

# HAPPY 13TH PULSE



Worship Ministry by Alicia Wong \* Who is the Messiah by Joyce Tan \* Hanoi Holiday by John Lee

**The Vine Committee**

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APCC 2016  
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# HOM'S Reflections

I watched the movie Captain America-Civil War recently and read the latest news about BREXIT. There is a common story-line between the two. Both

are about Unity being torn apart.

At the end of the movie, Captain America and Iron Man are no longer team mates. They go their separate ways. Isn't this what is happening to the EU and the UK?



*"I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought" 1 Corinthians 1:10*

*"Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel" Philipians 1:27*

Is it possible to fulfill Paul's appeal to have agreement and no divisions amongst Christians? Since Paul had to write it, I presume that there were signs of disagreement even during his time. I pray the NJCC will be the outcome of Paul's plea, a church hub where Christians will be a united body of Christ, though of different body parts.

Something else that is currently in the news, is England exiting the Euro 2016 after losing to Iceland, 2-1. It was a humiliating defeat for a statistically superior team to lose to a team that never qualified for the competition before and whose coach is a dentist. Glenn Hoddle, ex-England player and coach commented that the English team was scared to death. Really talented sportsmen can just freeze.



The strategy to overcome this psychological problem would be to be in the position of the underdogs. That way losing would not be so embarrassing and winning, a great victory.

Have you ever wondered, if both teams prayed for a win, who will God give the victory to? Is it purely by chance that one team wins over the other? The story of EPL team, Leicester City winning the cup last season supposedly due to the prayers of some Thai monks (this football club is owned by a Thai millionaire) makes me wonder.

In whatever competition, there will always be winners and losers. Can the losers be spared the humiliation and embarrassment of defeat?



Pity the England team as they bear the butt of many jokes, like this one: “Looking like we might leave Europe twice in one week”.

Rooney comforting Vardy after the game. That is the job of the captain? Score one goal and comfort your teammates? By the way, the coach resigned.

Starting in July, I am trying to coach my CG on Exodus. Whether or not I can form a team, depends on how much confidence I can coerce into them. We are the underdogs, the old people who easily get scammed, the forgetful ones. We are like Iceland compared to England. Let's get into the beautiful game.

*“Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.”*  
Genesis 15:1

*Martin Cheah*





## Getting to know...

### Worship Ministry

*We see them on stage every week but do we know what lies behind the scenes? In this issue we have two people from this ministry offering some insights on how things work...*



**Justin Tay** (*Worship Leader*)

**Alicia:** I think most people know who you are so let's have you name 5 things that you think people don't know about you.

**Justin:** 5 is too many. Let's keep it to 3:

- 1) I am blessed with a very capable wife.
- 2) My late grandmother is the first Christian in our family. She is the one that led my dad to Christ.
- 3) My mother-in-law, Lucy, stays with us on the weekdays. Despite being in her seventies, she volunteers to help look after our kids together with Serene.

**Alicia:** You have to be musically inclined to be a worship leader. Truth or myth?

**Justin:** Obviously a myth although it is always good for a worship leader to be proficient in music. I think there are a handful of us who cannot play a musical instrument competently. I prefer to see this as a strength though; it keeps me grounded.

There are other qualities/elements more significant than music know-how, for example, God's calling, a willing heart, passion and discipline etc..

**Alicia:** What preparations does a worship leader need to make when it's their turn to lead worship for the week?

**Justin:** I guess it differs for each worship leader; there is no model answer to this question.

As for me, I try to make sure that I create a theme for each worship session. It is an art Mr Chin taught me. The theme should flow with the other elements of the service. Worship should not take the centre stage of the service. The reading of the Word and the Holy Communion should take the centre stage because these are the only 2 segments where God 'gives' us (His Word, body and blood), rather than we 'give' God (our confession, praises, prayers, tithes etc). Therefore, the Word and the Holy Communion should take the lead, and worship should complement these two.

Another crucial aspect of worship preparation is getting into the spiritual mode and mood. Ideally, we should be in this mode and mood every week but humanly-speaking, we all have our highs and lows. Part of my preparation is to discipline myself to become more in-sync with God so that I know what He wants. I usually do that 2 weeks (used to be 3/4 weeks) in advance.

I have this imagery in my head that worship leader is just a stirrer. God is the hand holding us, the congregation is water, the church the breaker, and the Holy Spirit the fire that heats up from below. If God moves us, and we move accordingly, we will help move the congregation in His direction. We are just an instrument. Therefore, getting in-sync with Him is important.

