

# AG TIMES



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A Bi-monthly Publication of Assemblies of God, Singapore

[www.ag.org.sg](http://www.ag.org.sg)

Unveiling something new soon...



Our Leaders Share their Hearts – Pg 11



Relevance of the Church and  
Reaching the *NextGen* – Pg 14 & 15



God Used Me Beyond my Imagination – Pg 17

# The Assemblies of God (AG) of Singapore Celebrates our 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!

The AG of Singapore is turning 90 this year! We are thankful for how God has grown us as a denomination over the last 90 years and are excited about what is to come.

It is truly a significant time to commemorate our heritage, reaffirm our traditions, and redefine our Pentecostal identity and values to become relevant in our ministry for the next generation.

## Join In The Celebrations!

Our celebrations will center on three key foci, Upward, Inward and Outward.

### UPWARD FOCUS

#### Special Conference

All are welcome

The celebrations kick off with a conference in May. Join us to thank God for His faithfulness and receive a fresh word from the Lord as we move forward!

Date : **May 3 & 4**  
Time : 9am – 12.30pm  
Venue : Trinity@Paya Lebar

### INWARD FOCUS

#### 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner

Let's come together to remember how God has grown us as a movement and be empowered by the Holy Spirit to move to the future.

Date : **May 4**  
Time : 7pm  
Venue : Orchid Country Club

### OUTWARD FOCUS

#### Community Project

We hope to raise \$90,000 to provide financial assistance to 90 needy students from the four self-help groups, namely Chinese Development Assistance Council, Mendaki, Singapore Indian Development Association and Eurasian Association.

### Come and be challenged by these powerful speakers!



**Rev Alan Hewitt**  
led Hope Church in Newtown, Mid-Wales for 32 years before

handing over the baton in 2017. He has served for over 17 years on the National Leadership Team of the British AG and is currently its Chairman whilst also being Area Leader for AG Wales. A regular and popular speaker at Conferences, his ministry is particularly appreciated for its Biblical content and relevant life application. He is the author of 'The Gender Revolution', which is a call for the recognition of women in Church ministry and leadership.



**Rev Ong Sek Leang**  
is the Senior Pastor of Metro Tabernacle, a fast growing and dynamic

church in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and the General Superintendent of the AG of Malaysia. He travels extensively and ministers from a deep passion for the manifested presence of God and a powerful prophetic anointing for breakthrough. He is driven to release the church to live in intimacy and to raise a new generation of leaders that will flow in the power of the Spirit with a strategic mindset and a spirit of boldness to do great exploits for revival and ministry breakthrough.



**Rev J Don George**  
is the Pastor Emeritus of Calvary Church in Irving Texas, having served as

its Senior Pastor for 45 years before transitioning in 2018. He has been an Ordained Minister with the General Council of the AG, Springfield, Missouri, since 1960. A pastor and evangelist at heart, Rev George is a passionate speaker, travelling often for Evangelistic Outreach Crusades. He has preached in Europe, Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and South America. He holds the Doctor of Divinity degree from Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

On that night, Mdm Halimah Yacob, President of the Republic of Singapore will be presenting checks to the four self-help groups.

If you would like to give to the community, please email to [admin@ag.org.sg](mailto:admin@ag.org.sg) for details.

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Today, problems are complex, values are evolving, and the future is uncertain.

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At ACTS, we encourage collaborative learning so that our students learn to work together as one body of Christ. We train students to sharpen their critical thinking skills. We equip them to engage the world wherever they are.

The lecturers and classmates have enabled me to be a thinking spiritual leader.

Rev Lindsey Lui  
Senior Pastor  
Faith Assembly of God,  
Singapore  
2013 Alumna



A big thank you to ACTS College for sowing into the early years of my ministry growth.

Pastor Joe Ong  
Senior Pastor  
Leeward Community Church, Hawaii, USA  
1988 Alumnus



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# THEOLOGICAL TRAINING REDEFINED

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 Registration & lunch - 11:00am  
 Shotgun - 1:00pm

**Guest-of-Honour**  
**Mr. Amrin Amin**  
 Parliamentary Secretary  
 Ministry of Home Affairs  
 Ministry of Health

For more information, kindly contact 6793 7933  
 Luke Tan (luketan@teenchallenge.org.sg)  
 Philip Tong (philip@teenchallenge.org.sg)  
<https://www.teenchallenge.org.sg/>



For the past 4 decades, Teen Challenge (TC) has been reaching out to the marginalized, particularly to those struggling with substance abuse and alcohol addictions.

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beneficiaries



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Plan for 2019:  
Residential Centre  
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**IT'S NOW OR NEVER**

Come July 2018, Raffles Country Club closes to make way for the High Speed Rail and other transport-related uses.

Come join us as we bid farewell to this beautiful golf course and be a part of Singapore Golfing history.

# A Praise Report from ElimParis

## The Launch of Our First English Service

*The Lord led and guided ElimParis in the launch of their very first English service in January 2018. Rev John Lim shares their excitement.*

*Photo credit: ElimParis*

As we approached June 2017, the Holy Spirit began to challenge us to envisage a change in our way of functioning. During the past eight years, we have had our services in French and Mandarin. However, there came to be a stirring in my spirit to envision reaching out to English-speakers in Paris.

As we shared the vision of change with the leaders together, we began to pray and allow the spirit of God to help us formulate and shape the vision for ElimParis.

It was clear to us that a three-language session would not be the most achievable model for us. This change would entail starting a new service in Mandarin, and allowing the French service to develop into a bilingual French-English service. The challenge was that it will require twice as many people to run the services. e.g. worship team, Sunday school, ushering, etc.

We decided to allow the Lord to speak to all involved, and gave adequate time for the team to intercede together. We are thankful for the prayers of our home church Elim Singapore, as well as our friends back in Singapore. As we prayed together, in spite of the challenges posed, the decision slowly took shape in our hearts.

As we began to communicate and share the changes involved, we asked everyone to express their sentiments as well as their concerns. We wanted to hear from everybody and raise up any issues that needed to be addressed along the way. After which, we had a time of prayer together, committing what we had discussed to the Lord.



*Our leadership gathering to pray for direction*



*First service in English*

One thing that we had asked of the Lord, was that the decision be a unified one, in which ALL in the leadership team would be in agreement with.

It wasn't a walk in the park, and there were many things we needed to iron out both logistically, as well as among the different groups of people. We had to make sure that the transition was as smooth for everyone as possible.

After much seeking the Lord and praying together as a church, we finally had our first service in January 2018! The two services were separated after the partaking of the Holy Communion. Between the two services, we brought all our members together for a time of fellowship.

With God, all things are possible! Indeed, He has, once again, showed us that He is the mighty God who create things into being, and takes care of all our needs. *"We can make our plans, but the LORD determines our steps."* (Proverbs 16:9)

We would like to thank all our friends for their continued support for God's work in Paris. We are thankful for your contributions in any form toward the projects mentioned and most of all, the time of intercession for us. GOD BLESS YOU ALL!

Please continue to pray for our ministry here:

- 1) Unity and strength for the leaders of ElimParis. His provision and grace to be upon us.
- 2) Wisdom and guidance of God for His missionaries.
- 3) God to raise up more volunteers to serve Him.
- 4) For Rev John's ministry among the sick in the French hospital system.
- 5) For Pastor Rebecca's ministry among needy families in Ivry-sur-Seine.

For more information on ElimParis, visit <https://johnlimkc.wordpress.com>.



*Food, fun and fellowship after our service*



# 5-7

YEARS OLD

Ranger Kids is an exciting program for young children. They can experience fun and adventure here.



