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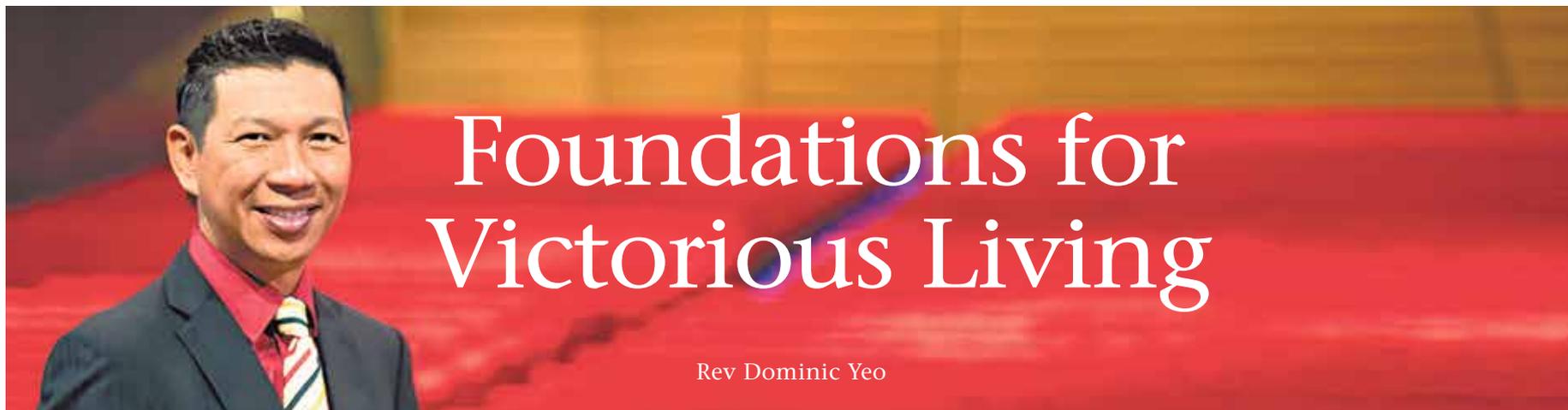
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# Foundations for Victorious Living

Rev Dominic Yeo

Many Christians struggle with the concept of victorious living—a life where we continually experience the miracles, breakthroughs, blessings, and favor of God. Believers often talk about the breakthroughs and miracles they were experiencing, yet there are many, who feel that they experienced none of those things. I've heard many believers lament: How can we worship the same God but have completely different experiences?

Victorious living starts by establishing the right foundations. By looking at Scripture, we discover two foundations that need to be in place for us to experience the victorious life.

## Foundation 1: God's light determines the extent of our victory

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. (Genesis 1:1-3)*

In Hebrew, the word for “darkness” is also translated into “chaos,” “desolation,” and “emptiness.” That was the state of the world until God came into the picture. He brought a remedy to the darkness by introducing light.

While we might think of this light as the sun, God only created the sun on the fourth day (verses 14-16). Instead, this light refers to the illumination of God, a revelation of God that brings life and displays His glory.

For some, chaos, desolation, and emptiness are the words you would use to describe your current state of life. Things are so messy and meaningless that there doesn't seem to be a way out. But if God is light and if He calls us from darkness to light (1 John 1:5; 1 Peter 2:9), then we must declare this truth into our spirit and circumstances.

We are not meant to live in barrenness and ruin. We are meant to live life to the full (John 10:10). That starts by taking a step of faith toward God. In the place of darkness, dare to step into the light so that you can begin to see the victories of God take place in your life!

## Foundation 2: Your thought life will determine your world

Having come into the light, the next thing we must do is fortify our thought life. We must let the light of God penetrate our minds because what we think, we become (Proverbs 23:7).

I'm sure you've encountered people you know who are angry simply because of the way they carry themselves. They have an angry walk, a black face, and spew hateful words. But happy people don't behave that way. There's a lightness to their steps, smiles on their faces, and positivity that flows from their lips.

As Christians, we must endeavor to be the latter and we can only do that when we transform our thought life.

*Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will. (Romans 12:2)*

In the beginning, God spoke a word that brought light into our world. That's why we need to return to that Word. We need to go from being prisoners of negative thoughts to victors whose minds are filled with God's truth. As we soak in God's Word, we will experience the illumination of God that changes our perspectives and guides us toward the path of victory.

You and I are not immune to the challenges of life. That is the reality of living in a broken world. But as children of the light, the truth is that we will not be overwhelmed. Walk into the light of God and let His light penetrate our minds. Establish strong foundations and move forward with confidence that we will overcome. The victorious life is waiting for us!

As children of light, we must not only walk in the light—we must *be the light*. With the holiday season approaching, let the light of God radiate from you in your actions and speech. Let your testimony bring life and display the glory of the Almighty God.

## 得胜生命的基础

得胜生命是不断经历神迹、突破、祝福，和恩宠的生命。对于这个概念，好些基督徒觉得难以理解。信徒常分享他们经历的突破和神迹，然而，好些信徒却觉得自己没有这些经历。我听过许多信徒抱怨：为什么我们敬拜同一个神，却有截然不同的经历？

得胜的生命从奠定正确的基础开始。圣经告诉我们，我们必须奠定的两个基础以活出得胜生命。

### 基础一：我们胜利的程度取决于神的光

*起初神创造天地。地是空虚混沌。渊面黑暗。神的灵运行在水面上。神说，要有光，就有了光。— 创世记1:1-3*

在希伯来文中，“黑暗”也能译为“混乱”、“孤寂”和“空虚”。那是世界当时的状况，直到神引入光，改变了黑暗的现象。

我们也许认为这光就是太阳，但神第四天才创造太阳（第14-16节）。其实，这光指的是神的光照，也就是

神揭露自己，彰显祂的荣耀，带来生命。

对一些人来说，混乱、孤寂和空虚是他们用来形容目前生命状态的词汇。一切都那么混乱和毫无意义，看不到任何出路。然而倘若我们相信神是光，并且呼召我们从黑暗入光明（约翰一书1:5；彼得前书2:9），那么我们就必须宣告这个真理进入我们的灵和我们的情况。

神为我们预备的生命不是无果效和毁坏的生命，而是丰盛的生命（约翰福音10:10）。丰盛的生命从踏出信心的一步开始。当你身处黑暗中，你要勇于踏入光明，才能开始看到神所预备的胜利成就在生命中！

### 基础二：你的世界取决于你的思想

进入光明之后，我们需要做的下一步是坚固心思意念。我们需要让神的光渗透我们的思想，因为我们的思想怎样，我们的为人就是怎样（箴言23:7）。

我相信你曾经碰过一些生气的人。他们走路的样子气势凌人、脸色铁青，愤恨的言语脱口而出。可是，开心的人不这样表现。他们脚步轻盈、面带微笑，正面的言语从唇齿间流露。

身为基督徒的我们应该努力成为后者。我们唯有转化思想，才能够做到。

*“不要效法这个世界。只要心意更新而变化，叫你们察验何为神的善良，纯全可喜悦的旨意。”— 罗马书12:2*

起初，神的话语把光带入世界。这就是为什么我们必须回到神的话语。我们不要再做负面思想的俘虏，而要转变为思想中充满真理的胜利者。当我们浸泡在神的话语中，我们就会经历神的光照。这光能改变我们的观点，引导我们行走胜利的道路。

对于生命的挑战，你和我并没有免疫力。这是生活在一个破碎的世界里的现实。但是，真理告诉我们，身为光明之子的我们不会承受不住风雨。让我们走在神的光中，让神的光渗透我们的思想意念。我们要奠定稳固的基础，抱着信心前进，深信困难必能克服。得胜的生命在等着我们！

身为光明之子的我们，不要单单走在光中。我们必须成为光。佳节临近，让神的光透过你的行动和言语从你的身上散发出来。让你的见证带来生命，并彰显至高神的荣耀。



Mental wellness is a topic that we encounter frequently. The issues pertaining to mental wellness used to be taboo but now it is more widely discussed, and seeking help is no longer a shame. As Christians, we have either experienced these issues ourselves, or know of people who have. We should not be ashamed to talk about it or even seek help when needed.

In this issue, we attempt to discuss 'The Christian Perspective on Mental Wellness', particularly on the following topics: Self-care, self-harm, depression among adults and a real-life testimony of someone who has walked through depression.