I like to add that this spiritual preparation is an enormous blessing in my life. Some of my best spiritual highs happened during these 2 weeks. Sometimes we think that when we serve, we have to sacrifice a lot and we lose out in some ways. I have learnt that this is not true: when we serve, we will always be the net beneficiaries, sometimes in ways we do not know. I cannot count the number of earthly blessings (and how much more the heavenly blessings) that have a direct connection with serving. God will never short change His servants. He only gives more, never less, as a good father would.

It is beneficial for JCC to see different worship-leading styles. This adds vibrancy to our JCC worship.

**Alicia:** My husband told me that he is constantly impressed by the fact that you are able to juggle your responsibilities despite wearing so many hats - your job, being a father to two kids, husband, your Boys Bridge ministry, JCC English Council, etc..etc.. I'm sure there are more roles you have taken up than I know of. How do you do it?

**Justin:** This is not entirely true. Firstly, I do struggle. I have asked myself many times why do I spend so much time on people's kids at the expense of my own.

Secondly, while we all wear different hats at different times, the real effort comes from more than one individual. I have a lot of family members and co-workers working alongside me. They may not show their faces but they work hard quietly in the background.

(Digressing here) If any of the youths are reading this, and if it is your desire to serve the Lord as you age, it is imperative that you marry someone with – common values and passions (perhaps not all but at least the crucial ones like ministry commitments) – and a common God.



I would also like to give credit to BB (and the church for supporting the BB). My life is likely to be very different if I had not joined the BB. The lives of the older officers, especially their discipline and focus, have rubbed off on me.

We can all be effective for God in various ways. I have seen many in our church do it, so it can be done – “with the help of God”.

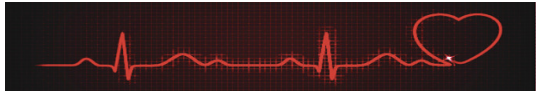
**Alicia:** What would you like to see in this ministry 10 years from now?

**Justin:** That’s a question I have not thought about. 10 years is a little long. Maybe within these 3-5 years, I would like to see more of our youths being mentored (not just trained) and taking on the roles in the music ministry. A ministry and even a church can live or die by that.

Many of the older adults have served faithfully for years. It will be good for JCC’s future if they take on a mentoring role and pass on their experience and knowledge. The challenge is that many are already stretched now. So one party has to give (i.e. do more) to ensure posterity. Or both parties can reach out and come to a middle ground. The latter is clearly the better option.

The worship ministry by nature can be silo. By that I mean that we can just come play our instruments and leave. It does not have the structure of a cell which encourages relationship building. I believe that the only way for us to mentor or grow the ministry is to spend time building relationships within the ministry. Without this deliberate intent (and I am guilty of this), it is going to be far-fetched to consider mentoring or succession planning. Of course, mentoring can take place outside the worship ministry in our own cells. Whichever way, we ALL need to make sure that we have this deliberate intent.

**Nathanael Yeap** (musician)



**Alicia:** A little background of you.

**Nathanael:** I am finally starting work this year. Haha.

**Alicia:** That's really answering to the part of *little*. Haha. Alright, I let you go at that. Now, let's get to the interview proper. Question: I have to know at least one musical instrument before I can join the Worship Ministry as a musician. Truth or myth?

**Nathanael:** It is true that if you want to serve as a musician on Sunday, you are very likely to need to know at least one musical instrument before you can start understudying. That being said, I personally feel that anyone can learn a musical instrument since it is a skill that God can provide. Even if one is not serving on any particular Sunday, what is important is that an instrument can help us worship God and learn about worship through the process. The most important thing that one should consider coming into this ministry or any ministry for that matter should be our heart and whether we want to serve Him regardless the place and wherever he calls us, or whether we just want to serve Him where we want to.

Apart from this, I think we must also remember that the Worship Ministry includes other roles apart from musicians (eg vocalist, worship leader, bible readers, sound system etc)

**Alicia:** Oh yes indeed. I do have the intention to include them in the following interviews since Worship Ministry is considerably big. Anyway, I was told you know a number of instruments. How many musical instruments do you play?

**Nathanael:** I started doing the sound system when I was about Secondary 2 or 3, and then onto guitar around Sec 4 or JC 1. Playing guitar was something I asked God for since at that time there was a shortage of guitarists. Two to three years later I started serving as a vocalist and then bass one or two years after that. The order of musical instruments I prefer coincidentally is similar to the order of which I started serving.