# 8-10

YEARS OLD

Discovery Rangers features an engaging system of learning through various outdoor and indoor activities.



# 11-14

YEARS OLD

Adventure Rangers gets youths participating in activities involving outdoor camps, arts, technology and sports.



# 15-17

YEARS OLD

Expedition Rangers mentors youths to develop self-reliance, leadership and a deeper appreciation of God.

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# CENTRAL POW-WOW CAMP-OUT

For Ages  
5-17

**AUGUST 9 - 11, 2018**

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Open to all children and youth from 5-17 years old.  
Save the date and more details will be rolling out!

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## TOGETHERNESS - AG COMMUNITY

# Praise Report from our Ministry in Indonesia

*By Evangelist Johnnie Tan*

*God is working mightily among His churches and people.*

We praise God for His healing hand upon the people we reached out to in Indonesia in January. Here are some of the testimonies:



*A brother (man in white) testifying how God healed him of cancer*

### Healing of prostate and lung cancer

A man in one of the churches we had visited had a tumor in the prostate and it had developed into Stage four cancer. Additionally, he had flakes in the lung and that, too, developed into cancer. He came to us for prayer. When he was on the floor, God did a miracle and healed him of prostate cancer and lung cancer. We want to give God all the glory for what He has done for our brother. God is really good!



*Teaching during the Inner Healing sessions*

### Conducted an inner healing seminar and service

We conducted three sessions on Inner Healing and the session was a fruitful one where many leaders were empowered. As the seminar and service came to a close, we opened up the altar for those who needed inner healing. We prayed for the people who came forward, and many were healed and set free at the altar.

*Photo credit: Evangelist Johnnie Tan*



*Our sister conceived a pair of twins after many years of childlessness*

### The Miracle of twin babies

A couple in a church we ministered to had been married for several years. They desired to have baby but the wife couldn't conceive. She came forward to be prayed for together with her husband. During the prayer, she felt that God had touched her and healed her reproductive system. Subsequently, she found out she was pregnant. It was a miracle!

When they went for her check up, the doctor found that she had conceived not one baby, but twins. The doctor couldn't believe this, so he consulted another doctor. The other doctor did the check again and found that the womb indeed had two babies. What was even more amazing was that before the confirmation by the doctors, God had already spoken to her husband about them having a pair of twins. God even gave the husband the names for their babies when he sought God.



*The congregation worshipping and welcoming the presence of the Lord*

### An open door God gave

God opened a new door to us when we were invited to minister at a church. We conducted two services and spent time praying for the sick at these services. There were many stroke patients who came forward for prayer. After the prayers, we encouraged the stroke patients to put their faith into action by doing some movement of the hands and legs. Many healings took place during that time.

There was a mother who stood in proxy for her son, who was in Canada. Her son had a problem with his left kidney. When she was being prayed over, she felt a warm sensation in her left kidney. God was doing His work in her son's life right there and then.

To God be all the glory!

# AG Training and Together in Prayer (2TiP)

By Sheryl Teo, Grace Assembly of God

*A time to encourage our ministers and leaders to persevere in their ministry.*

On March 1, 2018, the Assemblies of God (AG) ministers came together for the second 2TiP of the year in Trinity Christian Centre. We gathered not just as ministers, but more so as beloved children of God, seeking the face of our heavenly Father. It was an uplifting time of refreshment in the Lord.

Pastor Jason Tan from Zion Full Gospel Church led us in a powerful time of prayer. He drew from the story of Mary and Martha in the Bible and encouraged us to seek the presence of God in our walk with Him, our family, our ministry, and in AG Singapore. We also prayed for our priorities to be aligned with God's heart, and for a pioneering spirit to arise within, so that we will take on the new dreams that the Holy Spirit births within us.

Rev Robert Lum and Rev Alvin Ngo from Eternal Life AG spoke on the topic of 'Leading with Perseverance'. Rev Robert—or Pastor Bob, as he is affectionately known—has been in the same church for the past 50 years, helming the role of the Senior Pastor since 1992. Rev Alvin, in his 35 years in full-time ministry, has served in the overseas mission field as well as in two local churches. He is now in his 21<sup>st</sup> year of serving in Eternal Life AG.



(L-R) Rev Alvin Ngo and Rev Robert Lum

Acknowledging that every person has their own God-designed journey on planet earth, they exhorted us to each fulfill God's purpose in our generation. They shared openly from their wealth of experience and personal struggles, with a candid sense of humor that often sent waves of laughter across the room. Certainly, their sharing had inspired and encouraged us to persevere in our life journey and in serving God.



Supporting one another in our leadership journey with prayers

Photo credit: Francis Lau of Narrative Films and Eternal Life Assembly



Listening to the heartfelt sharing from one of our speakers, Rev Alvin Ngo

Rev Bob and Rev Alvin share their personal convictions:

## Leading with Perseverance

### Key points:

#### What keeps Rev Bob going?

- 1) God's calling (Jeremiah 1:5; Psalm 139:16)
  - Don't see what you do as a job, but a calling.
- 2) Living a balanced life
  - Every area of life has its place—family, church, friends, and self. God is in the center of them all.
  - Church is not more important than family. If family fails, we fail.
- 3) Doing what God has gifted me to do (1 Peter 4:10)
  - If you find that you are forcing yourself to do something you are not gifted to do, it could be a sign to move on. Ask the Lord.
- 4) Having ministry support (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10)
  - There should be no lone ranger. Get support.
  - Ways to get support: Have your spouse or family with you in ministry, know your team mates personally, and have friends both inside and outside of church.
- 5) Develop yourself
  - Keep growing.
  - Fill your spiritual and emotional tank.
  - Be authentic with others.
- 6) Expect hardship
  - Disappointment, rejection and betrayal can take place in ministry. It will hurt.
- 7) Strengthen yourself in the Lord (1 Samuel 30:6)
  - Build up your relationship with God, because He is our strength.

#### What keeps Rev Alvin going?

- 1) Plant your life where you serve
  - Don't move unless God moves you.
  - Don't allow critics to run your life.
- 2) Know what you are called to do
  - Try to focus and/or do less of other things.
- 3) Love what you do (Colossians 3:17)
  - Tasks become easier when you love what you do.
  - Take pride in what you do, and give it priority.
- 4) Keep on keeping on (1 Timothy 4:15; 2 Timothy 3:14)
  - Keep doing the things you are called to do.
  - Keep growing, keep learning. Read widely.
- 5) Serving God does not mean not having to deal with problems or difficulties
  - Stay focused on the important things, do not get distracted by momentary troubles.
  - We cannot run away from problems, we must run with them. Find ways to do so.
- 6) Stay healthy
  - A failing health can short circuit your ministry. You can only last as long as you are healthy.
  - Tips: Eat, exercise, and rest well. Exercising is as sacred as attending church. Try to plan your work around your holidays and breaks.

## GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

## Look Back, Look Down, Look Forward!



By Rev Dominic Yeo

Recently my daughter flew off to Melbourne for her ministry internship. As I released her to pursue God's plans for her life, I was amazed at how time has flown. But yet, God works through time. In fact, every now and then, it's good to **Look Back** to realize what God has done.

1928 may have been the year that Walt Disney created Mickey Mouse or even the year where penicillin, the antibiotic which saved millions of lives, was discovered. Yet, for our little red dot at the tip of the Malay Peninsula, it was a place that God led the Assemblies of God (AG) Missionaries to. They thought they were on a ship en route to Hong Kong, but the Holy Spirit had other plans: On April 1, 1928, Rev and Mrs Cecil M Jackson conducted an Easter service on the ship that docked on our shores and stayed as the Spirit led them.

