

MOVEMENT OF HEALTHY CHURCHES

Kingdom Expansion through Healthy Churches

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CHIEF EDITOR: Rev Jason Tan

ASST EDITORS: Rev Winnie Wong
Miranda Zhang

COORDINATOR: Carol Lim

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MOVEMENT OF HEALTHY CHURCHES: Kingdom Expansion through Healthy Churches

Rev Dominic Yeo



Creating an Atmosphere of Growth

Growth is a natural process. Plants, animals, and humans all grow and develop over time. If growth is not happening, it is often due to factors that hinder this natural progression, such as insufficient nourishment, an unfavorable environment, or external influences.

Healthy things grow; it's God's design for His creation. Growth is an essential aspect of life and creation, much like the church. Healthy churches have the capacity to grow and flourish. When members experience genuine spiritual transformation, they naturally share their faith experiences with others, strengthening the faith of fellow believers and introducing God to others as well.

Kingdom expansion is the natural outgrowth of a healthy church. Healthy churches have an atmosphere that propagates growth and expansion—both spiritually and numerically. This atmosphere should not be taken for granted. Just as a greenhouse creates conditions for plants to thrive, this atmosphere needs to be created, protected, monitored, and maintained! A church that prioritizes discipleship, leadership development, and reaching out will naturally expand as people encounter God's love and invite others to experience it.

How Do We Create the Right Atmosphere for Growth and Expansion?

Creating the right atmosphere begins with faith. Faith activates spiritual gifts and releases supernatural power. Whether you lead a church, a ministry or a small group, you can create an atmosphere of faith through the way you live out your christian walk. You cannot create that which you do not walk and live in. Is your faith contagious enough to inspire others to greater faith? Consider if faith to believe for the supernatural to happen is being preached and encouraged in your congregation.

Faith is not being anti-negative. It is a posture of life. Faith is believing that God can do what He says He can do regardless of how impossible the situation appears to be (Hebrews 11:1).

- Do you have faith to believe for the salvation of your entire household?
- Do you have faith to pray for the sick to be well?
- Do you have faith to plant a small group in your schools, campuses, and offices?
- Do you have faith to plant a church to reach new communities?

Creating the right atmosphere requires opportunities for engagement. Engagement demands the activation of faith for the manifestation of gifts. Engagement enables the anointing to flow. Are there opportunities for people to engage and serve? Are there platforms for the deployment of gifts? Without the opportunity to serve, there is no opportunity for development. However, with opportunity comes maturity. Together with guidance and affirmation, gifts are developed and expressed in alignment with the church's mission and vision, fostering an atmosphere of growth.

Engagement in ministry does not require perfect people. When Jesus sent out the twelve in Matthew 10, they were

far from graduating from Bible College. They did not have the full picture of what was to come. They only had the opportunity to observe what the Master had done before. And Jesus sent them out to "heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely as you have received; freely give." (Matthew 10:8) It was the full baptism of ministry!

There is no doubt that people need to be equipped and empowered, but let's not wait for perfection before releasing people to engage in ministry. Otherwise, not only will we hinder the growth and health of the church, but we may also be tempted to strive and do everything in our own strength, void of the Spirit.

Creating the right atmosphere requires training and development. Just as the branches of fruit trees are pruned to bear more fruit, the time and effort dedicated to enabling learning, engagement, and corrections cannot be compromised.

Leadership development ensures that the mission of the church continues through the generations. MM33 is our collective goal as the Assemblies of God churches, where we endeavor to present to the Lord one million churches by the year 2033. That goal will not be possible without the training and development of missionaries, church planters, next-generation leadership, evangelists, and so forth.

Develop spiritually mature believers who serve in ministry and can impact their spheres of influence, whether in education, government, media, or business, with biblical kingdom values and principles.

Train your church to hear God's voice and follow the Holy Spirit's leading. Guide them in cultivating a deep and meaningful walk with God so they can carry His heartbeat in everything they do. Raise a people dependent on the Spirit of God.

Creating the right atmosphere requires the Holy Spirit. Growth is God-ordained. The health of the Church lives on the breath of the Holy Spirit. The manifestations of the Spiritual Gifts are the work of the Holy Spirit. Not ours. We are simply conduits.

In the Lord's prayer, we are instructed to invoke on earth that which is in heaven. We are standing in the gap by faith and allowing the Spirit to release the atmosphere of heaven in our midst here on earth.

There needs to be a yielding to the Spirit to allow Him to move as He wishes in our ministry. Some of our plans and schedules hold a higher pedestal than the Spirit. If we want the right atmosphere for a healthy church that grows and expands, we must surrender to the Spirit's leading. It's okay for it to be messy. The upper room outpouring was a mess. I'd rather God's mess than our best.

Healthy churches are not just for the privileged few. I believe that as we create an atmosphere of faith, engagement, training and development, and constant yielding to the Spirit, the church will be strengthened and positioned for growth and Kingdom expansion.

通过健康的教会扩展神的国度

营造成长的气氛

成长是一个自然的过程。植物、动物和人类都会随着时间的推移而成长和发展。如果成长没有发生，通常是由于某些因素阻碍了这一自然进程，例如营养不足、不利的环境或外在影响。

健康的事物会成长，这是神对创造物的设计。成长是生命和创造的重要组成部分，教会亦是如此。健康的教会有能力成长和兴旺。当成员经历真实的属灵转化时，他们会自然而然地与他人分享自己的信仰经历，从而加强信徒之间的信心，也向他人介绍神。

神国的扩展是健康教会自然的成长结果。健康的教会拥有促进成长和扩展的氛围——无论是属灵上还是人数上的增长。这种氛围不应被视为理所当然。正如温室为植物提供适宜的生长条件一样，这种氛围也需要被创造、保护、监督和维持！一个优先注重门徒训练、领袖培养和布道的教会将会自然地扩展。人们在当中会经历神的爱并邀请其他人一同经历神的爱。

我们如何营造适合成长和扩展的氛围？

营造正确的氛围始于信心。信心启动属灵的恩赐，信心释放超自然的能力。无论你带领的是教会、事工，还是小组，你可以通过你的基督徒生命来创造信心的氛围。如果不曾经历，你就无法创造出这种氛围。你的信心是否足够有感染力，能激励他人拥有更大的信心？想一想，你的教会是否传讲并鼓励会众相信超自然的能力？

信心不是不消极，而是一种生活的态度。信心意味着相信神能够成就祂所应许的一切，无论环境看起来多么不可能。(希伯来书11:1)

- 你有信心相信你的全家都会得救吗？
- 你有信心为病人祷告得医治吗？
- 你有信心在学校、校园和职场中建立小组吗？
- 你有信心植堂去接触新的社群吗？

营造正确的氛围需要提供参与的机会。这种参与需要人们以信心的行动来彰显属灵的恩赐。这种参与促使恩膏流动。你的教会是否提供人们参与和服事的机会？是否有平台让人们发挥他们的恩赐？如果没有服事的机会，就没有成长的机会。然而，机会带来成熟。在指导和肯定的过程中，恩赐被发展，并与教会的使命和异象保持一致，从而营造出成长的气氛。

服事的参与并不需要完美的人。当耶稣在马太福音10章差派十二门徒时，他们并未从神学院毕业，也不了解未来将要发生的一切。他们唯一的经验就是观察主耶稣的所行的一切。但耶稣仍然差遣他们“医治病人，叫死人复活，叫长大麻疯的洁净，把鬼赶出去。你们白白地得来，也要白白地舍去。”(马太福音10:8)这是一场彻底的服事洗礼！

毫无疑问，人们需要被装备和授权，但我们不能等到他们完全成熟才让他们参与服事。否则，我们不仅会阻碍教会的成长和健康，还可能陷入依靠自己能力去做一切事的困境，而忽略了圣灵的工作。

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Kingdom Expansion through the Movement of Healthy Churches

Signs of a Healthy Church

This series delves into the vital connection between healthy churches and the expansion of God's Kingdom. We will explore key indicators of church health, providing practical guidance for pastors and leaders to cultivate thriving congregations. By focusing on these essential signs, we aim to equip churches to foster environments where spiritual growth and evangelism flourish.



Growing Leadership

*A healthy church will have growth in the leadership in two aspects, personal and leadership base.
Rev Robert Lum explains the importance of these two.*



"Everything rises and falls on leadership." John Maxwell.

A crucial aspect of a healthy church is the growth of the leadership. There are two aspects:

- I. Personal development of a leader (quality);
- II. Expansion in the leadership base (quantity).

I. Personal Development of a Leader (quality)

2 Timothy 2:15, one of my life verses, says, *"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth."* To present ourselves approved to God, we strive to develop to the fullest potential that God has placed in us. I firmly believe that there is room for every person to grow—spiritually, intellectually, emotionally and socially as well as in leadership skills.

In my years as a pastor, I know that stagnancy is not an option. It is very important that I keep growing in my relationship with God. It is easy for a leader to be so busy with ministry that he has little or no time to give his attention to worship, to hear God's word or be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. Perhaps a leader feels complacent because he has strong foundations and does not need the time with God anymore. The truth is contrary—the greater our role in leadership, the more we need God.