The Christian Perspective on Mental Wellness

# Self-care for Better Mental Health

*How important and biblical is self-care in our fast-paced, self-sacrificing culture? Dr Angeline Teoh delves into this topic.*

16-year-old Jodi (pseudonym) sat across from me in the counseling room, mild-mannered, polite and appearing less emotive than usual. After moments of silence, she muttered slowly but audibly, "They said to give my all for the exams, get into a good school, and I'm set for a bright future. So here I am in a good school. But the homework keeps coming. When will it ever end?"

Jodi was visibly fatigued despite her dead-pan expression. She had done well academically and was preparing for the student council elections. Outside of school, Jodi had been a committed and active youth member at church. Today, however, nothing about the buzz of school life she used to relish could pique her interest. An upcoming youth camp at church that she had been looking forward to now became an event she could not wait to be over.

I suggested to Jodi that she could slow down her hectic pace of life, "Perhaps you can take a break from the homework for a day or two?"

Jodi looked at me in genuine disbelief, "I can?"

The idea of deserving rest had not crossed her mind. Jodi knew how to respond and behave toward others. The Bible had taught her values of cheerfully giving off of her time and resources, and of caring for those needing a kind word or deed. However, to be told now that she herself deserved kindness and care—this required a paradigm shift. Jodi had operated from a self-sacrificing ethos and never considered balancing it with self-care to her own detriment and to the point of burnout.

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2019) recognizes the latent threat that chronic workplace stress could exact on one's health, referring to the resultant burnout as "phenomena in the occupational context and should not be applied to describe experiences in other areas of life". I intentionally gave the non-occupational example of Jodi, nevertheless, because of the prevalent norm of self-fatiguing lifestyles that are beyond the official definition of burnout, and because Jodi had taken on her youth-student role as an all-consuming pre-occupation and was now showing all the dimensions of burnout:

- feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion;

- increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job; and
- reduced professional efficacy

In fact, I have seen other examples of Jodi outside of counseling in homemakers and in sincere individuals volunteering themselves to good causes. If you or your loved ones are showing the above signs of burnout—whether due to workplace stress or not—do seek help.

For those of you who believe you have not quite reached your thresholds to be experiencing burnout, the responsible response should be, "How do I then prevent it?" Just as nutrition and a healthy lifestyle contribute to wellness, self-care is very much a part of the equation too. The often misunderstood cliché of exercising self-care is not about taking extended leave or treating yourself to a foot spa. These are acceptable, sometimes necessary, though not always beneficial when taken to the extreme.

Self-care requires demarcating boundaries for where giving off of our time and energy starts and stops. Self-care is about attending to legitimate needs in the very human bodies that God has wired in us. It is often cited that God rested on the seventh day after creating our earthly abode, modeling for us the observance of a weekly Sabbath. Let us not forget too, that God made our world in six days, and after each day there was evening, and there was morning (Genesis 1). Now why would our Maker who neither slumbers nor sleeps (Psalm 121: 2-4) need such a demarcation between day and evening if not for the fact that man needs it?

Neuroscience further confirms God's threading our brain with his rhythmic timing of day and evening when the sleep hormone known as melatonin is produced more as evening approaches, to prepare the body for our daily dose of rest. Self-care in the form of maintaining regular and sufficient hours of sleep, therefore, is in obedience to God's design for us.

Among the different ways we practice self-care, sleep could be an overlooked basic need, judging from the studies about Singaporeans' sleep deprivation issues collated by Singapore Sleep Society. Hence, I believe Jodi is not the



*An educator by training, Dr Angeline Teoh has worked in the local and international schools for almost 14 years before she became a school counselor. She subsequently joined a private practice and the social services before taking on her current role as faculty at School of Counseling, TCA College. It has been almost a decade since Dr Teoh first practiced as a counselor. She attends Woodlands Evangelical Free Church and counts her family as God's greatest blessing to her. She is married with a 19-year-old son and a 14-year-old daughter.*

*Continued on pg 6...*

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The Christian Perspective on Mental Wellness

# Applying the Healing Balm

*Why are people harming themselves? How can we seek help if our loved ones are engaging in self-harm? Abigail Lee shares her advice on the matter.*

“1 in 3 young adults here have engaged in self-harm: Study”, “Rising trend of self-harm among the young”, “More Singapore teens engaging in self-harm”—These are headlines that have surfaced in our local newspapers since 2015. In fact, the most recent article published in The Straits Times on June 22, 2019 reported that not only do 1 in 3 young adults here in Singapore engage in self-harm, 1 in 10 of them do it frequently.

What exactly is self-harm? What are the signs and dynamics surrounding this issue that we need to understand? How can we approach and engage a young person in conversation regarding this?

Firstly, let’s define self-harm. Self-harm is a direct, intentional, repeated behavior with the purpose of harming one’s body, resulting in mild to moderate physical injury. It is typically done by cutting, hitting, burning or scratching oneself.

Contrary to the myths that children or teenagers who resort to self-harm are just trying to get attention from their parents or be accepted at school, most of them would say that their behavior was really a silent cry for help not designed to attract attention or just to be part of a group. In fact, the majority who hurt themselves go to great lengths to hide their scars from adults, particularly their parents.

Some possible warning signs of self-harm usually include a combination of the following:

- Dramatic changes in mood, withdrawing from things previously enjoyed and avoiding any type of social interaction
- Avoids wearing clothes or activities like swimming where certain parts of the body may be exposed
- Continuously making excuses for bruises and scratches, wearing more bandages and is more secretive
- Changes in behaviors such as eating, sleeping, school performance, level of socialization and appearance
- Knowing of others engaging in self-harm

Parents may think that if they just ignore the behavior, their child will grow out of this phase. However, what many people fail to realize is that when individuals engage in self-harm, they usually report having a sense of relief, increased calm, and even elation. This is due to our brains reacting to self-harm by releasing opioids or pleasure chemicals to counter the pain, which often results in a false sense of increased well-being.

The problem with this is that an area of the brain referred to as the “reward circuit” or the “pleasure center” is activated in the process. As such, in order to produce the same positive feeling, the person ends up having to repeat and escalate the pain inflicted, leading to an addictive behavior that the individual then finds difficult to stop.

Reasons for a person to self-harm include:

- Viewing it as a coping mechanism, thinking it’s the only way to regulate painful or intolerable negative emotions

- An attempt to gain control over one’s environment such as a cry for help or attention, to test others’ devotions, or even to punish oneself
- Negative influences among peers and media exposure
- Negative family environmental or being exposed to repeated trauma and conflict such as divorce, tension, fights, and abuse

Common reactions of people who discover that their loved one is self-harming:

- Disbelief – *“I cannot accept that my child or loved one is doing this.”*
- Anger – *“He/She is so blessed. How can he/she do this?”*
- Embarrassment and shame – *“People will think that our family is messed up or that I am a bad parent.”*
- Fear and Anxiety – *“Is my child suicidal? I am so worried!”*
- Helplessness – *“How do I even start talking about this? What do I do?”*
- Guilt – *“Did I do something to cause this? Maybe I did not spend enough time with him/her. I’m to blame.”*

Identifying and acknowledging your own emotions along with keeping them in check is important as it will then allow you to make a plan of action not based only on your feelings. Resolve not to avoid the issue pertaining to the fact that your loved one is hurting, but seek to deal with it openly, daily and consistently. The better you understand the dynamics of self-harming behavior, as well as the needs of your loved one, the more comfortable and confident you will be able to discuss this issue with him/her. This will in turn inspire his/her trust and assist you in developing a plan to address the issue.

How can a parent approach their child about self-harming behavior and steps they can take to help:

- Express your care and concern and gently encourage him/her to discuss the topic with you. Make your words count, including acknowledging your own discomfort, instead of lecturing or scolding
- Describe behaviors you have observed that make you suspect they are self-harming backed with factual evidence
- Validate his/her emotions and point of view, along with reassuring him/her that admitting to the behavior is not to judge or punish them, but to help them
- Find out the frequency and the motivation behind self-harming along with the ways that he/she has tried to stop, so that any faulty thinking can be identified
- Involve professionals like counselors who can come alongside to provide therapeutic support along this journey and advise how they can regulate their emotions and cope
- Offer hope to him/her by reassuring them that there is a way to stopping self-harming behavior (Proverbs 23:18, Jeremiah 29:11)
- Pray for him/her to experience:
  - ◆ The love of God (Romans 8:31-39)
  - ◆ The peace of God (Philippians 4:7)
  - ◆ The healing of God (Psalm 46:1, Psalm 27:14)

As we walk together with our loved ones struggling with this, we need to remember to surround ourselves with a healthy support system. Let’s be assured that self-harming behavior is certainly treatable and rest in God’s promise to us that, *“I am the Lord, who heals you.”* (Exodus 15:26)



**Abigail Lee** is the Executive Director of Healing Hearts Centre, a private counseling center that is committed to seeing emotional restoration take place in individuals and families along with equipping and training professionals. Currently the President of both the Association of Christian Counsellors (Singapore) and the Association for Play Therapy (Singapore), she was conferred the May Day Awards-Working People’s Advocate by the National Trades Union Congress in 2018. She is a counselor, play therapist, supervisor and trainer. Through the application of biblically-based principles, she brings hope and restoration to all whom she works with. Abigail and her husband worship at Eternal Life Assembly.

