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WITNESS



A publication of Christ Methodist Church

STORIES OF GOD-GIVEN
RESTORATION, HEALING AND WHOLENESS

Mercy & Miracles

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A word from the Editor

Elena May Gudgeon


Over the last eight years, I have had the wonderful privilege of receiving, reading and working on the stories of many individuals who have been supernaturally blessed or in some way ‘rescued’ from difficult life circumstances. It never ceases to amaze me just how much God cares about the little details in our lives – the small, private needs, desires, or burdens that we carry around inside us and reveal to no one.

We may never ask for anything, and yet find our unspoken needs miraculously provided for. Or we may ask and not receive exactly what we want when we want it, but then discover along the way that God has definitely been listening and working on the situation. Often the hardest task on our part is mustering the faith to believe God knows what He’s doing in our lives. We find it especially hard to believe He will take care of us when we have behaved badly and need to face the consequences of our unwise decisions.

But our God is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and lovingly devoted to His rebellious creation. We will never be able to fully grasp how wide and long and high and deep His love is for us, but some of the stories in this issue of Witness can help us get a sense of it.

When we fail, He picks up the pieces and restores order.
When we lack, He sends help our way, and provides us with solutions.
When we hurt, He brings healing and hope so that we feel better.
When we disbelieve, He offers miracles to prove His love.

Once, during a season of unremitting melancholy and self-pity, I berated my Creator for not caring about my deepest needs, and for “keeping me in a cage all to Himself” to slog it out in full-time ministry all by my lonesome. Instead of smiting me, as I so deserved, for my whinging against the Almighty (who so graciously had provided a firm calling for my life in the first place), God chose to give me the desires of my heart. He did so with characteristic wit and wonder, and even outmaneuvered my human failures to help me build something beautiful with someone special.

God is merciful, and God is more than able.
May you have the joy of experiencing this truth your life too. 



To submit feedback, story ideas, or testimonies to this magazine, please email elena.gudgeon@cmc.org.sg



A WORD FROM YOUR PASTOR

POWER UP!

BY BARNABAS CHONG

His first words were, “come follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19).

His last words were “therefore go and make disciples of all nations surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19,20)

From turning His disciples then and now into “fishers of men”, and releasing us into the nations carrying His authority, His presence and His power has always been a big thing in God’s heart. But how is the church today doing? Are we involved in

and prioritizing the work that was so important to Him? We are the only people in the world who can!

Occasionally, when the pastors sense that God is giving us a word of knowledge (prophetic word) to be released to the congregation, we will step forward and share it, and we have seen people positively impacted by that. This is an example of God’s power at work.


A number of years ago, God impressed on Pastor Edmund’s heart to challenge CMC to see India as a mission field so that CMC could learn from and be a part of God’s miraculous work in that part of the world. Since then, he has led many teams to India to minister to the sick and underprivileged, and many Indians have been healed from different kinds of pains and illnesses!

But God’s power is not just demonstrated through prophetic words or amazing feats of healing and deliverance. There is also the power of love that changes lives. Our church’s “Hands and Feet” movement has blessed many over the last few years. We have painted homes, bought household appliances, groceries, and done a variety of things to bless the needy families in our community.

While the above examples of God’s acts of power are encouraging, they are occasional occurrences. We can also rejoice in God’s daily acts of power in our homes, neighbourhoods, workplaces, schools, even shopping malls. At our church camp last month, Pastor Kenneth Chin, Senior Pastor of Acts Church (KL, Malaysia), shared with us how God demonstrated His power amongst students in his church. They would gather with other

Christian students to pray and ask God to reveal how they might bless their schools.

God spoke to them, and they have since prayed for sick friends, teachers and even principals who were miraculously healed by the Lord. These youths have also cleaned, repaired and painted school toilets, and showed love and support to troubled persons in schools, including teachers! And this amazing movement has continued into their tertiary education and work life too.

CMC, will you actively desire to proclaim Christ through your life every day and let God act in power through you? Will you seek to learn more about how to “Go in His Power”, and then actually do it? If you are a regular worshipper at CMC, that’s what we hope and pray you will do because we know that when you start to live like that, you will be truly satisfied, and God will be truly glorified! 



Mercy and Miracles

BY MERGIE P. GUILLEN

I HAVE BEEN VERY BLESSED BY MANY WONDERFUL PEOPLE WHO HAVE JOURNEYED WITH ME SINCE I CAME TO WORK IN SINGAPORE. SOME OF THEM HAVE BECOME AS CLOSE AS FAMILY TO ME, AND GOD HAS REVEALED HIS GOODNESS AND MIRACULOUS WAYS TO ME IN ON SO MANY OCCASIONS THROUGH THEM.

GRANDMOTHER

For a number of years it was my job to look after my employer's mother, who was a sweet and very loveable person even at the advanced age of 87 years old, when I first met her. There was a time when she was diagnosed with pneumonia and hospitalized for 3 weeks at the Intensive Care Unit at Changi General Hospital. In those weeks, I experienced guilt for my short comings as domestic helper.

I begged God not to take her home yet and promised Him that I would strive to become a better care giver. "Please let her live for at least 5 more years", I requested.

God reassured me with this verse from Isaiah 41:10 **"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."** I felt great relief and comfort after reading His Word. 📖



A few days later, the hospital called our home to inform my employer that her mother's heart had stopped beating and that she had passed away. My employer asked me to get changed and accompany her to the hospital right away. Although it would have been natural to feel panicked, at that moment I felt strangely calm.

As we were waiting for the taxi we had booked to arrive, the house phone rang again. It was the doctor calling to let my employer know that her mother's heart had begun beating again! I was so shocked and relieved after hearing that message that I began to cry, and as we journeyed to the hospital I gave thanks to God over and over for answering my prayer.

When we arrived at the hospital I saw that my employer's mother looked okay and over the next few days she recovered extremely well. She was discharged from the hospital one week later, and when she came home I was able to see to her needs with much more joy and peace of mind than before.

Five years later, at her age of ninety two, my employer's mother was hospitalized once again for complications related to old age and sickness. I was with her in her hospital ward every day and night, and one evening while I was feeding her dinner, she told me to "Take care, Magge" (her nickname for me). Then she said "I want to go home."

I asked her which home she meant – the one at Dunbar Walk? She wouldn't specify, but just kept repeating "go home, go home." So I replied, unthinkingly, "Okay *popor* (grandma), why don't you go home first? I will follow you later, ok?"

