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WITNESS



A publication of Christ Methodist Church



Joy to the World

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A word from the
Editor

Elena May Gudgeon

It's been rewarding to be on the receiving end of dozens of testimonies and thousands of photos from our teams who have gone overseas this year to bless the poor, the oppressed, the sick, the young and the old. Many photos feature Singaporeans caring for or laughing alongside of persons very different from themselves, and I imagine it must warm our Heavenly Father's heart to see his children united in friendship across cultural divides.

This is what heaven must look like – many nations dining together in the presence of the King, sharing food, life stories, and laughter from the belly. No trace of bias, condescension or unkind humor. No language barriers. No way for labels like 'them' and 'us' to stick. Just all of us children, eyes dewy with wonder as we contemplate an existence with no mourning, no sickness and no pain.

How we long for the coming of this reality.

In the meantime we do what we can to show others Who motivates us to love all people (even our enemies), and Who gives us peace in the midst of life's storms. We may not all have the opportunity to travel, but hey, news travels too. Let's spread some of the good stuff – share our victories in Christ, our breakthroughs, our hope.

Somewhere out there in the world, someone needs to know that joy is coming with the morning

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



A WORD
FROM YOUR
PASTOR

JUST THE BEGINNING

BY **PASTOR VINCENT GOH**

2017 was an exciting year, and a year of ‘firsts’ for many of our congregation members. Our GONations initiative sent us out of our comfort zones and into the underprivileged or marginalized communities of eight countries. Several local outreach initiatives in partnership with Healthserve also connected us with many migrant workers in Singapore, helping us learn more about their needs so we can more effectively bless them in years to come.

*“Enlarge the place of your tent,
stretch your tent curtain wide, do
not hold back; lengthen your cords,
strengthen your stakes.”*

~ Isaiah 56:2


GONations was more than a just an annual campaign or outreach project though – it was a church wide effort to commit to living out the Gospel in tangible ways, to let many others experience the love of God through us. I have been very encouraged by the stories some of you have shared after coming back from your trips, and hope you share them with many others around you.

Our members George and Gilyn Wong, who accepted the challenge to go on their very first trip with CMC this year, shared “...It will always be one of the best decisions we have ever made. It has inspired us, challenged us, broadened our horizons, and reminded us what it means to be a disciple...” (Their full story is featured on page 14)

There are hundreds more ‘unsung heroes’ like them in CMC who have stepped out of their comfort zones in obedience to bless others this year, and have been richly blessed by God in

return. This momentum is just the beginning though, and there will be more opportunities coming in the years ahead.

In preparation for that, I believe we need to grow deeper as disciples in the Lord. As much as we desire to enlarge our tent, we are also reminded to strengthen our stakes. A large tent that doesn’t have strong cords to pull it taught, and thick pegs to hold those cords firmly in the ground, will collapse.

So together let’s focus on growing deeper in God’s Presence, deeper in His Word, and deeper in His Mission as we journey into 2018. With God leading the way, there’s so much to look forward to! 

CELEBRATING





● 527
people took part in
GONations overall

● 406
people went on an
overseas trip only

● 121
people took part in
local outreach only

● 74
people took part in both
overseas and local initiatives



89 people went on multiple trips



32 families went together

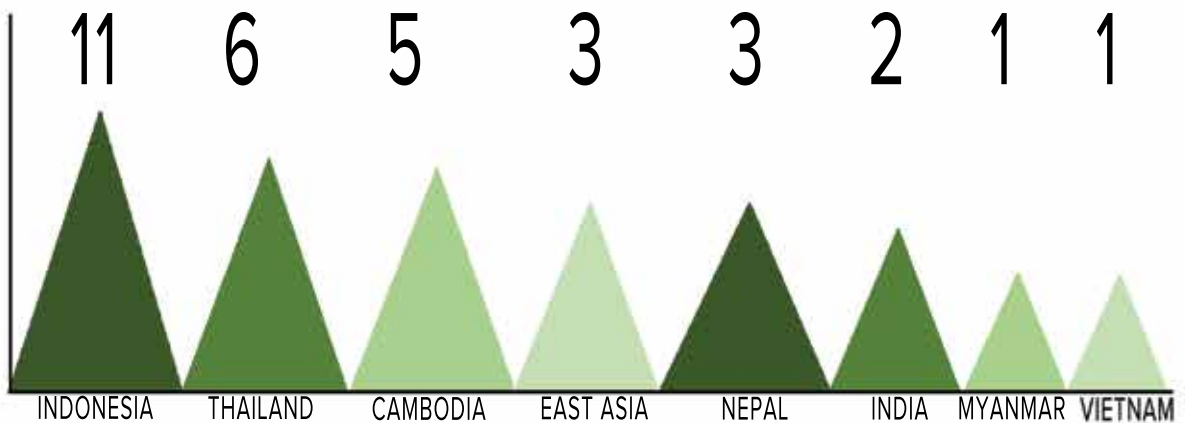


18 travellers were 12 and under

32 trips in
total

142 days spent
on the field

Number of trips per country



CELEBRATING

BY REV BARNABAS CHONG



OUR DESIRE WAS FOR EVERY CMC CONGREGATION MEMBER TO BE INVOLVED IN A CROSS-CULTURAL OUTREACH EFFORT EITHER THROUGH AN OVERSEAS TRIP OR A LOCAL EVENT TO BLESS MIGRANT WORKERS IN SINGAPORE THIS YEAR, AND WE HAD HOPED FOR AT LEAST 800 PEOPLE TO RESPOND TO THE GONATIONS CALL.

