

March 2021

# THE WINEPRESS

*O taste and see that God is good*



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### **PRAYER FOCUS FOR APRIL**

The Month of April ushers in the Easter Season which reminds us that Christ has resurrected, conquered death and is reigning with God, the Father, today!

Pray that every JCCian will:

- a) Be Confident in "daily living" by walking with the Living Christ
- b) Be Bold in embracing the vision of the Living Christ for the world
- c) Be Steadfast in overcoming the storms of lives by trusting the Living Christ
- d) Be Active in Discipleship as the Calling of the Living Christ for us.








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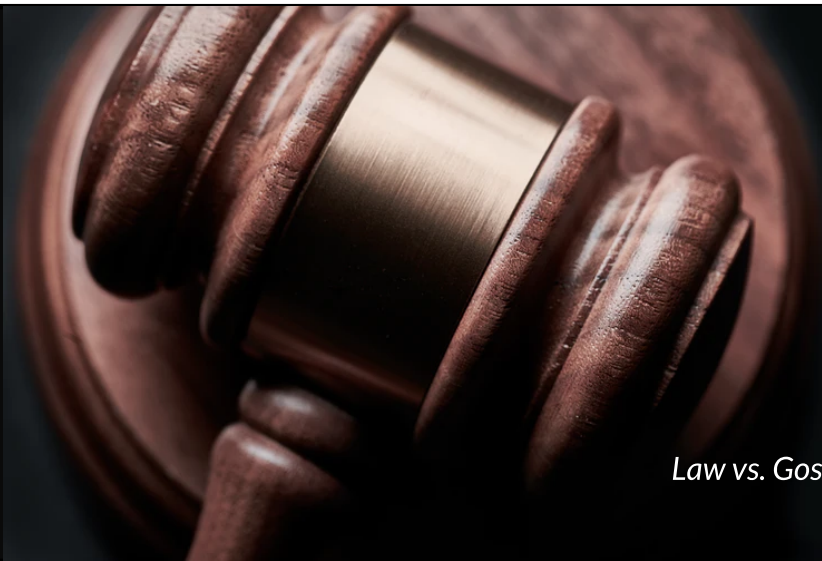
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## What's in The WinePRESS?

The WinePRESS is underpinned by 5 key and evergreen components:

-  **1. P** rayer Focus of the month. Promote alignment of vision and unity of heart as a congregation to reach the lost and bless the needy.
-  **2. R** efreshing bytes. Encourage one another in daily living by sharing inspiring stories, testimonies, events and useful information in support of outreach efforts.
-  **3. E** xhortative writing. Scripture-based articles and nuggets to inspire love for God's Living Word and obedience to His Commands, being doers of the Word, not hearers only.
-  **4. S** cripture challenge. Bible quiz and learning activities to promote scripture memory, meditation and retention of God's Word. Look out for prizes!
-  **5. S** ervice-in-Action. A call to action for JCCians to serve God's people and the Taman Jurong community with their talent, gifting and material resources.



*Law vs. Gospel is a major theme in Lutheran theology.  
God shows His love through both.*

## LAW VS. GOSPEL: LOVE FOR UNLOVABLE (PART TWO)

By Joseph Hiow

### WHAT IS GOSPEL?

Luther defines the Gospel as “a preaching of the incarnate Son of God, given to us without any merit on our part for salvation and peace. It is a Word of salvation, a Word of grace, a Word of comfort, a Word of joy, a voice of the bridegroom and bride, a good Word, a Word of peace.”

The Gospel is purely Good News. Luther says, “... Gospel is a light that illumines hearts and makes them alive. It discloses what grace and the mercy of God are; what the forgiveness of sins, blessing, righteousness, life, and eternal salvation are, and how to obtain these.” The Gospel contains no demands like the Law. There is only promise for everyone who believes in Jesus as his or her personal Lord and Saviour.

### HOW DOES GOD SHOW HIS LOVE THROUGH HIS GOSPEL?

*“This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but*

*that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.” (1 John 4: 9-10)*

### God sent His begotten Son to fulfill the demands of the Law.

*Jesus says, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.” (Matt 5: 17).*

*Jesus answered His disciples, saying, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14: 6)*

Since Jesus has fulfilled the demands of the law, believers coming to Him are no longer condemned.

### God proclaims His promise of forgiveness.

*“The time has come,” Jesus said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!” (Mark 1: 15)*

*“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1: 9)*

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The Gospel of forgiveness provides a path to reconciliation with God with our repentance.