That morning, around 6.30am, I heard her choking loudly and got up to attend to her, but

she was already gone – her eyes were open but she was not breathing. I closed her eyes, and cried, talking to God and thanking him for the opportunity to take care of her. I thanked Him for having mercy upon both me and *popor*, by extending her life for 5 more years answering my request to continue taking care of her.

AUNTY


My employer lives with two other unmarried siblings, and her sister battled stage three breast cancer a few years ago. After one year the cancerous cells spread to her liver and she entered the final stages of her sickness. Because her bones were so weak, she would fall down several times each day, and the doctor cautioned me to be aware of a potentially fatal fall down the stairs. (She lived on the second floor of our house with her brother).

One day, I accompanied my employer to an abdominal surgery appointment at Changi General Hospital, and when I returned home her brother told me that their sister had fallen down again. I rushed with aunty back to the Accident & Emergency department of Changi General Hospital, and while we were waiting for the doctor I asked her if she wanted to eat something. She responded by swearing at me loudly, which was very embarrassing because we were in a very public area of the hospital and people were starting to stare at me, as if I did something wrong.

I knew that she was shouting because she was frustrated with her poor health, so I just cried inside my heart and said nothing. I prayed silently that God would give her peace and stop her yelling at me, and amazingly, she soon began to calm down and stopped scolding me! Then the doctor called her name, examined her, and decided to admit her.

I went home alone and after I reached my room, I broke down and cried. I asked God why He let this happen to me in spite of my kindness towards my employer's sister. I felt so embarrassed and hurt. Right then, the Holy Spirit came to speak to me and comfort me: "You are God's child, and you can stand straight with your head held high everywhere you go. Continue doing the good work of supporting the family I gave you, and don't look to your left and right, worrying about what other people think of you." I was also reminded that in Matthew 5:16 Jesus said "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Actions shine brighter than words.

These are only two little examples of how God is guiding me as I continue to work here in Singapore, but I hope they encourage you, especially if you serve a family in the same way that I do. There will be ups and downs in your journey, but if you put your trust in God Almighty, He will show you his mercy and his miracles (both big and small) in the different situations you face.

Even after so many years of working here, I still desire to continue living in Singapore and serving the needs of the family he has given me because I know that God will continue to supply all my needs and support me in every way. I want to especially thank and encourage all the ladies who are my sisters at the Grace Fellowship ministry in Christ Methodist Church. 



"Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise - the fruit of lips that confess his name. And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."

~Hebrews; 13; 15-16



MERGIE is from the Philippines and is currently a member of our international domestic helper's ministry, Grace Fellowship.

OH THE MIRACLE OF BIRTH! That God would fashion a sentient being with eternity set in her heart, and catapult her into the loving arms of her earthly parents. Well-meaning parents, blinded to the destiny each child has in His kingdom, flood her with fleeting notions of worldly values and success. Somewhere in the hustle, broken men break their children. Yet God has orchestrated a rescue plan. He cradles His children with healing in His wings, making all things beautiful in its time.



OUR Children

BY CHOW WEI, SHARON, AND OLIVIA SEOW

OLIVIA

We admittedly fall short as parents. Unwittingly, we have misunderstood our children and failed to portray our heavenly Father's love in our actions. Now realizing that there is only one good Father, we look to Him in all circumstances, entrusting our children to Him.

Last year, an intense spiritual warfare transpired. Despite prayers against her anxiety concerning family relationships and school life, Olivia (my younger daughter) was tormented by spirits, recurring night terrors and visions of death.

As her O level prelims drew nearer, she was unable to study, let alone wake up to attend school without uncontrollably collapsing to the ground. Though Olivia had the desire to complete her exams, she missed half of the prelim papers. God in His immense love and mercy connected us to prayer warriors, tearing asunder the plans of the enemy. Praise God! Knowing that God was fighting for her, Olivia conquered all of her O level papers. Over time, through Olivia's realization of God's true loving nature, the night terrors and deadly visions ceased.

During last November's Cambodia Mission trip, God mercifully revealed to Olivia the tears He wept over the Cambodians who have suffered from the genocide, and He assured her that He has the desire and power to transform barren wastelands into verdant pastures abounding with blessings.

God is continuously unveiling His ravishing love to her and is leading her gently through the labyrinth of the great unknown. Although still in the process of being made whole by the Healer, her *raison d'être* is to love the Lord with all her heart, all her mind and all her soul. Olivia is taking a break from school this year, immersing herself in God's love and truth, composing music and helping a man with Cerebral Palsy to edit his autobiography.

OH THE MIRACLE OF LIFE!

Radiant and untainted, prancing around with abandon, 9-year-old Luke is always bubbling with life, reveling in all things beautiful. While he can't speak yet, his very being bespeaks of endless love and inexplicable joy. Though his heart soars, his soul is like a tree planted by the living waters, tethered to God's love. Within the chambers of his heart, a song of God's love echoes deep and slow. In his childlikeness, he simply embraces Jesus's gift of a full and everlasting life.

LUKE

At 18 months old, Luke's MRI scan posited that he should undergo a brain operation to implant a permanent shunt in order to drain excess fluids from his brain and release the high pressure that had built up in the brain. With the operation being irreversible and susceptible to infections, we were horror-stricken and clouded by hopelessness. The top neurologists and the brain surgeon highly recommended this operation on the basis of:

- High brain pressure of 35 units (normal is 10 to 15)
- Luke's large head circumference (at the 99 percentile for his age)
- Ostensible swelling in both optic nerves in the eyes; an indication that the high brain pressure was pushing against his optic nerves

We cried out desperately to God for mercy and healing, and our care group rallied with us to pray for Luke. In our communal prayer, Olivia had a vision of the shunt being symbolic of a serpent; a destructive instrument of the evil one. Convicted that the operation was not God's answer for Luke's condition, we decided to seek a second opinion.

One week later, Luke was rolled into the operating theatre, where the doctors conducted a thorough examination of his brain pressure and optic nerves. Hallelujah! The pressure was revealed to be normal, and the apparent swelling of the optic nerves was merely pigmentation that occurs in some individuals! God had been merciful to our family and protected precious Luke from going through a detrimental and life-altering procedure. ^W

All children are unique masterpieces of God. Like flowers, some are as passionate as red roses, while others are as gentle as baby's-breath. They blossom at different speeds and in different seasons, having a myriad of distinctive features. Although at times we may wander into the wilderness, God reclaims us, watering the withered ones till they bloom again. I hope that parents will see themselves and their children through God's eyes. We are instruments in God's grand orchestra; a salient thread in His intricate tapestry. He is composing something beautiful.

