



# witness



## Blinded to See

A profound transformational testimony



## In His Time

A journey of obedience and trust



## Bible Boot Camp – Armour Up!

Our inaugural ChristKidz camp

# Strong & Courageous



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# A word

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

REV JEREMY YAP

from your  
Pastor



## Strong and Courageous

“Have I not commanded you? *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

This is the call to every Christian and it is also the call to Christ Methodist Church as we continue to go further for the Lord.

What comes to mind when you think of being strong and courageous?

Is it David facing the giant Goliath? Or Daniel spending a night in the lions’ den?

Or perhaps a child facing up to a bully in school? Or a firefighter saving someone from a burning building?

The command to be strong and courageous is used many times in the Bible but none more so than to Joshua as he was taking over the mantle of leadership of God’s people to lead them into the Promised Land. This phrase was repeated over and over to Joshua.

First, in Deuteronomy 31:6, Moses told the people of God to be strong and courageous, and then Moses repeated this to Joshua in Deuteronomy 31:7. God then encouraged Joshua to be strong and courageous in Deuteronomy 31:23.

Moses handed over the reins to Joshua and at the beginning of the Book of Joshua, God again commissioned Joshua to be strong and courageous, not once or twice, but three times (Joshua 1:6, 7 and 9). To cap it all off, the people of God collectively responded to Joshua and also encouraged him to be strong and courageous (Joshua 1:18).

We read in a short time Joshua had to be encouraged five times. Why was this necessary? Because Moses had died (Joshua 1:2) and Joshua had very big shoes to fill.

Although Joshua must have learned a lot from Moses as his protégé, and Joshua must have seen God work miracles in the wilderness, it is a different thing altogether

to be appointed leader of this rag-tag bunch of people and be expected to take over the fortified cities of the Promised Land. Joshua must have needed all the encouragement he could get.

But was Joshua supposed to be strong and courageous as a fighter and army commander? Was Joshua expected to rely on swords and shields to fight the battles before him?

Joshua 1:7 tells us otherwise. Joshua was instructed by God to be strong and courageous not chiefly to take up arms but more importantly to observe God’s laws passed to him by Moses, and not to deviate from God’s commands. *The encouragement was not simply for physical strength and courage, but for spiritual strength and courage.*

The Bible tells us that strength and courage are not found primarily in swashbuckling bravado shown by the world and by Hollywood (and in a more modern context, Netflix), but strength and courage are found in the knowledge, understanding and obedience to God’s Word. Strength and courage are found in facing the temptations of life and choosing instead to turn away and stand on God’s promises and remain in God’s purity.

Strength and courage are obeying Jesus’ command to love, to turn the other cheek, to go the extra mile, to seek the least, the last and the lost when everything else in life tells you that it is a lost cause.

I pray that the stories of strength and courage in this issue will help you find the strength and courage to continue to read and meditate on God’s Word daily so that we can be true to Joshua’s commands of obedience to God’s Word and to not deviate to the right or the left, that we may prosper wherever we go.

“So when I fight, I’ll fight on my knees  
With my hands lifted high  
Oh God, the battle belongs to You.”  
Phil Wickham, *Battle Belongs*





# The Road to 2025

BY NETANIA PEREIRA

It has been just under six years since Rev Dr Edwin Wong became our Pastor-in-charge. Since then, CMC has gone through all sorts of changes, and we have undoubtedly entered a new season.

Through Rev Dr Edwin's leadership and obedience to the Lord, we have witnessed a clear shift in the spiritual atmosphere of our worship services, along with a tangible sense of excitement and anticipation for what is happening in our church.

Now, at the cusp of the new year, we look back with Rev Dr Edwin on the journey thus far.





### Charting the Path

After navigating the tumultuous COVID-19 period, Rev Dr Edwin rolled out a four-year discipleship journey in 2022 with the launch of *The 4 Essentials*. This initiative aimed to align us as we worked towards becoming a Word-based, Spirit-empowered, disciple making church by 2025 – also known as Vision 2025. The process involved extensive brainstorming and collaboration with various leaders.

“I’m very thankful that we were able to test the material with the Zone Supervisors. We met frequently to refine it. There was a lot of blood and sweat behind it, but with that came a strong sense of togetherness,” he shares.

As we approached 2023, there was a need for more forward planning. “We had *The 4 Essentials* and we were seeking the Lord for what’s next. *The three words – Deeper, Further, Greater* – together with a whole flood of verses just came; it was so simple and clear. Everything happened overnight,” he recalls.

“Some urged us to do more, but the Lord told us to hold back. So, when we went ‘Deeper’, we scaled back our activities to slow down and deepen our relationship with God. We didn’t want to appear busy on the surface but lack depth with God.”

Casting a vision and guiding the church through different seasons is a tremendous responsibility. “The line between God’s will and my desire cannot be blurred,” he shares. When asked if he ever hesitated in setting the direction, he reflects, “In my own quiet moments, I knew this wasn’t from me, and that gave me the confidence to do it.”

Through this spiritual direction, we have heard amazing testimonies of God’s redeeming grace, seen individuals activated for missions and witnessed growth in numbers as well. At the leadership level, Rev Dr Edwin also fostered stronger collaboration within the various ministries, resulting in an increased sense of unity.

### A Season of Transformation

While leading the church through this transformative season, Rev Dr Edwin has also embarked on a significant personal transformation. Since January 2024, he has lost 30 kilograms – the equivalent of six bags of rice!

After suffering from hip pain, his orthopaedic surgeon recommended hip replacement surgery. However, due to the lengthy recovery period, Rev Dr Edwin decided to postpone the procedure. Shortly after came the possibility of Rev Barnabas Chong requiring knee surgery, and with only two pastors at the time, the church faced a potential leadership gap.

Recognising that he could be the only pastor at CMC, Rev Dr Edwin knew he had to prioritise his health for the sake of the church. “I realised that my love for the church and desire to be there for the people was my greatest motivation,” he says.

Since then, the only downside to his weight loss has been the need for a new wardrobe. “I’ve had to change my pants at least three times. My tailor is upset with me because he keeps having to make more alterations,” he adds with a smile.