### God's promise of salvation to those who believe and are baptised

*"Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." (Mark 16: 16)*

To Luther, this divine promise of God must be set far above all the works, vows, and religious order. We should exercise our faith in it; and once we have been baptised, we are saved.

Evidently, God's great love is manifest in the sacrament of baptism; for when Jesus himself was baptized, God declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"

### Holy Communion – Greatest expression of God's love

To Luther, in **Holy Communion (Lord's Supper)** that **promise of forgiveness, life, and salvation is repeated throughout the person's life.**

When we eat the bread and drink from the cup, we inexorably remember the love of God for us that He sacrificed His beloved Son so that we may be saved. (John 3:16)

### **How do we respond to His Gospel?**

- I. We need to have faith that Jesus is our Lord and Saviour. Our response to the Gospel must never be based on work, human accomplishment or human merit.
- II. Experiencing the power of the Gospel, we need to share the Gospel with others passionately.

### **Conclusion:**

By God's love through the law, we are convicted with the guilt of sin and then God's love through the

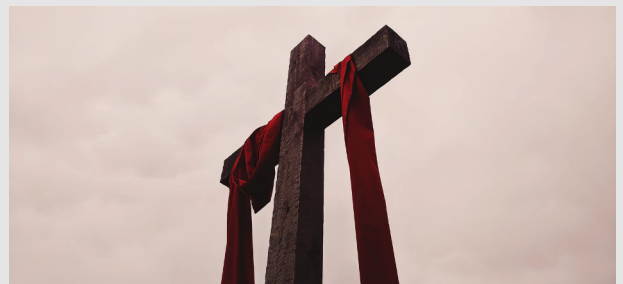
Gospel delivers us the hope of eternal life without fear of our inability, by our human nature, to fulfill the exacting demands of the Law.

We are saved by grace through faith, because of God's love that is manifest through the Law and the Gospel.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Are you overwhelmed in your life/ ministry, and complaining to God? How would you allow God's love through His law and Gospel to strengthen you powerfully, and encourage you to thank God joyfully?
2. Do you feel obligated in coming to church/ serving God? How would you allow God's love through His law and Gospel to prompt you to love God and others wholeheartedly?

### THE WINEPRESS MAR 2021



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## FORGIVE (PART ONE)

By John Lee

STOMP report, Dec 1, 2020:

*A woman lost a clutch bag with \$10 000 in it. Instead of faulting the finder, she hoped the finder would put the cash to good use. She said, "At first, we did feel angry, sad and regretful, ... but after a day passed, **we learnt to forgive so that it would not burden us and we can move on.**"*

*(Note – It was a rewarding experience that the money was later found and returned to her.)*

**Forgiveness doesn't excuse their behaviour. It prevents their behaviour from destroying your heart. - Hemant Smarty**

Cases of extreme forgiveness can be found by a simple Google search. These often raise questions about justification. It is easy to proffer reasons why it is not always good to forgive. Nevertheless, when one personally falls into hot soup, such reasons

would instinctively be supplanted by alternative rationalisations for mercy. It is hard to trust people to be morally unbiased in their avowal for or against the spirit of forgiveness.

Social media betray people's increasing lack of tolerance for mistakes, with relentless "righteous" screams sans mercy even over simple misconducts that may not constitute offences under any law.

The 5th of the 7 petitions in the Lord's Prayer is instructive: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

In simple terms, if you feel that someone cannot be forgiven for a certain mistake, then you must honestly agree not to change your mind about it when that someone happens to be yourself or your loved one. If everybody does no wrong, nobody is ever hurt, then the question of whether to forgive (or be forgiven) will never arise.

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## JUSTICE AND MERCY NOT MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE

A woman committed adultery, a serious offence that attracted a death sentence by stoning. Jesus showed mercy and said to those who disagreed, *"Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her."* (Jn 8:7)

"Yes, you must show mercy to others. If you do not show mercy, then God will not show mercy to you when he judges you. But the one who shows mercy can stand without fear before the Judge." – James 2:13 (ERV)

Criss Jami (an American poet) said:

*"Always seek justice, but love mercy. To love justice and hate mercy is but a doorway to more injustice."*

Sadly, a harmonious marriage between two loves – lover of justice + lover of mercy – is not a given in the world.