While we did not meet our original 'dream target', I feel that CMC members and friends have responded exceedingly well and the whole experience has been nothing short of amazing! For me, the success here is not just about hitting the numerical target but achieving a mindset shift in the church – inspiring change in the types of conversations that take place amongst church members, inspiring boldness to

share our faith, and get out of our comfort zones to do something we may not have done before in order to bless others. It is really about life-change!

This GONations initiative has also become a trail blazer for what we do in the future as a church. 2017 has permanently changed the way CMC views and does outreach – we are not the same anymore. One of the objectives we set out for this project early on was “to deepen the intentional discipleship process in our church”, which in turn impacts the spiritual life of CMC. I believe this has already taken place.

Those who went out on trips have returned with a renewed sense of love for God and discovered a love for people in those nations – particularly those who are marginalized, deprived and abandoned.

Alot of the farewells during the trips were full of tears and strong emotions. Many have also indicated a desire to return to the same fields to continue to love, serve and bless the people they met. Some actually did so the very same year!

In one of my favourite books, Oswald J Smith said that a pastor who goes frequently on mission trips come back a better pastor. As a pastor, he had been involved in outreach work in over 90 countries. On the same note, I would say that a Christian who goes frequently on outreach trips comes back a better Christian – one who serves with greater passion, commitment and love.

So I want to encourage CMC members to keep at it, and maybe visit more places to see and be involved in what God is doing in different lands. Some may want to pray about going for longer trips - two, three or even four weeks or more. Every church (including CMC) must remember that the heart of the gospel is about reaching the lost. The moment a church loses her cutting edge in soul-winning, whether in our workplaces, schools, social networks or out there in the nations, she has become nothing more than an exclusive social club. The rescue boat has become a luxurious cruise ship; the sanctuary where the lives of Christ-followers are supposed to be transformed week after week has become a concert hall that tickles and entertains the crowd.

God has blessed us with so much, so we must in turn be a blessing to those who need the hope that Jesus gives, whether it is a neighbour, a family member, a relative or a stranger. 🌍



PASTOR BARNABAS championed the 2017 GONations campaign alongside team members Samuel Ng, Earl Tan, Mary Lee, Hoi Kok Fu, Linda Sethi, Dezarae Ang, Molly Martel, and many others who worked tirelessly to mobilize our church.

From terror to Triumph

BY NETANIA PEREIRA

EE HUI AND HER DAUGHTERS RAENA (16) AND ELISA (13) SHARE HOW THEY FACED AND OVERCAME THEIR FEARS ON THEIR RECENT TRIP TO MYANMAR WHERE THEY VISITED SLUMS AND REACHED OUT TO PATIENTS WITH HIV.

“I was intrigued by the idea of blessing HIV+ patients,” shared Ee Hui, “but I felt the slums would be too hard for me because I am very particular about my environment being clean and healthy. On top of that, I’m claustrophobic, and the hot and cramped spaces in slums can make me panic.”

So the trip to Myanmar was only a fleeting thought until her care group mate April Chan asked if she would go together with her. Despite her many reservations, Ee Hui felt the urge to challenge herself to make a longer trip – especially after having already experienced 3 shorter weekend trips to Bintan. She approached her family and with persistent persuading, two of her daughters Raena and Elisa set aside their own worries and signed up as well.

Upon arrival at the first slum, they were greeted with children who were affectionately fighting to hold their hands – tightening their grip reassuringly as they navigated the narrow bamboo walkways. These walkways were mounted on stilts above waste and dirty water, and were the only route to and from homes they were visiting. “These walkways were very scary. The local kids were so surefooted and could just

run across while we were slowly shuffling over. When we finally reached the first hut, I turned around and saw that Elisa was almost crying from the fear of falling in!”

Elisa had similar reservations as her mother regarding cleanliness but she had no choice but to answer when nature called. She was the only one in the team who had the privilege of using the slum





toilets...twice! When you gotta go, you gotta go.

During the trip, Ee Hui faced situations that almost triggered her claustrophobia, from squeezing with the team into a van (with luggage) to times when villagers were flocking into the small huts. Thankfully God saw her through it, even when she felt close to fainting.

Her biggest battle came in the form of wet and sticky kitchen floors that made her cringe. “I HATE wet floors! There I was, peeling eggs and washing potatoes with my feet not fully on the ground because I couldn’t bear to touch it.” Nevertheless, she faithfully stayed in the kitchen for over 2 hours, helping as the team prepared and packed food for 87 children to bring home.

Her fears began to fade as she met and interacted with the people of Myanmar. “God really expanded my capacity to love. I met a lady with HIV who was receiving the highest stage of medication, but she was selling it for food. Despite her situation, she had so much joy and hope. It was so encouraging, I bawled while praying for her.”

Raena’s biggest fear on this trip was praying for people out loud. “It was the second day and we were asked to pray for the people we were with. After hesitating for a while, I approached a lady and asked if she needed prayer. She just signaled to her shoulders

because of the language barrier. I wasn’t very sure but I prayed for healing regardless. Somehow after that I just gained confidence!”

She also found herself longing to stay at the slums a little longer just to spend time with the children. “The kids in the slums were so happy and I felt so blessed by them, which is something I usually don’t feel when I’m in Singapore. God really touched my heart with these kids.” ^W

*But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.
~2 Corinthians 12:9*



NETANIA belongs to Roots young adult CG and serves with the worship ministry.