### Grateful and Hopeful

As we approach 2025, Rev Dr Edwin is thankful for the support he has received from the congregation, leaders, and staff over the years – both directly or indirectly. Amid the usual obstacles, there have been many uplifting and encouraging instances that have carried him through some of his most difficult times. “There have been moments when a very tiring day suddenly turns around, and a sense of peace and joy carries me through. That’s when I know someone is praying for me,” he shares.

With this gratitude, he hopes for CMC to grow into a centre where others can receive support. CMC has been blessed to be a blessing, and this is Rev Dr Edwin’s heartfelt wish for the church: “I hope our church will one day be a house of prayer, blessing, worship, and healing, so that we serve a greater purpose. The more blessings that flow out, the more blessings are going to come – not just for us but for the generations to come.”

Let us look forward to our 95th year with eager expectation to witness the “Greater” things of God!

### PEW’s Clues:

#### 8 Weight Loss Tips from Rev Dr Edwin Wong

1. Set small goals for yourself
2. Avoid processed food
3. Cut out sugar
4. Only eat carbs in the morning
5. No unhealthy snacks
6. Drink lots of water
7. Intermittent fasting is key
8. Weigh yourself every morning (so you know if you can have a cheat day or not!)



# On Faith, Family, and Finishing Well: Rev Barnabas Reflects on the Closing of a Chapter

BY MATTHEW CHIN



After 30 years in ministry, Rev Barnabas Chong is retiring.

After 30 years in ministry, Rev Barnabas Chong is retiring.

“I’m fully aware that it’s very important that I keep myself fairly occupied”, he tells me in his office overlooking the church’s front driveway.

Photographs, books, and various coffee-related appliances – the paraphernalia of a pastor – line the furniture in his office. In the seat to my left, his two dogs lay quietly – a groomer’s appointment, I’m told.

“Just last night, at a dinner with some old friends, one of my friends said, ‘Before retirement, I did things because I had to, but now, I can do things because I want to’”, he recounts, as I probe him on the next chapter of his story.

Between itinerant invitations to minister and travelling to visit two of his three sons in Australia, Rev Barnabas moots the idea of authoring a second book. “While my youngest son Josiah is in school, I can do a lot of writing and reading...that’s the life.”

But Rev Barnabas unambiguously points out that it is “full-time, pastoral ministry” that he is stepping down from. “He reminds me that there is still ministry to be done... in one sense, retirement opens up new doors for ministry as well.”

## A Life of Ministry

It should perhaps come as little surprise that Rev Barnabas plans to keep up with the Lord’s work even after retirement, as inklings for full-time ministry had simmered since his time as a Polytechnic student.

After a brief stint as an auditor, Rev Barnabas began his clerical service at a local independent church as an associate pastor, before joining the Methodist Church in the year 2000 as a staff member of Barker Road Methodist Church.

Rev Barnabas’ first pastoral appointment in the Methodist

Church only came several years later as Faith Methodist Church’s (FMC) Youth Pastor.

“I think that was one of the most gratifying tours”, Rev Barnabas says of his service in FMC. With fondness, he recounts how his efforts to revitalise FMC’s youth ministry at the time were supported by a capable, hardworking team.

The Tackle Box, the present iteration of FMC’s youth ministry, remains the namesake of Rev Barnabas’ revitalisation efforts all those years back. A cursory search of “Pastor Barnabas Chong” on YouTube turns up a video affectionately produced by FMC’s then-youths bidding farewell to Rev Barnabas at the end of his tour. Fondness, it seems, cuts both ways.

A CMC congregant, by now all too familiar with the work of Rev Barnabas, might be tempted to perceive him as “our pastor”, but this perhaps diminishes the reach of his ministry, which has had profound impact on lives well beyond East Coast Road.

Rev Barnabas also marks the epochs in his career by the prayer and intercessory ministries that he has helped to conceive. From organic groups who would meet informally for prayer at the different churches he pastored, to the more structured inception of the Trinity Annual Conference (TRAC) Healing Ministry, Rev Barnabas has had a hand in the development of intercessory ministries throughout the course of his ministry.

“It appears to be inactivity,” he says of prayer, but in this perceived inactivity, “heaven is activated”

Likening those involved in the intercessory as the “commandos” of the church, Rev Barnabas describes the weekly intercessors’ prayer meeting as fighting spiritual battles at a greater intensity and duration than the regular corporate prayer meetings.

More broadly, however, Rev Barnabas agreed that prayer is an oft-overlooked aspect



of the Christian faith. “It appears to be inactivity,” he says of prayer, but in this perceived inactivity, “heaven is activated”.

### The Costs of Discipleship

Having spent nearly the entirety of his professional career as a man of the cloth, Rev Barnabas is under no illusion about the costs of a life of ministry (Luke 14:28).

While the congregant may often idealise the moral standards of the clergyman, fallibility remains intertwined with the human condition to which even the most ascetic clergymen are bound. It is these challenges of human fallibility in a fundamentally social occupation that Rev Barnabas has often found most distressing.

Recalling instances of interpersonal misunderstanding as some of the most painful moments of his career, Rev Barnabas shared how such nadirs drove him at one point to consider prematurely calling time on his career.

The irregularity and long hours of a pastor’s schedule often also unsettled family life.

Describing the tension of fulfilling the demands of ministry and his responsibilities to his family as choices that he has had to make over the years, Rev Barnabas recounts how he “didn’t always choose correctly”.

“There was a period where I think my family was kind of neglected, so I’ve had to make up for that over the years”, Rev Barnabas adds, wistfully.

Beyond interpersonal challenges, one cannot ignore the tolls that the ministry has exacted on Rev Barnabas’ physical health.

It was on a tour to Israel with Cairnhill Methodist Church in 2011 that Rev Barnabas

faced a life-altering skin infection – what he calls his “Medical Dilemma” in various other accounts.

Since then, Rev Barnabas has faced several other health complications. It is such considerations of his health that have influenced his decision to retire from full-time pastoral ministry.