CHOW WEI and SHARON are the proud parents of three lovely children, Rebekah, their eldest, Olivia, their second, and Luke their youngest.

Journey TO HEALING

BY JENNY TAN

**OUR CHURCH
MEMBER AND
RESIDENT
CULINARY TRAINER
ANNE YEO**

candidly shares how the prayers and loving support of CMC's Healing Place ministry team helped her get through five years living with a very painful nerve disease.



THE ILLNESS

"In 2011, I was diagnosed with a nerve disease called Trigeminal Neuralgia, which is a chronic pain condition that affects the 5th cranial nerve, one of the most widely distributed nerves in the head. The pain centered my forehead and spread throughout the right side of my face, the area around my eyes, downwards to the nose, mouth, lips and even my teeth. This affected area was so sensitive that the lightest touch would trigger unbearable pain. The disease is considered one of the most painful afflictions known in medical practice.

This pain came in unpredictable waves and turned my life upside down. I could not do simple daily functions like wash my face and brush my teeth in the morning, brush my hair, blow my nose or even eat. When I could not open my mouth to eat, my domestic helper was feeding me liquids through a straw and porridge with a teaspoon. She slept in my room each night, as I never knew when the pain would hit me. When an attack came in the middle of the night, amidst my cries and screams, she would hold my hands tightly until I calmed down and slowly got back to sleep.

Over the subsequent years I was hospitalized four times and met with several neurologists and neurosurgeons whom I hoped would offer me a feasible cure. Medication was offered as the first line of defense, but it did not work, and I was asked to consider a radiation procedure known as 'Gamma Knife'. This procedure dampens the cranial nerve but its positive effects would only be experienced after about a year. In the meantime, the side effects would include numbness in my eyes and face.

The doctors also offered open brain surgery as a permanent solution, but that option came with great risks during surgery. I thought hard about my choices, decided against the radiation or surgery, and continued taking the cocktail of medicine prescribed to me for five years. One of the drugs lowered my white blood cell count so every few months I needed to have my blood tested by the neurologist before he would prescribe the next dosage.

THE HEALING PLACE

These were definitely the darkest moments in my life, after the cancer I had already battled years ago. At times when I was alone, I sank into sadness and tears and began to question why God had abandoned me in my time of need. Hadn't He heard my cries for healing and relief? Why wouldn't He rescue me? Because of the affliction, I missed out on many family occasions like birthday celebrations and the day my niece delivered her son, whom I named Paul. That day I was warded in the very same hospital as she was, but wasn't able to join the family to see the bundle of joy, the first grandchild in the family, as I was not allowed to leave the bed.

A year into my struggle with this disease, I came to be aware of a ministry in our church called 'The Healing Place'. It is a prayer ministry catered especially for those who are physically or otherwise unwell and they operate on most Saturdays in the year. No appointment is required. You just have to walk in, fill in a form detailing





your illness or struggle, and they will prepare by praying over that information before they meet you. Then they invite you in to talk with them, and finally they will pray for your situation. As they pray they sometimes use scripture to encourage you and help you trust God with your difficulty.

I started visiting The Healing Place every Saturday that I could, and over the last four years, the wonderful team of intercessors have been relentlessly praying for me. During one session in 2015, a few of them sensed that God was asking me to “let go”. There wasn’t any specific detail communicated but it was something along the lines of “letting go” of whatever heavy burdens I was carrying. I remember that John 14:27 was read to me that day: “Peace I leave with you. My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” (This has since become one of my favorite verses in the Bible.)

At the time I was a little puzzled, as I didn’t know what exactly it all referred to. But as I took time that week to examine and reflect my life in light of what had been revealed, I realized I needed to let go of unnecessary burdens I was carrying on behalf of my family. No one had imposed these responsibilities on my shoulders, but I had taken it upon myself to help raise my brother’s children, and even though they were all grown up and married, I still worried about them and tended to fuss over their smallest needs.

I finally also acknowledged that it was time to let go of my career in the corporate sector. I was seven years past due retirement, and yet had allowed my contract to be renewed seven times because I enjoyed my work and the boss and all the colleagues were very kind to me. In 2014 the company was undergoing structural review

and overhaul, and it felt like the time was right to “let go” of all that I had been pursuing in the marketplace. My boss knew I was not happy and reluctantly accepted my resignation.

Letting go is not easy for me because I am by nature an active and busy person. When you are of such a character for many decades of your life, it is not so easy to change overnight. I worried about being bored after retiring, and even as I took that leap of faith I asked God if there was anything new He wanted me to do with my time.

THE NEXT CHAPTER

After receiving this revelation and praying about it, I made an effort to consciously “let go” of these areas of my life. I retired from my job and started enjoying my life a bit more, making short trips and meeting up more often with my cancer support group buddies. Amazingly, my health condition began gradually improving, and my recent check-up in June 2016 with my neurosurgeon revealed that my Trigeminal Neuralgia has stabilized with medication and radiation will no longer be necessary!

Praise the Lord as He is the ultimate healer and He knows what life changes you need to make to become healthy and happy! Healing may not necessarily come immediately when you want it, but you have to trust that His plan for your life is good.


Spending time with those wise and prayerful people at The Healing Place also encouraged me to read the Bible more and search for comfort and direction in God’s Words. As I spent the early hours of each morning reading the bible and meditating with worship soaking and healing music from Julie True.com, I experienced peace even in the midst of my pain.

As I spent time with God I also received instruction from Him on what to do with my life after retirement. I was reminded that in 2008 He had given me the desire to pursue cooking as a hobby and as a possible business venture. Back then I had thought of setting up a culinary training school specially catered for domestic helpers, but it was an idea I never got to fully develop because I was so busy at work.

Soon after retiring in December 2014, I was approached by Mary Ann Chua, coordinator of our domestic helper’s ministry, Grace Fellowship, to consider running cooking workshops to teach the foreign ladies to cook local dishes for their employers. I gladly accepted, as I felt God had been preparing me for this role for many years, and have since run four workshops for them. I’ve also conducted cooking workshops for couples who have just completed the marriage preparation course in our church.