Between the Clouds



BY WINNIE LAU

I was privileged to be a part of our church's inaugural medical team to Nepal in early 2017. The medical camp was held over two days, in a very remote farming area.

One part of the journey to the village was through a single-lane mud road. As we were making our way through the mud road, we suddenly came to a halt. There was a huge excavator right in the middle of the road. Not even a motorcycle could pass through. We were a little disheartened as there was no other way to get to the village except through this road.

We prayed for God to make a way for us and the excavator was eventually moved to the side so that we could continue. Later on, we realised that there had been a

landslide the day before and the road had become inaccessible. God had sent the excavator ahead of us to clear the road for us. What we had perceived as an 'obstacle' was actually a blessing. God really showed us through these encounters that He provides and is in control of every situation.

To our surprise, the medical outpost turned out to be a tiny one-room church. We were expecting to see about 200 patients a day. On the first day, to our disappointment, the villagers came in at a very slow pace. We found out that some of them had to walk 4 hours to come to this village. By 4pm, we only had only seen 80 patients, so in faith, we prayed and asked God to send us 100 patients that day. Amazingly, in the last half hour, over 20 patients showed up! That day, we saw a total of 106 patients. This showed us that our God is clearly the one in control.

On the second day of our medical camp, it rained heavily in the morning and throughout most of the day. We could not use the same setup we used the day before. Our entire team (which included doctors as well as those of us assigned to take blood pressure, perform eyesight tests and to educate villagers about hygiene) had to be housed inside the tiny church so that the tents outside could be used as waiting areas for the patients. Despite the rain and space limitations, a total of 352 villagers came on the second day to receive medical care. What a miracle! Only God can make such things happen!

Every day, we woke up early to watch the sunrise. Every day, we were blessed with a different view of the Himalayan Mountains. The landscape was so beautiful that we could not help but be in awe of God's creation. Who else could have made the mountains and the seas, but our Great Almighty God.

Each day, God would unveil different parts of the foothills, followed by the Himalayan range behind it. This reminded me that God reveals His plan to us in His own time. Often we do not see the full picture of His plan. Sometimes we might just get a little glimpse of a foothill of what God has in store, but He loves us so much that He will only give us what is best for us in good time.

While we often think that we are so blessed in Singapore for our luxurious living conditions, we are sadly 'time poor' as compared with the Nepalese who are 'time rich'. This was something that took us a while to understand.

In Singapore, life operates like clockwork. We become impatient when we are made to wait. We complain when things do not happen the way we expect. In Nepal, a 5-hour journey can stretch into 7 hours or more when there are traffic jams, road



*“Don't worry about anything,
instead pray about everything.”*

~Philippians 4:6

blocks and unforeseen events due to bad weather, but the Nepalese take all this in their stride and still stay happy and contented.

Their humility, self-reliance and heart of gratitude are some of the things for us to emulate. Our busy schedules in Singapore can cause us to forget God. This trip reminded us the importance of slowing down and spending more time with God so as to hear Him better. We look forward to going back to Nepal again very soon. ^W

*A longer version of this article was published in
Harvest Force 2017 issue 3.*



WINNIE serves as ChristKidz Superintendent and is happily married to Dr Bobby Cheng. They have 3 teenage children, Matthew, Mark and Beatrice.

Reflections

ON OUR FIRST TRIP

BY **GEORGE AND GILYN WONG**

Husband and wife George and Gilyn Wong visited East Asia in late 2017 to encourage and strengthen fellow Christians there through family life ministry. It was the first time either of them had gone on a trip with CMC, and they share some of their thoughts about the experience with us.

George

This was a very interesting and meaningful experience for me. I didn't know what to expect to see or do throughout the entire trip, but it was still amazing to have witnessed God working in many different ways and I truly enjoyed the time that I spent there.

We visited churches, organizations, and several poverty-stricken families, bringing gifts of food and daily essentials to bless them, and praying for people we met. Since my grasp of the local language wasn't good, I prayed for them in English. Though they did not understand my prayers, I could see that God still touched them.

Overall, I felt that the trip not only blessed the people we met there, but also helped me develop as a person and as a believer. My most important takeaway is that language really does not matter when it comes to God. All that matters is having a heart to worship Him and a desire to know Him more. Will I go again? Absolutely!

Gilyn


I was deeply impacted to see so many people hungry for the gospel. Despite their many life struggles, the believers there responded in faith together to be spiritually strengthened as a community. We cried quietly from witnessing what they endured, but the friendliness, warm smiles, determination and faith of these brothers and sisters in Christ gave us hope. We who are so blessed and privileged ought to never doubt God's goodness and His provision for our needs!



The kids we taught were well mannered and intelligent, asking thoughtful questions and participating fully in the teaching and singing sessions. But what amazed me was the way they fought for a chance to say prayers! They were especially good at reciting the Lord's Prayer clearly and confidently (in mandarin).

Through God's grace, we received generous donations which we used to buy gifts of food and daily essentials like rice, cooking oil, Milo, coffee, oats, biscuits, bottled water, toilet paper, etc. for the poverty-stricken families we met. We are also grateful for the time and selfless efforts put in by Pastor Chen and Preacher Fu who worked with us there.

We enjoyed ourselves, ate very well, delighted in fellowship with our teammates and most importantly, we are happy to have reached out and made new friends for God's kingdom.

As we contemplate the future, we pray that we will always look to God for guidance, always be a blessing to those around us, and continue to look for ways to illuminate His gospel truth in our world, every day. 