The Christian Perspective on Mental Wellness

# Bringing Light to the Darkness: Depression in Adults and Seniors

*How can the church be a stronger support for members who are struggling with mental illness?*

*Ps Chua Seng Lee shares his insights and shows us how.*

On July 29, 2019, the local newspapers carried the headlines that suicides in Singapore have gone up by 10% compared to 2018. Some even highlighted a record increase, in suicides, among boys.

(<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/suicides-number-2018-teenagers-boys-highest-11761480>)

Some statisticians would be quick to highlight that this is no cause for alarm because there is no real trend of increase over a period. And the Singapore suicide rate ranked rather low in the world—105<sup>th</sup> by age-standardized suicide rate according to the World Health Organization in 2016.

But these statistics bring no comfort to anyone. Especially those who have lost their loved ones through suicide. For them, the life lost is one life too many.

And pastorally, we should seek to see zero lives lost through suicides!

There is no good reason to accept an average of 400 lives lost through suicide annually in Singapore. The fact that we do see such figures on an annual basis, means that the root cause of such darkness has not yet been removed.

One of the major contributors to such darkness is mental health issues that go undiagnosed or untreated.

Mental health issues have been around for many years. But they have not been properly discussed and investigated by the majority. Somehow, many simply ignore the issues and hope that they don't have to face them.

The Church is not spared from this. Many suicide cases that I've come across have involved Christians. And regardless of their roles in church, many of them were plagued by mental health issues. Sadly, a lot of them were unable to talk about their struggles with their church community.

Many of those who struggle with such issues have expressed to me that their churches were not able to empathize with them. Some were simply redirected to seek professional treatment. There was also no follow up by the church or pastors thereafter. Some were even sent to the deliverance ministry to have their "mental health demons" cast out.

Inevitably, there are many hurting Christians out there suffering in silence. What can we, as a body of Christ, do to help them more effectively?

## What should we do as a church?

### 1. Build our understanding on mental health

We cannot afford to be ignorant anymore.

Due to our superficial knowledge of the problems, we will inevitably provide only superficial support to them. We need to deepen our knowledge and understanding on mental health issues so that we could, by His grace, provide a deeper support to those who are struggling with such issues.

Specifically, we need to step up our knowledge for depression among adults and seniors. Depression is commonly known as common cold of mental illnesses. In our intense work environment and competitive culture, many working adults and seniors are hit with depression. The suicide rates among the adults and seniors remain the highest in all age brackets. 75% of suicides are among those from 30 years old and above.

### What are some of the common causes of depression among adults and seniors?

Depression is a bio-chemical disorder within the brain. Such disorders could be triggered due to genes or environmental factors. Environmental factors could be stress at work or a lack of work, health issues, loss of a loved one, difficult relationships, adjustment issues and so on.

### What are some of the signs and symptoms?

These are the common symptoms to look out for:

- Persistent sad, anxious, "empty" moods or crying
- Feelings of hopelessness, guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness
- Irritability, restlessness, or having trouble sitting still
- Loss of interest in once pleasurable activities, including sex
- Decreased energy or fatigue
- Moving or talking more slowly
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions
- Difficulty sleeping, early-morning awakening, or oversleeping
- Eating more or less than usual, usually with unplanned weight gain or loss
- Thoughts of death or suicide, or suicide attempts
- Aches or pains, headaches, cramps, or digestive problems without a clear physical cause that do not ease with treatment

If someone you know exhibits some of these symptoms for more than two weeks, this person should be encouraged to seek professional help.

### 2. Step up training for our church members

1 Thessalonians 5:23 says: "May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Our discipleship should be wholistic as reflected in the prayer of Paul in the text above. It should include spirit, soul and body. However, we tend to focus on spirituality at the expense of soul and body care. Most of the time, we train our members in Bible reading, prayers and worship. All of these are good Christian disciplines to aid us to connect with God. But just these alone are insufficient.

We need to equip our members in developing Biblical soul care, specifically to develop healthy thinking, feeling and decision habits. We need to help them connect the dots from Scripture to their mind, heart and will. In fact, most of us struggle in our walk with God because of the many ungodly thoughts and habits we have kept in our minds. Healthy thinking habits will include subjecting all these thoughts to God's Word. We cannot renew our mind if we do not know the ungodly thoughts we need to repent of.



**Ps Chua Seng Lee** is the Deputy Senior Pastor of Bethesda Church and has spent over two decades working with youth and young adults. He has a Masters Degree in Christian Education and was invited to serve in the Singapore National Youth Council for four years as well as on the National Youth Mentoring Steering Committee as Chairman for another four years. In 2011, he authored a book on overcoming depression among young people. He is married to Josephine Seow and has two beautiful children.

*Continued on pg 9...*

The Christian Perspective of Mental Wellness

# God Gave Me Strength to Overcome Depression

*A true-life account of a sister who has walked out of depression.*

A few years ago, I became a patient at the Institute of Mental Health (IMH). I was terrified, I was devastated, and I was only 15.

It all started years prior, in the little things I believed about myself. As a child, I was never confident about who I was, and was easily shaken by things around me. Even though I grew up in church learning about the person God designed me to be, and even though I truly loved the little I knew about following Jesus, I never really understood how to let all these truths become reality in my life.

The problems with the way I saw myself started to get worse as I entered secondary school. Suddenly, I was struggling with new subjects and failing most of them. I went from being a primary school student who easily achieved A-stars to being a 'high-risk' student who fought to keep from getting expelled. Even worse was the fact that most days, there was also a lot of chaos at home. I had no respite from the frustration that filled my world, and I hated that no matter how hard I tried, I could not fix things both at school and at home. Slowly, I allowed bitterness to not only overcome my mind, but spill over into the way I treated my body. I started struggling with anorexia, sometimes even starving myself for days on end. I struggled even more with self-harming, giving in to the impulse to cut myself several times a day. For years, I was so careful in keeping this detrimental lifestyle a secret, making sure everyone around me only saw the good Christian girl I wanted them to see.

Yet, everything eventually spun out of control. I was heading home one evening when unbearable anxiety suddenly took over. All I knew was that I wanted to be anywhere but home. I got off the train and walked aimlessly for hours, crippled by the overwhelming sense of despair, but more so, filled with the desperate need to hurt myself. This time, I lost control. I physically felt as if I could not stop. Before I knew it, I had to rush myself to the hospital because I started to feel faint from the blood I was losing.

At the hospital, I was told that I had to be taken to IMH for an overnight observation. In that moment, reality finally hit me hard. I was about to turn 16—my first milestone birthday—yet instead of celebrating the life God had gifted me, I had gotten to a point where I no longer wanted to live it. I remember getting to IMH and hearing a nurse comment that I had 54 cuts on my left arm alone, only to look down and realize for the first time that night the severity of it all. Depression had claimed its hold on me.

I realized that I had to give up. I was done trying to mend it all on my own. I was simply human and I was not created to bear the weight I had so stubbornly insisted on bearing. That night, as I lay sleepless on the hospital bed, I cried out to God. I needed Him to take over.

The healing process was not easy. I had grown addicted to my self-harming habits and I knew I needed time to unlearn the way I responded to life. Yet, with God guiding the way, I started to feel a new sense of strength I had never felt before. A strength that I did not have to strive for, but simply rest in. Whenever the urges felt impossible to resist, all I had to do was to call on the name of Jesus, and His presence would fill my bedroom. Slowly, God showed me how to walk away from the mess I was once tangled in, and into His freedom. Within just months, even the psychologist I had been seeing at IMH was amazed at the progress I was making!

God did not simply turn my life around, He exchanged His to give me a completely new one. He did not just pull me out from the darkness, He has now positioned me to help others do the same. Today, I am not just far from the person I used to be; I have found a joy that I know cannot be shaken. God is in control of my every day, and I can think of no better way to live life.