### The Salience of Discipleship

However, it is perhaps through such trials, and the wisdom gleaned from them, that Rev Barnabas’ ministry has been able to establish such resonance with the different congregations that he has ministered to over the last three decades.

Rev Barnabas admits that witnessing the hand of God in even his most heartbreaking circumstances has made his suffering “almost insignificant”.

This posture of obedience in spite of often tremendous costs has shaped many of Rev Barnabas’ perspectives, and it is these same perspectives that he hopes CMC will continue to cultivate among her congregants even after he departs from his full-time position.

The idea of discipleship is close to Rev Barnabas’ heart, and it is this same idea of “Disciples mak[ing] Disciples who make Disciples” – the title of one of the chapters in his thesis – that Rev Barnabas hopes that CMC will continue to develop and refine through initiatives like

the DG312 system.

As he prepares for the next chapter in his story, Rev Barnabas concedes that he will miss CMC’s leadership team, whom he credits for conferring pastors with the freedom to lead and experiment with ideas – a liberty that is not universal across all churches.



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Rev Barnabas poignantly describes the warmth of the congregation, whose greetings of “welcome home” caught him by surprise in 2018 when he returned to speak at CMC’s Christmas services, as something that he will miss.

But Rev Barnabas acknowledges that it is an opportune time to move on from this present chapter in his story. Rev Barnabas is choosing to retire while he is still in good health, to be able to spend quality time with his family in his silver years.

Rev Barnabas’ life and testimony have alluded to both the finitude of life and the salience of the Gospel. As he calls time on his ministry career, perhaps the best form of tribute to the esteemed reverend is to live lives convicted of both.



Undergraduate by day, and fledgling CG leader by night, **MATTHEW** has been a part of the CMC family since the time it had a kindergarten. He also runs a lot.





# Follow God Wholeheartedly

It is with great joy that CMC welcomes back Rev Jeremy Yap, a familiar face in our church family. Rev Jeremy, who officially began his pastoral duties with us on August 1, 2024, is no stranger to the congregation, having first joined CMC in 2007 upon getting married. Now, as he steps into his new role, we had the opportunity to sit down with him for an interview to reflect on his return, his experiences so far, and his vision for the church.

## A Homecoming of Heart and Spirit

For Rev Jeremy, returning to CMC feels very much like coming home. One of the first things he noted with enthusiasm was the convenience of being closer to home, but more than that, the comfort of being surrounded by familiar faces. “My family is here. I’ve been coming here since 2007,” he

shared. His words underscore how deeply rooted his connection to this congregation is, and how his posting here feels like divine alignment.

While the decision for his posting wasn’t something he had direct control over, it certainly feels like a blessing. The TRAC Board of Appointment makes such decisions based on the needs of the congregation, and Rev Jeremy is confident that his familiarity with the church and its people has prepared him to meet these needs with love and commitment. As he settles into his role, he’s keen to reconnect with long-standing members and forge new relationships.

## Navigating New Roles with Humility

In his first couple of months, Rev Jeremy has been overseeing various ministries, including ChristKidz, IGNITE, the



“People say, ‘There is never enough,’ but in Him, there is always enough. Follow God wholeheartedly. He will never shortchange you,”

Chinese Ministry, and the Glowing Years Ministry. Each ministry presents its unique challenges and opportunities, but Rev Jeremy is no stranger to hard work. During his time at his previous posting at Aldersgate Methodist Church, he oversaw a wide range of ministries, from Witness & Evangelism to Youth Ministry, including chaplain duties at both Fairfield Methodist Primary and Secondary Schools.

When asked how he’s managing this workload, Rev Jeremy admitted that while it’s challenging, it’s also incredibly rewarding. “Time has flown by. No two days are the same,” he reflected, highlighting the diversity and depth of his responsibilities. Despite the overwhelming nature of his work, he remains grounded, balancing his pastoral duties with family commitments and learning to say “no” when necessary – though he humorously confessed his wife thinks he doesn’t say “no” enough!

One area he approaches with humility is preaching in Mandarin. Although he admits that Chinese is not his strong suit, having failed it in school, he continues to embrace the challenge. “My Chinese is quite terrible, but I’ve preached in Mandarin before. I just use Google Translate for the difficult phrases,” illustrating his determination to serve in every capacity required of him.

### God’s Presence and the Power of Prayer

Rev Jeremy’s return has been marked not just by administrative or ministerial duties but by a palpable sense of God’s movement within the church. Over the past few months, he has witnessed firsthand how prayer has impacted the lives of the congregation.

He shared the powerful testimonies of three individuals who experienced significant breakthroughs after being prayed for at the altar. One man, for instance, came back to share that he no longer needed the operation he had been facing.

Reflecting on these moments, Rev Jeremy said, “You know in your head that God answers prayers, but to see it work before you, to hear people tell you that their prayers were answered, it shows me that God is moving in this place.” These experiences not only reaffirm Rev Jeremy’s belief in the power of prayer but also indicate a deeper, spiritual shift happening within the congregation.

The sense of gratitude among members is something that particularly touches him. Drawing a parallel to Jesus’ healing of the ten lepers, where only one returned to give thanks, Rev Jeremy pointed out how blessed he feels to be in a church where people are



willing to share what God is doing in their lives. “There is this sense of gratitude here. And because of that, I feel that God is moving in this place,” he said, expressing his deep appreciation for the openness of the congregation to share and testify what our Lord is doing in their lives.

### Looking Forward: Greater Works of God

While Rev Jeremy is still getting settled and feels it’s too early to implement any major changes, he is confident that the church is on the right path. As part of the church’s vision for the year ahead, the theme is “Greater”, which reflects the desire to see greater works of God in the lives of the congregation and the church as a whole. “Everything we do, something greater will come out of it,” he emphasised, speaking to the belief that God will continue to move powerfully in the months and years to come.

The future of CMC, according to Rev Jeremy, is exciting. With many new faces joining the congregation and a younger ministry team, the church is evolving while remaining rooted in its mission. Rev Jeremy believes that this dynamic environment, coupled with a shared vision for greater works of God, will lead the church to new

heights. “People say, ‘There is never enough,’ but in Him, there is always enough. Follow God wholeheartedly. He will never shortchange you,” he said, offering a message of encouragement to the congregation.