GEORGE and **GILYN** both serve in the Audio Visual team are members of 'Elight' care group. Their daughter Gwen attends IGNITE youth ministry.

LESSONS FROM

Bangalore

BY ALICE TAN

"It is more blessed to give than to receive." ~ Acts 20:35

When the big GONations initiative was unveiled in early 2017, my first thought was to register for a trip in order to tick the 'Christ's Great commission fulfilled!' box in my life as a disciple. I had never been on a trip before, so initially I was considering Cambodia because my long-time good friend Kim had signed up to go there. I prayed and asked God to reveal which mission I should go for in accordance to His plan for me. Weeks passed with no answer.

I started panicking on the last Sunday to register for the Cambodia trip and prayed fervently for God's direction during the 8:30am service that morning. After the service ended, my good friend from the Disciple course, Maggie, tapped me on my shoulder and asked if I would like to go to Bangalore. God had answered my prayer just in time, so I said YES!

First lesson learned: We need ask God where he wants to send us, in accordance with His good and perfect plan for each of us.

I thank God for gently easing me into my first overseas outreach experience as the Chai 3:16 facility is new, with modern amenities like clean ensuite toilets, hot running water, clean bedlinen, air-conditioned rooms and filtered drinking water. I was grateful for these familiar things.

Our team was there to help the Chai 3:16 staff and volunteers with their daily work of running the place and also to interact with students who dropped by the café looking for community. I was given kitchen cleaning duties in partnership with a longer-term volunteer named Siffo, who is from New Delhi. Siffo recently attained a PhD and chose to volunteer in Chai 3:16 for 2 years after her graduation. Maggie kindly volunteered to help us too, even though she was still nursing a bad injury from accidentally slamming a drawer on one of her fingers (the whole nail had come off!).




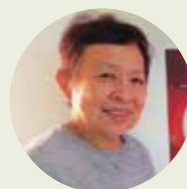
The kitchen we cleaned is a big commercial type with 4 huge gas stoves, larder, cabinets, and big pots and pans that were often oily and stained from the daily cooking of Indian curry. As I worked with Maggie and Siffo each day, I learned humility in serving others from their wonderful example.

Lesson 2: We are destined by God to serve others with humility and joy.

As we interacted with the students visiting Chai 3:16 each day, I heard many of their sad and traumatic stories. One young man fled as a fugitive from his hometown when he was very young and has never been able to return home for fear of punishment. He has no way to travel, and struggles with bitterness and resentment regarding his predicament.

As I reflected on his life's trials, my own issues and problems (derived from my natural desires) started to appear frivolous and meaningless. I decided to be content with what I already have, and to never take for granted the abundant blessings God has showered upon me throughout my life so far.

Lesson 3: Be thankful and contented always. 



ALICE was baptised in CMC and has been a member since 1992. She has been serving as a facilitator in the Disciple ministry for the past few years and retired from her banking career in June 2017.

SHAMROCK COVE

BY **ERROL CHAMPION**



“SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT! ALL IS CALM, ALL IS BRIGHT!”

A well-known Christmas carol is belted out with gusto and fire during rehearsal in a little corner room of St Patrick’s School that used to function as a teachers’ room many years ago. This room underwent a number of identity changes until it was finally repurposed as a student care center. Today it is filled with so many wonderful juxtapositions, like the ‘calm’ and ‘silent’ of that song being constantly interrupted with giggles and questions about the song, breaking the momentum (once again).

Welcome to Shamrock Cove, where ‘calm’ and ‘silent’ are not typically in our repertoire but you can be assured that ‘all is bright’! This place has an ecosystem of its own, where high octane adrenaline can co-exist with lax, sloth-like tranquility.

Here, older students take time to teach younger ones how to play the games

available; boys who are normally segregated by their academic class enjoy a level playing field where ‘noobs’ and ‘legends’ sit shoulder to shoulder in the same game map; players seek to strategize against and outrank one another but also congratulate and laugh with one another afterwards. In this place, ‘NA, NT and E’ are simply letters, and lives are graded using filters called ‘grace’ and ‘mercy’.

In its 7 years as a student care center, Shamrock Cove has grown and planted some firm roots to become a mainstay in St Patrick’s School. This is a place of lifestyle learning, where good values are imparted to students who pass through the school. I am so encouraged to have heard testimonies about students who have carried and applied those same values into the next level of their life journey.

Many former students even return to invest their lives in helping current students by giving tuition, assisting in managing the center, or simply by sharing about their experiences when they were ‘patrons’ at the Cove. We are indeed proud of our diversity, potential, and also our heritage. What was once considered dystopian space is now a haven for cultivating lives that reflect a generous helping of positive values and joy. Shamrock Cove aims to impart a little Christmas into the lives of students every day, in every way.

Do show your love for the boys at St Patrick’s School by praying for them and for the continuing good work at Shamrock Cove. [W](#)



ERROL CHAMPION works with CMC as our lay executive staff in Outreach. His wife, Camilla, and two daughters Keri-Ann and Keira, worship with him at CMC.

Thanksgiving



WITH US ALWAYS

by NANCY LOW

I had a near disastrous fall in early 2017. Thankfully I didn't somersault down the stairs, I just stumbled and then sat down near the top of the stairs. Three kind souls came to help me up, holding my arms and shoulders in case I fell again. They said "Do you realize it was God who protected you from a bad fall? You are very blessed." I had never thought of it that way. A few weeks later, they remembered me and showed concern for my well-being. I want to thank God for protecting me from bodily harm and bruises by sending friends to my aid when I needed them. I know my God is with me always.