*"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." (2 Corinthians 5:17, ESV)*

...Continued from pg 3

only uninformed Christian who has mistakenly equated self-care with self-indulgence, and unwittingly neglected aspects of self-care that we have been wired to receive regularly. One might ask how we could possibly glorify God through acts of self-care such as:

- Eating well
- Sleeping well
- Engaging in regular physical activities to balance one's sedentary lifestyle
- Setting time aside for family and social activities, as well as leisurely pursuits
- Setting boundaries with others and for oneself
- Seeking professional help for an objective assessment of issues when in doubt

Well, Jeffery Gates (2015) who was a librarian at Cedarville University, Ohio, and led weekly discussions of ethical issues from a Biblical perspective with laymen, reminded of strong Biblical evidence for self-care in Exodus 18: 17-18; Leviticus 19:18; Mark 6:31; 12:30-31; Ephesians 5:29; 1 Timothy 5:23; and 3 John 1:2. Gates' scriptural examples remind us afresh that God did not make a replica of Himself in man to be omnipresent, omniscient or omnipotent. Above all, be assured that exercising self-care is obeying God's command to love His creation in you.

# Trinity@CBD, A Spiritual Oasis in the City

*“Would you like to join us for a weekday church service?”*

By Imelda Lie, Trinity Christian Centre

A week before the launch of Trinity@CBD, a fellow church member and I went out to invite people to our Thursday service at Singapore’s Central Business District (CBD) during our lunch break. While there were some polite declines, many invitations were met with outright rejections. People were walking like they had no time to stop.

In the blazing hot sun, we quickly changed our strategies, condensing our opening line to capture their attention in a few seconds. We persevered and prayed over every tract, believing that they would lead people to salvation. Whenever we met someone who was intrigued and took a flyer, we were reminded that this indeed was our harvest field.



*Church-goers mingling before service starts*

On the night of July 18, the entire pastoral team and many Trinitarians came early to PARKROYAL on Pickering for the pre-launch reception, eager to do their part in this ‘Decade of Expansion’. As soon as the door opened for the inaugural service, the ballroom was filled, and more seats had to be added to accommodate the multitudes. With praise and worship filling the hall, it was refreshing to wind down with



*Listening attentively to the Word*

God’s presence rather than the happy hours that are so prevalent in this part of Singapore.

Delivering the first message was Rev Gerald Tan, who reminded us of the pitfalls of busyness, especially amid long and tiring days at work.

He says, “Sometimes we get caught up in the culture of work where it’s about trying to meet the deadline, win that project, and trying to go further. But I believe God is doing something in the CBD. There are many who need a place of worship. Not a worship of money or deals but a worship of God Almighty.”

Trinity@CBD is a lighthouse in this bustling area, a place of respite from the grind of daily life. But more than that,

Trinity@CBD is bringing disruption for God’s Kingdom in the marketplace. We are bringing the Gospel closer to our colleagues and the many lives who need God’s transforming power and presence.

We thank God for the 48 first-time visitors who joined the inaugural service and for the many that continue to come for every service.

We are in the CBD not merely to earn money and make a living for ourselves. We are called to let God work through us in our workplace. The Kingdom of God is ever-increasing and always on the move. You and I must be sensitive to the Spirit’s leading and dare to go where the Spirit goes. It’s time to rule, to transform, and to be strong in the Lord!



*Praising the Lord with our voices and lifted hands*



*Rev Gerald delivering the Word to the congregation*

# Homecoming: Honoring Detonate's Heritage

Detonate, the youth ministry of Zion Full Gospel Church celebrated their Homecoming with present and past youths.

By Matthew Yap and Rufus Tan,  
Zion Full Gospel Church

*"Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other."* (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)

On July 6, 2019, we celebrated Detonate's Homecoming in Zion Full Gospel Church. In view of the church's 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Singapore's Youth Day celebrations, we wanted to honor the heritage of Zion's youth ministry by remembering our previous leaders and youth alumni, who have contributed to the youth ministry through the years. Their labor has undoubtedly contributed to today's Detonate and they were invited to a night of fellowship and entertainment put together by our very own youths.

Everyone in Detonate had a part to play to make Homecoming possible. We handled the food, ushering, media, decoration and overall program. One of the special highlights was a 15-minute drama entitled, *'D'Legacy'*, produced and scripted by a team of youths.

Dinner had such a warm atmosphere. Youth alumni and past leaders streamed into the hall and reunite like old friends, while the youths served them drinks and snacks. Seeing



*"It was a fun and memorable experience for me. I am proud to say that I was a part of this production."*  
Xavier Toh, Detonate Youth



*A group shot of everyone from different generations*

the generations coming together in one hall really fulfilled the vision we had for Homecoming. Grace Leong, a youth alumnus, said, "The dinner fellowship was the most significant and meaningful. It was truly a walk down memory lane as we reminisced the good times during our ministry days."

There was no better way to start the program than with a time of praise and thanksgiving to God. It was an overwhelming experience, having the various generations uniting in worship. Although the ministry may have evolved through the years, we are united by our common faith in Jesus, the One who remains true through it all. Some then shared their experiences in the youth ministry through a video trip down memory lane and live testimonies. Their stories moved many hearts and we were all encouraged by the testaments of God's unfailing promises for the ministry.

Finally, it was time for the highlight of the night! Despite the many difficulties faced by the drama team, they worked together as one to overcome the obstacles that came in their way. In *D'Legacy*, we recreated three significant events from the history of Zion's youth ministry: featuring the street evangelism outreaches in the 90s, a very special evangelistic

drama produced in 2007, and *'The Greatest Showman Medley'* dance in our 2018 church camp. This production is part of our efforts to pay homage to Detonate's legacy. Jia Ling, a youth alumnus, said, "It was really lovely to see a flashback of the past dramas and outreaches that we did, especially the impact of them on the current generation of youths."

At Homecoming, besides remembering the good times and honoring our heritage, new memories have also been forged for many. Undeniably, this day would not have been possible without the presence and power of God. We want to thank God for providing us with everything that we could have possibly needed, from the start till the end. All glory to God!



*The youth crew looking good for the camera*



*"The drama was well thought out and added to the memory lane experience."*  
Joshua Tay, Youth Alumnus



*Honoring our pastors (left to right: Ps Randy Sing, Ps Charles Tan, Ps Deborah Tan, Ps Joyce Kwek)*

# NDFI-FC Celebrates its 9<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

We celebrate another great year of God's faithfulness in our ministry.

By New Destiny Fellowship International



*Our one big happy family*

The New Destiny Fellowship International-Filipino Congregation (NDFI-FC) celebrated its 9<sup>th</sup> anniversary on July 21, 2019 with the theme, *'Moving Forward, Abiding in Christ'*. The theme was derived from Hebrews 12:2: *"Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith, for the joy set before Him He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."*

The special service kicked off with a milestone video highlighting the key events of the church in the preceding year. The Dance Ministry presented an interpretative dance with a multi-media element entitled, *'The Great Exchange'* to convey the message of hope and salvation to the audience.

Guest preacher, Rev James Singh, an itinerant evangelist

under the Assemblies of God, Singapore, shared the message of God and challenged the congregation to be passionate in serving the Lord. He also reminded the congregation that a Christian's security should lie in his or her relationship with God, and not in other things.

We praise God for His faithfulness in NDFI-FC and look forward with an expectant heart to receiving His divine direction for the church in the years to come.

NDFI has an English Congregation and an Indonesian Ministry partner (*Sahabat Orang Sakit*) to cater to various communities in Singapore. It has outreaches in Kuwait (NDFI-Kuwait) and in the Philippines (NDFI-Sinipay, Sibutad, Zamboanga del Norte).



*Rev James Singh, our guest speaker for the event*

*...Continued from pg 5*

We need to teach healthy living too. We have preached hard on sins, yet we do very little in developing the temple of the Holy Spirit in our bodies. We also need to develop proper body care through a pattern of sufficient sleep, eat and rest.

### 3. Increase our outreach to those in pain

People struggling with mental illness tend to avoid seeking help. It is the very nature of such illness. Hence, as a loving community, we must seek them out.

When we discover our members or friends who exhibit some of the symptoms listed earlier, we need to go to them, connect with them and encourage them. Bring them to see a professional such as a doctor, counselor or therapist and

follow up with them. They may reject your offer or ignore you. But they need you. Don't leave them alone.

And we may need to remove the stigma and myths surrounding mental illness so that more can come out and seek help.