It is also important for a leader to grow in other areas. Leaders must keep abreast of contemporary mindset and culture to remain relevant in an ever changing world. While it is true that the God's word does not change, the application of the word must relate to current situations. It is not enough to quote, "Thus says the Lord". We need to study God's word, understand the present issues and ask the Holy Spirit to guide us to apply the principles of the Word to the complexities of life.

Leading in a church is stressful. We must develop emotional and mental strength and resilience. On one hand, Christian ministry has eternal implications. On the other, we are human and the people we lead are human. It is easy for a leader to give up when there are personal challenges and team conflicts. Paul says, *"All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize."* (1 Corinthians 9:25 NLT) As leaders, let us stand firm and encourage one another to be steadfast in God's calling.

Another area of personal development is leadership skills e.g. leading a team, planning a meeting, organizing an event, motivating volunteers, etc. I encourage leaders to be avid learners. The Chinese says, *"活到老，学到老"* ("learn as long as you live.") We must upskill or be left behind. For years, I was resistant to using digital Bible study tools. Nothing beats opening a book and flipping through the pages, right? Until I discovered that there are tons of study resources available digitally and online. When COVID-19 struck our nation, church leaders were forced to learn ZOOM and Microsoft Teams. We realized that social media platforms play a key role in reaching the NOW generation. I hope that senior leaders will not be resistant to change. Rather, we will embrace innovative technology and avenues and lead the church to expand the work of God.

II. Expansion in the Leadership Base (quantity)

The other aspect of growing leadership in a healthy church is to expand the number of leaders. It does not matter if a church is big or small. We must continually develop leaders. We see this when the early Church appointed deacons to serve alongside the apostles (Acts 6:1-6). Paul told Timothy, *"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others."* (2 Timothy 2:2) The raising of leaders is intentional—"entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others." A leader must identify potential leaders who are Christ-like. They should possess leadership qualities and are learners. This will ensure that the ministry of the church is not dependent on a single or a handful of leaders. A healthy church will have a training program, formal or informal, to develop the members and raise leaders. We must also offer opportunities for younger or newer leader to have practical experience (co-lead or lead under supervision). This takes faith in God and confidence in the new leaders. Evangelist Myles Munroe says, "Leadership success is measured by the success of your successor."

A pool of leaders will pave the way for a smooth succession of leadership. To all the leaders in the church, I like to quote Peter's words, *"And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away."* (1 Peter 5:4) May we be better leaders and raise more leaders for God's kingdom!



Rev Robert (Bob) Lum grew up in Eternal Life Assembly since his conversion in 1967. After a five-year banking career, he became a full-time Christian minister in 1985 and was appointed as senior pastor in 1992. Known for his friendliness and passion, Bob is a "people's pastor". He is married to Dorothy and they have three daughters, three sons-in-law and two grand-daughters and three grandsons.



Genuine Discipleship

By adopting genuine discipleship and refuting pseudo-discipleship, a church can become healthier and stronger. Rev Lawrence Koo exposes these myths on discipleship and brings the truths on genuine discipleship.

In Christian discipleship, we must stay away from pseudo-discipleship. Therefore, to embrace genuine discipleship, first we need to expose the myths of discipleship. Basically, there are four myths about discipleship:

1. I Just Want to be a Christian But Not a Disciple.

In the Bible, there is no distinction between a Christian and a disciple of Christ. Every Christian is a disciple, every disciple is a Christian. Unfortunately, we have bought into the myth, *“Every disciple is a Christian, but not every Christian is a disciple.”* While we know this is a sad reality, it’s not biblically correct.

People who say “I just want to be a Christian but not a disciple” only show their lack of biblical understanding of discipleship and their shallowness in their relationship with Christ. Dietrich Bonhoeffer once said, *“Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ.”*

2. Jesus Only Asked Me to Believe in Him But He Didn’t Call Me to be a Disciple.

Is it true that Jesus offers two kinds of call—one call to people to just believe in Him, and the other call to people to follow Him?

If we have bought into this myth, then there are two serious problems. Firstly, we have created a caste system in the Kingdom of God. Secondly, we have put words into the mouth of Jesus what He did not say.

The fact is whenever Jesus calls people, He calls people to follow Him FIRST.

3. Discipleship is for Mature Christians.

“Discipleship is for the special elites and the serious Christians who want to go deep...” is another myth. While we all start our Christian journey as spiritual babes, we cannot remain as babes forever. For Christians not wanting to grow is abnormal and unscriptural (1 Peter 2:2, Ephesians 4:13)

Discipleship is for both the immature and mature Christians. In fact, discipleship is even more crucial for the immature Christians.

4. “Don’t Follow Me, But Follow Jesus.”

It’s a cop-out to tell people, “Follow Jesus, do not follow me.” It is simply shirking our responsibility as Christians. Instead, we should say, “Follow me, as I follow Christ.” (1 Corinthians 11:1)

It does not mean Christians are perfect. On the contrary, it is because we are imperfect that we need to follow Christ. As we follow Christ in all our imperfections, we will discover the amazing grace of God.

What Then is Genuine Discipleship?

1. Discipleship is a Command, Not an Option.

Jesus made it explicitly clear that discipleship is a command, not an option. He did not say, “go and make converts of all nations...” He said, *“Go and make DISCIPLES of all nations...”* (Matthew 28:19)

No one likes to be commanded. We want to be our own lords. Jack Dawson in the movie, ‘Titanic’, steps up to the bow of the Titanic, throws up his arms and shouts, *“I am the king of the world!”* Little did he know that he was shouting from a sinking ship.

In Christian discipleship, there is only ONE KING. That king is Jesus, the KING of kings. Therefore, if Jesus is our King, then we must obey His commands.

2. Discipleship is Costly, and Not to be Taken Lightly.

Sadly, today, many people want a comfortable Christianity, a Christianity with no cross, no corrections, and no change. Genuine discipleship always comes with a price.

The fact is, following Jesus requires us to make hard choices—choices between earthly and eternal values. For Jesus said, *“No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”* (Luke 9:62) If we want to follow Jesus, our eyes must always be fixed on the Kingdom of God—things pertaining to eternal values. This would inadvertently cost us the temporal pleasure and earthly benefits.

3. Discipleship can only Happen Within a Community, and it’s Never an Individual Business.

We live in an individualistic world where personal rights are over-emphasized. While God values every individual because we are made in His image, God’s image is never completely found and grasped in individuality but in the unity of His people.

Therefore, Christian discipleship can never happen outside the community of faith. No one can truly be a disciple of Christ on their own. That is why we gather corporately to worship God as a church; that is why we get connected with people in a small group; and that is why we serve as a team in the ministry; and subject ourselves to the teaching and correction of people whom God has placed over us.

The truth is, if the goal of discipleship is about becoming like Christ, we can never be like Jesus on our own.

4. Discipleship is all About Christ and Not About Us.

Discipleship is NOT primarily about our spiritual growth, not about knowing the Bible, not about being prayerful, serving or worshiping, etc. All these are only means to the end of knowing Jesus Christ. There is no such thing as too much discipleship or over-emphasis of discipleship, just as there is no such thing as too much of following Jesus because discipleship is all about Jesus.

Genuine discipleship begins and ends with Christ because He is the founder and perfecter of our faith.

Churches become healthier and stronger when Christians are real disciples of Christ. Conversely, churches become sicker and weaker when believers embrace pseudo-discipleship. So, will the real disciples please stand up!



Rev Lawrence Koo stepped down as the senior pastor of New Horizon Church since June 2024. Currently, he is involved in itinerant ministry and missions.



Outward Focus and Evangelism

For a church to be healthy, it must be reaching out and growing in evangelism but how do you build a culture of outward focus and evangelism in your church? Rev Sabrina Chow gives us practical steps.

When Jesus gave the Great Commission to his disciples before his ascension, he has already set the mission of the church to be outward focus.

Matthew 28:19-20 *"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

The mandate is in three steps. Firstly, to make disciples of all nations. Secondly, to baptize them, and finally, to teach them all that Christ has commanded us to do. Evangelism is the first step towards discipleship. With this clarion call, the local church must make the Great Commission a priority.

So how does a church bring evangelism as its focus?

1. The Leadership Sets the Example to Embrace and Practice Lifestyle Evangelism.

1 Corinthians 11:1 *"Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ."*

People follow their leaders. If the leader has a lifestyle of evangelism, it rubs on to the people to do the same. John C. Maxwell says, "Everything rises and falls on leadership." If you want your church to be outward focus, the leader must set the example of evangelism. I personally make it a point to ask the Lord for opportunities to share the gospel whenever I'm with pre-believers. When God opens the door, I step in to share my testimony and explain the gospel to them. When I make it my lifestyle, and when I share such testimonies to the congregation, they are empowered and emboldened to do the same.

2. Create Different Platforms for Evangelism Throughout the Year to Reach Diverse Groups of People.

1 Corinthians 9:22 *"To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some."*

In our church we create different programs throughout the year to target diverse groups of people so there are many opportunities for outreach. Both English and Chinese congregations have their own evangelistic programs. The cell groups do Alpha. We have programs to reach our nearby community, we run age-group programs to reach the youth and young adults, we have programs to reach the business and corporate communities. With many platforms, the congregation invite their oikos and community to the suitable events that best fit their profile.