Who are we as the AG? As a movement, we trace our roots back to 312 Azusa Street. Characterized by the Pentecostal message of baptism in the Holy Spirit and the Pentecostal experience of speaking in tongues, the outpouring of the Spirit in 1906 brought about a spiritual awakening, igniting a worldwide movement.

We are planted out of that outpouring, where people hungered for the Spirit and moved in the power and gifts of the Spirit. Missionaries, sent in that same

power, sowed and planted the AG churches here in Singapore.

**Look Down to see what God is doing**

Today we have more than 22,000 adherents who worship in our AG churches and many are still being added. This is, without a doubt, the grace and work of the Spirit.

AG Singapore is bigger and stronger because we have grown through our times of training as a movement. We are empowered to be a blessing through our *togetherness* having had the privilege to serve the larger AG body at the 8<sup>th</sup> triennial World AG Congress (WAGC) held in Singapore last year.

God is doing a powerful work in the midst of our churches and it is imperative that we recognize the work of the Holy Spirit. As God positions and aligns His church, we will get uncomfortable and even feel stretched. But the strengthening is in the stretching! We need to see His hand and allow the Spirit to stretch us. Only then, can we be transformed to effect a greater transformation in our communities and nation!

**Look Forward to where God is taking us**

All the stretching and strengthening is not just for the NOW. It's for the future generation. What we do in this generation will affect the next generation. If AG Singapore is to continue in strength and power, we need to arise in our Spirit life. We cannot be satisfied with just the trickles of the Spirit. God wants to pour out His Spirit upon His church!

Jesus never intended for the Church to stay at the Cross but to move into Pentecost to experience God's resurrection power, so that the Church will become all that Christ had purposed her to be! In the same way, God never intended for His Church to stay in today's victories. Rather we need to constantly be hungry for the Spirit's move in our lives and churches! We need to be filled to overflowing, and be living out the manifestations of the Spirit.

As we celebrate our 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary, I see a strong Church; a Church in power; a Church where signs, miracles and wonders will be a norm! But it takes all of us to look forward and move forward, so that the Church of tomorrow will be a result of the Church today.

**往后看、往下看、往前看！**

近期，我的女儿飞往墨尔本开始她的事工实习。我释放她去追逐循神给她的计划的同时，惊叹时间的飞逝。然而，神使用时间来完成祂的工作。实际上，我们应该时不时**往后看**以发觉神的作为。

在1928年，华特·迪士尼创作了米奇老鼠。这一年，救了上百万人性命的首个有效抗生素——盘尼西林——也被发现了。而那年，神带领了神召会的宣教士去到马来半岛的尾端的一个小红点上。他们以为自己只是乘船途经那里，继续前往香港，然而圣灵却有别的打算。1928年4月1日，塞西尔·杰克逊牧师和师母跟随圣灵的带领，在靠岸的船上举行了一个复活节聚会。

我们神召会是谁？神召会可以追溯到亚苏撒街312号的运动，其特色是重视圣灵洗和五旬节说方言的经历。1906年圣灵的倾倒带来了属灵的觉醒，引发了一个全球性的运动。

神召会就在这个运动之下诞生，是渴慕圣灵，在圣灵的大能和恩赐中运作的一群人。在圣灵的大能中被差派出去的宣教士便在新加坡撒种和种植了神召会教会。

**往后看，看看神在做什么。**

今天，新加坡教会有超过22,000信徒，并且人数还在增加。无可置疑，这是圣灵的恩典和工作。

新加坡神召会能够强大，原因在于作为一个运动，我们经历了锻炼和成长。我们的合一使我们有能力成为祝福，于去年的第八届三年一度的世界神召大会上服事广大的神召会肢体。

神在我们众教会中施行大能，我们必须认识圣灵的工作。神在引导教会与祂对齐的时候，我们会感到不舒服，甚至觉得被伸展到极限。然而，伸展带来的是成长和坚固！我们需要看到神的手，让圣灵来扩展我们。只有这样，我们才能被转化从而带来社区和国家更大的转化！

**向前看，看神要带领我们去哪里。**

所有的伸展和坚固不单是为了现在的需要。它也是为了后代。我们这一代所做的会影响下一代。如果新加坡神召会要继续有能力，我们就必须在灵里兴起来。我们不能满足于圣灵的些许洒落。神要将祂的灵倾倒祂的教会！

耶稣的意愿并不是让教会停留在十字架那里，而是要我们去到五旬节经历神复活的大能，使教会能活出基督给她的命定！同样的，神的意愿不是让祂的教会停留在今天的胜利中。我们要持续地渴慕圣灵在我们的生命和教会中运行！我们需要被圣灵满溢，活在圣灵的彰显中。

我们庆祝90周年之际，我看到一个强盛的教会；一个大能的教会；一个神迹奇事为日常现象的教会！然而，我们大家都必须向前看，向前跨步，让明日教会成为今日教会努力的成果！

## TRAINING – AG SINGAPORE 90<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

*As we celebrate our 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, AG Times features two series—“Our Leaders Share their Hearts” and “The Next 90 Years—The Role of the Church”.*

*In this second installment of “Our Leaders Share their Hearts”, we hear from our very own General Superintendent (GS), Rev Dominic Yeo and our longest serving GS, Rev Patrick Lau, as they share candidly on what had impacted them in the past and what they feel the future holds for the AG.*

### Our Leaders Share their Hearts

# An Interview with Our General Superintendent

*Rev Dominic Yeo talks about his journey in the last decade as our General Superintendent (GS) as well as his hopes for the future.*

## 1. It's almost 10 years! Please share with us your journey on becoming the GS serving the AG Singapore. What were your initial thoughts?

My journey started in 2009 when God's prophetic word for Trinity Christian Centre was to *Enter Into Abundant Living*. Despite a year of credit crunches and financial upheaval, God blessed many Trinitarians with a Goshen experience of favor and prosperity. As we entered into 2010, God revealed that we were *Blessed to be a Blessing*. That was not just a prophetic word for Trinity, as it actualized for me personally.

During a ministry trip in April 2010 to the US, I began to receive congratulatory messages about my appointment as the new GS. It filled me with a sense of fear and trembling. Though I felt inadequate about the road ahead, there was a sense of knowing that this role was an appointment by God, and a privilege for Trinity to be a blessing to our nation.

## 2. How have you seen AG Singapore grow in the last decade?

When I was appointed, I prayed and sought the Lord for His heart and mind for AG Singapore. The Lord revealed to me three distinctive expressions of the AG movement. The first being a Spirit of Togetherness, the second a Spirit of Transformation and the third a Spirit of Training.

Over the decade, we have grown in *Togetherness, Transformation and Training* as we came together at prayer meetings, evangelistic platforms, and conferences. Through the monthly Training and Together in Prayer (2TiP) meetings, AG Singapore ministers and missionaries are empowered to become more effective as leaders.

Through the bi-monthly AG Times, we constantly read of the testimonies of salvation and breakthroughs that happen in our churches and ministries. These

reports bear witness to the transformation that God is doing in our churches and nation.

## 3. What were some of the most memorable moments that impacted you the most in your years of service as our GS?

Leading a ministry can sometimes be a lonely journey without a strong comradeship. The hallmark of the AG, is the fellowship that facilitates encouragement and empowerment, so that none of us need to walk alone in ministry.

The EXCO has also been an amazing team, each of them strong leaders with deep convictions and commitment to serve and build the AG body. I've been encouraged to see how we, and the rest of the AG ministers, have made it a priority to come together, pray together, and journey in the ministry together through the monthly 2TiP meetings and our bi-annual Ministers' Institute cum Retreats.