**Alicia:** What preparations does a musician generally need to make when it's his/her turn to serve for the week?

**Nathanael:** The worship leader would normally send his/her worship set on the Sunday before the actual service. As a musician, I would typically practice through the week so that I am familiar with the chords, song flow etc. On Friday, the worship team for that Sunday gathers and practices the songs the leader has chosen as well as the hymns. As a PA(sound system), I would go down on Friday to take note of how the worship leader intends to lead the songs so that I can adjust the sound to suit the direction the worship leader is trying to take. I personally think it is important for everyone to be down on Friday so that the whole team can be in sync and lead the congregation well. After that, I run through the order (whether as a musician or PA) by myself on Saturday to prepare for Sunday.

**Alicia:** Do you face any struggles as a musician in the worship ministry?

**Nathanael:** One struggle that I faced when I first started serving is the idea of having a Friday night used for worship practice. There are many things that we can do on a Friday night and till now, that is the favored day when planning for meet up with friends. I guess how one can overcome this struggle is by learning to arrange your time well, and ultimately truly enjoy worshipping him even during a Friday practice.

**Alicia:** What would you like to see in this ministry 10 years from now?

**Nathanael:** I hope to see the ministry go beyond just the technical skill and be truly worshipping even as they are leading people into worship; that everyone one who joins the ministry will strive to learn the meaning of worship and our place as the worship team on Sunday in light of leading people to worship.

*Thank you, Justin and Nathanael for your time. I'm sure we all are enlightened by your sharing. Let's remember to keep this ministry in prayers and kind thoughts as they serve each week. All glory to God!*

## A Retreat to Hanoi (11th – 15th May)



When the travel bug bit, the four of us (Christopher, Cecilia, Peggy and I) took flight on SQ for a brief escape from Singapore. We landed in Hanoi and

settled down in the spacious rooms of a comfortable hotel in the city's Old Quarter in the afternoon before venturing out to explore the teeming thoroughfares where the locals spoke a language that was alien to us.



It was cool to be armed with banknotes in huge denominations, enjoying the feeling of being millionaires even if it was just for a brief few days. 😊



I mused about how convenient it would be for all travellers around the world if only there is a single global language for all peoples, if only the Tower of Babel incident did not take place and man's disobedience did not lean on God to confuse the language of humanity. (Gen. 11:7-9)



Nevertheless, we still do not forget that we have God to thank for His gracious blessings of journey mercies and a wonderful time of recreation and eye-opening experience in a foreign land despite the challenge of language that is inevitable for travellers.

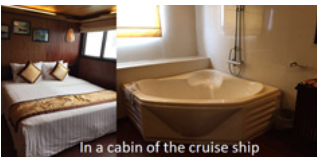
Originally, our plan was to visit Perth. However, our tour enquiries in Singapore led us finally to choose Hanoi as this was a place where none of us had ever visited and the attractiveness of Halong Bay which we had read about or watched on TV travel documentaries held sway. After watching an interesting water puppet show and tucking in a very filling (or over-filling) multi-course dinner

arranged by the tour guide at a restaurant in the city, we returned to the hotel to rest.



Early morning the second day in Hanoi, we departed from the hotel for Halong Bay. It was a journey of several hours and along the way we stopped by a place

where the process of pearl cultivation and harvesting was explained to us. At separate tables, different staff members showed us how an oyster was opened up to implant a tiny bit of mantle tissue into it to culture a pearl and how a cultured pearl was extracted from an oyster. It was a very informative stop for us before we continued on our journey to Halong Bay.



Halong Bay is one of the natural wonders of the world, featuring thousands of isles in their beautiful and natural shapes. One may imagine the loveliness of the bay from reading material or TV documentaries, but there is really nothing comparable to personally seeing with our own eyes the magnificence of the place as we cruised among the islets of limestones. The beauty of nature that captures human awe could not have been man-made.