3. Do It as a Team.

Hebrews 10:24 *"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds."*

We encourage our congregation to do evangelism as a team. For example, in door knocking of community and street evangelism, those who are timid and inexperience will pair up with those who are bolder and more experienced. This makes evangelism fun and breaks the fear of talking to strangers and rejection. This encourages newbies to embrace evangelism as a lifestyle.

4. Equip the People by Preaching and Teaching Regularly on Evangelism.

1 Peter 3:15 *"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect."*

To keep the passion for evangelism, we often share from the pulpit on the importance of outreach and testimonies of salvations. We also equip the church on how to do evangelism and encourage everyone to attend these classes. When the congregation is equipped to do outreach, they are more confident to reach people for Christ.

5. Recognize Those with the Gift and Passion for Evangelism and Fan It to Flame.

2 Timothy 1:6 *"For this reason, I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands."*

We encourage everyone to evangelize, but we also recognize those with the passion and gift of evangelism. So, we mobilize them for different events to bring friends and share the gospel. Because of their gift, they are able to bring people and win them for Christ at a higher success rate.

6. Build Ownership Through Bottom-up Evangelism Initiatives.

Mark 10:43-44 *"Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all."*

We encourage cell leaders to take ownership and plan their own evangelism efforts throughout the year. This way, it is not just a top-down mobilization but a bottom-up initiative that builds ownership in evangelism.

7. Create a Warm Environment so People Feel Welcome, and Evangelism Can Take Place Comfortably.

Acts 16:34 *"The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole household."*

In our church we create a warm environment for people to fellowship over food. There is always breakfast before service and a once-a-month lunch for everyone. Often it is in that relaxed and welcoming environment that the gospel is shared with newcomers. And because they feel welcomed and accepted, they are more open to talk about the faith and many are won to Christ during these informal times.

8. Recognize that Evangelism is a Process and Not a One-time Event.

1 Corinthians 3-6-7 *"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow."*

Evangelism takes time. Sometimes you sow, sometimes you water and sometimes you reap, but it's the Holy Spirit who enables the seed of the gospel to grow. More often than not, we are called to sow the seeds of prayers and good works and wait for God to work in their lives. In time, when the harvest is ripe, we will reap it. There is no failure in evangelism. When we understand it as a process, we rejoice every time we have an opportunity to sow because it is an indication that the person is closer to salvation than ever before.

When we do the above, we build a culture of evangelism and outward focus. It's exciting because we often see pre-believers in our services and events give their lives to Jesus. When that happens, we rejoice with the angels in heaven as precious souls enter into the kingdom of God.



Rev Sabrina Chow is passionate about winning souls and discipling the local church. She founded Risen Christian Assembly in August 2018 and serves as their current Senior Pastor. Together with her team of pastors, leaders and members, she started this pioneering work to reach the unchurched through friendship and community evangelism. Her greatest joy is to see souls saved and people rise up in revival fire to fulfil their God-given destiny. She is happily married to Ps Andrew Lee, who also serves on staff with Risen Christian Assembly.



Spirit-Empowered Worship

The worship life of a church is an indicator of its health. How do we seek the Holy Spirit's empowerment in worship? Ps Jireh Ang leads us to find out.



When we look at signs of health in a church, one quick indicator would be found in the life of worship at a church. And we must know that worship is so much more than just music or singing; worship is what we give worth to or in whom we place worth. The true nature of worship lies in the condition of our hearts and where our priorities and dedication are placed.

A Reality Check

As a worship leader, the story behind the song “The Heart of Worship” by Matt Redman, has been a great reminder of this true nature of worship as well as a caution not to steer away from it. Mike Pilavachi, who was Matt’s pastor then, had observed that their church (with all the “works”—from the equipment to the well-rehearsed worship teams) seemed to be going through the motions each week and, though they were singing songs that even allowed for people to have a chance to “get down” to business with God, their hearts were far from Him. He noted that they had become “connoisseurs” of worship rather than participants of it.

Doesn’t this sound familiar? Jesus, in response to the religious leaders, and referencing Isaiah 29:13, said in Matthew 15:8-9 (NLT), *‘These people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. Their worship is a farce, for they teach man-made ideas as commands from God.’*

Return to First Love

This realization and reality check is where it begins—that our hearts are far from God while we continue to do church as we have always done. If we desire health in our churches, our hearts ought to return God, our first love. We want to honor and worship God with our hearts and not just pay lip service. Because when we return to the heart of worship, we will respond to His loving kindness and His majesty, and we surrender to Him, then an exchange begins. We will see God move through the Holy Spirit to guide, empower, and transform our lives and our worship experiences. We will develop and be led by the moving of the Holy Spirit, into a deeper connection with God.

A few years ago, while attending a course studying church models and re-thinking church, I was challenged to evaluate with some questions like these:

- Does God love what we are doing (in our church)?
- What did He see as we gathered?
- What pleased Him the most?
- Do we pray like we should?
- Do people even come with passion for Jesus?
- Do we mean it when we sing the songs we sing but don’t live it?

Admittedly, I had a sobering time trying to answer these questions. As I reflected, I thought of the preferences and even prejudices that have framed how we have worship gatherings each week and I laid them up against these questions. I wondered if we had led people to show up to church if there is the “right” stuff rather than showing up with an expectancy of our God being more than enough. Perhaps these are similar questions we can reflect on in our desire to lead and build a healthy church.

Seek the Empowerment of the Holy Spirit

As we start this journey to alignment and building health, we must first return to our reliance on the strength and empowerment of the Holy Spirit—our precious and promised gift. Jesus gives us the Holy Spirit to empower us in our journey and to do work He has entrusted us to continue. The Holy Spirit empowers us by revealing truth in our lives (like coming back to the heart of worship); by revealing truth in our lives that we have sin and have done things that are not pleasing to Him. And because He is intimately connected with Jesus, our worship is then able to be directed with the revelation He brings and for us recalibrate and to bring Jesus glory (John 16:12-15). And when our churches and our faith communities begin to live the Spirit-empowered lives of worship and sacrifice, we will see signs of a healthy church.

With this healthy alignment, a Spirit-empowered worship in church will obviously involve the Holy Spirit actively guiding and transforming the believers, engaging their whole heart (John 16:13). The church will be Jesus-centered, exalting and magnifying His name in worship (Ephesians 5:19-20); with preaching and teaching rooted in the Word to generate faith and conviction (2 Timothy 3:16-17). There will be an element of spiritual transformation whereby the Holy Spirit enables believers to victoriously overcome sin and with obedience to live according to His Word and serve others (Galatians 5:13, 16-17).

Jesus, in answering the Samaritan woman at the well, tells her,

John 4:23-24 (NLT), *“But the time is coming—indeed it’s here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship Him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth.”*

He is letting her know and letting us know that worship goes beyond physical locations and the traditions we have. He wants us to understand that the Holy Spirit and the truth He reveals must guide our worship. That we need to be rooted in the Word and its truth. And when we merge our spiritual passion with the spiritual truth, we will be healthy and empowered by the Spirit.



Ps Jireh Ang is the Associate Pastor at Emmanuel Assembly of God. He wears numerous hats with his portfolio and he is most passionate about connecting people with the love of Jesus. He grew up in Singapore and lived in the US for many years. A graduate of Northwest University in Kirkland, Washington (USA), he was in the marketplace and a bi-vocational church-planter in the US.

...Continued from pg 2

营造正确的氛围需要培训和发展。就像果树的枝条需要修剪才能结出更多果实一样，我们也必须献上时间和精力以促进学习、参与和纠正。这是不可忽视的。

领袖发展能确保教会的使命代代相传。MM33是我们神召会的集体目标，即在2033年前向神献上一百万间教会。这个目标的实现，离不开对宣教士、植堂者、下一代领袖和布道家等人的培训和发展。

让我们培养属灵成熟，投入服事的信徒，使他们发挥影响力，无论是在教育、政府、媒体，还是商业领域，都能以神国的价值观和原则去影响自己的生活圈子。

教导你的教会聆听神的声音，并跟随圣灵的引导。帮助他们建立与神深厚且真实的关系，使他们在生活的每个方面都能承载神的心意。塑造一群依靠圣灵的人。

营造正确的氛围需要圣灵。成长是神所命定的。教会的健康依赖于圣灵的运行。属灵恩赐的彰显是圣灵的工作，而非我们自己的作为。我们只是器皿。

在主祷文中，耶稣教导我们求神的旨意行在地上，如同行在天上。我们要站在破口中，凭信心祈求，邀请圣灵在我们当中释放天国的氛围。

我们需要顺服圣灵，让祂按照祂的方式运行在我们的事工中。有时，我们重视自己的计划和安排胜于圣灵。但如果我们希望教会拥有健康成长和扩展的氛围，就必须降服于圣灵的引导。混乱并不可怕。五旬节的圣灵降临看起来混乱，但我宁愿要神所带来的混乱，也不要人所能做到的最好。

健康的教会不只是少数人的特权。我相信，当我们营造一个充满信心、积极参与、不断培训和发展的氛围，并持续向圣灵降服，教会将被坚固，并被定位于成长和国度的扩展。

January 2TiP

Responding to the Word

in Prayer, Consecrating and Committing the Year 2025 to the Lord

2025 began with a bang as we had our very first Togetherness in Training and Prayer (2TiP) on January 2, 2025.