As we welcome Rev Jeremy back to CMC, we do so with the knowledge that God has placed him here for a reason. His deep connection to our church family, his tireless dedication to ministry, and his faith in God’s continued work all serve as a reminder that greater things are yet to come!



ALBERT knows that our Lord is always faithful and he hopes to reflect God’s goodness in people’s everyday.



# Blinded to See

BY STEVEN ANG



When I was a child, I used to attend Sunday school at CMC. Although I wandered from the faith for many years after that, I am so thankful that God drew me back to Him and CMC.

This journey began in mid-July 2022. I had just finalised my divorce and I reconnected with my friend and CMC member, George Wong. We met up and had a meal together where he encouraged me to come to church. Since I was familiar with CMC, I decided to attend that Sunday. Somehow after the service, I felt the peace of God with me. I began visiting regularly after that, and after a while, people would greet me when they saw me. The warmth of the community encouraged me to keep attending church.

In September 2022, George and I decided to visit our childhood friend, Aaron Beh, who resides in Kota Kinabalu. He had been working in the Assembly of God church and has since retired. His wife, Rev Laura Ng, is still serving as a pastor for the Chinese congregation in the same church. We booked an apartment so that they could stay with us.

On the day of our arrival, while we were unpacking, we started having a casual conversation about the gospel. Rev Laura asked me, "How is your Christian life?" I explained that I had just started attending church a few months ago and was not yet baptised.

She then asked if I would like them to

pray for me to receive the Holy Spirit. I felt ready and so, I agreed. As they prayed, I was overwhelmed by the Spirit of God and slipped from my chair to the ground. When I woke up, I had no idea what had happened. Rev Laura told me that I had just received the Holy Spirit and asked if there was anything I wanted to renounce.

For 45 years, I had been smoking over 20 cigarettes a day. I had tried to quit once before, but relapsed after two months and ended up smoking even more.

So, I told her that I wanted to renounce smoking. They prayed for me a second time, and again, I was touched by the Holy Spirit and fell to the ground. When I woke up, I was crying and I felt a strange warmth in my heart. Everything happened so quickly and unexpectedly.

Later that evening, we went out for dinner and then decided to do some grocery shopping. I had completely forgotten that I had shared my desire to quit smoking, and out of habit, I went to look for cigarettes. I headed to the counter where they are usually displayed but could not find any. I got annoyed and grumbled to my friends about the supermarket not stocking something as basic as cigarettes.

To my surprise, my friends told me they could see the cigarettes behind the counter. I was sceptical, thinking they were playing a trick on me, but they insisted that the cigarettes were there. They realised that God had blinded my eyes from seeing the cigarettes and slowly helped me understand what was happening.

I thank God for His guidance that led me out of Singapore to have such an amazing encounter with Him. Since then, I've been completely liberated from the strongholds of my nicotine addiction and without any withdrawal symptoms. With God all things are possible!

On the second day of our trip, Rev Laura asked if I wanted to be baptised in the swimming pool at the apartment we were

staying at. That got me thinking, and I decided that I wanted to be baptised at CMC, for I felt that God had brought me back to CMC for a reason. When I returned to Singapore, I signed up for the baptism classes and was baptised on Christmas day.

"If we are faithless, He remains faithful."  
2 Timothy 2:13

Since then, I have been taking steps to grow in my faith. I attended Church Camp in 2023 and have joined E-Light Care Group where they have been journeying with me, guiding me and teaching me how to pray.

I give thanks to God for His faithfulness throughout my life, even when I drifted, as it says in 2 Timothy 2:13, "If we are faithless, He remains faithful." I pray that as I journey through the faith and continue to discover more of God, He will lead me through the right path.



STEVEN believes that with God, he has won the battle.



# Natural Evangelism Conference

“The Good News is not something we come to church to hear; it is something we go from church to tell.” – Canon J. John

On 27 and 28 June 2024, we held our Natural Evangelism Conference. Guest speaker Canon J. John inspired, encouraged, and equipped over 600 attendees to be intentional in praying, caring and sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.

We pray that the seeds planted during this conference will continue to bear fruit as we step out in faith to pursue the “Greater” things of God in 2025. Let us press in to share the love and message of Christ with those around us!



# One Invitation Could Change Everything

There was excitement in the air as people streamed into church on 29 and 30 June 2024. It was Celebration Weekend and the promise of food (for the body and soul), games, and fellowship drew over 300 visitors across our three services.

It was a joy to see the sanctuary and fellowship deck packed with people, including many first-time visitors to a church.

Guest speaker Canon J. John delivered an impactful message, and we pray that those who have yet to know the Lord caught a glimpse of His love and experienced the warmth of church community.





# In His Time

BY IRENE NG

I confess I am a workaholic and would think nothing about spending my entire day and night at my laptop, pounding away at the keyboard. In 2019, my daughter Audrey asked, “Mum, I’m planning to start a family. Will you be able to help me out?” I thought nothing of the request as I knew the gestation period would allow me some time to do the needful when the time came.

The following year, my mum’s health took a sudden turn for the worse, and I found myself constantly having to manage my time to bring her for multiple visits to the hospital. During one such visit, I received an urgent call from the office, which needed my immediate attention. It required me to make numerous calls to various parties to communicate the decisions made. Those few minutes saw my blood pressure shoot up with immense stress as I had to attend to my mum, who was wheelchair-bound. I prayed, and the verse from Jeremiah 29:11 flashed across my mind:

“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”.

I did not quite understand the message then.

One day while in the office, a strange prompting came: “Send in the email to retire now.” Puzzled, as all seemed well that quiet afternoon, I chose to ignore it, but it came again: “Send it in now!” I was pretty shaken, but obeyed the command nonetheless as Jeremiah 29:11 flashed before me yet again. What followed were multiple calls for me to continue serving in my capacity but God impressed upon me to stay resolute. The end of 2021 saw me retiring from the workforce, which took many of my colleagues by surprise.