The Psalmist, David, sang to God: "*The whole earth is filled with awe at your wonders; where morning dawns, where evening fades, you call forth songs of joy.*" (Ps. 65:8)



We stayed on the cruise ship overnight. We didn't expect luxury, but were pleasantly surprised when told that the two cabins the four of us occupied were the two largest cabins in the ship. They were spacious, with large-sized beds and large-sized bathtubs. The greatest luxury was the view from the sundeck after sunset as the silhouettes of the rocky outcrops of limestone hills against the dark sky embraced the whole ship 360° around. I marvelled at God's majesty in Creation and could imagine poets waxing

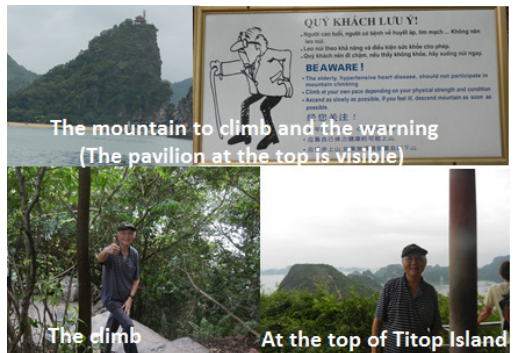


lyrical about the splendour. It is regrettable that I had neither a good camera to capture a stunning picture of the night view nor the poetic flair to record the beauty for reminiscence.

In the day, we had the opportunity to visit a cave called "The Surprising Cave" (Hang Sung Sot). This cave in the middle of Halong Bay was indeed surprising and worthy of many "Wows!" from tourists for the way that Mother Nature had carved giant airy spaces within, with stalactites and stalagmites as well as naturally created picturesque backdrops for photo-taking.



Immediately after the cave visit, we proceeded to Titop (Titov) Island where the swimmers enjoyed themselves swimming in the cool water, some others took the opportunity to relax on the beach with the sun just right (not hot) while someone like me





who is known more to be the physically inactive type suddenly found the inspiration from don't-know-where to climb a mountain on the island – alone! To me who usually leads a sedentary lifestyle, the mountain seemed like a little “Mount Everest” at a height of some 400 walking steps up and 400 walking steps down, making a total of 800 steps, each of which was definitely higher than the steps on our public buses. ☺

Along the way up, I would stop at intervals and ask others who were descending how much more height there was for me to go; and as I got nearer to the top, I got words of encouragement like “Not much more to go, you can make it.” It was fun and exciting to challenge my knees to successfully reach the top where there was a pavilion that visitors could take a 360° view of the waters and islets in the bay below. At the start, I didn't really have much confidence, and a big warning sign for the elderly and hypertensive not to participate in mountain climbing was not helpful to build any confidence. I assured myself, “Never mind, I can always turn back halfway.” As the climb progressed, however, I felt no urge to turn back – just an inner push to go all the way.



Finally, I reached the top and added a little feather on my cap. ☺ Adding a little amusement to the experience, when I came down the mountain I couldn't find any familiar faces around. I thought that I had gone past the one-hour time that had been set for us to spend on the island and the ship had moved off

without me. ☺ Thankfully, God blessed me with all things right and all was well with still a little time to spare. ☺ ☺

Hanoi gave me the impression that it is a land of caves. There were many caves to visit actually, even for casual visitors, and we already visited a number at Halong Bay.

The day after we disembarked from the ship, we went on another wooden paddle-boat tour of caves and tunnels at the Trang An Scenic Landscape Complex, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Christopher & Cecilia took one boat while Peggy and I took another, and





we passed through eight caves altogether, some with low heights that we had to bend our bodies forward to keep our heads low. The whole cruise by paddle-boat lasted three straight hours, enough for us to enjoy the serenity of the unmolested nature with seemingly endless limestone cliffs providing an imposing tranquil beauty.

Our last place of visit was the Phat Diem Cathedral which is a Roman Catholic church with pagoda-type roofs.



We may travel for leisure or recreation, but along our journey we open up to the presence of the great nature beyond our immediate surroundings. Someone once said that nature is the art of God. When we think of human art, we think of man-made beauty. If we care to contemplate, it should be obvious that no human art is comparable in beauty and fineness to the art of God that is called nature.



“Nothing is more calming than connecting with God through nature. His beautiful creations, gifts and blessings we should never take for granted but enjoy.” – *Rachel Sazon-Reyes*

Thank God for blessing us on the retreat to Hanoi and for opening us to hear His voice through His art.

*John Lee*



In one of the outings with my family, my 10 year old niece asked me, “Who is the Messiah?” This question jolted a natural reaction from me, asking why and how she knew about this word, “Messiah”. She spontaneously replied that she got to know about this word in school. I was puzzled because she is not from a Christian school and this was one of the questions asked as part of her homework or lessons? The next thought that sped through my mind, “She asked me this question!”

