 40 kilometres southwest of Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Four times a year, in March, June, September and December, the mission teams visit Krang Svay Methodist Church (KSMC) to encourage and disciple their young leaders, inspire their children, and minister to the sick and poor. CMC also uses the financial resources that God has blessed us with to support the local pastor and the rental of the church building.





Together with the Methodist Missions Society (MMS), our church also started a donation scheme called Edufund about five years ago, with the objective of benefitting poor or orphaned students in KSMC. This scheme calls for sponsors in Singapore to provide a year's worth of school fees for Cambodian students anywhere from Grade 6 to University. Young people who need the help of such a scheme are identified by the KSMC Local Church Executive Committee, who also ensures that these youth are Christians hungry to grow in the Lord and serve in their local church.

To find out more about Edufund, I spoke with a few participants from CMC and could not help but feel inspired by their generosity and commitment to the program. Although he prefers to remain anonymous, one of them, who is currently a sponsor to four children, shared that he was compelled to start contributing because he knows these youth have less opportunities in life compared with the ones growing up in Singapore. He added that it was also a way of giving thanks to the Lord for the abundant blessings he's received.

Edward and Nancy Tham, who are active in our Glowing Years Ministry, currently sponsor a Cambodian youth who attends the local university. They have been supporting him for three years now, since he was in high school, and they intend to continue until he graduates from university. Nancy said that the least they can do is help give these children the chance to learn basic literacy skills, which will then open doors for them later on in life and also enable them to read the bible better. Learning and understanding from the Word that their future is in the hands of one who will always love and provide for them is something that will give them assurance and peace always, no matter what life brings their way. Edward and Nancy shared that the act of sponsorship has blessed them in many indescribable ways too.

Gabriel Lee, a young adult who regularly visits KSMC with the mission teams from CMC, is currently sponsoring two children. He recalls readily agreeing to commit this monthly "love gift" to these children (whom he knows personally from his visits) when he was presented with the opportunity four years ago. He is convinced that

this is money well spent – giving others a chance at breaking out of the poverty they were born into. Gabriel's infectious love for the children of KSMC has also moved at least half of the members in his care group, BUGGS, to be a part of this meaningful program even though they may not know the children personally.

Going to school remains a dream for many of the children from poorer families in the village of Krang Svey. They are often attracted by the fun kids or youth program run by the church and by our visiting mission teams, but if their parents can't find a way to make ends meet and pay for their school tuition, some of these kids may have to leave the village to work in factories or fields elsewhere at a very young age. They may never step into a church again, and there are many vices out there in their society just waiting to ensnare them.

Your sponsorship can provide a way for them to attend a nearby school, and also be watched over by the local church. The Edufund organizers are currently working on improving a feedback mechanism that ensures the students will be held accountable for passing their exams and using their tuition fees responsibly, as well as attending church and a care group as often as they are able to. The aim is to ensure they grow into well-rounded young adults who are both compelled and better equipped to serve in church leadership, and to disciple future generations of young Christians.

For just about USD\$400 a year (for sponsoring a school student) up to USD \$1000 a year (for sponsoring a university student), you will be contributing to a young person's academic as well as spiritual development. Do consider making this your exciting new adventure for the New Year.

"From what we get, we can make a living; what we give, however, makes a life."
~ Arthur Ashe

If interested, please contact Mr Hoi Kok Fu, our church ministry staff for missions and outreach, at 97542248 / kokfu.hoi@cmc.org.sg.



Zee can usually be seen eating and loves listening to Bon Iver and The Temper Trap. In her spare time, she constantly refreshes her Instagram page to stalk other people's lives. Ask her where in the world she would rather be, and you might be dragged into her not-so-secret mission to conquer a few mountains ala Bukit Timah hill or Redhill.

Reflections on INDIA

by Kezia Khomasurya



The following are snippets from my mission trip journal to help give you a sense of what our India mission trips are like, especially for someone who hasn't gone on one before. I hope they encourage you to consider visiting India in 2014.

DAY 1

To be honest, I was pretty apprehensive at first since I wasn't sure what was ahead. We got out of our van and were immediately greeted by the children and adults who were so eager to shake our hand. As we sat down in the church, I looked out at the sea of colors in front of me and felt a mix of emotions: sympathy, excitement, a hint of fear but also joy to be able to serve them.... After most of the rice was distributed, we were encouraged to start praying for the members; if I had any time to think about this I probably would have hesitated but we

had to get started right away. Before I could even ask them what I should pray for, most of the ladies would tell me of their health issues by pointing to me where it hurt and automatically speaking in Telugu. With no translator present at that moment, I felt a little lost and unsure as to whether my prayers were "working" or not. But calling on the Holy Spirit I found enough faith to believe that language is not a barrier and love needs no words...

DAY 2

It took some time to reach the first village... the terrain we drove past ranged from rocky hills and padi fields, to grassy lands with herds of sheep and cows. It made me wonder what sort of medical help these villagers would be able to get, if any at all. And I understood why they usually needed prayer for what seemed to us very simple things – like headaches, stomach aches and back aches.