As I knew I had time on my hands after retirement, I decided to renovate my home, and so naturally, the option was to move in with my mother to keep her company. That was the best decision in my life as it gave

me a glimpse of why God had given me the prompt at that precise moment. Never would I have guessed that mum would pass on two months later. I would have lived life in regret had I not heeded the Lord’s prompting then. **The first lesson I learned – Obedience!**

However, that was only the tip of the iceberg. God had yet to show me His full glory. Audrey had been trying for a baby for a few years, but somehow, her plans did not materialise. I recalled that during one of the prayer meetings in the church, I prayed fervently, asking God to grant the couple their heart’s desire. As the meeting drew to a close, Rev Barnabas Chong went up on stage to give the benediction. Just as he was about to start, Rev Dr Edwin Wong jumped onto the stage and proclaimed, “Someone is praying for a baby tonight, and I just want to say that your prayer will be answered”. I could hear my heart beating excitedly as I heard this proclamation. **Indeed, our Lord listens to our every prayer!**

A year later and two months into my retirement, Audrey informed me that she was expecting a pair of twins! The lyrics from the song Way Maker ring close as God is truly a light in the darkness, and even when we don’t see it, He is always working!

The entire experience of how I retired, kept company with my mum for the last leg of her journey on earth and the arrival of my twin grandchildren was a profound reminder of God’s faithfulness. He answers our prayers, but not according to our timeline. **Instead, He responded at the perfect moment, showing me that His master plan is far superior to mine.** What felt like a delay in the arrival of



Audrey’s babies was an opportunity for Him to show us His grace and provision in a more impactful way. **The second lesson learned – Trust!**

I have since learned to appreciate God’s timing and understand that His delays are not denials but part of His divine plan, designed for our ultimate good and His glory. I am incredibly grateful for God’s unwavering faithfulness and for the way He answers prayers, often beyond our expectations.

I hope this testimony will remind us of God’s mercy and goodness and that He is always at work, orchestrating our lives in ways that reflect His infinite love and wisdom. **Indeed, “He has made everything beautiful in its time” (Ecclesiastes 3:11) for me, and He will do the same for you too!**



**IRENE** finds much joy serving God and looking after her grandchildren.



2 Corinthians 4:18

“So we fix our eyes not on what is seen,  
but on what is unseen since what is seen is temporary,  
but what is unseen is eternal.”



# Cliffhanger

BY RAYMOND YEW

Walking toward my usual barber in a mall, I passed by a rock-climbing facility. Enthusiasts, amateurs and professionals, were navigating the enormous structure, each striving to reach the top. Watching them, an analogy struck me: this was much like our journey through life before God.

Imagine you are in a dark cave, clinging to the crevices of a cliff...

Everywhere there is darkness and you are not sure how far up or down it goes.

The only security you have is a small headlamp which allows you to see about two feet in front of you and the rocky ledges

you are clinging to.

Our secular logic, experiences and influences have shaped our instinct not to let go. So we cling on with all our might to these small ledges on the cliff, believing so strongly that there is a deep emptiness below us and if we let go, we will fall to our death.

Avoiding death now becomes a relentless bootless errand because we all know that in the end, death is inevitable. Yet we cling on hoping we can live forever and not realising that even if one day, we do get to live forever, we will just be prolonging our suffering of still being stuck on the same cliff clinging

on to the same crevices surrounded by the same darkness.

As you start getting your bearings on this cliff, you realise that there are other climbers with you. All facing the same darkness but with different attitudes and emotions.

Some are finding bigger crevices and ledges to relieve their tired hands and arms only to realise that this relief is only temporary as you still need to cling on to the rocks to avoid falling.

Some become bitter and start blaming the crevices for being so small. Why are they in this position in the first place and why is no one helping them?

Some simply remain where they are, consumed by fear, anxiety and doubt, clinging on even tighter.

Then there are the climbers who have climbed high and because of a misstep have fallen off the cliff but somehow miraculously grabbed hold of a ledge and did not fall to their death. However, because they fell so far down to almost where they began their climb, they became disheartened. Instead of rejoicing for not falling to their death, they sink into depression, choosing to let the darkness consume them.

Other climbers turn to prayer while clinging on to the crevices and ledges hoping for help to come in the form of a divine intervention.

Picture your life transposed onto this metaphorical cliff and the crevices and ledges that we cling on to are the secular possessions we yearn for – money, career, titles, idols, superstitions, reputation and the many more that are created by worldly standards. What comes with clinging to these crevices is our secular wisdom which creates the unwanted emotions of fear, anxiety, doubt, anger and depression.

What we have succeeded in becoming are expert cliff hangers. At some point in the

many phases of our lives, we have become one of those climbers clinging on to the worldly crevices that provide a false sense of security.

What we have failed at miserably though, is listening. We are so consumed by fears and anxieties, so focused on securing our position on the cliff that we miss the calls from God. What God said to Jeremiah best personifies how deaf we are on that cliff – “While you were doing all these things declares the Lord, I spoke to you again and again, but you did not listen; I called you, but you did not answer.” Jeremiah 7:13

If only we had listened and heeded the advice, we would have realised that we were only two feet away from the ground. Only two feet away from salvation. Instead of being consumed by depression, we can let go and find that we are only two feet away from finding peace and joy.

But our worldly milieu tells us to trust ourselves and hold on even tighter as we see only the darkness. Ironically, the people around us were suffering the same fate.

If only we listened while we prayed, then we can see that the divine intervention we are hoping for is just two feet away from us and all we need to do is to let go.

If only...

Now, open your eyes, let go of that crevice. Listen with an open heart and surrender to God. You are just two feet away from the ground. Only two feet away from salvation.

“So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”  
2 Corinthians 4:18



Once a struggling Christian, **RAYMOND'S** relationship with God was healed through an affliction that God allowed into his life. He is deeply grateful for God's mercy and love.





# Obedience in Answering the Call

BY JULIEN SOON

Going through Discipleship Training School (DTS) in Singapore has been a unique and precious journey and I thank God for every moment, even though it was an experience I did not expect would happen.