EMPOWERED FOR MINISTRY

by MERGIE GUILLEN

On the day of my water baptism some years ago I felt a cool 'wind' come into my body after I got out of the baptismal pool. At the time I just thought it was a normal chill because I was wet. The following Sunday at the 8.30am service I felt this cool 'wind' again while I was deep in prayer. I wondered if it was the Holy Spirit touching me, but I wasn't sure.

In 2017, while studying the book of Acts during the Disciple course, I came across Acts 2:2 ("Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.") Now I am certain that these experiences are the Holy Spirit assuring me that He is real and with me. Every now and then as I pray I can feel a cool wind come upon me. And I sense Him leading me in praying for others.

I volunteered to pray for others at a healing service organized by the Methodist Church in 2017. During the service a woman came forward to ask for healing prayer for pain in her stomach. She had been for medical checkups but they could not find the problem and she had been suffering quite a long time. During our simple prayer for her, I felt the same cool wind come into my body. I then put my hand on her stomach and she later told me she could feel something being restored when I did that.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." ~ Acts 1:8

With the Holy Spirit I now have the confidence and courage to share my experiences of God with others.





**#ignitesomepraise,
we've got a new
staff team member
shepherding our
youth ministry!**

Gladys and I once travelled to Taiwan and were staying at a mountain retreat venue. She woke me up one night saying that there may be something supernatural in the room. I woke up dazed, looked around, shrugged it off and instantly fell back to sleep. The next morning she told me that the TV and lights had been shaking! Turns out the region was experiencing tremors from a nearby earthquake and I had slept right through it!"

Hello EDWIN SEAH

BY **NETANIA PEREIRA**

NUMBER OF BIRTHDAYS

33

FAMILY

Married to Gladys. They have a beautiful baby girl, Bethany.

#teamgladwin

Believe it or not, Edwin and Gladys met on the summit of Mount Kinabalu! Alone and separate from their respective groups, they sat next to each other to take in the view and snap a couple of photos.

"The first thing I said to her was, "Is that a Sony NEX-5 camera?" because I owned one and I recognised the distinct click of the shutter. She still thinks that was a pickup line but it was a genuine question!"

HOBBIES

Travelling – to experience different cultures and to enjoy the great outdoors.

FUN FACT

"I sleep like a log, anywhere and under any circumstance.

CAREER MOVES

After an injury drove him to give up his university studies halfway, he helped his parents with the family business before moving on to become a Market Research Consultant for five years. "God provided that job to get me up and running again, and I was able to rise through the ranks quite fast although I didn't have a degree."

FAITH JOURNEY

His family practised ancestor worship and as a young adult Edwin chose to be an Atheist,

shunning God due to various events that happened in his life. But little did he realise that God had already set in motion a plan to 'meet' Edwin early in his life.

"I was in competitive bowling in Secondary School and I knew this bowler from a rival school who seemed really cocky...he was a bit of an eyesore really!" The 'eyesore' turned out to be Mark Cheong, a CMC member who would one day invite Edwin to church!

Their paths crossed again in 2005 at university, and this time they bonded over their many common interests. Throughout the course of their friendship, Mark introduced Edwin to his friends from CMC, such as Keith Huang, Audrey Tham, Tay Wei Jun and Wei Yi Hui. They regularly discussed faith matters and invited him to church, but he wasn't ready.

In 2013 however, Edwin found himself mired in a situation beyond his own control and finally dropped Mark a text message saying he wanted to give the God they had always been talking about a try. He attended CMC service for the first time on 28 April and gave his life to Christ a month later at our young adults' retreat.

THE CALL

After choosing Christ, Edwin's desires and priorities shifted to wanting to serve God with his life and career. Six months into his new job as a recruitment consultant, he developed an 'itch' to apply for positions in social work, but there were no takers.

At this time, several available positions with CMC staff were being publicised at Sunday services. "I responded to an altar call on Easter Sunday for those who were facing career crossroads in their lives, and I heard God clearly say to me 'You are always welcome in My house' while I was being prayed for. I knew this was a sign He would be opening doors for me in full time ministry."

YOUTH MINISTRY


Together with Gladys, Edwin currently leads a youth care group called 'Kiasu For Christ' (KFC). "We have been so blessed by them! Initially I was unsure if I could relate well with the younger generation but God has increasingly given me an awareness of what young people are going through. It's definitely worthwhile to sow into the next generation and witness their faith journeys up-close.

Before I joined as Youth Ministry Executive, I asked



God what He wanted for IGNITE youth ministry and what I needed to have in order to effectively lead them. God impressed upon my mind the word 'passion'.

There is already such a high level of energy at IGNITE. Our worship service is so refreshing, filled with youthful vibrancy, enthusiasm, and the presence of God. But I desire to see IGNITE take spiritual passion to a whole new level, and be clear and single-minded about their calling to be God's kingdom champions in this world.

It doesn't matter how young you are. If you desire to be 'salt of the earth', God can achieve amazing things through you!" 



NETANIA grew up in CMC and fondly remembers squeezing in the pews with her pals on Sunday mornings.



HELP IS NEVER FAR AWAY, NOW THAT CMC HAS BROUGHT ON BOARD TO OUR STAFF TEAM A NEW FAMILY LIFE COUNSELLOR TO SUPPORT FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS GOING THROUGH DIFFICULT SEASONS.

Who you gonna call? AMOS YAP!