## VALUE HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIPS

Rom 12:17-19 tells us:

*"Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord."*

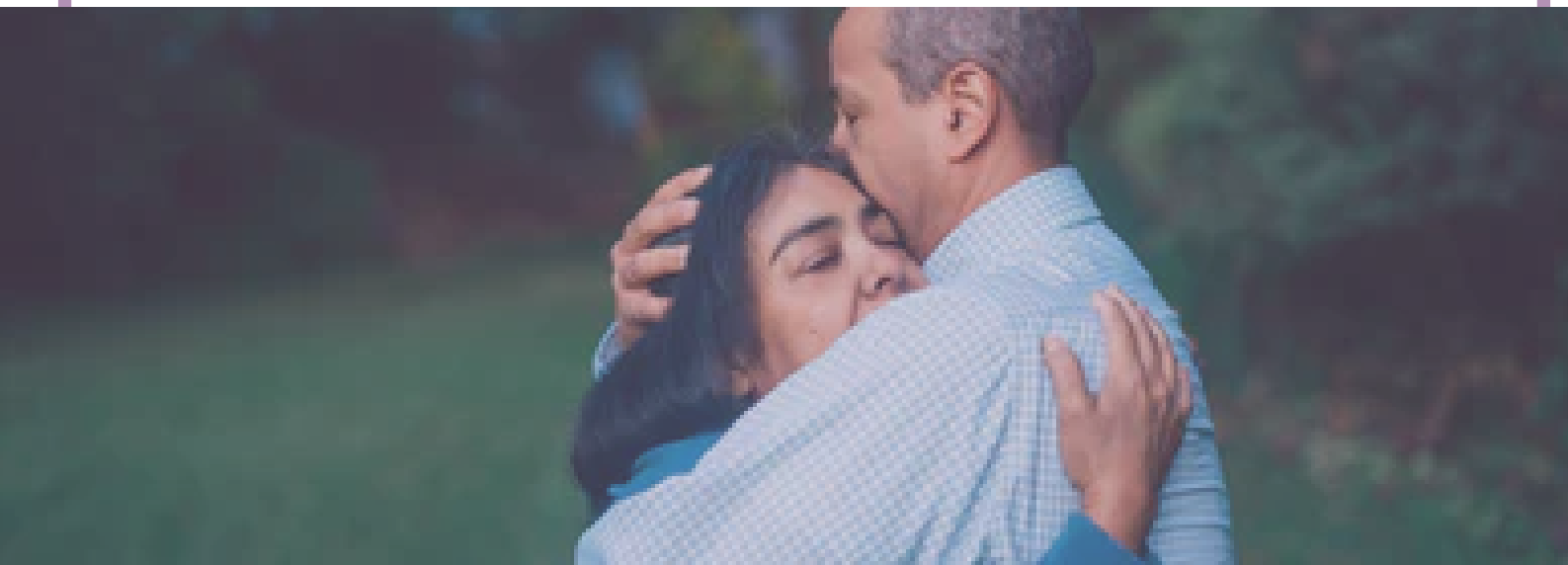
This Bible passage speaks of our relationship with those we may be tempted to treat as enemies and wish upon them "just desserts" for their mistreatment of us. The OT principle of justice is "eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot" (Ex 21:24), but here we have Paul's instruction not to take retribution into our own hands but to live in peace with them. *Think about harmonious relationships in a heterogeneous environment!*

## WIN PEOPLE WITH LOVE, LEAVE JUDGMENT TO GOD

*"If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."* (Rom 12:20)

This verse is a quotation from Prov 25:21-22. It alludes to a person demonstrating repentance by a ritual act of carrying a container of burning coals on his head. Our graciousness with love and forgiveness towards our enemies can be impactful in winning over a sinner to repentance.

Christians are called to "repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing." (1 Pet 3:9) This is not about disregarding wrongs. Rather, we abjure hatred and repudiate vindictiveness. Judgement belongs to God. (Deu 32:35; Heb 10:30)





## THANK GOD FOR "CATCHERS"

By Doris Tan

Reflecting on the goodness of God for 2020 for my journey in JCC, I am reminded to give thanks to God for this group in the church – the ‘catchers of people’.