After my O Levels in 2023, I took a gap year to figure out what God's plan was for me. I felt like I was in my comfort zone, stuck in a roundabout of school, tuition, hanging out with friends and doing it all over again the next day. I thought there is surely more to life than this, so throughout the year, **I spent time praying and asking God what my next steps should be. He slowly gave me the hunger for missions and directed me towards it.**

In late November, a missionary from Youth With A Mission (YWAM) came to speak at an IGNITE youth service about her DTS experience. As she said those three letters "DTS", a light bulb went off in my head and I was drawn in, but a lot of questions were brewing in my mind as I did not know what YWAM was or what they did besides being a missions organisation.

At the end of the service, she opened the floor for the 1361 call, which was to do either one month, three months, six months or one year of missions. I was reminded of the time Joseph Chean had an altar call during our church camp in June. During which, I had the conviction to go up but hesitated.







This time, I stumbled forward and felt like somebody pushed me from the back, but no one did.

After that service, a few weeks went by and the thought of DTS slipped my mind. During that time, I went for an army check-up and was told that they couldn't accept me due to a health issue. I shared this with my youth leader, and the next day he texted me to ask if I considered DTS Singapore. I prayed about it and decided to do some further research. What concerned me was the fact that I had to leave my family and live with others and the fee was something I did not have. I continued to pray and went to talk to different church staff.

The conviction came when I had a vision a few nights before the application deadline. It was of Matthew 28:19-20 which talks about The Great Commission. This is the instruction the disciples received from Jesus to go into the nations and spread the gospel. **I sensed the Lord convicting me to reflect on which was more important – the instruction He gives or my worries.** As I reflected on

the verse, I thought about the disciples and how they dropped everything when they received the calling to follow Christ. A few days later, I submitted my application and was accepted into YWAM Harvest Force DTS 2024.

During YWAM DTS, I was surrounded by people from different nations, backgrounds and ages and I am super blessed that I got to journey with them. Living in the community helped me to focus and strengthen my faith, and I learned a lot from living with others. During the Lecture phase, we had speakers from different countries, ranging from Hawaii to South Africa. Each week covered a different topic, and **the depth of learning was a time that God used to help me refocus on what He truly wanted me to do.** There were things that I had to lay down as I did not know they were holding me back from doing what God truly wanted me to do. God led me out of my comfort zone and I took part in street evangelism and used the gift God gave me to play the cajon during worship sessions in front of a large group of people.

“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.”

Jeremiah 29:11

As part of the programme, I also went to Japan for three months for outreach. One of the outreach areas was a Homeless Ministry which not only gives out food on Thursdays but also includes a short sermon. I saw many homeless people who were not just hungry for food, but hungry to hear the gospel. I could truly see that God is close to the broken-hearted. God also used my health issue as a gateway to speak to the people to bring hope into their lives. Growing up, I had deemed my health issue as a thorn in my flesh, but God redeemed it to show people who He is.

During my DTS journey, I faced many personal challenges such as times when I couldn't be with my family, but God blessed me with an amazing community in CMC and IGNITE that always supported me in prayer



and checked in on me every step of the way.

Going into DTS was something that I did not have in my plans, but as I followed through with God's plans, I realised that DTS was necessary to help me find what was my place in The Great

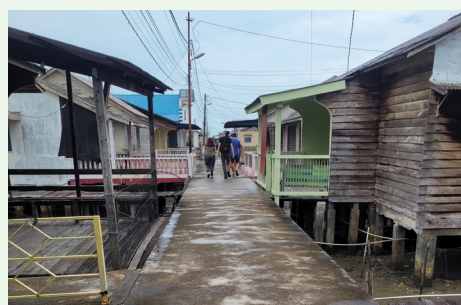
Commission. After completing my DTS, I am continuing to seek God and pursue the call to missions that He has given me.

“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.” Jeremiah 29:11



**JULIEN** is 19 years old and has attended CMC since he was young. In his free time, he likes to read a good book while having coffee.





# Love Thy Neighbour: A Mission to Remember

BY TEN27 CARE GROUP

On September 14, 2024, our diverse group of ten, led by Chris Tham, embarked on a mission trip to Bintan. From the moment we arrived, God's presence was undeniable. The children at the kids' ministry and the tight-knit community left a deep impression on us. **We went to serve, but the residents' joy and resilience gave us so much more.** They taught us that true wealth lies not in material possessions, but in gratitude and connection, transcending all borders and backgrounds.

In Senggarang, the children's pure, unguarded faith touched us deeply. Their joy in worship was a poignant reminder of the beauty of child-like trust in God.

The next day, we visited village homes. We will never forget meeting Mr and Mrs Lim, an elderly couple whose love for each other and for Jesus radiated from their tiny home. Their faith was so strong, so genuine. Even in their old age, they prayed with child-like faith, with innocence and trust.

We also met Mr Guo, a stroke survivor. Watching him stand and walk, knowing he had been through so much, filled us with awe. His determination and growing faith were clear signs of God's restorative power.

However, it was a local carpenter who truly embodied the commandment to "love thy neighbour." He heard of an elderly lady's injury and brought her herbs for healing, expecting nothing in return. His selflessness was a quiet, powerful testament to God's love.

Many of us were first-timers, questioning the impact of these brief encounters. **Yet, the children's joy, Mr Lim's wisdom, and the fruits from the collective efforts of various churches proved that every act of service matters.**

**涓涓之流, 积成江河 (Consistent efforts can accumulate over time to create something impactful).** Reflecting on our trip to Tanjong Pinang, the warmth and hospitality of Senggarang's residents were overwhelming. Their laughter, gratitude and simple joy taught us the beauty of connection and the richness of community. This trip transformed us, reminding us that true wealth is measured by the love we share.

Our journey to Bintan also brought our group closer. Each interaction revealed hidden talents and strengths. Some bridged language gaps, others led joyful games and some put together a skit about the Good Samaritan, complete with a script, props and art direction.