BY **NETANIA PEREIRA**

LIFE EXPERIENCE

56 years

OTHER HALF

Married to Juliet for 25 years. They met at Church of Praise when he was on the pastoral staff team there. “It was like God sent her there. Lo and behold like an angel, she appeared!”

OFFSPRING

Marcus (25) has just graduated with a Business Degree in Economics and

Finance Degree in Business and Economics, and Denise (22) is pursuing a Bachelor in Fine Arts as Visual Communications student and hopes to work as an illustrator.

EAST SIDE BEST SIDE

Amos is a true Eastie who grew up in Bedok and has lived in the East all his life.

HOBBIES

Listening to music, travelling and playing with his pet Corgi, “Quinine”.

FUN FACT

“I have always loved helping people. I remember back in primary school, I helped out my classmate who needed money to the extent that I had no money myself to take bus, so I walked home!”

TURNING POINT

As a teenager, Amos found himself seeking truth and asking questions to figure out the reason for his existence. At age 17, he found his answers when he gave his life

to Christ at a Billy Graham Crusade.

FATHER'S BUSINESS

Amos spent his early adult years helping his father with the family business. The thought of serving the church full time barely crossed his mind. "I was an extremely introverted person and I felt that I wasn't very gifted and outstanding in the church community to be called by God.

But he did sense a still, small voice leading him to be equipped for full time ministry, and the confirmation later came as a prophetic word during a Sunday service sermon. "God was so faithful to supply all my needs throughout my time at bible school. I even received financial support from people I didn't know!"

Amos started out as the pastoral staff in charge of missions and worship at Church of Praise before becoming lead pastor at Care Community Church for over 2 decades. "I guess my entire work experience can be summed up as 'from helping my father's business to helping my Father's Business!'"

GROWTH SPURT

Amos spent a year helping to plant a church in the Philippines in 1988. "That

year changed my ministerial life. I was doing everything from evangelism, teaching and preaching to painting and even washing toilets! I was exposed to ministry and situations that I wasn't trained for. It pushed and stretched me to do ministry and tasks beyond my abilities."

PASTOR TO PROFESSIONAL COUNSELLOR

After working over a decade as lead pastor of a small congregation, Amos experienced a season of fatigue where he could no longer see the purpose of being a pastor, and he felt his ministry was merely "a religious responsibility".

It was during his sabbatical that he sensed God's leading to improve his effectiveness in helping people with their struggles. With a strong curiosity in human behaviour and a heart for others, he set out to upgrade himself and pursued a Masters in Counselling at Monash University.

"My pastoral experience has definitely helped me in my practice as a professional counsellor. Effective counselling requires integration of both the psychological and spiritual aspects of a person. Counselling is more than resolving personal or psychological problems. It is


about empowering, coaching and transforming lives in a personal setting."

GOALS

As an experienced volunteer facilitator with Eagles Mediation & Counselling Centre's premarital programme, Amos hope to become more specialized in couples and marriage counselling.

WORDS OF WISDOM

"I believe that little things matter to God in big ways. Do not despise the small things as big changes come with small steps."

It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade. ~ Mark 4:31-32 



NETANIA believes that all we need is Jesus and a little chocolate.



**When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you.
When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned;
the flames will not set you ablaze.**

~ Isaiah 43:2

I WILL BE with You!

BY **DEBORAH CHUA**

December 2016

I planned on starting a rigorous exercise regime to improve my fitness when my company's gym reopened in mid-December 2016. On 11 December 2016, I went for a routine dental cleaning. Later that week, I sprained my hip. I was prescribed bed rest and could not start my exercise regime. Sporadic fevers and chills, lethargy and poor appetite followed, which I attributed to my lack of movement.

Saturday, 21 January 2017, just after 9am, my room seemed increasingly brighter. How surreal. I brushed the thought aside and tried to dress myself. My thoughts seemed stuffy. I could not recall clothes I had! Feeling off-balanced, I wore my pants. I tried to choose a top. My arms did not obey.

"Okay, perfume first," I decided. Grasping my perfume bottle with some concentration and trying to spray, I realized that I had not removed the cover. I sprayed 5 times instead of once. Becoming alarmed, I tried to WhatsApp my husband Sam, but my fingers would not obey. God, help.

"Call Sam!" Amazingly, my uncoordinated fingers grasped my handphone and I selected "Contacts", scrolled to "Sam", then his home number. Despite my garbled speech on the phone, Sam figured out it was me and rushed upstairs.

Downstairs, Sam's parents and friends, who happened to have a gathering, prayed. During the prayer, a parents' friend had a vision from God in which she could see a black cloud around my head and a claw over my heart.

We rushed to Tan Tock Seng Hospital A&E – a familiar route, as Sam had visited the weekend before for a minor wound. A doctor quickly came over and told me that I have all the signs of a stroke, unusual for someone young and fit. As I had a high fever of 39°C and chills, she suspected an underlying condition caused the stroke.

Although he maintained an assuring front when he was with me, Sam feared that I may not survive and that our 18-month-old daughter, Hannah, would become motherless. To learn more about strokes, Sam contacted one of his former teachers so that he could speak to her husband, Doctor A, who Sam mistakenly remembered being a neurologist. Doctor A is actually a senior heart surgeon.

The stroke damaged the Broca's area in my brain and compromised the fine motor skills on the right side of my body (my dominant side) as well as my ability to express speech. I could not say names, except Sam's!