By Ps Mervin Chia, Bethel Assembly of God

Ps Jireh Ang, and Ps Daphne Lau led the ministers to worship, through declaring Christ as the One we desire and sing our praises to.

Rev Dominic Yeo started by calling us to place our 2024 at the foot of the cross, otherwise we might stumble either by the successes, or failures of the past year, and unable to move forward.

Rather, we have to be future-oriented, and forward-facing as we launch ahead into the mandate and mission that God has given to the global Assemblies of God, MM33.

2025 is a year of new beginnings where God will bring about an entrenchment into greater successes and breakthroughs.

Numerical Breakthrough is putting our hands and hearts together towards 1 million churches by 2033.

Generational Breakthrough is envisioning succession through the delegation and empowering of the next generation.

Growth Breakthrough is having a mindset towards growth in terms of church-planting.

Mandate Breakthrough is obeying the call to make disciples, both to be more like Jesus as well as to engage the world.

Spiritual Breakthrough is engaging in prayer at every Assemblies of God church.

Holistic Breakthrough is growing our churches healthily in the pattern of the early church in Acts 2:44-47.

Missional Breakthrough is seeing the Church established where the Gospel has not been reached.

Pentecostal Breakthrough is longing for the normative activity of the Holy Spirit in our churches where miracles, signs and wonders are performed.

Rev Dominic turns us to Isaiah 54:1 to see how we can receive these breakthroughs.

*Sing, O barren one, who did not bear;
break forth into singing and cry aloud,
you who have not been in labor!*

For the children of the desolate one will be more than the children of her who is married," says the LORD.

Rev Dominic here emphasizes 'more'. **More** in terms of the breakthrough, empowerment, provision, fulfillment, and catalytic movement of the Spirit manifesting and transforming the life of the Church, the ministers and our congregants.

1. Envisioning Breakthrough

As ministers we have to keep seeing where God is leading in order for us live out God's call. God is always calling us to something new and fresh because He is always doing new things and calling us to participate in what He is doing. Our perception of the reality of God's call enables, and acknowledges possession.

Philippians 3:12 *"Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own."* Let's take hold of Him, who takes hold of us.

But not only do we perceive, we declare God's breakthrough.

We proclaim God's Word and His Work. Declaration releases formation and transformation. Let us declare from God's Word what He says He will do because what He says, He creates, He forms, and He transforms our life, our ministry and our churches.

2. Move From Desolation into Joy

To remain in desolation means to accept our current situation, denying any possibility of God's power to vivify us by His Spirit, form Christ in us, and transform our ministries.

However, **joy challenges our current reality** of barrenness, sorrow and defeat, for the reality of God's new creation.

Joy is the rendition of heaven. We realize the foretaste of what is to be, the new creation. We celebrate in what God is, and what He says He will in the midst of what might appears as a desolate reality.

Joy is the multiplication of God's blessing.

3. Your Current State is Never the Finished State

The cross not only is finished work, it is also the delivered work. What Christ accomplished once-and-for-all in the past, is realized or delivered and it can be appropriated in our lives, and in our churches today.

What this means for us is that we are defined by His Word which says that He is able to do far more abundantly than we can ever ask or imagine.

Therefore, we live in the destiny, and destination that God ordains for us in the cross of Christ, and while we hope, we hope as heirs of God, and co-heirs with Christ, adopted and developed, into the the image of the Son.

4. Get ready for the breakthroughs

We get ready by adopting a disposition of anticipation for what God is going to do. Readiness postures us to be open to what God envisions to do in our lives and in our churches. Another disposition we adopt is joy because joy is faith manifest, this relates back to the joy

that challenges the current state versus the promises of God. Rev Dominic then introduces another disposition and that is singing as opposed to complaining. Singing is both a disposition and our liturgical expression which comes from what we open ourselves to. It can be formative, because we become what we worship, and therefore we are to be discerning to what we sing. Singing builds faith, and it is important that faith is established on the Truth of God's Word.

Rev Terence Ong took over to lead the ministers in prayer for one another in pairs because God's call through the vision is intended not burden but to provide direction. Therefore, it was necessary for us to provide the care and support to one another as ministers to enable an understanding that we are not in this alone and we can take comfort and find strength in the body, in the community of pastors. Rev Terence then broke us into groups to share our struggles, and what aspect of the various breakthroughs we felt resonated with us in terms of our personal lives as well as our ministries and then to pray for an area of breakthrough that God placed upon our hearts.



1 Rev Dominic Yeo addressing the pastors and ministers

2 We stand together to be ready for breakthroughs

3 Committing 2025 to the Lord

February 2TiP

Sustaining a Corporate Prayer Culture in the Church:

A Senior Pastor's Experience

A time of empowerment with Rev Sabrina Chow sharing her personal experience as a church planter.

By Ps Chai Moon Leong, New Horizon Church

The 2TiP gathering on February 6, 2025, was a powerful time of learning and impartation on establishing and sustaining a corporate prayer culture within the church. Rev Terence Ong welcomed all attendees with Psalm 138, setting the tone for a Spirit-filled session. This was followed by a time of worship led by Ps Derek, featuring songs, 'Hear Our Praises' and 'Because of You'. The presence of God was felt in our midst as we worshiped.

Insights from Rev Sabrina Chow

Rev Sabrina Chow shared her firsthand experience of planting Risen Christian Assembly, emphasizing the foundational role of prayer in the process. The church was birthed in prayers, with the initial four months dedicated to corporate prayer meetings held at Trinity Christian Centre. Through these experiences, she realized that spiritual warfare was real, and that the congregation needed a clear purpose for their prayers.

Establishing a Culture of Corporate Prayer

Recognizing the need to seek God's face and pray for revival, Rev Sabrina initiated daily onsite corporate prayer meetings from 2018 to 2021 during lunchtime. These meetings laid a strong spiritual foundation for the church plant. In 2021, they transitioned to weekly meetings, and in 2023, the meetings were renamed Holy Spirit Night to reflect their Spirit-led nature. Later, the name changed to Good Morning Holy Spirit, aligning with the shift to Saturday morning gatherings. She emphasized the importance of understanding why frequent corporate prayer meetings are necessary, stating that knowing the "why" will clarify the "how".

Six Reasons for Corporate Prayer Meetings

1. Spiritual Work Requires Spiritual Effort

The church's mission is spiritual, and it must be carried out through prayer (Ephesians 6:18). Activities without prayer remain human efforts; those bathed in prayer become God's work.

2. Desperation for God Drives Prayer

When believers acknowledge their need for God, they are compelled to seek Him in prayer.

3. Hunger for God Inspires Prayer

A deep longing for God draws people to consistent prayer.

4. Needs Drive Prayer

Personal and communal needs push people toward corporate intercession.

5. Spiritual Warfare Demands Prayer

Ephesians 6:12 highlights the battle against spiritual forces, necessitating corporate prayer for unity, breakthrough, and victory (Philippians 2).

6. Prayer is the Responsibility of Pastors

Pastors are called to lead their churches in prayer and ensure their congregations become houses of prayer. A strong prayer culture begins with leadership. Church leaders must prioritize prayer in their personal lives and model its importance to the congregation. When pastors, elders, and ministry leaders actively participate in corporate prayer, they inspire others to follow.

Preparing to Lead Effective Prayer Meetings

A well-organized prayer meeting should have a clear focus. While flexibility is essential, a basic structure ensures the meeting stays focused and engaging. Pray and prepare the agenda according to the Holy Spirit's guidance and the church calendar. Be flexible—plans may change as the Spirit leads. Work closely with worship leaders to ensure a seamless flow between worship and prayer. Step out in faith and press in for breakthroughs, healings, and encounters



Rev Sabrina Chow sharing from a senior pastor's perspective

with God. Make prayer meetings engaging and Spirit-led to avoid them becoming monotonous. People will engage in prayer more consistently if they believe their prayers make a difference. Creating an atmosphere of faith and expectancy fuels participation. Preparing to lead effective powerful prayer meetings are the essentials in creating a corporate prayer meeting culture.

Sustaining a Corporate Prayer Meeting Culture

To ensure long-term sustainability, can consider implementing varieties to keep prayer meetings engaging and prevent routine from turning into boredom. Incorporate different styles of prayer to accommodate various personalities and spiritual gifts. Rotating different pastors to lead prayer meetings to distribute the workload.

Devoting the first 30 minutes to worship, soaking in God's presence, and allowing Him to minister. Practicing listening to and obeying the Holy Spirit. Encouraging active participation through small groups, prophetic acts, and declarative prayers. Interweaving worship with prayer to create a dynamic and responsive atmosphere.