In 2015, when Singapore celebrated her Jubilee year, we had the opportunity to release God's blessings over our nation as we came together at the Jubilee Day of Prayer. Beyond the physical size of the event as the largest multi-denominational event in our nation's history, what impacted me the most was how it was a glimpse of heaven on earth. The presence of God had descended upon the stadium as the church of Singapore came together in unity of heart to seek His face. May we hold fast to God's word and never allow the ancient landmarks of God to be removed from Singapore.

More recently, AG Singapore had the privilege and honor to organize the 8<sup>th</sup> triennial World Assemblies of God Congress (WAGC) in 2017. What a display of togetherness when more than 600 members from the AG Singapore churches gave of their time and talents to host over 80 nations, and more than 3,000 delegates!

## 4. What do you envision us to be like in the next 10 years as we prepare to step into our 100 years as a denomination?

As we approach our 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary in May, my prayer is that the spirit of togetherness will continue

to grow in the next ten years and beyond.

With the launch of the Next Gen Commission (NGC) fellowship this year, I look forward to seeing greater collaboration between churches, empowering our people to leave a strong spiritual legacy for our children, youth, and young adults.

I also envision the churches working together in the area of missions. By combining our time, talents, and treasures, the synergy of the AG community has the potential to be a powerful harvest-force both locally and overseas.

With the inception of the Alliance of Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches of Singapore (APCCS), I also envision the AG community rising to new levels of influence in our nation as we work in the larger fraternity of like-minded believers to transform the social fabric of our nation for His glory.

Training will remain a priority as we continue to strengthen and equip our ministers and laity. In the next decade, I see ACTS College becoming a premier college for Pentecostal-charismatic studies—a place where men and women can develop the strong foundations needed to be effective evangelists, disciples, and disciple-makers.

## 5. Any words to share with the AG churches in Singapore?

The AG was birthed out of a tremendous manifestation of the Holy Spirit. It flourishes today because of our obedience to the Spirit's leading.

As we prepare to celebrate our centennial, let us continue to hold fast to our tradition of being led and endued by the Spirit. We need to allow an overflow of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We cannot desensitize our spirit man from hearing and responding to the Holy Spirit. We cannot be ashamed to teach and live out our Pentecostal distinctions.

How will we forge forward in new victories and breakthroughs? It will be as Zechariah 4:6 says: *“Not by might, nor by power, but my spirit says the Lord.”*

## TRAINING – AG SINGAPORE 90<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

Our Leaders Share their Hearts

# An Interview with Our Longest-Serving General Superintendent

*Rev Patrick Lau has served as the General Superintendent (GS) for 31 years during 1977-2009. He shares his experiences with us.*



**1. 31 years as the GS of AG Singapore is amazing! Share with us your journey on becoming GS. What were your initial thoughts?**

Before I was elected to serve as GS, I served two years as a committee member and two years as Treasurer. I served under Rev Oh Beng Khee when he was the GS. I learned a lot from him during those four years.

As I was able to see the challenges of that position firsthand, I knew that it was an awesome responsibility. I had seen how difficult it was to manage the expectations of many different people at various levels in the AG. Furthermore, at that time, pastors were trained either from Malaysia, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Philippines or elsewhere. So, given their differing management styles and backgrounds,

I knew that ensuring that all of us worked together well wasn't going to be an easy task.

However I accepted knowing that God had placed me there for a purpose and He would give me grace. Thus, I took that step of faith to serve and ended up doing it for 31 years.

**2. What were some of the most memorable moments that impacted you the most in your years of service as the GS?**

I was in a committee with people of diverse ministries, management styles, and very experienced leaders who were older than me. It was challenging, but I did it through His strength. I always look forward to seeing young pastors emerge and receive their credentials. This was most rewarding. I was delighted to see Teen Challenge Singapore become a vibrant center for troubled youths. I was also glad to see the formation of the Bible Institute of Singapore and becoming a top Pentecostal School in Asia. Our first graduation was held at National Trade Union Hall at Shenton, and Rev Dr Robert Lim was the speaker.

Another highlight, during my term of service was seeing the growth in the youth department. I'm thankful for the formation of a very effective worship ministry consisting of many AG churches under Rev Daphne Lau, as well as our uniform group, the Royal Rangers, being well-accepted and serving in national events.

I'm grateful to see the AG being recognized by the main line denominations here in Singapore and working together in rallies and crusades. Personally, being able to sit in the National Council of Churches Executive Committee was also a privilege. I'm also blessed to witness the growth of about eight AG churches in Singapore to 48 when I stepped down.

We were given the honor of hosting the World Pentecostal Conference in Singapore at the Westin Hotel and the National Stadium, where I was the Host Chairman with a committee from different Pentecostal groups. These were most memorable! We also purchased two properties, the General Council Office and the Bible School premise. God has truly blessed us on this journey.

**3. This year we celebrate 90 years of AG history, how has AG Singapore grown over the different generations?**

I first came into the AG in 1965 as a new convert, and later discovered that all the few churches, Faith AG, Bethel AG, Grace AG, Elim AG and Trinity Christian Centre were pastored by missionaries.

Then, in the 1970s, I had the privilege of being among the early batch of local leaders to take over or pioneer churches. Serving alongside with me were Rev Johnny Lee, Rev Alfred Ang, Rev Lee Hung Kiang, Rev Lee Siang Lip, Rev Oh Beng Khee, Rev Robert Lim, Rev Francis Cheong, Rev John Ong and Rev Pang Ek Kwan. Then, in the 1980s, more locals began to rise up, took over churches and pioneered more works.

Within the 31-year period when I served, I've had the privilege of seeing about 40 churches being started. By God's grace, many local leaders have risen up to take over the mantle of our pioneering missionaries, and we have since grown to become one of the largest Christian denominations here.

**4. As we look back, what is one thing we did well as a denomination?**

We fully believed and practiced the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking in tongues. We led our people into real worship—not just singing, but worship as a lifestyle. We were and still are passionate in personal evangelism and missions. We believed in our youths, identified them, entrusted them and raised them to carry on the work that God has meant for us as the AG Singapore.

**5. Any words to share with the AG churches in Singapore?**

We are a Pentecostal Movement. It has been the Holy Spirit that propelled us to evangelism and powerful worship. Let us pray that we will continue to allow the Holy Spirit to move in our lives, in our churches, in reaching the lost and in our worship.



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*"...allow his vulnerability to speak to your heart and cause your spirit to receive encouragement for your own life and ministry."*