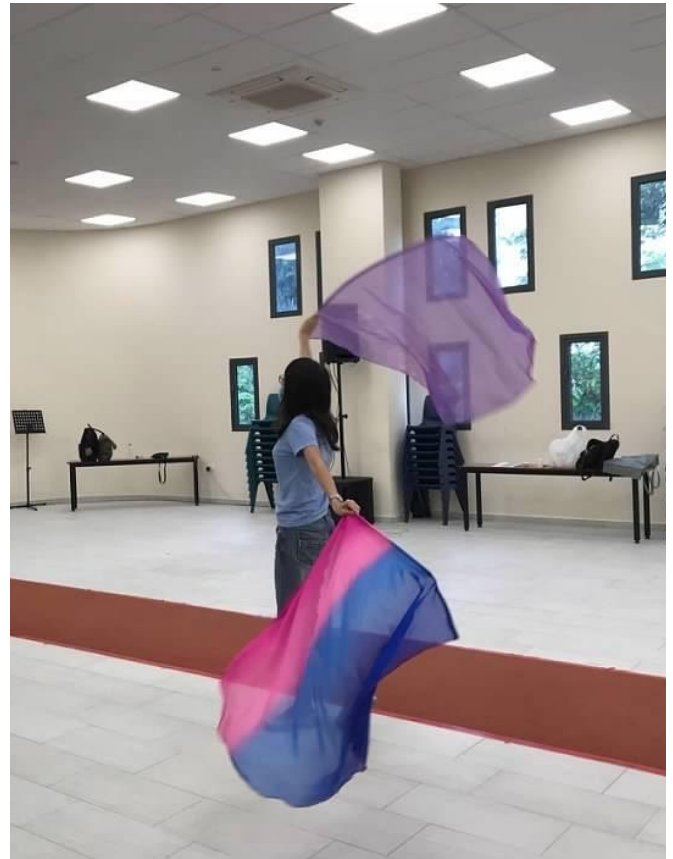
‘Catchers’ is a term that echoes from what Jesus said to Simon, *“Don’t be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.”* – Lk 5:10 (GNB)

Using a term in vogue in the age of social media, we might call them “Influencers” – i.e., influencers for Jesus, reaching out to people for the kingdom of God.

‘Catchers’ is a term that also speaks of my experience as I felt that they were always there to catch me, and I was always on the lookout to avoid or run away from them.

I came to attend worship services in the new building in 2017, always seating by myself and avoiding interaction with people. I just wanted to catch God’s Word for me, enjoy the worship and thereafter ‘*chiong*’ (hurry) for the door before the Catchers (army of the Lord) had their chance to approach me. I would always be on the lookout for the door that would allow the easiest exit without being accosted. Someone once commented that I was like a *ninja* – “now you see me appear in service and now you don’t.”

God had His way and He said ‘NO’ to my way. Thus, since June 2019, my demeanours during worship gradually changed. I started to move around, shedding my *ninja* image as I became more visible during worship. Besides, the Lord put me in the same team for prayer sessions with two sisters



whom I termed as the two key Catchers. As much as I wanted to run, I was stuck with them and, lo and behold, instead of two, there was a bigger group of them.

Even though I didn’t have to avoid the Catchers (since I was stuck with them anyway), I still avoided interaction with others. Now, it was more due to the awkwardness I felt because of my expressions during worship.

Late last year, while praying for one of the key Catchers, the Lord revealed to me that I was a hard nut to crack and the team had done a good job in cracking this nut, crossing the barrier and reaching out to me. Also, a pioneer in JCC said to me:

“Look at the Cross, it is made of both vertical and horizontal pieces. You said that you worship God. That is the vertical relationship; what about the horizontal fellowship with the body of Christ.”

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At that instant, the bulb lighted.

There is a time and season for everything. Time is in the Lord's Hand. We cannot force open the cocoon and hope to see a butterfly fly out; if we do so, it will cripple the insect. It takes time for the transformation of the chrysalis into a mature butterfly to be completed. It is about time for me to be gradually opening up, starting with this small team who "caught" me.

2020 had been a challenging year both at work and on a personal level. The support from the Catchers made my journey lighter and easier.

They saved me from myself, from running away, from closing the doors that God intend for it to be kept open.

Thank God also for the body of Christ in JCC; you are beautiful. Every one of you has in one way or another been in the role of a catcher or influencer or someone who reaches out to others in need. May you be encouraged by this sharing. In His time, The Lord will crack the nuts, tear down the walls of those whom you have been trying to reach. When they begin to open up, they will step forth to testify of God's goodness and give thanks to you, the Catchers.