I regained my ability to say "Deb" the next day, "Deborah" the day after, and my NRIC number weeks later. Thankfully, God preserved my





memory and ability to think and read, though initially it seemed like my mind labored through a fog. Anything needing my consent, I requested the medical staff speak to Sam in front of me.

Diagnosis and decisions

I was diagnosed with a bacterial infection. Bacteria had attached itself to the mitral valve in my heart. As heart valves have no direct blood supply (ie. white blood cells are not able to reach the bacteria on the mitral valve), the bacteria thrived, now measuring about 1cm. The stroke was caused by bacteria growth breaking off in my heart and travelling to my brain.

A heart surgeon informed us that I had to undergo open-heart surgery to remove the bacteria growth on the mitral valve and repair or replace the damaged mitral valve. He advised that it was close to impossible

to repair my mitral valve given the size of the bacteria growth. He gave 2 less-than-ideal options for valve replacement. If I chose a tissue valve, I would have to undergo another heart surgery within 15 years' time to replace the tissue valve; if a mechanical valve, I would have to take blood thinners and avoid contact sports for the rest of my life.

That night, Sam contacted Doctor A again. Doctor A recommended his colleague, Doctor Z, a leading heart valve surgeon at Singapore General Hospital, to perform the surgery. Our families and friends also sought referrals for good heart surgeons in Singapore, and all led to Doctor Z.

Peace and revelation from God

While Sam was praying on 23 January 2017, God revealed to him the names of two pastors. One of them visited us that afternoon and prayed for us, during which divine peace filled Sam. He no longer was fearful or tearful. I also became more articulate and capable of having simple conversations without assistance.

That same day, Doctor A informed Sam that Doctor Z had agreed to take me under his care. Doctor Z is generally on overseas assignments and very busy even when he is in Singapore. Indeed, it was God's providence and direction that led Sam to contact his former teacher, which in turn facilitated Doctor Z's engagement.

After my transfer to SGH, the second pastor visited us. Through him, God revealed how He had already stepped in to save my life – because I had an underlying heart condition that we did not know about, God had allowed the sprain to happen so that I would not start on my exercise regime. Rigorous exercise could have resulted in heart failure or death as I would have assumed that any tiredness was because I was unfit and would have pushed myself harder. God had allowed the stroke to happen so that we could find out about the bacterial infection, and He would fix my heart and keep me alive and well.

Following additional tests, Doctor Z informed us that part of the bacteria growth appeared to be hanging on a “thread” which could easily break off causing further complications. Heart surgery was therefore scheduled for 26 January 2017.

Heart Surgery

The surgery was from 12.30pm to 6.30pm. At least 7 doctors were in the operating team led by Doctor Z, including 3 heart surgeons, 2 anesthetists, a neurologist and a cardiologist. My sternum was sawn apart and my blood was thinned, which posed a risk that further strokes and/or bleeding in the brain would occur.

Doctor Z discovered that my mitral valve was torn on one side and that the bulk of the bacteria growth was on this torn area. Doctor Z hypothesized that my mitral valve had already been damaged/torn for some time, providing a habitat for the bacteria to take root – likely, bacteria introduced during the dental checkup on 11 December 2016. Despite earlier




indication that it would be difficult to repair the mitral valve due to the size of the bacteria growth, God used Doctor Z to repair the valve.

January to March 2017

After surgery, I remained hospitalized for 6 more weeks to treat the bacterial infection. Antibiotics was administered intravenously every 4 hours to destroy any bacteria in my bloodstream. To prevent the potent antibiotics from burning my veins, a 40cm catheter that started from a blood vessel in my right arm and ended at my heart was inserted under live x-ray.

Post-surgery CT Scans of my brain showed possible bleeding. The doctors ceased giving me blood thinning medication despite it being best practice for such medication to be taken for 3 months post-heart surgery. This concerned us as further strokes could happen. With much prayer, I remained fine and our concerns waned.

Being in hospital for weeks was not easy. Thankfully, my father-in-law brought Hannah to hospital daily to visit me and subsequently, I was given regular home leave of 2-3 hours (before the next intravenous drip) to see Hannah at home. My parents and siblings also took turns staying overnight with me in the hospital. I am blessed and grateful for all the help, prayer and support given to me by our families, friends, churches, colleagues and the surgical, hospital and medical staff. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

I see God’s providence and faithfulness every step of the way. I thank God for the gift of health and life that I have today, and am certain that God continues to perfect and complete my health. All praise and honor be given to God. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life! 



DEBORAH CHUA Wife to Samuel Wee, mother to Hannah. Legal counsel. 29 years old in 2016. Fit and active. Loves bubble tea and chili crabs.

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY!

CHRISTMAS 2017
16 & 17 December

BAPTISED



Master Adam Chong
Son of Mr & Mrs Shaun Chong

Master Asher Yap and
Miss Lauren Yap
*Son & daughter of
Mr & Mrs Jeremy Yap*

Miss Bethany Seah
Daughter of Mr & Mrs Edwin Seah

Miss Caitlyn Teo
Daughter of Mr & Mrs Luke Teo

Miss Joelle Yuna Liew
Daughter of Mr & Mrs Kevin Liew

Master Jonas Goh
Son of Mr & Mrs Jeremy Goh

Master Seth Chong
Son of Mr & Mrs Ray Chong

Master Zachery Foo
Son of Mr & Mrs Foo Piao Zhou

Ms Charlene Liew
Ms Chen Ching Fah
Mr Daniel Lim
Ms Emily Seah
Ms Grace Ling
Ms Mary Cheow