When people see the impact of corporate prayer, they are more likely to remain committed. Testimonies inspire faith and reinforce the reality of God's power. Beyond weekly corporate meetings, other prayer initiatives were introduced to sustain a strong prayer culture within the church. These initiatives foster an environment where prayer becomes a lifestyle rather than just an event. Building and sustaining a corporate prayer culture requires perseverance. Many believers struggle with prayer because they don't understand its significance or how to engage in it effectively. Teaching on the biblical foundations of prayer helps people develop confidence and desire to pray corporately. Churches may face discouragement, low attendance, or spiritual resistance. However, consistent prayer warriors must press on.

What are the benefits of corporate prayer meetings? Aligns the church with the will of God and allows His answers to unfold in His timing. Develops a prayerful congregation, shaping prayer as a lifestyle. Raises up prayer

leaders who guide others in intercession. Sharpens spiritual discernment, allowing believers to hear from God more clearly.

The Role of Leadership in Fostering a Prayer Culture

A strong prayer culture does not develop by accident, it requires intentional leadership that prioritizes and nurtures prayer as a way of life. Leaders play a crucial role in sustaining a corporate prayer culture. To build and maintain momentum. Keep prayer meetings regular and announce them consistently. Encourage participation through testimonies of answered prayers. Understand that a prayer culture develops progressively, requiring patience and persistence.

Teach people to hear from God through both structured teaching and personal encounters. Many believers struggle with prayer because they don't understand its significance or how to engage in it effectively. Teaching on the biblical foundations of prayer helps people develop confidence and desire to pray corporately.

A strong prayer culture emerges when leaders emphasize total reliance on God. Instead of treating prayer as a last resort, leaders should encourage their community to seek God first in all situations. When decisions, challenges, and successes are consistently brought before God in prayer, it reinforces the belief that He is the ultimate source of wisdom and provision.

As the 2TiP session concluded, Rev Chia Beng Hock led the congregation in prayers, reminding them that while they may plan, it is ultimately God who determines their steps. The session was a powerful reminder that prayer is not just an activity but a divine strategy for transformation, revival, and sustained spiritual growth in the church. A church that prays together thrives together.

Igniting and sustaining a corporate prayer culture requires intentional leadership, solid biblical teaching, and consistent practice. When prayer becomes a central part of church life, the congregation experiences unity, power, and revival. Let us commit to cultivating a prayer movement that glorifies God and transforms lives. Let us turn prayer into a lifestyle for all believers.



科技与福音事工

Technology and Gospel Sharing

吕丽萍牧师，AG中文牧者领袖网络协调人。

By Rev Lindsey Lui, AG Chinese Pastors-Leaders' Network Coordinator

使用科技传福音。

2025年2月6日，37位讲华语的牧师和领袖参加了AG大家庭的敬拜活动之后，分开到另一间教室一起祷告和领受装备。这些活动都是以华语进行。他们之后与讲英语的牧师和领袖们一起共进午餐和团契。

“我们喜欢这种形式，因为它提醒我们，AG大家庭是由不同的支派和语言组成的。”

“我们有机会结识不同的牧师，同时用自己的母语为他人祷告并得到装备。”

科技与福音事工的培训加强我们的事工能力。我们思考在数字化时代，科技如何为福音事工带来突破性机遇？我们如何利用新媒体触及更广泛的群体，解决福音传播中的挑战，避开常见的误区，并且揭示人工智能在福音事工中的潜力？在这2TiP，我们得到宝贵的知识。我们也祷告圣灵教导我们如何有智慧为信仰善用科技，完成主的大使命！

我们期待下一次的8月中英联合2TiP活动！

Using technology to evangelize.

On February 6, 2025, 37 Mandarin-speaking pastors and leaders joined the big AG family for worship before adjourning to a separate classroom for training and prayer. These were conducted in Mandarin. They rejoined the English-speaking pastors and leaders for lunch and fellowship.

“We love this format as it reminds us that the AG family is made up of different tribes and tongues.”

“We have a chance to meet different pastors, and at the same time, pray for one another and be equipped in our mother tongue.”

The training on Technology and Gospel Sharing was empowering! We considered how technology brings new opportunities to evangelize to a wider audience. We looked at the pitfalls using AI in the ministry context. Ultimately, we need the guidance and discernment of the Holy Spirit on how to best use technology to reach different groups of people.

We look forward to the next Chinese-English combined 2TiP in August!



- 1 中文牧师领袖推动神国度的发展 Advancing the Kingdom as a family of Chinese ministers
- 2 讲演, 许秀琴姐妹 Our speaker, Sis Khor Siew Khim
- 3 为着彼此的事工激励祷告 Praying to uplift one another's ministries
- 4 我们同心祷告圣灵给我们使用技术的能力传福音 United prayers for Holy Spirit power to use technology for outreach
- 5 “捞起”团契 Fellowship over Lo Hei

Bringing Festive Cheer

Lunar New Year celebrations brought warmth to our Teen Challenge residents.

By Teen Challenge Singapore

On January 14, 2025, Teen Challenge Singapore celebrated the Lunar New Year, marking a special time of reflection, fellowship, and joy. The hope was to foster a sense of community and provide festive cheer to residents and families. With an opening prayer led by Rev Chia Beng Hock, the celebrations began.

Creative Performance

In a delightful twist to the traditional Lunar New Year festivities, one of our residents donned a pineapple costume to welcome and bring cheer to fellow residents and their families. This creative and heartwarming gesture replaced the customary lion dance performance, adding a unique and memorable touch to the celebration. This spirited performance by our resident highlighted the ingenuity and enthusiasm of Teen Challenge Singapore, making the event a truly unforgettable experience for everyone.

In the spirit of unity, gratitude, and togetherness, residents were treated to a sumptuous festive buffet dinner. Following dinner, everyone gathered in the Chapel Hall for an evening performance. The residents of Teen Challenge delighted the audience with their musical talents in celebration of the Lunar New Year. This special performance brought joy and festive cheer to the community, featuring

traditional songs that reflected the rich cultural heritage of Lunar New Year festivities.

Fun Games

The evening festivities then switched to games and a lively bingo game. The game brought everyone together; smiles were seen on our participant's faces as they eagerly awaited their winning numbers. Goodie bags filled with treats and essentials were also given out to the residents and families, spreading warmth and appreciation.

Lo Hei Time

Of course, a Lunar New Year celebration would not be complete without a Lo Hei (Prosperity Toss) session. Excitement filled the air as the Yu Sheng was tossed with proclamations of Christian scripture verses about blessing, hope, and renewal. Each ingredient was paired with a Bible verse, reinforcing God's promises for the new year.

The night ended with a beautiful moment as the residents, families and staff of Teen Challenge got together to light up sparklers, symbolizing new beginnings and God's light shining in our lives. The celebration concluded with a heartfelt prayer by Rev Chia, blessing everyone with faith, hope, and renewal for the year ahead.



- 1 Fostering a sense of community with residents and families through fun games
- 2 Bringing laughter to one another with creative costumes and team activities
- 3 Receiving gifts for participating in games
- 4 Sharing a meal together
- 5 Ending the night with lighting sparklers, symbolizing new beginnings and God's light shining in our lives

Turn to Pg 18 for a life-transforming testimony by one of our residents.



Rev Dominic Yeo: Chairman with the Nations

Our General Superintendent, who is also the Chairman of the World Assemblies of God Fellowship, started the year with a powerful time of ministry. Let's pray for him as he continues to empower and equip the various AG General Councils and ministries.

January 7-12 – GHANA

I was in Accra, Ghana by the invitation of the President of Ghana, H.E John Mahama, to attend the presidential inauguration held on January 7, 2025. H.E John Mahama is part of the Assemblies of God church. I had the opportunity to visit him and pray for him as he takes on the office with a strong desire for God to use him as an instrument to change his nation.

Thereafter, I took the opportunity to make a courtesy call to Bishop Stephen Wengham and his Executive Presbytery at the AG Ghana HQ. And had the privilege of joining them at the start of their prayer retreat for the year 2025, toured the office facility of Assemblies of God Television, and held a brief meeting with the Ghana leadership.

During my time in Ghana, I also commiserated with Rev Stephen Wengam, General Superintendent of Assemblies of God, Ghana following the demise of his mother, Madam Deborah Wengam. Accompanied by Rev Peter Chin, General Superintendent of Brunei Assemblies of God and Secretary of Southeast Asia Assemblies of God Fellowship, I extended the condolences of the World Assemblies of God Fellowship to Rev Stephen and signed the book of condolence.

January 15-19 – BURKINA FASO

Rev Etienne P Zongo, President of AG Burkina Faso, invited me to be the main speaker at their triennial General Council meeting in their country's capital city, Ouagadougou. AG Burkina Faso celebrates 104 years since their establishment. Expounded on Acts 1:8 and MM33, and challenged the more than 8,000 ministers to move in the power of the Holy Spirit for miraculous, signs and wonders to extend and expand the Kingdom of God.

January 21-24 – PERU

It was a privilege to be back in Peru AG to minister to them at the General Assembly after speaking at their International Congress of Missions in September last year. There was a powerful move of God as ministers received healing for themselves. God is working in the lives of these leaders and ministers as they, in turn, impact their ministries.