... As we walked in to the village, we were headed by a group of drummers in the front who announced our arrival and got people interested in following us. Our destination was a little "start-up church" at the end of the village – just a small structure with brick walls about 3 feet high and beams supporting a tin roof. It looked so simple to us, but the locals were so happy and excited to have it.

... At the second start-up church dedication Florence Nathan and Nicole Teoh shared their testimonies and I think that really encouraged the ladies there. Women are generally not regarded as highly as men in India and are I think they're not meant to say more than men in public settings, so it must have been encouraging to see other women of God speak out in ministry to others.

DAY 3

Where do I even begin about how amazing today was? The day started out with a visit to the home of a Christian family... While we were there a neighbor poked his nose in and after we finished praying for that family, he invited us to his home too. There, he shared with us that he was an alcoholic who was trying to quit and though he had been interested becoming a Christian for some time, he felt there was another spirit in him resisting this. We explained to him that when Jesus lives in us we can command all evil spirits to flee in Jesus' name, and with renewed confidence he said yes to accepting Christ as his personal savior! We prayed the sinner's prayer with him

and when he opened his eyes, I could see a visible change in his countenance. He seemed to be in awe, and abit shaken because clearly something spiritually real for him had taken place. He had to grab on to a few men in order not to fall on his back.

...We went around to some of the other houses. One lady had half a face sunken in but didn't seem very concerned about it when we first met her. When we asked her how we could minister to her, she asked us to pray for peace in the family and for her third son to find a wife. After we had done that, she brought us to her daughter-in-law's house and we prayed for peace in that family unit as well because her husband had a drinking problem. As we prayed I felt there was a dark presence around the house and I suggested we pray for the house. The pastor suggested we worship there too, so we did, in Telugu, which was a really nice experience for us. As we left to visit another house, I noticed the woman with the sunken face go up to Florence to ask to be prayed for personally. I loved her character – she put everyone else's needs first before her own obvious suffering.

DAY 4

... My local translator was called Steven and he would ask the others in advance about what they would like to be prayed for whilst I was busying praying for one. He also took the time to ask them how they felt after prayer – If there was any physical change or if healing had taken place. Many had health conditions I've never even experienced before and I could only feel sympathy that they had to live with that, some for years. One old lady felt burning sensations in her hands and feet; another in her eye; another had a stone lodged in her nose; one child had constant trembling. I wished then that I had more medical knowledge to be able to share with them what may be causing their pain, but all I could do was to trust that the Holy Spirit would touch and heal them. After a while the crowd thinned out and at the end Steven himself wanted me to pray for him. He had just graduated from bible school and wanted prayer for his ministry. I can't wait to see his future and the legacy he has yet to leave behind.

DAY 5

After worship at the night rally, a few men and women shared testimonies of how they had been healed at the previous night's rally. Then Neale Gregson shared the Christmas gospel, which ended with an invitation to accept Jesus as savior, and also for those who needed healing to stand and place their hands over the body part that needed healing. I had come to the night rally with a headache that had persisted since morning. At first I was hesitant to stand because I wasn't in the "target audience", but eventually I did and placed my hand on my forehead, then we prayed together. As I took my hand away, the headache



completely left me and I was just so overjoyed! Now I knew why the Indians were so overjoyed when Jesus healed them. To have experienced that right then and there was amazing, and I couldn't stop thinking "wow, it worked!" We automatically turn to medicine when we experience pain, but they don't have that luxury, which is why Jesus is truly a saviour to them when he heals, and why they are so excited to experience it.

DAY 6

I did not want to leave, but slowly the crowd disappeared and we were being called back into the van. I wanted more time to pray for them and also to talk a little with my awesome translator. The last guy who came up to me to be prayed for confessed that he had anger issues that he couldn't control, but didn't want to continue living like that. I hadn't had anyone ask that prayer from me but as I prayed, I could sense there was unforgiveness in him, just as I had a few years ago when I was constantly angry and bitter. So after my prayer I asked him if there was someone he needed to forgive. His eyes welled up with tears and he said it was his parents. I knew how he felt, and I tried to share my own history in what little time we had left. Steven translated to him and though he seemed to be wrestling with something within himself, he looked slightly happier knowing that I had gone through a similar path.

...India has changed the way I look at people so much. I was reminded of the things and people I so often take for granted. I was also reminded that I am nothing without God – something I forget too easily in the workplace, when I'm in my element and comfort zone. This trip completely threw that away and I truly realized that it's because that He first loved me that I am able to love others.



Kezia works in animation so you need only say the words "Wanna watch a cartoon?" for her eyes to light up. Try it some time. :p This was her first mission trip to India.

SAVE THE DATES!



Church Camp 2014
9-12 June

at Hatten Hotel Melaka

With Pastor Benny Ho
Senior Pastor, Faith Community Church, Perth