### 4. Rely more on God for His strength

Ultimate healing or change must come from God. As such, we need to continually soak our action in prayers. Allow the Holy Spirit to prompt you to do the right thing with the person.

And in moments of discouragement or tiredness, hang on even more to Him. He and He alone is why we do

what we do.

### Closing thoughts.

Mental health issues are more prevalent than we think. And it has no sign of retreating. The church needs to arise and address this issue and not sweep it under the carpet.

God's idea is not for a single church to take on the tsunami alone. Rather, He desires us to come together as one body to reach and heal the whole city for His glory. We need one another. We need to network within the body of Christ—in the hospitals, clinics, specialized ministries and more—to bring about His Light to pierce this present "darkness" of our times. May God equip us to bring light into this darkness.

# Emmanuel turns 50: Love Looks Like...

We celebrate 50 years  
of God's presence and  
faithfulness.

By Emmanuel Assembly of God

On September 8, 2019, Emmanuel Assembly of God celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a celebration service and lunch. Over 1,300 Emmanuelites, their loved ones, and friends gathered together at Fairmont Hotel. Together, we commemorated God's faithfulness over the past 50 years and dedicated the next 50 of Emmanuel's future into His hands. The event was graced by Guest-of-Honor, Senior Minister of State for the Ministries of Law and Health and Member of Parliament for Marine Parade GRC, Mr Edwin Tong.

## Praising God for 50 Years of Growth

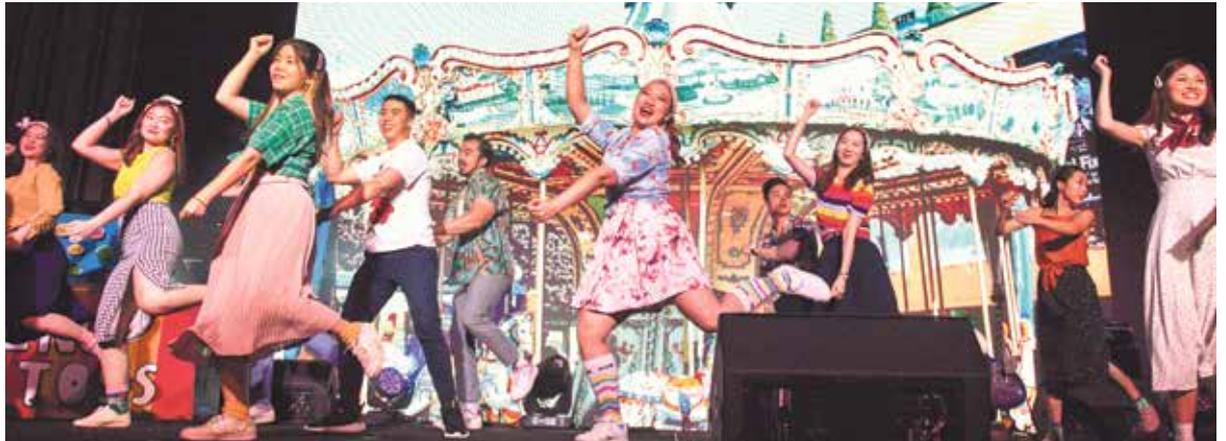
Though Emmanuel was registered in 1969, its history dates back to as early as 1954, where Pastor Emma Louis Neighbour told Bible stories to children every Saturday at Everitt Road, under a rambutan tree. This grew into a congregation that would hold its services and meetings at 25 Everitt Road from 1958. Emmanuel continued to grow. Through a period of uncertainties and financial challenges, the Lord enabled us to move into a larger campus at 165 Upper East Coast Road in 1985.

During this time, God blessed Emmanuel with more members of different 'tribes', 'nations' and language groups. Emmanuel grew to include a robust diversity of ministries, including the Mandarin, Filipino, Indonesian and Malayalam services. Ministries catering to generations were birthed through the years—from the Children's Ministry, to Generation of Promise (for youths aged 12-17), to Campus Ministry (for youths in tertiary education and National Service), to Golden Emmanuel Ministry (for English-speaking seniors above the age of 50), and Evergreen Ministry (for Mandarin and dialect-speaking senior citizens).

In 2017, Emmanuel reached a significant milestone: going back where it all began—its second campus was 'birthed' at its original home at Everitt Road. Today, both our campuses continue to reach out to their communities, connecting them with the Love of Jesus.

## Celebrating 50 Years Before and Ahead

Our Senior Pastor Rev Mark Poh, referred to the Year of Jubilee in the Bible and shared about the pre-eminence of God's sovereignty and faithfulness. Our Guest-of-Honor, Mr Edwin Tong, acknowledged the significance of Emmanuel



*A befitting Finale telling of our Father's Love*



*Our Senior Pastor, Rev Mark Poh with our Guest-of-Honor, Mr Edwin Tong: Seeding to The Rare Disease Fund*

in reaching out to its communities, appreciating especially the fact that both present and past Emmanuelites were present to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary together.

Our Emeritus Pastor, Rev Alfred Ang, shared candidly how age was no barrier to participating in building the Family of God. In a poignant act, he accorded honor to all who served and believed in Emmanuel, especially in its pioneering years.

In honor and worship of God, each of the nine performances (musical, dance or video) specially put together by our English Ministry, Chinese Ministry, Generation of Promise, Campus Ministry, Evergreen Ministry, Golden Emmanuel Ministry, Filipino Ministry and Dedi-K-Ted Dance, expressly praised Him, showcasing aspects of His character and glory through the acts of unity and artistry.

## Blessed to Bless

We truly believe that we are blessed to be a blessing to others. Emmanuel was honored to be able to seed into The Rare Disease Fund, a charity fund jointly established by The Ministry of Health and the SingHealth Fund. This combines community donations and a government-matching contribution to support citizens with specific rare diseases requiring treatment at a high cost.

In a befitting tribute to God, our very own Scott Van Der Ven composed a 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary song. The lyrics of two verses tell it all:

"You saw the shine in the dust  
You gave Your all to have me  
Jesus, I can't get enough  
I've fallen in love with Your love

Words don't measure to Your Name  
Or tell of Your fullness, Lord  
We're like a match made in Heaven  
You're my everything I adore"

Thank you, God! Here's to 50 years and beyond! *"Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."* (1 Corinthians 13:7, ESV) You are the reason why we live, love and celebrate.



*An inter-generational Chinese Ministry giving a heart-warming performance*



*Youthful vibrance of our Evergreen Ministry*

# Blessed 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Faith Assembly!

## Simply Faith

By Rev Lindsey Lui, Faith Assembly of God Church

2019 marks a new season of greater things for Faith Assembly of God (AG). Standing on the shoulders of spiritual giants—Rev Lula Baird, Rev and Sister Stevens L Nolins, Rev Dr and Sister Andrew Ong—the Faith family is ready to step into her destiny. Our heart is to multiply disciple-making churches that seek to honor God, strengthen families and transform communities both in Singapore and the nations. We are grateful for the spiritual guidance and support of Rev Dominic Yeo as well as the different AG ministers. What a blessing to be part of the Pentecostal community!

There were three defining moments for our church this year. First, we cast a new church vision in January: Growing Disciples, Transforming Nations. This helps us to see clearly who we are and what we want to do. We're excited to forge ahead!

Second, we expanded our community network. Because of the generosity of Faith members and friends of Faith including AG churches and ministers, \$40,000 was raised and donated to three community agencies in Whampoa. We were honored to have Mr Heng Chee How, MP for Jalan Besar GRC (Whampoa), Senior Minister of State for Defence and Ms Denise Phua, Mayor of Central CDC grace our 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fundraising



On July 14, we were honored that Mr Heng Chee How (third from left), MP for Jalan Besar GRC (Whampoa), Senior Minister of State for Defence and Ms Denise Phua (fourth from left), Mayor of Central CDC graced our Fundraising Banquet at Amara Sanctuary Resort Sentosa to present the donations to the three community agencies in Whampoa



Our Faith family

Banquet held at Amara Sanctuary Resort Sentosa on July 14. They presented the donations to:

- a) Arc Children Centre
- b) Beyond Social Services
- c) Whampoa Community Development Welfare Fund

We hope to be a greater blessing in our community in the days ahead.

Third, we celebrated God's goodness with a big birthday party in September! We were emboldened by God's word preached by Rev Yang Tuck Yoong, Chairman of Alliance of Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches of Singapore (APCCS). We shall see an acceleration of God's work and a greater breakthrough in our church. We give God the glory!