In addition to serving at church, I have also been indulging in my passion for cooking by attending culinary classes by some well-known local chefs in Singapore and have now gained so much knowledge. I hope to be able to publish a cookbook of the recipes I have learnt and collected over the years – it’s an uphill task but I believe the Lord will show me the way. God has indeed been faithful to fill my days with meaningful projects and ways to bless others. Retirement hasn’t been boring at all!

If any of you are sick or suffering from discomfort, I highly recommend visiting The Healing Place on a Saturday, because they have been a most wonderful source of support and inspiration for me. They were patient with me although the journey to better health took over four years, and they are still walking with me today.

This testimony is given to glorify our Lord Jesus Christ. Through my life and every season of sickness, I have been abundantly blessed by my gracious God. 

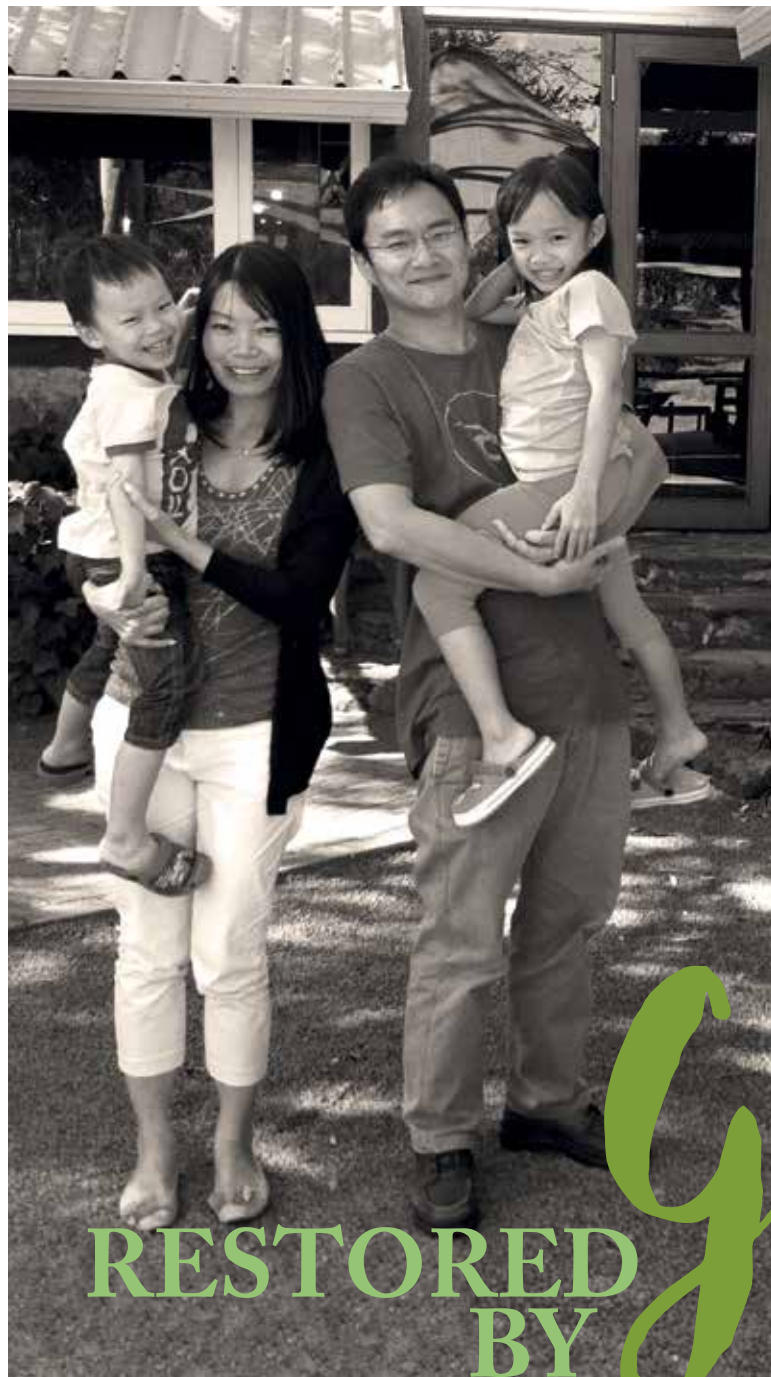


JENNY TAN has been in the Food & Beverage communications field for the last 15 years. She has been attending the 10.30am service since 2015 and is a member of Bethel CG.

ANNE YEO'S DELICIOUS DURIAN CREPE



THE HEALING PLACE MINISTRY RUNS EVERY SATURDAY (EXCEPT PUBLIC HOLIDAYS) FROM 10AM – 12PM, AT THE LEVEL 2 PRAYER LOUNGES OF CHRIST METHODIST CHURCH.



AT THE AGE OF FOUR, I WAS DIAGNOSED WITH IDIOPATHIC THROMBOCYTOPENIC PURPURA (ITP),

which is a medical condition characterized by unusually low levels of platelets (the cells that help your blood clot). This meant that I would bruise easily for no apparent reason. I had the chronic form of ITP, meaning it would be a long term condition with no cure.

Since that diagnosis, I had to make regular visits to the hospital for checkups to monitor the condition. To manage the condition, I had to be careful to avoid injuries that would cause bleeding and was advised by the doctors to avoid contact sports and outdoor activities.

God

BY MELISSA THAM

When I was in my mid-twenties, I came down with a serious bout of viral fever which caused my platelets to drop to extremely low levels. My platelet count was so low that I faced the risk of internal bleeding even without any injury, so I had to be hospitalized immediately. I

would say that the time I spent in the hospital was one of the darkest periods in my life. I was helpless and hopeless. In addition to my low platelet count, I had high fever and chills which plagued me day and night. It was also then that I cried out to God.

I had become a Christian in my teens and in the early days, I was a fervent believer, hungry to read the bible. But as the years went by, I became consumed by my studies and distracted by a myriad of activities, and subsequently work. So it was at that time when I was ill in hospital that I was furthest from God. In my helplessness, I prayed desperately for a miracle. In one of my prayers to God, I told Him that I would go back to church if He healed me.

I had spent 18 days in hospital with no sign of improvement. Other than being given Panadol to control my fever, I was given no other treatments as the haematologist wanted to monitor my situation first before deciding on the next steps. Should a hemorrhage occur at any point, a platelet transfusion would be necessary.