Rev Dr Naomi Dowdy

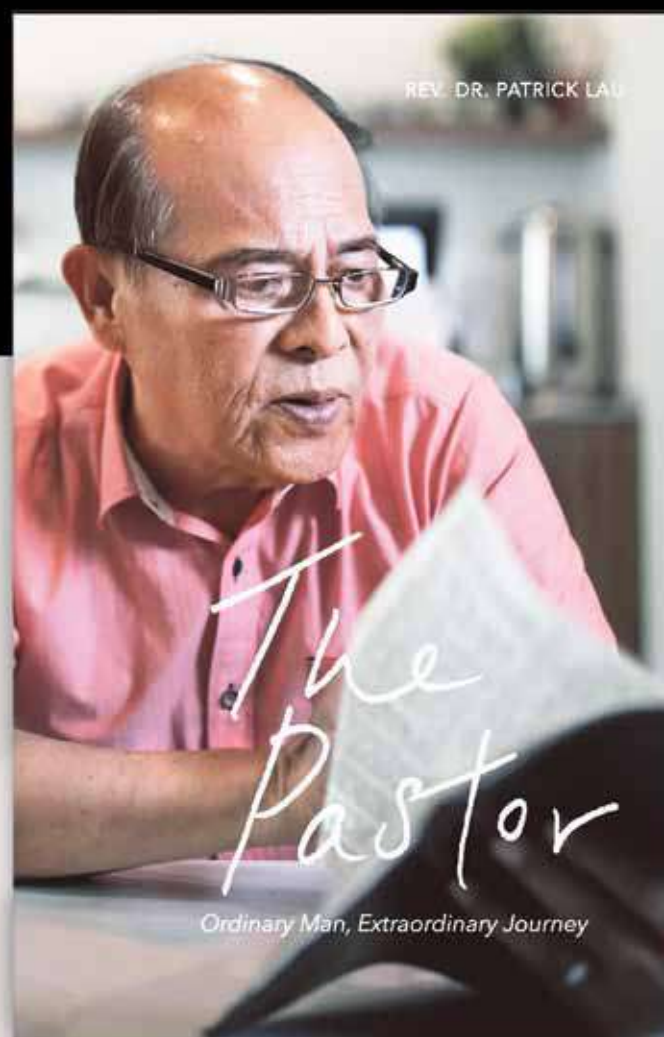
In 'The Pastor—Ordinary Man, Extraordinary Journey', Pastor Lau covers the period of time from when he said "Yes!" to full-time ministry on December 31, 1966 until 2017.

He shares the experiences of victories, blessings, failures, pains, struggles, miracles, divine provisions and supernatural encounters.

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## TRAINING – AG SINGAPORE 90<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

*The Assemblies of God (AG) has a strong heritage of spiritual hunger. The pioneering Pentecostals were hungry for authentic Christianity and sought the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The revivals at Azusa Street catapulted Pentecostalism and this led to the establishment of the AG in Arkansas, USA. It wasn't long before that movement reached our shores in Singapore in 1928. This year, the AG Singapore celebrates its 90th anniversary! We stand on the shoulders of great pioneers who desired nothing short of authentic Christianity. And while the world we live in today has evolved much technologically and socially, the God we worship promises to be the same throughout eternity. Thus, it is timely for us to seriously consider what our role is in our modern world. For AG Singapore to continue forging ahead, stronger than before, we need to be aware of the modern-day challenges and recognize the unchanging principles that God has for us to guard and reinforce.*

*In this second installment of the series on 'The Next 90 Years—The Role of the Church', we explore the topics: "The Church Being Relevant in the 21st Century" and "Five Effective Ways the Church could Reach Out to the 'NextGen'".*

### The Next 90 Years—The Role of the Church

# The Church Being Relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

By David Lim, ACTS College

*How can we, as a Church, which has existed for 2,000 years, still be relevant in this fast-changing world? David Lim discusses on this topic.*

To be '*relevant*', according to the Oxford English Dictionary, means to be "appropriate to the current time, period, or circumstances; of contemporary interest." For the Church, which has existed for close to two thousand years, the ability to remain relevant across centuries seems apparent.

Yet one of the challenges facing the Church today is precisely how she needs to keep up with a fast-changing world that is getting increasingly complicated, or risk being misunderstood or disregarded as the world moves on. But amidst "keeping up", how can the Church guard against excesses or compromise? How can the Church wade through the complexities of modern life, and speak intelligibly as God's prophetic voice to the world? The relationship between the Church and the world can be expounded from Jesus' prayer recorded in John 17. Through a simple study of three prepositions used in this passage, we can learn three principles to guide our efforts in staying relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

#### The Church is found 'IN' the world

In verse 11, Jesus states that He will no longer be in the world, but the Church is "*in* the world." The preposition here is '*en*', which usually denotes to be found in a fixed position, either with respect to time, space or state. This means in contrast to Jesus being away from the world, the Church is to continue be found in it. This is mentioned again four verses later when Jesus clarified that He is not asking the Father to take them out of the world.

Although this literally means the Church is to remain physically on earth, it can also mean figuratively that the Church is to be found among the world and should not seek to be isolated away from it. This implies the Church needs to be relevant and engage her neighbors meaningfully, and consequently should not be socially detached from the world.

#### The Church is not 'OF' the world

As to why the world is often hostile against the

Church, Jesus explains that this is because the Church is "not of the world". (verse 14) The preposition here is '*ek*', which means "out from" or "of", here used in the sense of origin. In the present context, this means that the Church did not have its origin from the world, and thus does not belong to it, nor share in its nature or destiny.

In other words, it is in our nature as people set apart to God that we are to be distinct from the world because we take on the nature of Christ in us. This means that in our effort to be relevant to the world, we are not to simply mirror their practices, nor compromise our values, convictions and beliefs. In the same way, Romans 12:2 exhorts us not to "*be conformed to this world*", while 1 John 2:15 instructs us not to "*love the world or the things in the world*".

#### The Church is sent 'INTO' the world

The first two prepositions studied gave rise to the very popular saying that the Church is to be "*in the world, but not of the world*", i.e. the Church needs to be relevant but not at the expense of compromising our identity. However, this is incomplete, for in verse 18, a third preposition is used to describe how the Church is to be related to the world. Here Jesus says that He is sending the Church "*into*" the world just as He was sent into the world by the Father. The preposition here is '*eis*', which typically denotes the entrance into from without, either literally or metaphorically.

This signifies that the Church, though set apart and separated from the world, is nonetheless sent into it, and this is the crux of the matter. Being relevant to the world is not about trying to blend in, nor is it about seeking to be popular. At the core, being relevant is about being missional. Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:22-23 summarises this well: "*I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.*"

#### Example of Joseph and Daniel

Throughout the Bible, there were many individuals who lived their lives in ways that were both relevant and impactful, but two surely stand out as the most illuminating in this regard: Joseph in Egypt and Daniel in Babylon.

Both found themselves in a world that was hostile to their faith, though not of their own choosing. They did not withdraw from the world, but instead meaningfully adapted to them, including having local names and practicing local customs.

However, their adaption to their respective cultures were not without limits, for both did not compromise in their worship of God, and both were known to be men of exemplary character. While they were in the world and adapted to be relevant to their contemporaries, they maintained that they were not of the world, and refused to be fully identified with it.

Finally, they understood that while they did not choose to be away from home, God was eventually sovereign and their presence in a hostile world must have been a result of God's providence and for the sake of God's purposes. They did not just find themselves helplessly in the world; they recognized that they had been intentionally sent into it. This gave purpose to the engagement of their respective cultures and provided boundaries in their effort to be relevant.

#### In Conclusion

Being in the world, we need to be relevant enough to be understood; Yet being not of this world, we need to be distinct enough to be differentiated; Finally, being sent into the world gives us the right motivation to be relevant and at the same time provides boundaries for it.



*David Lim is currently the Academic Dean at ACTS College. He has been actively teaching for close to ten years and teaches extensively both in Chinese and in English, and both at his home church, as well as outside of it. He holds a Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) from NUS, and has worked as a Mechanical Engineer and as a polytechnic Academic Staff prior to joining his church staff team. He graduated from ACTS College with his Master of Divinity in 2012, and is presently studying for his PhD (in Biblical Studies) with Asia Graduate School of Theology (AGST) Alliance. It is his desire to help believers understand God's message and encounter God's presence through His Word. He is married to a wonderful wife, and has three boys and a girl.*

†  
*The Next 90 Years—The Role of the Church*

# Reaching the 'NextGen'

*By Ps Joey Asher Tan, Grace Assembly of God*

*Reaching out to the 'NextGen' is a mission which has been in the hearts of many church leaders, parents and educators. Ps Joey Tan shares his insights and heart.*

"It takes a village to raise a child."