On September 22, we had our Vision Sunday at Amara Sanctuary Resort Sentosa, which is also our Big Birthday Bash. We are thankful to our longest-serving pastor of Faith AG, Rev Dr Andrew Ong (center) and his wife, Elsie (second from right). Rev Andrew is currently serving as the Director of ASSM. Our guest speaker, Rev Yang Tuck Yoong (second from left), Chairman of APCCS, shared a powerful word to our congregation that day.

### How has Faith impacted my life?



When I was young, I always struggled to believe that love existed, and I did not deserve to be loved. Through Amplify and Carecell, I met Jesus Himself, the lover of my soul. My mentors in this church have helped me to see the Father's heart and my life has never been the same since. It was also through Faith Assembly that I've learned how to simply put my faith in Him!

— **Tay Wei Fan**, Amplify Cell Leader, 12 years in Faith AG

### Start with Prayer

"God, we're ready to follow Christ in water baptism. Please open the way for us."



Two years later, in August 2019, God answered our prayers! My mom was miraculously healed and my family was ready for our decision. My life has been radically changed after a powerful encounter with God during our 2018 Amplify youth camp! I believe my obedience to be water baptized has opened heaven for my family and me! Thank you, God, for hearing our prayers!

— **Ariel Chua**, Amplify Media Team, 13 years in Faith AG

# Risen Christian Assembly (RCA) —Touching Lives That Matter

The church is a happening place to reach out to pre-believers.

By Lam Poh Ling, Risen Christian Assembly

Birthered just over a year ago, Risen Christian Assembly had a vision to build a church that cultivates a God Atmosphere, an Evangelistic Heart, is Missions Minded and raises Strong Leaders. Affirming that vision, Risenites have been passionately serving, going out to attract the lost, meeting the needs of individuals and families and building a strong community life in church to fulfill this vision.

In the past year, RCA started a few ministry programs that reach out to the community around the church's vicinity. From engaging elderly folks living in the low-income housing estates of King George's and French Road to tutoring youngsters living around the McNair Road area, Risenites are living out our core values of being authentic believers who care unreservedly for people.

## Makan Kakis for Silver Friends in the Neighborhood

Through RCA's charity arm, Arise Community Services (ACS), 'Makan Kakis' is the weekly gathering of 'kakis' (friends) to come together to share a hot meal and fellowship.

Hosted by carecells and volunteers on rotation, *Makan Kakis* commenced on March 2, 2019. Besides planning the program, our volunteers also take turns to fetch the older "silver" *kakis* from the neighborhood's void decks to the event location.



All the Kakis having a great time dancing to music



Our Kakis enjoying games with our elderly friends

On average, 35 folks from all walks of life turn up each week at Acts2Place, which is transformed into a "playground" where they can play games and win prizes. Other popular activities include dance exercises and Karaoke with oldies available in English, Mandarin and dialects! Our oldest *kaki* is 94 years old!

Through this program, we are getting to know our neighbors better. As we continue to learn more about them, we will be able to find ways to meet their different needs as well.

Many of these *Makan Kakis* have since become RCA's regular Sunday Church attendees and they sometimes bring a friend or two along to join them for service. We Risenites are also more than happy to welcome them into our family.

## SCORE Tuition

Our SCORE (Shoot for the stars, Cultivate knowledge, Overcome challenges, Realize potential and Exceed expectations) program is really a simple form of helping Secondary students brush up on their academic challenges.

RCA's youths and carecell members with adequate abilities provide free one-on-one tuition every Saturday for an hour. And this is followed by another hour of bonding and relationship-building activities with the youth.

Currently, up to 10 secondary school students are benefiting from this tuition program. Through the fellowship cultivated during the activity time, at least two of them have started attending RCA's Sunday church service. We believe that as we commit SCORE to the Lord, more will come to accept and know Him in due course.



One of our participants receiving a gift from us

## Movie Night—'Overcomer'

On September 10, 2019, RCA held a special movie night at Salt Media's theater. Screening the new movie 'Overcomer', the movie night was envisaged as an evangelistic event. Risenites were encouraged to invite oikos to watch it together. The tickets for all the 227 seats were snapped up quickly with the option to order bento dinner sets to go along. What a treat!

The faith-based movie turned out to be a tear-jerker as many could relate to the packed storyline of finding one's identity, acceptance, forgiveness and realizing who our Creator is. Many said they were going to recommend family and friends to watch this movie.

At the end of the movie, Ps Sabrina gave an altar call and a total of 31 individuals gave and rededicated their lives to our Lord Jesus. Hallelujah!

In the days ahead, RCA will continue to be led by the Lord to reach out to the lost and meet the needs of individuals and families in the community.



Serving at our Movie Night Event

# Double Whammy to Double Blessings

*We thank God for the donors and givers who gave to touch lives.*

*By Ps Luke Tan, Teen Challenge Singapore*

There could have been a double whammy for the 19<sup>th</sup> Teen Challenge (TC) Charity Golf event on September 27, with what seemed like a gloomy economy and the return of haze. Slightly more than a week before “D-Day”, the haze condition was worsening in Central and South Sumatra. The threat over this annual Charity Golf event was real, having intense smog in the air without a drop of water from the sky. The situation looked very concerning.



Alas, the power of faith and prayers prevailed. Heavy downpours came on Wednesday, two days before the event. On Friday morning, the sky cleared up and it was a perfect day for golf. The haze was suddenly gone!

Truth be told, our anxiety began earlier in January. The economy seemed to be sailing through troubled waters and many of our appeals for sponsorships were met with rejections. But our event advisors and organizing committee pressed on in trusting God. Fast-forward to September 27, we were utterly amazed by the goodness of God, the goodwill and the continual support from friends of TC Singapore.



At hole 16 of the Tampines Course, an optional novelty event was taking place. With a donation, 120 golfers pitted their skills against a lady golf coach to place their golf balls closest to the pin. This fun event helped to raise \$1,200 for the cash collection.

Bruce Mathieu, a former beneficiary of TC gave glory to God by sharing his story of transformation. Bruce has led a crime- and drug-free life for the last three years. His

testimony is a reminder that only God has the power to change lives.

The other highlight of the dinner event, besides the Raffle and Blessed Draws, was the auction. Four of the six auction items—a Peranakan diamond pendant, a ladies’ watch, a carpet and a painting—found new owners, helping TC to raise over \$13,000. The enthusiasm and support of our guests was commendable.

A wise leader once said: “No fruit tree bear fruits for itself. The fruits on the trees are always for the benefit of someone else.” TC has become a fruitful tree over the last 42 years. We have been bearing fruits to serve the needy and marginalized of our community. The work we have been doing could not have been possible without the strong and continual contributions from our donors.

The tree was first a seed. We wish to thank all our givers for nourishing the seeds of TC, so that it has become a sturdy, fruit-bearing tree, providing shelter and provisions to people in need.



God is good. 136 golfers participated in this 19<sup>th</sup> Charity Golf fund raising event, including our Guest-of-Honor, Rev Dominic Yeo, General Superintendent of the Assemblies of God Singapore. After a sumptuous and delicious Nasi Lemak lunch, a group photo was taken followed by the Shotgun Tee Off.

- 1 All ready to set off
- 2 Guest-of-Honor, Rev Dominic Yeo, concentrating on his next shot
- 3 All participants of the Charity Golf Event joining hearts to be a blessing
- 4 (from left) Mr Michael Lim, Assistant Director Teen Challenge Singapore, Pastoral Outreach; Rev Simon Ang, President of Teen Challenge Singapore Board; Mr Clement Chow, Emcee for the night; Mr Luke Tan, Executive Director of Teen Challenge Singapore
- 5 A painting for auction

# Praise Report from ElimParis

*Blessing ministries in France and Singapore.*

*By Rev John Lim, ElimParis*



Ps Rebecca was able to minister and meet the needs of Nathalie, who is going through challenges in her family. She is encouraged to serve God and commit her life to Him, as well as her children, focusing not on her difficulties, but on God's faithfulness at all times.



For a while, we needed to repaint the restroom and kitchen of our church hall. God sent us, Vince, from Seattle, a college science teacher who contacted us to explain that he wanted to be a blessing to our church during his vacation in France. What an amazing brother who decided to combine his holidays in France with meeting the needs of the church! He helped us paint the toilets and kitchen. We are so thankful to God for sending him to bless us.



During our time back home in July, I had the joy of preaching and ministering to the youth of Elim Church in Singapore, encouraging them to focus on seeking God's will in their lives. What a joy to see the wonderful work God has done among these young people who are passionate for Jesus and have the potential to change the world.