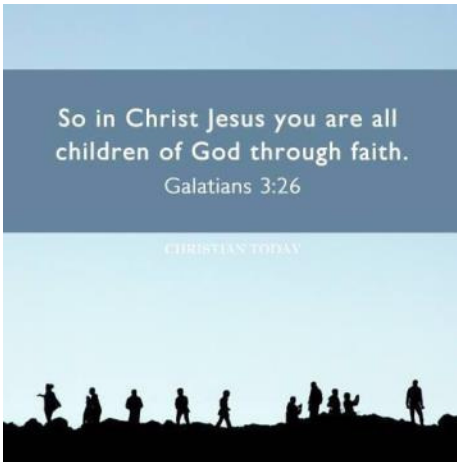
Nevertheless, I was delighted and hiding my excitement, I replied that the “Messiah” is Jesus Christ. I asked her, “Have you heard about Jesus?” She said yes and not showing much interest to hear further (hopefully there will be another chance for us to talk about it); she went off playing with her younger brother.

I thought to myself if the opportunity came once again, what would I say and what can I say about who the “Messiah” is? How do I want to say it? Did I understand the meaning of it enough to share with a 10 year old girl for her to understand? The surprise with my niece asking me this question was not unfounded as my family has a mix of Buddhist believers and free-thinkers.

As I checked the word on the internet, I realised that different religions used this word differently. Yet, as a Christian, it is clear that the word, “Messiah” comes from the Hebrew word, “*Mashiach*” and it means, “Anointed One” or “Chosen One”. It took reference that the name “Jesus Christ” is also termed as “Jesus the Messiah” from the Bible. As I learnt that anointing someone with oil was a sign that God was

consecrating or setting apart that person for a particular role in biblical times, this anointed role is God-ordained and it has a purpose.

So, what does it mean to me first before I can share with others? I equated, “Messiah” with “Jesus Christ”. He died for our sins as He loves us. His Love is not dependent on our circumstances of how well we do, what we do alone, why we do certain things, what we can see and know. The bottom-line message is really simple that He just loves us and it is this Love that made the difference in our lives. I will not expound the word, “Messiah” further.



In Luke 4:16-21, Jesus of Nazareth was and is the prophesied Messiah.

*“Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read.*

*The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:*

*The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, release for the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.*

*Then, he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”*

In John 4: 23-26 when Jesus talks to a Samaritan woman:



*“...Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God is spirit and his worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth.*

*The woman said, “I know that Messiah (called Christ), is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.” Then Jesus*

*declared, “I who speak to you am he.”*

Jesus is the Chosen One and He is the Messiah, Son of God and in believing in Him, we may have life in His Name. Let us live our life in Him, drawing strength through faith in Jesus Christ as He is the Messiah in our lives.

So, “Who is the Messiah to you?”  
What will your answer be?

**Joyce Tan**

it's **easy** to look  
at ourselves and see ourselves as

WHAT WE ARE **NOW**

**God** looks at us  
and sees

WHAT WE CAN **BECOME**

- Sarah Ann Neil



# SNIPPETS

Monthly Bite-size News



The Fund Raising Committee is going around the LCS churches to update and thank them for helping us in the rebuilding project. We visited YCCL on 29<sup>th</sup> May, BLC on 25<sup>th</sup> June and will visit LCOR on 24<sup>th</sup> July.



Above, the team with Rev Soh Guan Keng @ YCCL and right, the team with Rev John Tan @ BLC



Rev James Lim & Deacon Peter

6<sup>th</sup> June – The sudden death of Lai Huat, a member of the Dialect congregation, revealed how the DLT and the regular itinerant preachers could be rallied together quickly to perform the last rites.

Service Team) response as many of the members are getting older.

We may need to be more prepared with our FAST (Funeral Attendance



5<sup>th</sup> June – Dialect Parents Day celebration. The MPH was full but we did not run out of gifts or food for all who came, somewhat like the five loaves.





4<sup>th</sup> June – The Dialect Leadership Team celebrated the birthdays of 3 team members whose birthdays fall in June.



Luckily only 3 candles were used. If we used the actual number of candles, which roughly comes up to more than 180 candles, we would have needed a fire extinguisher.



28<sup>th</sup> May 2016 - Roger and Stephanie made their marriage vows in Hokkien and English at Wesley Methodist Church. Amongst his guests was Frodo, who flew all the way from Hong Kong for that special day and flew back.



24<sup>th</sup> May – A historical moment when Renewal Christian Church joins JCC to do God's work in Taman Jurong.





# APCC 2016 Photos tell the story