Do we realize that the "village" also includes the Church? Do teenagers and young adults remember that they are still a "child" to their parents? Who else is in this village? When does this child become an adult? Does the Church even know what it takes to raise a child?

It would be difficult to find a church that is not desperate to reach the next generation, or 'NextGen' as they are commonly known these days. In an endeavor to connect with young people, some churches have tried to be 'hipster' (by following the latest fads) and even mimic influential churches or Christian movements from the West; more worryingly so, some have even implemented worldly strategies and methods to market church and religion to xennials, millennials and post-millennials.

How is that going for them? And if you are in such a church, how is that going for you?

Does designing a cool website or employing a trendy youth pastor really work? Is serving Chai Latte in a cafe outside your service hall or using EDM (go google it!) in your worship session really effective? These are just a tip of the supposedly effective NextGen outreach ice-berg.

Come on, church. We can do better than that!

There is some value in such methods, but I am convinced that these would just provide temporary benefits. In the long-term, it will create a new set of challenges. Perhaps **we should only use what is relevant in our culture to impart what is timeless in our Christian faith.** Let us not lose sight of eternity, biblical literacy, and ultimately, life transformation.

It is far wiser to prepare the next generation now so that we do not scramble to repair them later. As such, I would like to suggest five timeless ways to shape this generation that is caught in a cultural kaleidoscope that they have created.

## #1 Connect the NextGen inter-generationally

Let us make a concerted effort to get godly and mature adults to host youth and young adult cell groups. It does not matter if these adults are single, married or have children. Any adult who has finished studying

and started working immediately adds a different and often fresh perspective to those younger than they are. If you are that adult, do not fret about what to say, what advice to give or if what you are saying is beneficial, or not. Your job is not to be a sage but to be a friend. Your priority is to befriend the young people you are hosting; let the relationship-building happen organically, and the deepening of friendship with individuals unfold naturally.

I have seen the benefits of this unique bond blossom in my church and I would love for you to experience this as well in yours. Often times, these adults would actually offer the same advice as you and I, but somehow young people are more receptive when they hear it from another source besides their parents or pastors.

## #2 Provide a stable and familiar environment for the NextGen

There are several transitional years for someone in the NextGen: at seven (from pre-school to primary school), 13 (primary to secondary school), and 17 years old (secondary school to tertiary education), along with the first year of National Service and University, as well as a young adult's first year in the workforce. I believe the most crucial years are at 13 and 17 years old because they might be too old for regular parental supervision, but too young to make life-changing decisions wisely.

Therefore, the church can alleviate some of these transitional stresses by providing a safe and familiar environment as a base for the young people to navigate through these life-stage changes. By keeping them in the same ministry during transition (for example, the age ranges for the pre-teens and youth ministries in my church are from 10 to 14 and 15 to 19 years old respectively), they are returning to a similar milieu every weekend; hanging out with the same people, learning from the same pulpit, and going through the same program anchors them in much needed stability, as they experience a sea of changes in their lives outside the church.

## #3 Remember that pastoring the NextGen is just as crucial as preaching to them

I might get slagged off for this but I honestly think that the young adult cry for expository preaching is overrated. Please do not read what I did not write. Expository preaching is absolutely necessary for the edification for our faith and the transformation of our lives, but the young adults' supposed desire for it is overstated; it is almost as if it is a trendy thing for a young person coming of age to declare that he or she wants expository preaching. Here is the reality—if you ask five young adults for their understanding of what "expository preaching" is, you will get five different definitions. As such, it is not far-fetched to assert that the average young adult

perhaps has no idea what he or she wants from the church. Maybe the sermon is not "deep enough" for the young adult because his or her walk with God is not deep enough.

Therefore, what I think young adults really need is solid shepherding—parents, adults, pastors and leaders who would disciple them properly and challenge their convictions, words, and actions whenever the occasion calls for it. Before they can truly appreciate expository preaching, they need to be recipients of solid pastoring first. After all, what is the point of learning another biblical truth when they have not applied the previous one? It is not truth that changes lives, but the truth applied that does.

## #4 Encourage the NextGen to be engaged in multiple mentoring relationships

I have the privilege of mentoring two groups of young men—a group of six in their late twenties and a group of seven in their early twenties. I have been journeying with the older group since they were in National Service and some of these are planning for marriage soon. What I have observed is that in different seasons of their lives, they need different types of mentors. And I have always pointed them to other adult mentors whom I feel can enrich their young adulthood.

To those who are actively mentoring the next generation, may I lovingly suggest that you simply cannot mentor them in every arena of life. That is the reality—either because you cannot be available enough, do not have experience in that area, or are too far away from their current season (that your advice may seem jaded or irrelevant). And for those who are hoping to find a mentor (or another one), may I lovingly encourage you to ask God to provide, press on in your search, and be open when he or she appears. There is no perfect mentor but with many mentors, there is a perfect mentoring experience.

## #5 Inspire the NextGen by issuing a big challenge far greater than they are

Globalisation results in two realities—being instantly connected to what happens on the other side of the globe (helped by the Internet), and people coming into our nation from all over the world. I have also observed that the NextGen is more inclined to social justice than the generations before them. This combination of factors means that we are now in an incredible season with an incredible opportunity to participate in global, local and even 'glocal' missions (reaching foreigners in our home country). However, we who live in Singapore have become risk-adverse and comfort-seeking. This has impacted the way we raise our own children as well as our spiritual children. Sometimes we end up preparing the path for those in the NextGen instead of preparing them for the path.

*Continued on pg 19...*

## TOGETHERNESS - AG CHURCHES

# You are BE(LOVED)—A Valentine's Event

By Saw Sing Yee, Trinity Christian Centre

*A powerful illustrated sermon of God's love that led many to salvation.*

The weekend of February 10-11 saw 1,138 youths (including 112 first-time visitors) coming for Trinity Christian Centre's youth ministry, IGNYTE's Valentine's Event, *BE(LOVED)*. Excitement coursed through the air as IGNYTErs waited for the Chapel doors to open, ready for their family and friends to encounter God.

Laughter filled the air as our emcees, Sister Janis Teo and Brother Benjamin Voon, broke the ice with an exciting game that tested our reflexes and got us out of our comfort zones.



*The story unfolds*

As the drama unfolded, the audience directed the steps of the main character, James, by participating in an Instagram poll. Should he cheer his love interest, Amanda, up? Where should he take her out for a date? Should he confess his feelings to her?

Beneath the surface of puppy love was something much deeper as the audience followed James through family struggles and self-esteem issues. In the end, James finds himself betrayed by his best friend, his affections spurned by Amanda, and reeling from a huge fight with his family. Defeated and alone, James asked a question that is in the heart of many youths:

*"Is it too much to ask to be loved?"*

This question hung in the air as Pastor David Sashi started sharing. "We all have a choice in who we want to love and who we allow to love us. In spite of our sin, God still loves us simply because we are His beloved."



*The IGNYTE ministry's leaders after the performance*

We thank God for this powerful revelation of His love, enabling 34 people to make decisions to step into His love and follow Christ. Our prayer is that every youth would choose to come back to their first love and rest in His faithful love for them!