1 Rev Dominic Yeo with Bishop Stephen Wengam

2 Extending condolences to Bishop Wengam following the passing of his mother

3 Speaking about MM33 and challenging the ministers to move in the power of the Holy Spirit

4 Witnessing a powerful move of the Holy Spirit among the ministers in Peru

Equipping Ministers for Mental Health Care

Dr Joyce Chan addressed mental health concerns within Next Gen ministries.

By Next Gen Commission Team

Mental health has become an increasingly critical issue among young people today. Studies indicate that one in seven young people globally experiences a mental health disorder¹, and suicide remains one of the leading causes of death among youth². Additionally, a survey conducted in 2022 found that nearly 50% of young people struggle with anxiety and depression³, often without adequate support. As these challenges continue to rise, churches and ministry leaders play a vital role in providing care, guidance, and intervention. However, navigating mental health concerns within a spiritual context can be complex and requires wisdom, training, and discernment.

Addressing Concerns

On March 13, 2025, the Next Gen Commission (NGC) held a gathering at Blessed Grace Church, bringing together Children, Youth, and Young Adult Pastors and Ministers from 14 different churches. The event was designed to equip ministers with knowledge, strategies, and resources to better address mental health concerns within their ministries. The highlight of the gathering was an insightful

and thought-provoking session by Dr Joyce Chan from TalkingHearts.SG on Mental Health for the NextGen.

Dr Chan addressed some of the most pressing questions that NextGen ministers frequently encounter, including:

- **How to differentiate between mental health challenges and spiritual oppression.** This is a common dilemma for church leaders who may be unsure whether an issue requires pastoral intervention or professional mental health support.
- **The role of deliverance, inner healing, and when to seek professional intervention.** Dr Chan provided clarity on how these elements fit together, emphasising the need for a holistic approach that integrates spiritual and psychological care.
- **Guidelines for referrals and the church's responsibility in pastoral care.** Participants learned about setting clear referral pathways for young people

struggling with mental health issues while maintaining a strong pastoral presence.

- **Balancing confidentiality while ensuring parents and leaders are appropriately informed.** Dr Chan shared practical wisdom on safeguarding young people's privacy while engaging the necessary stakeholders in their care.
- **Training church leaders to better support young people in mental distress.** The session highlighted key areas where church leaders can be trained to provide first-line emotional and spiritual support.

Throughout the discussion, participants gained valuable insights, practical tools, and ethical guidelines that will enable them to minister effectively to the young people under their care. Many left with a renewed sense of direction, particularly on how to establish effective partnerships with organizations like TalkingHearts.SG and other mental health resources to strengthen their ministry's capacity for mental health care.

Praying and Supporting One Another

The gathering was not only about learning but also about fostering relationships and strengthening community among ministers. It began with a shared meal, providing an intentional time for pastors and ministers to connect, bond, and encourage one another. The day ended with a powerful time of prayer, recognizing that those in ministry also need support for their own mental well-being. As pastors and ministers, prioritizing personal mental health ensures they can continue to care for others effectively.

Up and Coming Gathering

Looking ahead, we invite all Next Gen pastors and ministers to our next NGC Local Gathering on October 16, where Rev Joey Asher Tan from Grace Assembly of God will speak on Systematic Disciple-making for the Next Gen. Let's continue to strengthen one another as we disciple the next generation together!



- 1 Lifting our praises together as one body
- 2 Praying and encouraging one another
- 3 Our session speaker, Dr Joyce Chan, from TalkingHearts.SG
- 4 Fellowship over a meal
- 5 Connecting with one another as we shared our hearts

¹ UNICEF. (2021). *The State of the World's Children 2021: On My Mind – Promoting, protecting and caring for children's mental health*. Retrieved from <https://www.unicef.org/reports/state-worlds-children-2021>

² World Health Organization. (2022). *Suicide worldwide in 2019: Global health estimates*. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/publications/item/9789240026643>

³ National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). (2022). *Prevalence of Major Depressive Episode Among Adolescents*. Retrieved from <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/major-depression.shtml>



Celebrating Two Years of TalkingHearts!

TalkingHearts is celebrating its 2nd anniversary, and we are immensely grateful for the journey so far. Over the past two years, we have been blessed with incredible opportunities to grow, serve, and impact lives. Since becoming an associate partner of the Assemblies of God (AG) Singapore, we have received tremendous support and encouragement from pastors and leaders across the network. Their prayers, guidance, and partnerships have strengthened our mission and expanded our reach.

We are excited to share that our counseling presence has now expanded beyond our original location in the North of Singapore. We now have additional satellite counseling spaces in the South and East, enabling us to serve more individuals in need of professional and faith-based counseling. Without the partnerships and generosity of churches that have opened their doors to this ministry, we would not have been able to achieve this milestone.

Another significant development is the growth of our volunteer counselor base. What started with just two dedicated volunteer counselors has now expanded to five trained counselors committed to providing

emotional and mental wellness support. Each counselor brings unique expertise and a shared heart for serving others, ensuring that more individuals and families receive the care and guidance they need.

Extending Our Reach Beyond Borders

In the last quarter of 2024, TalkingHearts stepped beyond Singapore to extend our ministry internationally. We were honored to serve church leaders in the Philippines by providing one-on-one counseling sessions and conducting a mental wellness workshop designed to equip them with tools to navigate challenges in ministry and life. This opportunity to serve beyond our local community has been a deeply rewarding experience, and we trust that God will continue to open doors for us to be a blessing to the nations.

At TalkingHearts, we remain committed to our vision of being the salt and light of the earth (Matthew 5:13-16). We believe that through counseling and emotional support, individuals can experience healing, restoration, and a renewed sense of purpose. And, as TalkingHearts' tagline says, "Better Mind, Better Lives." After all, as a man thinks in his heart, so is he (Proverbs 23:7).

How You Can Support TalkingHearts

As we continue to grow, we invite you to partner with us in making an impact. Here are some ways you can support TalkingHearts:

→ Sponsor a Counseling Space

We are looking for suitable locations to host counseling sessions. If you have a space to offer, we would love to arrange a site visit.

→ Sponsor Someone for Counseling

Your financial support can help individuals who may not otherwise afford counseling services.

→ Spread the Word

Help us reach more people by sharing about TalkingHearts with your friends, family, and church community. Our website: www.talkinghearts.sg.

If you would like to support TalkingHearts' ministry, we would love to hear from you! Reach out to us at admin@talkinghearts.sg.

Thank You for being a part of this journey.
We look forward to what God will continue to do through us and in us in the years ahead!



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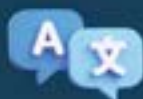
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A Journey of Sowing Seeds in the Mission Field

A life-transforming mission trip which shifted my thinking and understanding of doing God's work.

By Jerlynn Tay, Zion Full Gospel Church

I am Jerlynn, an undergrad at SIT studying communications and digital media. Before I dive into the mission journey, here is my story. The year I gave my life to God, I encountered a vivid vision in a room with my pastor and a friend. I saw myself in a deserted place, speaking to a group of people with weapons. That was where it all began for me, suddenly I felt my heart break for the people I saw in the vision and I prayed for them. Those in the room affirmed with similar visions. I was 14 then, so I did not really know what to do with the vision and left it at the back of my mind since that day.

God Prepared Me

Through the years, God continued to move in my life, healing childhood traumas and ungodly beliefs I've grown up with. Though the journey was painful, Jesus redeemed my story for His glory. My circumstances did not change overnight after I came to faith, but Jesus' power began to transform me. One of the first and most important lessons God taught me was to honor my parents, which seemed impossible then. He changed my heart as I obeyed, helping me empathize with them as I realize that they are first-time parents. This change started to extend to my friends, school, and beyond.

In December 2022, while I was finishing my last semester at the polytechnic, God reminded me of the vision I had at 14 about the desert and the unreached, as He invited me to take a gap year for missions. Initially, I really wanted to join a YWAM program immediately, but God told me to wait. After a bit of wrestling with this, I trusted Him and, in February 2023, received an opportunity to intern with Interserve Singapore for a year before my mission trip.

Reflecting on my year in Singapore, I'm grateful for how it reshaped my missional views and deepened my relationship with God. I feel like an arrow being drawn back on a bow, waiting to be launched by Him. God revealed that this process of being drawn back on the archer's bow is meant to bring me closer to Him, to be launched in His time for a greater purpose. I began to understand John Piper's statement that "missions exist because worship doesn't." God desires communion with us; our mission is to help others enter that relationship with Christ. In 2024, I then went to Indonesia for five months as an act of obedience to fulfill what God entrusted me during this season.

The Five Months

I had the privilege to live among Afghan refugees, particularly the Hazaras, who fled persecution based on their ethnicity and beliefs. Following leadership changes, girls were banned from education and work, forcing many Hazaras to seek refuge in countries like Australia, Canada, and the US.

However, Australia closed its doors in 2014, leaving many stranded in Indonesia, struggling with financial and health issues. We engaged the refugee community through

"Hi-story.page", a social enterprise that trained refugees as workshop instructors via ZOOM and allowed them to earn 80% of the fees, as they wanted to create dignified job opportunities for refugees. In response to a tragic series of suicides, they launched a six-month mental wellness program for refugee volunteers, which strengthened our community. This effort paved the way for our character-building program for local students and English lessons for Afghan church members during the five months to build relationships with them.