Thank you so much for taking time to read this article.

May God continue to use you and your loved ones to be a blessing in your world!

Your friends in Paris,  
John and Rebecca Lim  
<https://johnlimkc.wordpress.com>



Our church member, Lily, gives thanks to God for His work in her family in China. Her family members, who she has been praying for over many years, are slowly coming to the Lord this year. She was so glad to be able to accompany them to church during her recent trip back home to Qing-Dao.



In July, God spoke to us to bring worship songs to the isolated psychiatric patients in hospital. With the permission of the hospital authorities, our team sang jazz gospel songs to a hall full of patients. As the songs were sung, some of them began to dance along to the songs! The hospital personnel became very excited and told us that this was the first time patients, who were considered incapable to communicate, became responsive to songs. We believe that God had interjected His spirit into the words of the songs and brought about a God-birthing reaction in these patients! God's method was a simple ukulele and plenty of godly compassion.

**Please pray for us:**

1. God's continued peace and restoration among the lost and hurting in France
2. God's blessings of open doors as we reach the communities in Paris 13
3. God's continued strength and guidance over our church leaders
4. God's provision for the church, hospital and migrant ministries
5. God to raise up more workers for the one-time harvest in France
6. God to continue to help us raise passionate people for Him and the church after we launch our discipleship courses from September 2019



We were happy to be involved in the Chaplaincy Welcome Day at Hôpital Cochin. Ps Rebecca and I were able to meet families and hospital workers who came for the special lunch event and took time to explain our work with the isolated patients here. Many visitors were glad to find out more from Ps Rebecca on how they could participate as friends of the chaplaincy ministries.

- 1 *Nathalie and family*
- 2 *Lily giving her testimony about her family members getting saved*
- 3 *Together with David, a volunteer, at the Chaplaincy Welcome Day Lunch at Hôpital Cochin*
- 4 *Vince helping us with repainting parts of our church*
- 5 *Our worship team singing in the psychiatric ward*
- 6 *Time with Elim Church's youths*

# My Trip with an Evangelist, Rev James Singh

*Charles shares his first-hand experience shadowing an evangelist who helped him witness the power of God.*

*By Charles Lim, Eagle's Nest Church*

I heard that Rev James Singh is an evangelist and traveled often to countries like Romania, Mauritius, Japan and Indonesia for his ministry. I heard him once as a guest speaker in a church preaching. The sermon title was, 'The Mercy of God'. An altar call was given, and three-quarters of the congregations responded.



Two weeks after hearing his message, I met Rev James in Sengkang Sports Complex. It was from then; we became gym partners every Monday. After our gym sessions, we would adjourn nearby for coffee. I was curious about what an evangelist did out in the mission field, so I asked him. He began his ministry 20 years ago in an island called Biak in Papua, Indonesia. As the years passed by, he traveled to other island towns in Papua—Manowakri, Jayapura and Serui. His ministry began in Papua and he had been blessed since then.

During our conversation, he said that he was firming up his schedule to go to Biak and was expecting a call from Ps Lestari to discuss his itinerary. I then asked, "Can I join you in your trip to Biak? I don't mind being a cupbearer or a bag carrier." He agreed to take me along.

We left Singapore on a Monday evening and arrived on a Tuesday morning. Ps Rudy who is the Senior Pastor of El Shaddai Ministries came to fetch us to the church. We had a good rest and at 5pm, Rev James got ready to start his preaching session. Ps Lestari, who is the wife of Ps Rudy, was the interpreter. There was a congregation of 250 in attendance.

Indonesians are known for their wholeheartedness in their worship. I had been to the churches in Batam, Tanjung Pinang, Surabaya and Bunyuwangi. But in this island of Biak, the approach was different. It was a worship filled with awe and reverence. God's presence could be felt so tangibly!

## Diversity of Tongue

On Wednesday evening's service, Rev James shared a message with Ps Lestari interpreting in Bahasa. While Rev James was preaching, he would occasionally break into a tongue. His utterance sounded like Arabic and then Thai. Ps Lestari, without batting an eyelid, just flowed with the interpretation in Bahasa. There was an amazing co-ordination between the speaker and interpreter. It was incredibly fluid!

During the morning intercessory prayer sessions, I heard Rev James praying in tongues again. On one occasion I even heard him speak Cantonese. Amazingly, Rev James didn't know a word of Cantonese. To me, this was something that had to be supernatural and I was in awe of the work of the Holy Spirit.



## Church Called to Repentance

On the same evening, when Rev James closed in prayer at El Shaddai Ministries, Ps Rudy's sister stood up and gave a word to the church. She proclaimed to the congregation, "Do not always ask for blessings but not do any work. Do not harden your heart. I want your heart, surrender and obedience. And do not despise my Word."

Immediately, Ps Rudy called the congregation to repent. Many walked to the front to kneel, while others knelt near their seats. One could hear sobbing from those at the altar. This was my first time witnessing an entire church coming into repentance.

## Prayer for Healing

At our last church session, Rev James gave a word of knowledge that someone in the congregation had a kidney problem. A man who was in his 40s walked to the altar and he placed his hand on the left side of his body and prayed. After service, the man thanked Rev James for the prayer and revealed that his left kidney had a problem. Rev James was



spot on in placing his hand on his left side to pray. God is truly amazing!

## Concluding Thoughts

The week spent on the island of Biak was fruitful. I witnessed different Indonesian ethnic groups gathering together to worship God. Despite the living conditions on the island, the believers displayed the hunger and fervency in wanting to draw closer to God. God, in turn, worked powerfully amongst them.

Their zeal had made me reflect on my own walk with God and had put a mark in my own heart to draw much closer to Him. I thank God for this opportunity to see His love and work in action. To God be the glory!

- 1 *Rev James preaching and Ps Lestari interpreting his sermon*
- 2 *Worshippers presenting their dance to the Lord*
- 3 *Congregation bowing down before the Lord in worship*

# God's Chosen Ones

*Instilling the right values of self-worth in our children at Outpost 5 Harborlight Church Royal Rangers (RR) Campout.*

*By Royal Rangers Singapore*

Today's children are so fascinated by the digital world that they seem to have lost their sense of wonder and adventure in the outdoors. As we were preparing for the Outpost 5 Harborlight Church Campout, we sensed that God had wanted our rangers, young as they were, to begin understanding their identity in Christ. Social Media has become such a huge part of our world that many of them end up tagging their self-worth onto the unrealistic standards displayed on social media.

As we further sought the Lord, we sensed that He wanted them to discover the destiny He has for them and to claim the purposes of God over their lives.

The theme '*CHOSEN*' was chosen for the camp, literally, because we believed that every child is God-chosen, God-loved, God-made, and God-prepared. We are made in His image and as we become aware of our identity in Him, every child's journey of transformation begins. Their identity shouldn't be anchored in who their parents say they are, nor what the world deems as acceptable. It is about the relationship they have anchored in the Lord.

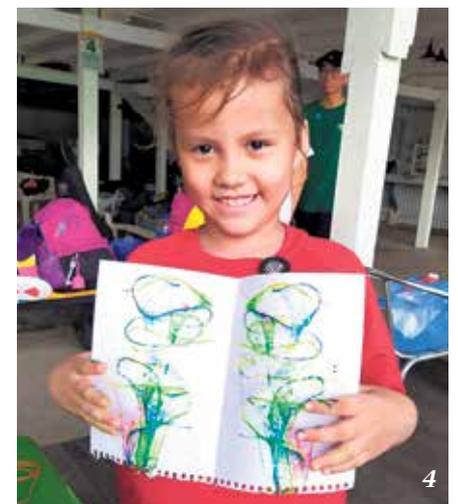
The message behind *CHOSEN* was delivered during the campfire at the Lodge in Pulau Ubin. Led by our RR pastor, Ps Derek, our children went through a prophetic act of writing down the insecurities they faced on little pieces of paper. In exchange, Ps Derek illustrated the exchange of fears for God's confidence, joy and strength by throwing the papers with the negative words into the campfire. Ps Derek shared in his devotion that as we grow up, we

inevitably allow other people to tell us who we are, and we allow our mistakes and regrets take over our lives. Instead, we shouldn't forget about what God has called us to be—that we are transformed by Him to do great and mighty things for His Kingdom.

*CHOSEN* is also a camp that aims to instill a sense of wonder in our children for God's creation in the great outdoors and to facilitate camping confidence. One of the consistently exciting activities for rangers is cooking outdoors, because as they work with their team to prepare the meal and start the fire, they often enjoy a sense of accomplishment and camaraderie. Some of the parents also came alongside to facilitate games and crafts to engage the children from as young as the Ranger Kids (5 to 7 years old) to as old as the Adventure Rangers (11 to 14 years old).