*"Being involved in Be(Loved) has been a humbling yet rewarding experience. I praise God for my eight classmates who came. This is the most number of people I had ever invited! Seeing how God used me to sow seeds into their lives reminded me of how good and awesome our God is!"*

— **Abigail Leong**, Zone 3, cast member

*"I could relate to James' character because I went through a similar situation. I didn't know why I had to face all these challenges, but I still chose to trust in God. Through Be(Loved), God reminded me of that time and how He was with me, showing His perfect and unfailing love for me even in ways*

*I never expected. I am assured that He would be with me through all that would come."*

— **Timothy Sng**, Zone 2

*"Be(Loved) reminded me of a verse that I had read eight weeks ago on a sleepless night—Mark 5:34. I felt comforted knowing that God's love was with me and that God remembered me. God's love is perfect and unconditional. Even at times when I felt unworthy, He reminds me that He will always love me. His love gives me strength when I am weak and peace when I am troubled."*

— **Genevieve Teh**, Zone 1

*"I was prompted to invite my friend to Be(Loved), even though I only occasionally saw him on the bus. When he responded to the altar call to accept Jesus, I was overjoyed! I believe that it was because he felt the love of God that he responded. Praise God!"*

— **Neo Yi En**, Zone 3



*Youths responding to the message of love*

# God Used Me Beyond my Imagination

By Elisha Tan, Moriah Assembly of God

*God gifted Elisha with an ability to pick up instruments fast. He shares his experience.*

When I was in Primary 2, I chose the choir to be my Co-curricular Activity (CCA). But when I was in Primary 3, I was asked to leave the choir due to not being able to sing on the right pitch. I felt very despondent.

During this time, I prayed to God and He opened another door for me. During the third quarter of the year, I got shortlisted to join the band. But band practices were, for the juniors, on Tuesdays. I prayed hard to God again that my parents will allow me to go since it's a different day with my sister's. I'm thankful that the Lord heard my prayer.

On my first few practices, I had some setbacks. One of the things that they made us do was to blow into a plastic mouthpiece. But my mouth was too big to fit into the small mouthpiece. To solve that problem, the teachers allocated me to play the euphonium instead. The euphonium is a brass instrument that is rather big and heavy.

Shortly after, due to my size, they transferred me over to play the tuba. Delighted to learn new things, I took up the tuba without any complaint. Although the tuba is way bigger and heavier, I always looked forward to band practices. I progressed quickly and



*Elisha, God's gifted!*

soon was promoted to the main band. I started to struggle and was terribly worried as the band was preparing for an upcoming examination known as the London College Exam as well as participating in the national competition called the Singapore Youth Festival (SYF). Then again, thanks to God, He knew about my struggle and I was transferred to the percussion section.

I truly enjoyed my time being a percussionist and I mastered it very fast. Much faster than any other instruments thus far. In early Primary 5, the teacher noticed my talent in picking up new instruments fast and wanted to train and expose me to other instruments. So, the teacher introduced me to the

clarinet. Keen to learn more, I accepted the offer and started to pick up the ropes. Thanks to God, I soon fitted in with the other clarinetists and we got along quite well. The SYF was held every alternate year, so our band started preparing for it a year before. Due to the lack of percussionists, the teachers had to put me back in the percussion section.

To others, I may have been seen as a good-for-nothing, being thrown anywhere there was a need. However, through all this, I had learned that it is all really a matter of perspective. I can choose to feel sorry for myself or even get frustrated by my situation, or I can see what God sees.

In a way, God has given me the gift to pick up all kinds of instruments and quite quickly. As such, I will do my best to make use of and multiply this gift. No matter which instruments I will be tasked to play, I will play it wholeheartedly.

Proverbs 3:5-6 says: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight." Indeed, I've learned that we may not always understand the situations in our lives, and it may even look haphazard and bad to other people, but shift your perspective and focus on God's leading, and "know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28)



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## TRANSFORMATION

# From Death to Life

By Bryant Toh, Trinity Christian Centre

*Smoking. Substance abuse. Self-harm. Attempted suicide. A criminal record. At the age of 12, that was the story of Bryant Toh's life.*

People in my family weren't Christians. At five, I watched my drunken father abuse my family members. I was six when I got caned and beaten till my tiny body bruised and bled. That incident scarred me. My perspective of a father changed from a loving parent to one who abuses, lies, and cheats.

When I was eight, my parents divorced, and my childhood dissipated. I was broken and alone. My mother was stressed out so I kept it all inside. I slipped into depression and started self-harming and having suicidal thoughts, even cutting myself in front of my class.

When I was nine, I closed my heart to everyone. I figured that if I didn't allow anyone in, there would be no chance for them to hurt me. I had no friends, suffered from depression and had dark thoughts every single day. That year, my mother's friend brought me to church. I recited the sinner's prayer without fully understanding its meaning. Despite "becoming a Christian", my life was still the same—hopeless and alone.

By 12, I had started smoking and abusing substances. I had also landed a juvenile criminal record and attempted suicide. At 13, I landed a second juvenile criminal record. Every day was nothing but pain, rejection, loneliness and tears. Jumping off a building was my wish. I hated people and God. To me, God was just a gimmick.

That year, my mother signed me up for IGNYTE Camp without my consent. She had been attending Trinity regularly after the divorce and thought that the youth camp would do me some good. I was furious with her but went only because she insisted on it. What she didn't know was that I planned to commit suicide right after camp was over.

I was so adamant to hate camp but on the third night, something unexplainable happened. "God, You know I hate You and I have no idea if You are real," I said in my heart, "But right now, I am asking You this: if You are real, show Yourself to me."

That night, Pastor Ong Sek Leang laid hands on me for prayer. The power of the Holy Spirit knocked me over. When I awoke, I knew that I just had a personal encounter with God.

*"Bryant, stop doubting and start believing."*



*Bryant declaring God's faithfulness during Watchnight Service 2017*

When God said those words, I knew that He had heard my heart's cry. He was there to show me that He was undeniably real.

I went home with a new perspective of God.

Admittedly, a lifetime of bad habits doesn't reverse overnight. I pressed on because my heart had experienced God's awesomeness and power. Over the next few years, I continued to open my heart to God, allowing Him to change me from the inside-out.

I am so grateful that the pastors and leaders of IGNYTE were always there to guide me along. They prayed with and for me. They challenged me to grow and step up to serve others. When they saw issues, they brought them up in love. Through their encouragement and patience, I changed from being prideful to having a teachable spirit—to become more and more like Christ. Over time, the different issues in my life were broken.

Today, I'm freed and loved. I no longer struggle with suicidal thoughts, hatred, depression, inadequacy,

self-harm and fear. I'm also cleared of my criminal records. I'm serving in worship ministry and even leading a carecell!

God's sanctifying grace has restored me. He has forgiven me. He has called me His child. That alone defines me. Only the work that Jesus Christ has done for me on the cross defines me, not my past, mistakes or even what I have done for Jesus.

Romans 8:38-39 says nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God that is Christ Jesus our Lord." Indeed, we can never be separated from God's amazing love.

As Christ forgave me, I have found the strength to forgive my father.

*Papa, if you are reading this, know that I forgive and love you. God didn't make a mistake when He chose you as my father. I pray you will find God and experience His goodness too. Thank you for being my Papa.*

# From Junkie to the Gym

By Ermin Woon, Teen Challenge Singapore

*God can lead you out of any challenge—even gambling and drug addiction.*

I came from a challenging family background. My mother was the sole breadwinner when my father was jobless. When I was 10 years old, I lost my one and only sister to an unexpected illness.

I hardly talked to my father. And if that ever happened, it was because I was drunk. Being the only child and with a working mom, most of my time was spent with friends in the neighborhood. Eventually I mixed with the wrong crowd and was introduced to drugs.

I was already a junkie at age 16. All I cared about was “getting high”. Without a source of income to sustain my drug habit, I resorted to betting on soccer. The highest stake I had ever placed was \$20,000. This was a really big sum of money for a 17-year-old youth. By then, I was also a gambling addict.