But one day, the fever and chills suddenly left me. That same afternoon, the haematologist broke the news to me that my platelet count had jumped up to almost normal levels and the next day, my platelet count was in the normal range! I was discharged from hospital that very day. The haematologist was amazed by the sudden and complete recovery of my platelet count without any treatment since I had chronic ITP and my platelet count had never been in the normal range all my life. It was inexplicable and clearly a miracle from God!

Unbeknownst to me, the school principal and school chaplain of St Hilda's secondary school where my mum taught, had been praying for me together with my mum in the school compound at around the time that the healing took place.

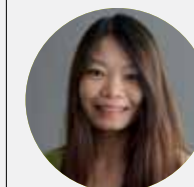
My mum later recounted to us that the prayer session was an intense one with all praying on their knees and which at the end of the prayer, left her school principal in tears. I believe that something happened that day. God heard our prayers and I was miraculously and completely healed of ITP.

I remembered my promise to God that I would go back to church if He healed me. Unfortunately, my spirit was willing but my mind was weak. So after a few visits to church, I stopped attending services and continued with my own selfish and self-seeking life. But God never gave up on me.

I subsequently went through a season of heartache before turning back to God, and through it all, I experienced God's mercy, forgiveness and unconditional and unwavering love for me, even though I had broken my promise to Him. Looking back, I can see how God was looking out for me and patiently waiting for my return throughout the time I was wandering in the wilderness. I was very much like the prodigal daughter.

I re-committed my life to God and stepped out in faith in obedience to Him and have not looked back since. Praise the Lord!

Indeed, Jeremiah 29:11-13 reminded me of God's faithfulness even though I was unfaithful and unworthy. These verses – so dear and real to me – comfort and assure us that God is sovereign over our lives, and is ever so forgiving and compassionate. He will welcome anyone with open arms who turns back to Him wholeheartedly, ANYTIME! 🙏



MELISSA has been attending CMC with her family for about 7 years. She's married to Simon Lee and they have 2 kids, Lee Enn and Joshua who are attending ChristKids. She is in the care group 'TGIF', which Simon co-leads.

'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.'

Jeremiah 29:11-13

**WE ASKED A FEW MEMBERS FROM OUR
'GENERATION Z' COHORT TO SHARE WITH US WHAT
IS ON THEIR HEARTS FOR THEIR FELLOW STUDENTS.**



"Dear God, I pray that our generation will be able to express love more freely, so that others may be touched by our small acts of love. May we also learn to love those who seem impossible to love. Amen."

~Lisa Chan, 17

Prayers

FOR OUR GENERATION



"Heavenly Father, thank you for making all of us unique. I ask that you would help every young person realise how special they are, and that you have a plan for each of their lives. May they be open to receiving love and affirmation from you, their creator and father, instead of seeking affirmation from things in this world, as it is only your love that can fully satisfy us. Thank you for making your love so accessible and real to all of us who seek it. Amen."

~Rebekah Seow, 19



"Lord Jesus, I want to pray for the increasing numbers of sick and depressed teenagers in my generation. I ask that you would help them understand that their creator loves them and wants to heal and give them a fulfilling life. Bless them with the opportunity to know you, no matter what they believe in right now, so that they can be healed and uplifted. Amen."

~Hazel Tan, 13

"Dear God, I pray that Christian students will have the courage to tell other people about you, and that they will leave legacies in their schools as you motivate them to bless others through acts of kindness. I also pray that parents throughout Singapore will not hold their children back from exploring Christianity for themselves. Amen."

~Arielle Seow, 13

"Dear Lord, I pray that you will keep my generation and their families safe from the evil that is in the world today. May those who believe in you have the courage to share the hope and peace that they find in Jesus with others around them. Amen."

~Keri-Ann Champion, 13

“Almighty God, you see the suffering of people around the world, and you know that there are those who are struggling to survive on very little. Many young people my age don’t have parents and don’t even have enough to eat. I ask that you will miraculously provide them with food, the way you multiplied the fish and the bread in that account from the gospels. May they come to know you as a loving Father and provider. Amen.”

~Samuel Hung, 13



“Dear God, you’re our Heavenly Father and we know you love us as your children. I pray that all children will come to know you, and that you’ll be a friend to kids who think they’re forgotten, feel lonely, or are being bullied. Thank you for loving us. Amen.”

~Olivia Chua, 10



“Dear God, I want to take a minute not to ask you for anything but to simply say thank you for all that I have. Even though you have no mobile phone, I still get to talk to you. Even though you do not have a Facebook account, you are still my friend. Even though you do now have Twitter, I will still follow you, because you are amazing! Amen.”

~Ethan Chan, 13



“Lord I ask for you to open the eyes of my generation to see you so that their lives will be changed. Amen.”

~ Raena Tan, 15
(Sisters, in picture together)

“Father God, mould the hearts of Singaporeans in my generation to be like yours. May we dare to go out and love people around us the way Jesus did, so that they may catch a glimpse of their Heavenly Father’s love for them too. Amen.”

~ Sarah Tan, 17

“Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for the gift of youth and the opportunity to be a blessing to others in our generation through our words and actions. Help us make a positive impact in our schools and circles of influence – to not just spectate but to actively participate in loving the community you put us in. Amen.”

~Ashley Low, 14

“Dear Jesus, I pray that our generation will turn out good. Amen.”

~Ben Lee, 10

“Lord, I pray that our generation will BE the change we want to see in our world, even if it means stepping out of our comfort zones. I pray that we will start making time for those we do not spend enough time with, and go all out in loving people, even if they are strangers to us. You have showered us with Your love and it is only right that we share it with those around us. Amen.”

~ Rebecca Chua, 18





A NEW Confidence

BY SANDRA CHEOK MEY ZHI

PERHAPS YOU ARE SOMEONE WHO IS STRUGGLING WITH WHAT I ONCE WENT THROUGH.

I used to feel all alone in believing my internal struggles were unjustified. However, as I got older and talked to close friends, I realised that I was not the only person frequently insecure about the choices I'd made in life, or constantly second guessing my own decisions and actions, no matter how big or small.

Some of these issues stem from my childhood and the environment in which I was raised, so they are quite difficult for me to articulate. But I would like to share with you what God is doing to restore my confidence and identity after I'd gone through a family crisis.