**We hope more people will join future trips. The bonds created and the lessons learned are invaluable. Tanjong Pinang, just a short ferry ride away, has left an indelible mark on our hearts. We look forward to sharing this journey with others, spreading the love and connection we experienced.**



## JOIN US:

To find out more on our upcoming mission trips, visit our website at:  
[www.cmc.org.sg/community-outreach](http://www.cmc.org.sg/community-outreach)



# Making Room for God to Move

BY LAURA LIM



*Each week, our Worship Ministry's role is pivotal in ushering the congregation into a space to encounter God. From prayerfully selecting the songs to dedicated practice and final rehearsals, the team strives to give their best each week as they serve God and help to cultivate an atmosphere for the Lord to meet with us. This year, there has been a palpable shift in how God has been moving in our midst during worship.*

*Worship & Music Committee Chairperson, Laura Lim, shares more about this shift and how the team has gone "Further" in the pursuit of His presence.*

In 2024, CMC embraced the theme of going "Further", and that has been tangible during our worship services. For the Worship Ministry, we have transitioned from merely executing weekly services to fostering a deeper, more meaningful worship experience. It's as if we moved from building a temple to being able to truly worship within it. This shift has not only enhanced our services but also revealed to each member the true purpose of their service.

## Unhurried Worship

A significant change has been the embrace of unhurried worship. Our worship leaders and teams have become more comfortable flowing with the Spirit, allowing for spontaneous, Spirit-led moments. This has been evident when pastors share a word of

knowledge or prayer during worship and our teams have learned to be both sensitive and adaptable. Through these fluid worship sets, we have also noticed a more engaged congregation with more hands raised and louder singing, reflecting a deeper connection during worship.

## His Presence, Our Priority

Presence over Production, Presence over Performance, Presence over Perfection. This was the phrase that Rev Dr Edwin Wong received from the Lord. Considering this important reminder, we prioritised the spiritual focus over physical preparation and technical skills. While we continued to host training sessions for the team to improve technical skills, these sessions have a greater aim to inspire our teams to progress beyond functionality to a spirit of excellence and spiritual sensitivity in our service. Our musicians and Audio-Visual team members have moved from simply playing instruments and operating the systems to worshipping while serving.

## Journeying Together

As we continue to grow in numbers, we have placed a greater emphasis on mentorship within the ministry. More mentors are now in place to support one another, fostering a community where relationships come in tandem with discipleship. This has cultivated an authentic environment where vulnerability is welcomed along with deeper ministry relationships as we serve and journey through life together.

## Looking Ahead to 2025: Going Greater

As we look forward to 2025, our focus shifts to go "Greater". This means placing God in His rightful high place and becoming more aware of His glory and greatness. As a team, we will seek to strive for daily consecration to God, allowing this personal devotion to flow into our corporate worship. We pray



for each team to experience encounters with God even during rehearsals.

Greater works require greater anointing, and as we pursue His anointing, we will encourage the congregation to do the same. We desire to see hearts touched by God during worship — lives changed, the lost saved, and people delivered from sin and sickness.



Whether through composing more songs that resonate with the congregation, contributing to missions and community work as a team, or committing to intentional prayerfulness, we look forward to 2025 with great expectation for a Spirit-led transformation – not only

for the Worship Ministry but for everyone in CMC. Together, we will witness the transformative power of worship in CMC and beyond.



**LAURA** has been serving in CMC worship ministry for 11 years, known for her energetic presence as a vocalist and worship leader (the one always jumping onstage). As a working mother of three and a lively extrovert, she thrives on a packed schedule. Her passion for worship has inspired her two younger daughters, who dream of joining her as worship leaders.



# Bible Boot Camp – Armour Up!

BY KYLIE TAN

This June holiday was so different from any other holiday as I attended the Bible Boot Camp – Armour Up organised by ChristKidz with my friends. I enjoyed the camp very much! Let me bring you through the journey.

The camp was held in La Salle House at St Patrick's School. On the first day, when everyone had settled down into our different groups, we started with a game of ice breaker. The teacher explained that to win, we needed to go around to find the right person. In this way, we'll get to know one another.

When everyone arrived, we started worship. Everyone was singing and having fun. In this camp, we learned about the full armour of God. We were introduced to the different pieces of armour that we can use to protect ourselves from the evil one. Ephesians 6:14-17 says "Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that

comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

We were taught and reminded that we have a God who is all powerful, all knowing and ever-present. He is also holy, faithful, eternal, merciful, graceful, loving, good and incomprehensible.

In the afternoon, we had some activities and fun games to play and bond. I remember that my team won and I was really overjoyed with the outcome. After tea break, we had craft time where we made the belt of truth. We pasted gemstones on the belt of truth that made it look real.

For the night session, there was a guest speaker, Mr Gerard. We had a lovely time with lots of activities. We started with a time of worship and I never experienced such an ambience before. It felt like we were



worshipping with thousands of people even though it was only us worshipping.

We were taught about forgiveness and about forgiving others even if you don't like them, because God forgave our sins. After that, we were encouraged to wash the feet of the guest speakers and teachers who represented people we were to seek forgiveness from.

On the second day, one of the teachers talked about how God gives us the full armour of God, so that we may be able to stand against evil schemes. Everyone listened attentively and memorised the verse of the day, Ephesians 6:11.

For craft, we made a full armour of God, which helped to reinforce what we had learned. After a delicious lunch, we had a telematch which was really fun but exhausting.

To wrap up the day, it was Uncle Gerard and his crew time. We were asked to be still to think deeply about what God was saying to us and why is God connecting with us. When I thought deeper, an image came to my mind and I saw a snow globe with one of my friends from my class. I thought that I should give a snow globe to that person, and that image popped out of my mind. I thought it wasn't an ordinary image and was an image given by God, so I drew that on a piece of paper. That was the first time I actually encountered God talking to me. I never had that feeling before. After the whole entire experience, I realised that God was always with me and I drew closer to God after this camp.

I truly learned a lot from this camp and I now know the full armour of God. A big thank you to all teachers and the organizing committee for their hard work to make this camp possible!



KYLIE is a 12 year old who loves singing and dancing. She is member of the Chinese Dance Club in school and enjoys watching K-pop dances in her free time. She has been attending ChristKidz since she was Primary 1.