RECEIVED INTO MEMBERSHIP

Ms Angeline Winarto
 Ms Chen Ching Fah
 Mr Daniel Lim
 Ms Emily Seah
 Mr Eugene Khoo
 Mr Glenn Wong
 Mr Kee Cheng Teng
 Mr Luke Oon
 Ms Mary Cheow
 Ms Molly Chua
 Ms Nellie Yee
 Mr Tay Pan Kwang
 Ms Verity Thoi
 Ms Violet Lim



TRANSFERRED MEMBERSHIP

Ms Annie Khoo	<i>transferred from Fairfield Methodist Church</i>
Ms Chin Chainn Miin	<i>transferred from Bedok Lutheran Church</i>
Mr Chris Lim	<i>transferred from Faith Methodist Church</i>
Ms Christina Lam	<i>transferred from Pentecost Methodist Church</i>
Ms Edith David	<i>transferred from Tamil Methodist Church</i>
Ms Helen Lim	<i>transferred from Barker Road Methodist Church</i>
Ms Lulu Tan	<i>transferred from Bethany Evangelical Church</i>
Mr Tan Chek Sian	<i>transferred from Katong Presbyterian Church</i>

If you are keen to be baptised in CMC or make a deeper commitment to CMC by becoming a member, our Easter 2018 baptism and membership season will start early in the year, and candidates are required to complete a course. For more enquiries please call our church office at 6345 3934 during office hours, or email info@cmc.org.sg

Do note that joining the membership of the church requires that you have been worshipping in CMC for at least 6 months, and have attended at least 6 sessions of a Care Group.

MINISTRY & SUPPORT STAFF

1. **Mr Earl Tan**
Executive Director
2. **Mr Rupert Lim**
Worship Director
3. **Mr Alvin Teh**
Senior Ministry Executive
(Dialect Ministries)
4. **Mr Errol Champion**
Ministry Executive
(St Patrick's Secondary School)
5. **Mr Hoi Kok Fu**
Senior Ministry Executive
(Outreach and Missions)
6. **Mr Chris Seow**
Senior Executive
(Audio Visual and Info Tech)
7. **Mr Amos Yap**
Senior Ministry Executive
(Family Life & Counselling)
8. **Miss Elena Gudgeon**
Senior Ministry Executive
(Communications)
9. **Mr Kevin Wang**
Media Executive
10. **Mr Edwin Seah**
Ministry Executive
(Youth Ministry)



CHURCH OPERATIONS STAFF

Ms Mabel Wat
Administrative Manager

Mr Steven Sim
Finance & IT Manager

Mrs Alice John
Secretary

Ms Suzanne Seah
Finance and Administrative Assistant

Ms Lily Sia
Administrative Assistant

Mr Sun Tian Fu
Administrative Assistant

Mr Shi Kai
Operations Executive

LOCAL CHURCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2017-2018



1

OUR PASTORS

1. Rev Vincent Goh
Pastor-In-Charge
2. Rev Barnabas Chong
Pastor
3. Rev Shaun Chong
Pastor



2



3



1



3



4



5



6



2



7



8

OUR LEADERS

1. Mr Donald Tay
LCEC Chairperson
2. Mr Barry Hung
Pastor-Parish Relations and
Staff Committee Chairperson
3. Mr Alan Tan
Associate Lay Leader
4. Mrs Mary Lee
Associate Lay Leader
5. Mr Jonathan Ong
Associate Lay Leader
6. Mr Chan Kum Kit
Associate Lay Leader
7. Miss Phylina Yeo
TRAC Lay Delegate
8. Ms Serene Chee
Associate Lay Leader

LOCAL CHURCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2017-2018

OUR STEWARDS

1. Mrs Tay Poh Luan
Honourary Steward
2. Mr Mark Chan
3. Mr Kelvin Lim
4. Miss Woo Ti Soo
5. Ms Doris Lee



OUR LCEC ADMIN TEAM

1. Mr Wan Wee Pin
Archivist
2. Mrs Tan Heem Juay
Finance Chairperson
3. Mr Noel Ong
Governance Chairperson
4. Miss Maggie Ng
Treasurer
5. Ms Sharon Tan
LCEC Secretary





MINISTRY CHAIRPERSONS

1. **Mrs Fanny Chiang**
Cantonese Ministry
2. **Ms Loh Mei Wai**
Care Groups Ministry
3. **Mr Ling Ting Soo**
Christalite Methodist Home
4. **Mr Stanley Lee**
Christian Outreach & Social Concerns
5. **Mrs Winnie Cheng**
Church School (ChristKidz)
6. **Miss Michele Soh**
Communications
7. **Mr Tan Wee Hiong**
Discipleship & Nurture
8. **Ms Elaine Shu**
Family Life Ministry
9. **Mr Rodney Chia**
Hokkien Ministry
10. **Mr Daniel Wang**
Mandarin Ministry
11. **Dr Samuel Ng**
Missions
12. **Ms Carol Chan**
Prayer
13. **Mr Winston Wee**
Property Management
14. **Mr Anthony Chong**
Senior's Ministry (GYM)
15. **Mr Andrew Wee**
Witness & Evangelism
16. **Ms Diana Hioe**
Worship & Music
17. **Mr Samuel Choo**
Youth Ministry
18. **Mrs Junie Tan**
Womens' Society of Christian Services



**TOO MANY
COMMITMENTS
ON A SUNDAY?**



SATURDAY SERVICE

**EVERY WEEK STARTING FROM
20 JANUARY 2018 | 4.30PM**