I was brought up in a family that stressed the importance of how others perceived me. Dwelling on emotional, intangible matters was considered a waste of precious time, because time should always be spent on productive and tangible pursuits. Academic labour and excellence were prized above spending time in church so I only ever sought God during exam season and my key objective in attending Sunday school at church was to find social validation in my friends.

Being an only child also exacerbated my insecurities because I found myself fighting so hard to defeat certain stereotypes and verbal harassment that I faced between the ages of eleven and fifteen. In Junior College, caring teachers realised and alerted that I was lacking in confidence, no matter how conscientious I was when conducting myself in front of other people. I shuddered to think that others could actually see how hard I was trying to show that I was not vulnerable. I feared being judged and that others would have negative impressions of me. 😞



When I entered university, I made great effort to distract myself from inner insecurities by striving for tangible achievements. And whenever I felt insecure, I would first go to my mother (Mama) for love and reassurance. Mama always believed in me and encouraged me to do things that I thought myself incapable of doing.

Towards the end of 2008, Mama was diagnosed with cancer. We thought she might pull through, but instead she passed away. During her wake, I was showered with constant verbal reminders that I am an only child. Well-meaning words of sympathy only served to drive home the fact that I was now alone, and it frustrated me that nobody could understand how I felt.

Mama's passing left me bereft. She had been my pillar of strength, confidence, support and inspiration. In addition to feeling overwhelmed by the loss and utterly miserable, I also experienced an identity crisis at that point. Even though I counted myself a believer, I had been relying purely on affirmation and assurance from others to build my confidence and self-esteem for so many years, without God. (How could a prayer life activated mainly by exam season build self-confidence?) Without Mama, I felt shipwrecked.

It was then that God saved me from wasting the remaining days of my life away by introducing me to a new family called Christ Methodist Church (CMC). Pastor David Ho, who conducted the English wake service for Mama, happened to be a friend of the family. One weekend, my father (Papa) decided to visit

“Do not fear, for I am with you: do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you: I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

~Isaiah 41:10



CMC to show appreciation for Pastor David's help, and I followed him. He was already a believer, and more receptive to attending church and spending time with God than I was just after Mama's death. To God be the glory! At CMC, Papa found purpose in life and met many people whom he could trust, rely upon and grow together with in his journey as a Christian. No words can describe the presence of God that we both experienced in our first weeks at CMC.

I too found a loving community of dedicated mentors and friends who were so willing to render their help and guidance whenever I needed it, as well as disclose their own difficult personal experiences to encourage me. God also blessed me with a bounty of job opportunities in Singapore when I took leave from my university studies after Mama's passing, and gave me the strength to live each day to its fullest potential, though it was tough at the beginning to carry on without her. All this made my struggle less painful and showed me how much God truly cared about my specific situation.

After my father and I went through a season of grieving and trying to stabilise our lives with the help of the CMC community, I returned to England to resume my legal studies. I have just completed my penultimate year at The


“Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

~Joshua 1:9

University of Warwick and can say that I am able to face life with increased courage and confidence, with God's help.

If you are facing a struggle in your life – whether it is the loss of a loved one or a general disposition towards being insecure and in need of validation from others – I would like to encourage you to put your trust in God. Without acknowledging that we need His help to sort things out for us internally and externally, there is a very real chance of us being totally consumed by fear and lacking the strength to accomplish anything significant in life. Constantly focusing on ourselves and our problems gets us nowhere.

To strengthen faith in God and address a general lack of self-confidence, I recommend keeping record of things learned during sermons or during personal bible reading time in a journal. It's also useful to keep a record of requests made to God in prayer, and to write down when you think He has answered in some way. As you look back at past entries, you can more clearly see how God is interacting with you.

I pray that God's love will fill our hearts (mine and yours), and that a peace that transcends all earthly concerns will prevail as we face challenges in our lives. My life is not completely free of challenges, of course, but I believe that as time goes by and we slowly get to know God's promises better, our core purpose in life is revealed and our insecurities will fade. 



SANDRA is 22 this year and a member of Roots young adult care group. She is currently studying law at the University of Warwick in Coventry, England.

CMC CAMP 2016 WAS SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT FROM PAST CAMPS BECAUSE ONE YOUNG ADULT CARE GROUP AGREED TO THE MASSIVE UNDERTAKING OF ORGANIZING IT ON BEHALF OF THE CHURCH.

CHURCH CAMP 2016 GO IN HIS POWER

CAPTURED HERE IN STORIES AND PICTURES IS THE WONDERFUL HAND OF GOD CHANGING LIVES AS THESE INDIVIDUALS STEPPED OUT IN FAITH TO SAY 'OK GOD, HERE I AM, USE ME.'



THE BIG PROJECT

During one of our care group meetings in July 2015, our leader Jonathan Ong popped a 'ten million dollar question' that surprised everybody: "Would Holy Rock care group like the opportunity to organize church camp 2016?"

As he presented the idea, a long list of excuses began to form at the tip of my tongue, but ultimately I agreed to think about it. As it turned out, although we were still unsure of our commitment at that point, God had planted his little seed in each of us that night, and there would be no turning back.

We discovered that it was such a blessing to work on a project this big with our care group mates. Decisions were fast and because of our pre-existing relationships as brothers and sisters in Christ, we found we could discuss differences in opinions freely without the fear of offending each other. Assigning

responsibilities did not prove too difficult as we were familiar with each other's strengths and weaknesses, and most importantly, we were quick to lend a hand to one another along the way.

My duties as Registration I/C included building up the database which the hotel would eventually use to book rooms for us. Every alternate Sunday my fellow CG mates would sit beside me to assist with the collection of forms and fees. No one complained about having to turn up at church an hour and a half earlier than usual, or stay back after service. I was truly blessed by their support and hard work, which enabled three months of meticulous registration duties to be smoothly concluded without a fuss.

With my part mostly completed by late April, I decided it would be okay to plan a trip to Seoul a couple of weeks before church camp. For reasons I couldn't understand at the time, the planning for this holiday did not go well – I was unable to secure the flights or hotel I wanted, and my travel companion (a tuition teacher who was supposed to be on term break) suddenly received requests from her students for extra lessons. We ended up reluctantly calling off our holiday.

Only in mid-May did I realise that the week I had originally wanted to travel coincided with the deadline for us to make the final payment to our church camp vendor. I was needed to assist with cross-checking the campers' details and their rooming requirements from hardcopy registration forms to soft copy data, and finally against the vendor's data and invoice. Thank God I wasn't traveling that week!