# A Weekend of Renewal: YA Retreat 2024



**"This retreat belongs to You, and I leave it completely in Your hands."**

From an earthly perspective, it would have seemed like a disaster waiting. A short timeline, an extremely lean and inexperienced (myself included) team, inertia from the last run many years ago, and dates clashing with our local university exams. It felt like a terrible situation to kickstart planning the 2024 Young Adults Retreat. Yet, just as Gideon had his already outnumbered four-to-one army cut from 32,000 to 300, it was the perfect situation for God's glory to shine through. This was a firsthand experience that if God calls and we remain obedient, every obstacle (physical or otherwise) will be removed.

As the overall IC for the retreat, I had six months to form a team, for a 3D2N retreat in Johor Bahru, Malaysia. The decision to take it on didn't come naturally. I had just moved into a new department less than a year ago and was still proving myself to new colleagues and bosses. Recognising the uphill battle before me, there were two obvious choices. Try to make the best out of an unfavourable situation or do things differently by trusting Him completely. I often defaulted to the former. My training had always prepared us for the worst and making the best of a situation was the norm. The latter, however, meant recognising that I had absolutely no control. One could plan for contingencies after contingencies, but to what end? And at what cost? It was one thing to know that I could trust God, but it was a whole other struggle to prayerfully let go. Nonetheless, I did.



While I set out for a committee of 10, it wasn't easy to find people willing to commit on top of their busy schedules. With the hectic pace in Singapore, many felt that they could most certainly use a retreat, but planning one sounded counterintuitive to getting the rest we all desired. In the end, I had five young individuals who graciously stepped up – but this meant that each person had to take up a secondary role. While this seemed like a setback, I had an opportunity to watch a 21st-century "Gideon story" unfold.

God's plan and provision could not have been more evident throughout this entire journey up till the last camper had returned to Singapore safe and sound. There were so many instances where we saw God work, but here are some of the major pieces He moved for us.

1. Every committee member was a perfect fit for their roles. Some even had skills for things we didn't originally plan for (e.g. building websites, emceeing, etc.)
2. Despite having the retreat during the university exam period, signups met the minimum required number of participants.
3. We had a free upgrade to the ballroom, which required 120 participants even though we had 70.
4. We had four worship sessions and we could form exactly four full worship teams based on the participants.
5. Traffic from Singapore to Johor Bahru

was so smooth during the first day that the majority of our participants arrived hours earlier than expected.

6. On day one, a main power line to the hotel was cut and we were in complete darkness and without air conditioning. Things were somehow restored within 15 minutes.

7. Various participants offered to step up to help just days before and during the retreat – exactly during the times when we were in a bind.

8. No accidents happened during the entire retreat, even during transits. Everyone left and returned to Singapore safely.

9. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the retreat and God's presence was tangible throughout.

Despite our worries, concerns and other commitments, He made a way and many were incredibly blessed. After the entire retreat, someone asked what some of my defining moments were. Although the thought of "I'm never doing this again" popped up in my head one time too many, it was during that final day that I couldn't help but tear up seeing our young adults completely focused on Him.

**Kester Yeo**





For two years, there has been a hidden but deep yearning to draw away to be with the Lord; to sit at His feet and feast at His table, without agenda or hurry.

I decided to give the Lord my mornings. I had it all planned out – I would wake up early and I would use this time to seek the Lord. For months, nothing changed – my prayer life remained marked by an uneasy silence. I grew frustrated that God had hid His face from me.

One morning, half asleep and fully disheartened, I felt a gentle prompting in my heart. It said, “I am not your 7 a.m. God”. Immediately, I knew God was addressing the way I had chosen to box Him in by working out a quick-fix formula for how He would meet with me each day.

I began to seek the Lord in unexpected places,

including taking a leap of faith to attend YA Retreat with my 2-year-old daughter. I was not expecting anything from this weekend, fully prepared that my hands would be full from diffusing the meltdowns of my baby boss.

But there, in a blackout-prone hall in JB where my toddler was attempting handstands during the Holy Communion, there my Lord chose to meet me. In these unlikely circumstances, He lavished on me the love of God and reminded me that He was my rest. While I am very much still grappling through the darkness to Him, I pursue Him knowing that he has promised me fullness – “every step an arrival”. My testimony is that though the steps are small and sometimes taken slowly, each step closer to the Lord is a treasured arrival. I look forward to this walk home to eternity with my Lord.

**Samantha Koh**



This was my first time attending the YA Retreat, and I have been blessed in many ways. From hearing the Word shared by Rev Jeremy Yap to the amazing times of worshipping the Lord together, and also the heartfelt and enjoyable times of fellowship; it was truly a time of rest and refreshment for me.

Rev Jeremy shared on counterfeit gods (by Timothy Keller), and how power, approval, comfort and control could be forms of deep idols in our lives. This challenged me even as we broke into groups to share about what we struggled with. The need for approval from others in the workplace and in relationships resonated with me.

Through this retreat, I’ve also made many new friends as well as got to know several existing ones better. As I had only joined CMC in February this year, I didn’t know a lot of people.

The three days helped me to get to know more people beyond my Care Group. I’m really grateful for that.

I truly cherish the times of worship we spent together. Worship is a part of my life which is deeply personal to me. Several milestones in my life have been marked by times of worshipping the Lord. On the second night, Sarah Tan led Firm Foundation and the lyrics lingered in my heart. I felt the Lord restoring hope into my heart in this season. God has been faithful to me through the years, despite the many times I’ve left Him or turned against Him.

**“I won’t be going under (because) I’m not held by my own strength”.**

How comforting to know that God is our firm foundation, our strength whenever we are weak, our Defender and the One who vindicates us. He will never fail. We may be in the midst of a storm and chaos when things are far from “safe”, but when we build on Him, we know that we are not alone, and we will indeed make it through.

Thank you, everyone, for making YA Retreat 2024 happen, I am grateful!

**Elisha Lai**





# D'WELL BITES



- STARTING JANUARY 2025 -

**READ DEVOTIONS BASED ON OUR D'WELL BIBLE READING PLAN,  
WRITTEN BY CMC PASTORS, LEADERS AND MEMBERS!**

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