Glimpses of Their Lives

In our work with refugee families, we prioritise building relationships through simple moments like sharing tea—'lim teh'. These interactions offer more profound insights into their lives than formal programs. Despite the absence of established ministries, home visits and connections at refugee learning centres allow us to hear firsthand accounts of their struggles and the emotional toll of leaving everything behind due to persecution.

One impactful story is of Mr N, a former journalist from Afghanistan who fled his country together with his young child and wife due to targeted head-hunting, faced depression and unemployment in Indonesia before starting a learning centre for refugee children.

Similarly, a young woman named Ms N struggles to navigate her refugee life alone after losing her parents. Their experiences broke my heart and reminded me of how limited I am as well as how much I needed Jesus in all of these.



Mr N's life is turned from despair to being purposeful in starting a learning centre



Ms N arises from her loss to become a stronger person



Conducting a Character-Building session

A Renewed Understanding

To conclude, during my time in Indonesia, I learned to shift from a quick, solution-driven mindset to being intentional and understanding the deep pain of refugees. This journey brought humility and taught me that doing His will is not about immediate results but faithfulness in sowing seeds and trusting God for growth. As Hebrews 11:6 and 1 Corinthians 3:7 remind us, faithfulness pleases God, and the outcomes belong to Him.

Lastly, discipleship is about bringing others closer to Jesus, as seen in Acts 1:8 and Matthew 28. Spending five months in Indonesia building relationships over tea challenged my "efficient" mindset. True discipleship requires making time for others and being faithful to our role. Like the Parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10, we must reflect on this:

Have we been too busy to stop and care for those in need? Have we been empowering others to sow seeds of faith through our lives?



Having "Lim-Teh" time to connect deeper with the families



Teaching English via ZOOM to the community

Testimony of Your Nature

When we move forward with faith, worship and surrender, the Lord turned our mourning into joy.

By Albert and Rebekah Liang, Centre of New Life

"Sing, O barren one, who did not bear; break forth into singing and cry aloud, you who have not been in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than the children of her who is married," says the Lord. "Enlarge the place of your tent, and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out; do not hold back; lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes." (Isaiah 54:1-2)

Rebekah and I got married on July 2, 2016, in the presence of our families and friends from Taiwan, Malaysia, and Singapore. It was one of the most memorable milestones of our lives as we embarked on the journey of building a family together. Little did we know how the next eight years would challenge and deepen our understanding of surrender, love, and resilience through life's ups and downs.

Worshiping Amid the Storm

On our second anniversary, July 2, 2018, we found ourselves at KK Women's and Children's Hospital, grieving the loss of our first pregnancy at seven weeks. Our hearts were shattered. Amid the storm, we felt led to worship. We sang "10,000 Reasons" as a song of surrender, offering our pain to the Lord, knowing that this precious life had always belonged to Him. For He alone is the giver of life.

Both Rebekah and I love children. We cherish time with our nieces and nephews, and we have always longed to be parents—to raise a family with a kingdom-minded purpose. However, after experiencing the heartbreak of miscarriage and subsequent medical challenges, we grew increasingly concerned about whether we would ever conceive again.

Time passed quickly. Between 2018 and 2020, just as we felt ready to try again, the world was shaken by the COVID-19 pandemic. Uncertainty weighed heavily on every aspect of our lives, including my career. What started as a two-year wait stretched into four, then six. We began to feel a deep sense of helplessness regarding our desire for children.

Encountering God's Nature

During this waiting period, we sought various treatments, including traditional Chinese medicine and nutritional supplements. In 2022 and 2023, we attempted three rounds of intrauterine insemination (IUI), but each one ended in disappointment. The process was emotionally and physically exhausting. Each time we discovered that Rebekah was not pregnant, our hearts grew weary.

At the end of 2023, we had a pivotal realization: *Did we get married just to have children?* Where had we placed our hope and fulfillment? We knew we had to address the condition of our hearts.

At the start of 2024, while participating in Awaken Generation's worship school, we encountered the song "Your Nature" by Kari Jobe during a revival night.

*"You bring life to the barren places,
Light to the darkest spaces,
God, it's Your nature."*



Celebrating God's goodness with wholehearted worship

*You bring joy to the brokenhearted,
Hope to the ones who've lost it,
God, it's Your nature."*

*"Sing out, O barren woman! Sing out, O broken man!
Stretch out your hands, believing this is your promised land.
Break out of disappointment, break out of hopelessness.
Stretch out your hands, believing this is your promised land."*

As we sang, our hearts were reignited with hope, joy, and intimacy with the Lord. We were reminded that our source of life must be rooted in God's living Word and in the finished work of the cross completed by Jesus Christ.

We came to a revelation: our marriage is not defined by whether we have children. Our purpose is to build a strong marriage that honors and glorifies Jesus Christ. We chose to trust that God could work through both supernatural miracles and medical interventions. With renewed faith, we took a step forward and embarked on the journey of IVF—not out of desperation, but from a place of wholeness, praise, and surrender.

Shifting from Worry to Worship

Rebekah felt convicted to shift her focus from worrying about conceiving to worshipping wholeheartedly. She dedicated herself to worshipping the Lord, expanding her discipleship groups at our home church, Centre of New Life, and serving as a dance student mentor at Awaken Generation, the worship school.

As we began the IVF journey, we shared it with our mentors, leaders, family, and life group community, inviting them to pray with us. We are deeply grateful for their support, as they stood by our side, offering help physically, spiritually, and emotionally. We surrendered our expectations to the Lord, learning to rest in Him as His children and dedicating our hearts to seeking His presence.

One evening, while having dinner with a dear brother in Christ, he shared his testimony of God's faithfulness. He

and his wife had also gone through IVF, and four years ago, they welcomed their firstborn. His words encouraged us: 'Do not feel ashamed of seeking medical help, for God can work through any means. Life is ultimately sparked and given by Him alone.'

His testimony affirmed what God had already been speaking to us: He is the Giver of life. He turns wastelands into fertile ground. He uses the barren woman and the broken man to dwell in His presence.

Turning Mourning into Joy

Encouraged by this, we continued to move forward in faith. Three weeks later, we went through the final stage of IVF. While waiting for the outcome, we experienced the Lord's grace, love, and faithfulness. One month later, Rebekah conceived! We were carrying a beautiful miracle child.

We were reminded of the verses that marked our wedding:

*"You have turned my mourning into joyful dancing.
You have taken away my clothes of mourning
and clothed me with joy,
that I might sing praises to You and not be silent.
O Lord my God, I will give You thanks forever!"
(Psalm 30:11-12)*

We are deeply grateful for the testimonies of others that encouraged us along the way, and now we share our own, believing that those who hear it may also find encouragement and renewed faith in God.

The Hebrew word *Aydooth* (אֵדוּת), meaning "testimony" or "witness," carries the idea of "do it again"—a reminder of God's power to restore and fulfill His promises.

For it is truly in our Heavenly Father's nature to bring life to barren places, light to the darkest spaces, and joy to the brokenhearted.

We close with this verse, which has marked our journey of receiving a son, sharing it with joy:

"For the Lord has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place." (Psalm 132:13)



Hearts full as we receive our miracle baby

“I’ve got you. I’ve always had you.”

Putting trust in our Healer and Protector.

By Tan Wenting, Harborlight Church

I discovered a lump under my right armpit in early March 2023. At first, I thought nothing of it because whenever I got sick, I would usually get small bumps from swollen lymph nodes. I assumed it would go away in a few days, however, this lump remained for months, and my worry deepened.

Coping with Uncertainty

At first, I tried to brush it off. I told myself it was probably nothing—maybe just an infection or lingering effects of a recent cold. But as time passed, the worry started to grow. Every time I touched it, a knot formed in my stomach: this was not just a passing discomfort anymore; it was a constant reminder that something was not right.

At that time, I was so afraid that it could be cancerous. Breast cancer was the first thing that came to mind, especially since I have female relatives who faced similar symptoms. I was terrified to find out the truth, but even more so, I was afraid of telling my family, knowing how heartbroken they would be. The fear of possibly burdening them weighed heavily on me. What if my worst fear came true? How would they cope? How would I cope?

Trusting God Amid Fear

At the same time, I was planning my wedding. This was supposed to be one of the happiest seasons of my life, but instead, I found myself feeling anxious, uncertain, and emotionally drained. I kept my struggle private, only confiding in my then-fiancé. Doubts constantly chipped away at me: *Am I worthy of being married to my husband? What if I really am sick? Will I become a burden to him?*

Even in the midst of fear, I still trusted in God. I have always believed in God’s power, and I knew He was in control. I am not someone who gives up easily, and deep down I was certain that God would not give up on me either. But that did not mean it was easy. Some days, the fear was overwhelming. I would wake up in the middle of the night with my heart racing, wondering what the future held. I prayed fervently, asking God to reveal Himself and heal me. I did everything I could to resist the creeping thoughts that tried to pull me down, holding onto every Bible verse I could find about healing, hope, and God’s promises.