Occasional winnings gave me a false sense of security. Thinking that this was an easy way to make money, there was zero motivation for work. When there was no money to spend, I resorted to borrowing from illegal moneylenders. And whenever I couldn't repay my debts, my family bailed me out.

I had no sense of right or wrong when I was under the influence of drugs. I became reckless in my behavior and often lost control. Over time, I began

to feel dissatisfied with life, and even the winnings from gambling no longer brought me joy. One day, the family decided that enough was enough and moved away without notice. All this took place while I was still serving my National Service (NS).

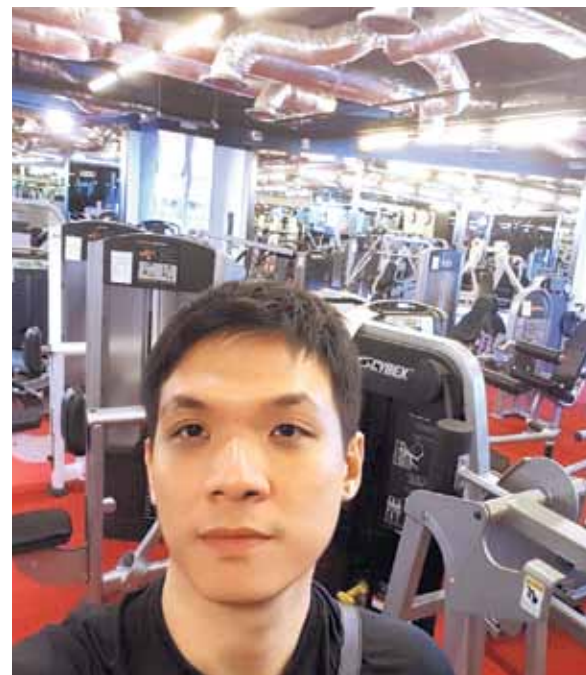
Naturally things went from bad to worse. I approached a friend for help and was introduced to pushing drugs. Unfortunately, my friend was caught and charged with drug-trafficking. For the first time, I realized that all I did was wrong and futile.

I completed my NS and was constantly job-hopping from one to another until I was 28. Under the influence of drugs, I committed theft and cheating, and was sentenced to 15 months imprisonment. Upon release, I returned to my old ways.

One day, while driving in Malaysia and under the influence of a banned substance, I met with a car accident which killed my friend. I served prison time in Malaysia and decided to change my way of life. I was deported immediately after release.

I was 30 years old when I decided to mend my ways. A friend recommended Teen Challenge (TC) to me saying, “Now, only a Halfway House can help you.” In 2013, I admitted myself into TC DARE Centre. Through the TC program, I overcame my dependency on drugs and discovered my passion in fitness.

With a positive mental attitude and support, I enrolled in a course to become a certified personal trainer. Though this course, I realized that fitness



*Ermin in his favorite place, the gym*

could help in recovering from drugs, as exercises help to reduce stress and improve the physical health. I appreciated how physical fitness can be used as a valuable stepping-stone to bring about a change in a person's lifestyle.

God has truly transformed my life! I've undergone many trials along this path of transformation and have made some bad decisions, but I've definitely learned my lesson. I will not give up and will continue walking with God in confidence. With God, all things are possible!

...Continued from pg 15

Therefore, to accelerate a consciousness of the urgent evangelization of the world, I am a strong proponent of conventional missions, where we head overseas to participate in the redemptive work of God among unreached people groups. Nothing fast-tracks spiritual growth and awareness in the way missions does. After all, nothing short of a global mission is worthy of a global God. On average, my colleagues and I take at least one or two *NextGen* teams out every year. The post-trip effect of participating in our missional God's heart for the world (That is, the “missions bug”) is tangibly felt and even contagious upon the *NextGen* communities. And instead of reinventing the wheel, I am also actively looking out for sustainable ways to partner with like-minded individuals who are already active in the local scene and sending young people their way to aid their cause. There is nothing more energizing than seeing ground-up initiatives because it maximizes the *NextGen*'s entrepreneurial spirit.

And so, whether you're a children's pastor, a youth minister, or a young adult leader, I want to encourage you from 1 Chronicles 12:32; Firstly, to understand the times, and secondly, to know what to do next. Trends will pass but the truth found in the Word will last forever. Let us not just myopically reach the *NextGen* in this period (and lose them later) but also prepare them to thrive in the church and the world in the future. May the Lord give you and me wisdom to win the *NextGen* for His glory!

*Ps Joey Asher Tan is the assistant head of the next generation ministry in Grace AG, and the pastor-in-charge of the youth and children's ministries. He also serves as the Next Generation Commission coordinator in AG Singapore. Joey is passionate about preaching, desires to relate authentically with the young adults he mentors, and firmly believes in what God can do through young people. He is married to Huiyi and has two young children, Eden and Judah.*



## TRANSFORMATION

# God Watches Over Our Baby

*By Eden and Edmund Chau, Bethel Assembly of God*

*God works His miracles again and again.*

Edmund and I were married for nine years. A year before Emmanuelle was conceived, God gave me an impression, that in future I will name my child Emmanuel. This was about July 2015. I told Him, "You must be kidding, I am not even pregnant now!" But I believed Him and kept praying for this name for a year.

In July 2016, I was pregnant and couldn't believe my eyes! She turned out to be a girl and we named her Emmanuelle. However, my water bag broke when I was almost into my third trimester. And gave birth to her a week later, on the Christmas Eve of 2016. She came 13 weeks premature weighing 982g and spent her first four months in the hospital.

Although there were a lot of uncertainties and fear, God is good and faithful. We prayed and upheld her in God's hands because she belonged to Him. He saw her through all the obstacles in NICU and eventually, she was discharged home with a feeding tube and without major health issues. God is good, not only did He prepare us mentally, He also blessed us financially. There were many hand-me-down items for the baby, so we hardly had to spend much because Mummy was on no pay leave and had no income. The total medical bill for the four months' hospital stay chalked up to \$192,000! After deducting the government subsidies, we only needed to pay \$3,000 from our Medisave account and didn't need to fork out a single cent of cash! Praise God!



*Second day after delivery*

When she was in hospital, she was diagnosed with Chronic Lungs Disease (CLD), Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) and Patent Ductus Arteriosus (PDA), which were related to her early birth. In simple words, her lungs, eyes and heart were



*Chinese new Year celebration as a family*

affected. Each time we went for a doctor's review, her breathing oxygen rate would always be 100%, which indicated that her lungs were well. As of the last eye doctor visit, she no longer has ROP—the eye disease that may have caused blindness. And she has been discharged from the Cardiac Centre, because her heart is perfectly well. Developmentally, she's also good. She's already trying to stand and crawling around the house.

We tried to wean her off the feeding tube because we wanted her to eat and drink like other normal children. She has very sensitive skin and the tape caused a lot of skin rash and irritation. However, Emmanuelle refused to be orally fed. She rejected to be breast-fed, rejected the bottle and also the spoon. The earlier days of trying to feed her were horrible. We literally fought each other, leaving one crying and the other frustrated. The doctor advised to continue feeding her with the tube in order not to compromise her growth. Nine months in, it was still extremely difficult to feed her and chances to have her off the feeding tube by her one year birthday, at the end of the year, looked bleak.

Then we decided to remove her tube and let her feel hungry. Logically, if you were feeling full all the time,

how would you be motivated to eat? This could have been risky and cause dehydration if she was not well-hydrated during the process. By God's grace, we removed her tube a month later and saw her gradually increase her feeds.

Emmanuelle celebrated her first birthday last year. We want to give thanks to God for blessing her in every way. All glory be to God!

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