I'll admit that bit of administration was quite tough – it came to a point where



the church camp data on my computer screen was starting to blur together as I scrolled through it, and my math was failing me because each number tally was different from the last.

Two days before the invoice confirmation deadline, I was at work when my workaholic boss came to tell me he had decided to leave early that day. Shortly after, all my colleagues were pulled into a long meeting, leaving me all by myself. It occurred to me that this was extra time God was providing for me to get the church camp administration done. I pulled up the camp data (yes I carried it everywhere I went, and yes, I had already finished my work stuff for the day, just in case you were wondering!) and managed to finalise the necessary details in those 'extra' two hours.

So you see, when God 'calls' you to a task, He will be faithful to ensure that you can fulfill it. Being a part of a care group is a good step in your journey with Jesus, but stepping out into the scary waters of serving others for His name's sake will bless you in so many ways beyond your bible study or church attendance. If you are ever prompted by the Lord to serve, I encourage you to take a leap of faith and... Go in His Power!

- Christine Goh



them if they would accept the challenge. I think God deserves praise for all the yesses I received, even if some of them only said yes out of pity for me!

Once we had group leaders in place we then had to decide on the best way to group the 500 or so campers who were going to be there. God reminded me of something our 2014 church camp speaker Pastor Benny Ho had said concerning CMC being blessed with an intergenerational congregation, and I felt God tugging my heart to mix everybody up instead of dividing them by age group or life stage.

Jonathan was initially concerned about whether folks would open up to share their honest opinions if the groups were so mixed, but after much discussion we proceeded in faith to try it out. After hearing the testimonies that were shared at the end of camp, our team was so glad we obeyed God's prompting! For instance, one young adult shared that she was so encouraged by the more experienced members in her group who gave her wisdom and insight on certain issues. Through the group time, God had given her the opportunity to find a potential spiritual mentor.

I'm so proud and happy to say that Holy Rock care group "went in His power" by stepping out of our comfort zones to serve as camp organisers this year. We would never have seen His goodness shine through in such wonderful ways otherwise!

- Elaine Shu

THE GREAT MIX-UP

When Jonathan Ong, our church camp I/C, requested that I take charge of 'grouping duties' at this camp, my initial thought was, "Sigh! Now everyone will try to avoid me!" My task started when registration ended – I had to comb through the list of those going, identify potential group leaders to help facilitate sessions at camp, and also try to see how best to group all the campers.

Identifying leaders was easy, but approaching them was my biggest fear. I was afraid to ask and especially afraid of being rejected. I prayed for boldness and favour, and also prayed for each pair of leaders before asking



“Let perseverance finish its work so you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”

James 1:4

personnel. These roles required us to sacrifice free time slots that other campers could enjoy during camp. But instead of leaving us feeling deprived of rest and good things by the end of camp, God demonstrated how much more He wanted to bless us.

During a time of prayer at camp, I had privately asked God to “remember me” the way He remembered Hannah in the bible by opening her womb after many years of barrenness. Fu Hang and I had been praying for close to a year, but our doctor’s diagnosis was that I would not be able to conceive easily. We may have felt like God had not been listening, but boy were we proven wrong!

On the last evening session at camp, as we entered a time of corporate prayer and ministry, Pastor Kenneth Chin said that he felt prompted by the Lord to minister to a lady ‘like Hannah’ who was in the congregation, struggling with the desire for a baby. He prayed and proclaimed her womb opened in Jesus name! I was stunned, and could not believe that God had answered my private prayer in a public space just to show me that He was amazing and that I should trust him.

THE ANSWERED PRAYER

2015 was a turbulent year for my husband Fu Hang and I. After I was diagnosed with a hyper thyroid condition while trying for a baby and being told it would be at least two years of treatment before I could be ready to conceive, we asked God why we had to have it so rough. Little did we know that God intended to turn this horrible situation into a wonderful display of how much He really loved us.

Fu Hang, who had never been to a church camp and is a relatively new Christian, took on the role of assistant camp commandant with a (slight?) nudge from me, while I accepted the double role of games I/C and audio-visual

‘Due season’ is God’s season, not ours. We are in a hurry but God is not. He has used the past year to show Fu Hang and I the love of people in CMC who have relentlessly prayed for our situation. Even now, He is growing patience in us, laying the foundation for a healthy marriage and family life.

If, like me, you have been struggling with the deep desire for a child but have been unable to conceive, I urge you to place your trust in Jesus and ask Him to show you His power in your life.

- Samantha Soh

Refreshed!

BY PAULINE LEONG

OUR CHURCH CAMP THEME 'GO IN HIS POWER!' RESONATED WITH ME AS I'D BEEN FEELING BURNT OUT FOR A LONG TIME, DESPERATELY IN NEED OF A REFRESHING TOUCH FROM THE LORD.

When the camp dates were first announced, I prayed fervently that God would clear my schedule and prepare my heart for His presence before, during and after the camp. However, obstacles seemed to abound. I was swamped at work, money was tight, my health was erratic and my usual room-mate for past church camps could not make it this year due to family commitments. Even as I tried to juggle simultaneous major changes – new workplace, moving out to stay on my own and part-time studies – I knew that I had launched out into deeper waters without keeping my eyes on Jesus.

I floundered in self-pity and defeat as bad habits had set in over time and were difficult to break. God in His mercy provided prayer supporters and encouragers to lift me up, but they could not halt the rapid erosion of faith from my increasingly lukewarm responses to God's commands. Like the prophet Jonah, it seemed like I was forever running away from God and needed to hit rock bottom before I would turn back to God.

Praise God for His mercy and grace, for responding to my tentative and halting steps to turn back to Him!

Soon after I had resigned myself to signing up for a single-occupancy room, the church camp committee linked me up with Yvonne Yap, a



relatively new worshipper at our church who was looking for a room-mate so that she could attend the camp. This arrangement provided a way for me to better manage the cost of the camp. However, it was also a huge step out of my comfort zone as I usually prefer to stay with people I know when travelling, or on my own if no one can join me.

The prospect seemed daunting as I am not usually a very sociable person, but would now have to befriend and in a way host a visitor to our church. I worried that I would behave awkwardly and make her uncomfortable during the camp. Deep down I also resented the potential loss of personal quiet time that I had been craving.