Glenda Boey, an Outpost Commander, recalls, "From cooking to learning the compass merit, to the campfire, seeing the rangers enjoy the Campout despite their initial fears made me proud of them. Each of them faced their own fears and overcame. I believe that every one of them took back something from *CHOSEN* and that this Campout would be something that will be etched in their memory for a long time."

The journey of instilling God's identity in these children does not simply end here. As the outpost pursues the business of God in facilitating new attitudes, emotions and behaviors that are reflective of Christ in the days ahead, we realize that we have only just begun.



- 1 Young rangers excited to embark on their outdoor adventure
- 2 Harborlight Church's rangers enjoyed their 2D1N campout at Pulau Ubin
- 3 The rangers had a chance to put their fire craft merit to use at the campout
- 4-5 The rangers enjoying fun crafts during the campout



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# Shaken by Illness, Strengthened by God

*There is nothing too difficult for God.*

By Loh Dan Lin, Trinity Christian Centre

The Lims were an ordinary family living an ordinary life. Dad (Abel) and Mom (Noreen) had steady careers, while daughters Felicia and Faith were studying in university and secondary school, respectively.

When a series of health crises threatened to rob their peace and plans, God's continued presence assured them that He was in control of their lives.

## Time's Up

It was 5am on April 2, 2017 when the Lim household was turned upside-down. Felicia was in the toilet when she suddenly could not move her left arm. "I panicked and rushed to my parents' bedroom," she recalled.

Abel took Felicia to the A&E where she was diagnosed with arteriovenous malformation (AVM)—a tangle of vessels that disrupts blood flow and oxygen circulation.<sup>1</sup> A condition that was from birth and unknown until then, hence, the hemorrhage was inevitable.

On midnight of the fifth day, Felicia experienced another hemorrhage and was rushed for an emergency operation. After what seemed like an eternity, the six-hour procedure was finally done.

## God's Tangible Presence

In the ICU, Noreen shares how God showed that He was with them.

"The ward was extremely quiet, except for the beeping sounds from the devices. Suddenly, Abel and I heard music. Though we did not recognize the song, we knew that God was comforting us through the music."

Conscious but unable to speak due to the tube in her throat, Felicia recalls the divine encounter.

"The music was like angels singing. I had never heard anything like that before, but I immediately recognized the tune that the choir of angels was singing—it was the chorus of *The Potter's Hand*. I knew then that God was reassuring me that He is my Potter and that He would use me according to His purposes."

## Illness Strikes Again

Having put her university studies on hold, Felicia was transferred to another hospital to undergo intensive rehabilitation therapy. In three months, she progressed from being bedbound to walking with the aid of a quad stick. The next stage of her recovery was to undergo cranioplasty surgery in November 2017. One week before the surgery, the Lims experienced another medical emergency. This time, it was Abel's turn.

"I felt a sudden tightening around my chest and decided to walk to Changi General Hospital since it was near our home. It was the most excruciating 15 minutes of my life.

I was diagnosed with a heart attack and had to be hospitalized for stenting. I was shocked. I had no pre-existing health conditions and no family history of heart problems. I thought, Why me and why now?"

Before the procedure, a pastor visited and prayed for him. In a flood of tears, he released the heavy burden to God. He would



*The spiritual family that prays together stays together*



*Stronger together and stronger with God*

no longer ask "why me" and "why us." Instead, he decided to trust that God will make all things beautiful in His time.

## Love Wrapped in Skin

Trinitarians constantly supported the family. While Noreen had to be in the hospital with Abel, different ones took turns to take care of the girls, bringing food and driving them around. During semester breaks, Felicia's friends from Campus and IGNUYE (Trinity's youth ministry) would visit to keep her company.

God did a deep work in every member of the Lim family, including the youngest.

"I was distraught when I found out about my sister's condition, and the challenges kept coming. One day, I decided to approach an IGNUYE leader and confided in her. She prayed alongside me and encouraged me. I was touched by her care and concern."

## A Journey of Faith

Felicia was able to return to school in August 2018. 27 months after losing the mobility of her left arm, Felicia walked on the NTU graduation stage to receive her degree in July 2019.

"Before, my wish was to graduate quickly so that I could start earning a decent salary," she shares, "Now, my perspective of a job is an avenue to live out God's calling for my life. My heart's desire is for my Potter to use and mold me, so that I can live out my God-given destiny."

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/arteriovenous-malformation/symptoms-causes/syc-20350544>

# God's Ways are Higher than Ours

*God used my wife to impact the people around her in both good and tough times.*

*By Leong Jow Young, Harborlight Church*

In February 2019, I lost my dearest wife to cancer. Shermaine and I met in the Navy in 1994 and got married five years later. God has always been the center of our lives throughout our marriage. Both of us were very involved in serving in church and were leading cell group together. Shermaine had a love for children, and even though we had no children, God led her to volunteer herself to serve in the Royal Rangers ministry, which allowed her to impact many young lives. Shermaine also had a heart for the nations, having gone to Thailand, Indonesia and China for missions; those trips have impacted her life greatly.

In 2016, after her return from a mission trip to China, she developed a persistent cough. Doctors prescribed her cough mixture thinking that it was a simple and common cough. However, the cough persisted for quite some time. A while later, my dad suddenly fell terribly ill and was hospitalized. Unfortunately, he passed away four days later. Amidst having to conduct the funeral, we were also preparing to go for a mission trip together to Indonesia. We left for Indonesia with Shermaine leading the children's program in the church we were visiting and came back with our hearts full of love for the people we prayed for and ministered to.

However, her cough didn't get any better despite the doctor's medicine, so we decided to make another visit to the doctor. It was then that an X-ray revealed that her lungs were flooded with fluid and she had to be hospitalized immediately to drain out the water from her lungs. What we thought was just fluid in the lungs that didn't seem to show any abnormality after initial tests, soon led to a CT scan that showed a 30cm tumor. Doctors confirmed that she was suffering from fourth stage Thymoma cancer.

Despite receiving this news, Shermaine still insisted on serving in church as she had made up her mind to continue serving the Lord until she could no longer go on. I remember pleading with God to heal her from cancer, but I heard God's voice asking me, "What if I want to take her home to spare her from the evil ahead?" It was then that God gave me Isaiah

57:1, "*The righteous perish, and no one takes it to heart; the devout are taken away, and no one understands that the righteous are taken away to be spared from evil.*" It was then that I responded to God, "To be in your presence is always better than being with me".

The tumor continued to grow bigger despite going through four rounds of chemotherapy. It was at that point that the oncologist could not offer us any further solution, so we left and sought help elsewhere. In December 2017, her condition deteriorated but the Lord turned the situation around for her and she could be discharged from the hospital. I believe that then, God knew that I was not ready to let her go, so God in His kindness gave her an extension of time with me.

However, 10 months later things started going downhill and Shermaine was hospitalized again. During her stay, she tried to talk to nurses and doctors about Jesus. There was a patient next door who was against Christians and placed a sign on the door that said: "No visitors or pastor, knock before you enter". Shermaine prayed persistently for this patient, and weeks later the sign was changed to "Strictly no visitors". I heard later that a pastor had ministered to the patient and she gave her heart to Jesus! Despite her sickness, Shermaine showed that we can still be used by God to touch lives. For several Sundays she took hospital leave just so she could attend church service on a wheelchair and an oxygen tank because she recognized that going to church was her priority and saw it as her privilege and honor to do so. Her decision to do that spoke strongly to the doctors, nurses and to fellow church members. It makes me wonder how often we skip church over a simple headache or not being able to wake up.

I asked her one day if there was any unfulfilled wish she had. She told me that after she recovers, she wants to go to a third world nation to minister to under-privileged children. It was then when God reminded me that we had already done that when we went to Indonesia for missions in 2016. If she had gone for a check-up before the mission trip, we would have



discovered the cancer and would have not been able to go. It would have then become an unfulfilled desire and Shermaine would have passed on with regret in her heart, so praise God for He had orchestrated everything to happen so perfectly. Before she passed away, as much as Shermaine desired to stay on this earth, she prayed that if it was God's will for her to return home to be with the Lord, that she would have God's strength to give up on her own selfish desires and obey God's plan for her life.

I believe that Shermaine has left behind an amazing legacy and wonderful memories etched in the minds and hearts of many people that she has impacted and served alongside with.