Seeking God for a Miracle

In September, our church held a special weekend service called Miracle Weekend with Ps Christopher Alam as the speaker. I had heard of his powerful healing anointing, and I felt a strong prompting to attend. At this point, I was desperate for a miracle, longing to encounter God in a life-changing way.

Surrendering to God

On the second night, Ps Christopher opened the altar for those in need of healing and miracles, and the entire congregation came forward. The atmosphere was filled with

expectation as people cried out to God, lifting their hands in faith. By divine intervention, Ps Christopher and I locked eyes, and he asked me what was wrong.

I hesitated for a moment. Until that point, I had kept my struggle private, afraid of how my family would take the news. But at that moment, I felt a deep conviction to step forward and share my situation. He listened intently, then instructed me to touch my lump and raise my hands. I closed my eyes and surrendered completely to God, trusting Him to move.

In that moment of surrender, I felt myself falling at the feet of God. A deep peace washed over me—unlike anything I had ever felt before. It was as if God was telling me, “I’ve got you. I’ve always had you.” All the fear, all the worry—it melted away. I knew that God had heard my prayers and that He had always been in control.

Experiencing a Healing Miracle

Then, Ps Christopher asked me to touch my lump again—and miraculously, it was gone!

The lump, which had been about the size of my thumbnail and had troubled me for months, had disappeared completely. I kept touching the spot over and over, trying to process what had just happened. Tears streamed down my face as I realized that God had just performed a miracle right before my eyes.

An overwhelming sense of relief and victory filled my heart because of what God had done. My faith was strengthened like never before. I now know, without a doubt, that God is real, and He is an all-powerful, prayer-answering God. He is my healer and my comforter.



With God on our side, we journey together in strength



We weather through all storms knowing that God will see us through

Turing my Fear into Faith

Looking back, I realized how much this experience has changed me. It was not just about physical healing—it was about spiritual renewal. God used this season of fear and uncertainty to draw me closer to Him. My faith, which had been tested, emerged stronger than ever.

During my time of hopelessness, I clung to this verse: *“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me”* (Psalm 23:4).

Since my healing, I have been able to share my testimony with my father-in-law, who is currently battling lymphoma. For the very first time, he became receptive to the gospel. As we continue to pray for him, we hope that he will one day receive God’s love and salvation.

To anyone who is feeling alone or hopeless, know that God is with you. He is always just a whisper away, listening to your heartfelt needs. God is our healer and protector. Trust in Him for miracles. If God could heal me and bring me out of a hopeless situation, I believe that He can do it for you too.

Breaking Chains: From a Death Sentence to a Life of Purpose

Teen Challenge's Marisa Lim spoke to Alvin Chew, who turned his life around when he encountered God, and is now part of the staff's team.

By Teen Challenge Singapore

Can you describe the moment you first realized you were being remanded for a capital charge?

When I was arrested, the CNB officer told me, "If you are convicted of this crime, you will face the death penalty." I felt completely shattered when I heard those words.

While in remand, I couldn't sleep well. I had no one to blame but myself. Every second of the day, I was consumed by condemnation, regret, fear, and hopelessness. I could only hang my head and cry in silence. The pain was unbearable—like a knife piercing through my heart.

I kept asking myself, "Is this the end of my life?"

How did you cope during your time of loneliness and despair?

During remand, I decided to attend the Christian service because I wanted a distraction from my overwhelming thoughts. I listened to prison volunteers share stories of how they experienced redemption in Jesus. I wondered, "Can Jesus really rescue someone like me?"

So, I began to pray: "Lord, if You are real, please save me. Give me a chance. If You let me live, I am willing to repent. I am willing to follow You." I prayed for a long time, but nothing seemed to happen. My prayers were only about myself—was asking God to help me, but I wasn't truly surrendering to Him.

What was the life-changing experience that deepened your conviction in His power through prayer?

After more than two years of isolation and earnest prayers, I made up my mind to fully surrender to Him—not just to be delivered from my situation, but to be freed from the grip of sin.

I remember one day, I prayed: "Lord, if You are real, please prove it to me. Give me a sign. If You save me, I will give You everything and serve You wholeheartedly."

The very next day, my lawyer brought news that left me in disbelief—the prosecution had decided to drop the drug trafficking charges and only proceed with a lesser drug-related offense. This meant that instead of facing the death penalty, I would now serve only five years in prison and three strokes of the cane.

The moment I heard the news, I was so overwhelmed with a mix of emotion. I was filled with disbelief coupled with an overwhelming relief. The weight of the impending death lifted off my shoulders. The suffocating fear and hopelessness that had gripped me for 26 months has



Walking free after serving a five-year sentence

suddenly been replaced by an indescribable sense of joy and hope. I wasn't just spared from death; I am saved for a purpose.

How did your life change after the death penalty was lifted?

Even though I was serving a five-year sentence, I eagerly attended Christian sessions and read my Bible faithfully. During this time, I developed a renewed sense of purpose in my life—to be a beacon of hope for those struggling with addiction and hopelessness.

I was placed in Teen Challenge (Singapore) as part of my Community-Based Program. After completing the program, I made the decision to stay and continue serving at Teen Challenge, dedicating myself to guiding others away from the destructive path of addiction.

Now that I've experienced the power of redemption firsthand, I want to inspire others by showing them that true freedom is possible. My mission in life is to help others find the same second chance that I was given.



Touching the lives of the elderly through community work

In what ways are you actively working towards fulfilling your desire to be a beacon of hope to others?

Aside from serving at Teen Challenge (Singapore) as a general worker in moving services and maintenance, I attend Shalom Baptist Church regularly. I recently completed the New Life courses for new believers. On December 25, 2024, I had the privilege of being water-baptized.



Taking a step of faith in water baptism to testify being a newly transformed follower of Christ

I am deeply grateful to my pastor and church members for introducing me to community work where I had the opportunity to serve both the elderly and young children. This experience has inspired me to volunteer more in community outreach.

Additionally, Teen Challenge has plans to send me for life skills courses and short-term Bible classes, which I eagerly look forward to. I am excited to grow, learn, and be better equipped to serve others.

If there's one thing I've learned, it's that no one is beyond redemption. No matter how deep the pit, God's love is deeper still. I am living proof that second chances exist—not just to escape punishment, but to walk in true freedom.

My journey is far from over, but I now walk it with hope, faith, and a renewed purpose.



Through God's transformation and support from Teen Challenge, days ahead are marked with victory

Perpetuating the Supernatural Ministry of Jesus Christ

Training and raising God's people to be part of Jesus' supernatural ministry.

By Rev Matthew Tan, Jesus Heal Me

Earlier this year, my team was invited to minister at the Gospel Mission to the Blind. After the ministry time, Ps Cheng Choo (also blind) took us to her office, and showed us how she uses her computer to send out emails and WhatsApp messages. She then showed us the braille Bible, where she read to us her favorite scripture:

Luke 4:18-19

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

It was her favorite text because that passage does not have any qualification for it. It does not say ministry is only for the able-bodied—i.e. sighted or non-sighted, the Lord can still use you.

She believes that the power of God is not hindered by our sickness and disability—even if God does not heal her, the Lord will still use her to heal the sick and set people free. It was at that point she requested for my team to train the blind people to pray for the sick.

I was humbled beyond words.



Healing service in Zion Full Gospel Church, Singapore. Earlier this year, I conducted a seminar for the church and ministered at healing services where we saw 1st time visitors being healed miraculously by the Lord.

Raising and Training

If the blind also desires to be used by God in this manner to be a blessing to others. The rest of us, able-bodied, have no excuse. Signs and Wonders is not just another movement that the AG is rolling out. I believe it should be common in our ministries. The power of God is the only timeless thing that keeps Christianity relevant to the people of all generations. If we miss this, we will be chasing endless trends which, I dare say, is the smokescreen of the devil.

Jesus Heal Me is privileged to be involved in the process of raising up the body of Christ for power evangelism. Since January 2025, besides running our own School of Healing, we have also ministered and trained people in 16 churches and institutions. Training would often be followed by a healing service where participants would minister with the JHM team and be coached by them.

There was one weekend in India where we counted 118 testimonies of healing. The amazing thing is that the people who got healed, most of them were prayed for by the participants of the School of Healing. Herein emphasizes our vision of having ordinary church members raise up to perpetuate the supernatural ministry of Jesus Christ.

Rev Matthew Tan has an evangelistic ministry that is marked by the healing anointing. He is the lead minister of *Jesus Heal Me* and he often ministers at evangelistic events and healing services. Together with a team, they would pray for the sick and lead people to Christ.



Healing Room at Eternal Life Assembly, Singapore. Monthly, I host this ministry with the blessing of the church leadership. My team is privileged to witness multiple healings happen at every session.



Coaching the ministry team @ Soakability, Singapore. This church is known for their healing and prophetic ministry. I am privileged to be invited to coach their team to be more effective in praying for the sick.



Coaching pastors and ministers at Asia Pacific Theological Seminary, Philippines. I was invited to be the practicum instructor of the 'Holy Spirit in Ministry' class. I coached the participants in the skillset needed to pray of the sick, and they ministered together with me at a healing service. The lady in the photo was certified 100% deaf in her right ear. A miracle happened at the healing service, and now she hears perfectly!

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