Thankfully, Yvonne and I quickly connected with each other on the first day of camp when we discovered mutual acquaintances among the other campers and began sharing our testimonies of God's continuing grace in our lives.

Yvonne said she came to Christ after her colleagues prayed with her when doctors said that she would never be able to sustain her long-awaited pregnancy and survive childbirth. Defying her doctor's gloomy prognosis, she carried her child to term and gave birth to her healthy firstborn. A few years later, against all expectations, she gave birth to a healthy pair of twins! Her husband remained a non-believer, but the couple have encouraged their children to attend Sunday school and services at churches near their home.


Yvonne had been attending Christian lunch fellowships with her colleagues for many years, but last year, she decided to attend church more regularly and visited our 10.30am service in December 2015. She also took the bold step of faith to sign up for our church camp as she wanted to experience one for herself.

By the end of the camp, she was so encouraged by the fellowship, preaching and learning that she asked to visit my care group at our next meeting. I was happy to agree to it as this was in line with our care group's increasing focus on serving others and welcoming new persons to our group. For me, Yvonne's friendship and request to visit our care group was a tangible sign that God can use anyone to reach out to others as I'm usually not sociable at all.

Befriending Yvonne and hearing her life testimony has greatly encouraged and humbled me. During the camp, I started to walk out of the pit of self-pity and depression that I had been stuck in and slowly returned to intercessory prayer for others in a more intentional way. Throughout the camp, the power-packed praise and worship sessions, sermons and group discussions crystallised this truth: It is time to go back to basics so that God's power in and through us can flow out of my walk with Him. It is impossible to live a victorious and joyful Christian life that draws others to Him if I am not abiding in Him daily, moment by moment.

I rejoice that God's grace is real and sufficient despite my inadequacies, and that He continues to equip me with everything I need to serve Him in every area of life, if only I will be real and honest with Him and with others. I remember our camp speaker Pastor Kenneth Chin saying that broken vessels allow God to shine through the cracks and demonstrate His power and love in and through us. How true it has proven in my own camp experience!

Pastor Chin also taught that sometimes, before we can move forward, we need to look back at where we have been. I have found it necessary to look back and remember what God has already equipped me with, and serve out of that providence, instead of focusing on my shortcomings and failures.

It has been a humbling and joyful experience to be re-energised by God's power and presence during this camp. May we as a family in Christ continue to build one another up through prayer, studying God's word, fellowship, outreach and service to the larger community as we wait on God to discover and live out our calling. 



PAULINE LEONG is adapting to a new workplace, new home, new schedules and rediscovering God anew this year. She is pictured here with Yvonne

3 life hacks

THAT WILL HELP YOU FIND TIME FOR YOUR CHILD

BY FOCUS ON THE FAMILY SINGAPORE

During date with dad and adventure with dad in march, we asked your sons and daughters, "when was the last time you spent one-on-one quality time with your father?"

41% Said that the last one-on-one quality time they spent with you happened sometime in the past year or that they couldn't remember it at all. We understand how time-strapped fathers can be, having to juggle responsibilities at work and home.



So, here are 3 life hacks that will help you find time for your child this month.

#1 SAVE ON WORK AND TIME

Take a good look at your personal lifestyle and work habits. Take stock specifically of how you spend every hour of the day and aim to get rid of one non-essential time-consuming activity.

It could be that you have the habit of lounging in front of the TV every evening just to unwind from the day's activities. While you can still do that for your personal well-being, you could pick just one day in the week (or fortnight) to bring your child out for an outdoor activity instead. Not only would you be spending one-on-one quality time with your child, you would be surprised at the effect it has in helping you relax from the day's work.

#2 SAVE THE MOBILE DEVICES FOR LATER

For just 30 minutes a day before your child's bedtime, put away all your mobile devices to just read or chat with him/her. You can start by doing this just once a week and then work your way up to as many times as possible per week for longer periods of time.

The key is to start a rhythm that you can commit to consistently. Over time, you will build a closer bond with your child through this dedicated father-child time.

#3 SAVE THE DATE(S)

Look at your schedule now and pen in three possible dates for an outing or one-on-one meal with your child over this month and next month. Lock it into your planner, like you would for a work-related appointment. For any reasons you or your child have to cancel the first date due to last minute work or school commitments, you still have two other dates to work with.

By making small adjustments to your routine and with some intentional planning, it will not be that hard to carve out quality one-on-one time with your child on a regular basis. Remember, your role as a father in your children's lives is irreplaceable. No one else can do what you do to boost your children's self-image and impart important lifelong values to them.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."

Proverbs 3:5-6

Back to School

THIS PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE WAS UP ON THE WALL IN MY PRIMARY SCHOOL HALL and it never really resonated with me up till a few years ago, when I had to decide on university education and a career path thereafter. Never did I think that God would give me the adventure that I'm on right now!

I wanted to be many things when I was a young boy – scientist, superman, taxi driver, soldier, racecar driver, X-men, pilot, chef, lawyer and the list grew as I changed my mind countless times. It was only when I was about 19 or 20 that there was a strange desire within me to want to serve our Lord. I remember responding to an altar call at one youth camp and it was there I told God that if and when He called, I would say yes. Eight years later, He did.

It was exciting, thrilling, scary and daunting all at once when I decided to leave my job as a chef and start on the path to full-time ministry, but God has been nothing short of amazing. He has been a real rock of reassurance and strength, especially when my silly human brain becomes overwhelmed by earthly worries about the decision I've made.

Jeremy Yap, Samuel Choo and myself will be calling Trinity Theological College our new home for the next three years as we work towards getting our Masters in Divinity. We're very different people from very different backgrounds and walks of life but I believe we all have the same desire to serve our Master and His people.



We are thankful for all the prayers, support and words of encouragement that have been given to us since it was announced over the pulpit that we would be embarking on our theological education. We ask that you continue to pray for us as we tackle our books and assignments, and preparation for ministry.

I strongly believe that every believer is called to serve God with his/her life. It doesn't necessarily have to be full-time ministry but everyone should find an avenue to serve. There are many different service opportunities in CMC and many needs that are waiting to be met! Do prayerfully consider serving in an area of ministry in church, your marketplaces and even the international community!

Email info@cmc.org.sg if you would like some help getting connected with a ministry that suits you, or call our church office at 6345 3934.



JOSH loves to makan and cook, and often thinks about one of life's greatest questions: if you had to, which would you give up? Beef or pork?



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