## MY JOURNEY TO JCC

By Pamela Lim

I came to JCC in November 2018 and was baptized in June 2019. Thanks to my mother, Lily, who brought me to JCC after my 12 years of neglecting God from the time of my youth. Here is the story of my faith journey:

My curiosity about God started as a 13-year-old teen. I witnessed God's mercy and healing when my mother was saved from a heart attack. Many questions formed in my mind, such as: Who is God? Is the bible something God left behind for us?

I started attending church with my parents as an adventure, with me enjoying reading a children's bible and listening to bible stories. I loved the creation narrative in Genesis most, which led me to the truth that this world did not appear by chance or evolution.

Two years later, my parents stopped attending church and I followed suit. I thought this was fine as I could still read the bible and pray on my own. Little did I foresee that I would stop reading the bible and drift away from God. The spiritual fire in me was soon gone, after which I no longer hungered after God's Word. Eventually, it felt like I had thrown God out of my life.

Like a lost sheep with no direction and purpose, I often questioned: What am I doing with my life?

Following the norm, I juggled studies and part-time work during my university days. Great stress led to panic attacks which caused me to feel a sharp tight pain on my chest or have severe diarrhea. I had to take medications half an hour before each meal to avoid a stomach upset.



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During one of the attacks, I cried out, “God, are you still there? I have not spoken to you for a long time and I am sorry I left you. I am feeling scared and painful. Could you please comfort me and help me?”

In that instant, all my pain was gone and I could stop my medications henceforth. For the first time, I felt the love from our Father God. This feeling was indescribable; I was totally comforted by God.

I remembered praying to have someone guide me and read the bible together. I couldn’t approach my friends as I was the only Christian among them. One day, outside a lecture theatre, I was taken aback when a stranger came up to me and asked if I knew who Jesus is. Without hesitation, I replied, “Oh yes, I do.” She passed me a pack of bible memory verses and told me that I could join her after school to study the bible together. I thought to myself, “Wow, God, you really answered my prayers!”

God continued to lead me forward... so I am now worshipping in JCC, enjoying a great fellowship

with brothers and sisters in Christ.

May we all persevere and not give up on reaching out to our loved ones, friends and the community. Their salvation is truly one of the greatest rewards we can get. Have FAITH, sow the seeds, PRAY and let GOD do the rest. In God’s Time, the seeds will sprout and we will see the harvest. Proverbs 16:9 says, “In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps.”

As humans we tend to plan and get upset when things do not go our way, sometimes what we have planned is according to our heart but not God’s heart. So, let us seek God’s heart and purpose. Let God establish our steps in whatever we do which will then be fruitful. God’s plan is the best!

Finally, I would like to encourage everyone to form prayer partners or join prayer meetings to pray for one another and be a source of encouragement and support. I also like to thank the JCC intercessor team for journeying with me since last year.

## We LITERALLY JAYWALKED INTO JCC

By Bryan Tan

God can turn our silliness into divinely planned outcomes. That’s how my wife and I happily ended up in JCC, our new home church since November 2019. Here’s the funny story which I hope will encourage you not to fret when you make silly mistakes. Have a good laugh about it and thank God in every situation. Surely, God is in control and He will make all things beautiful in His good timing.

It was restlessness that drove us to consider finding a new home church in this heartland. In our younger days, we grew up with Lighthouse



Evangelism for about twelve years before moving on to Pasir Panjang Hill Brethren Chapel in the mid-90s.

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## Calvary...here we come!



That day finally came. During the week, I looked up more information on the internet about the church. Sunday service starts at 10.30am. On Sunday, we were ready! We drove along Corporation Drive, not fully mindful that this time, we were driving in the opposite direction towards MacDonald's. So, naturally, we saw a white building (which is JCC of course, because Calvary would be further down the road) and I asked my wife, who is usually perfect with her orientation of roads and places, **"Is this Calvary?"** She said she thought so. We debated a while and decided that we had reached our destination.

Yet somehow, the visual evidence did not look quite right. When we entered the gate, we saw names of churches on the gate wall. But no "Calvary". Actually, the big name "Jurong Christian Church" was displayed on the building wall above the gate, but we could not see it from inside the car. We parked the car at the basement carpark and found our way to the lift lobby. At the lift lobby, we saw the Directory plate. Still no "Calvary". Only names of other churches! **"Strange...how come this church like that one?"** I thought to myself in Singlish.

## His ways are higher than our ways...

Then Justin Tay came by. Noticing that we were new and somewhat "lost", he asked where we were going. I replied with a generic answer, **"To the sanctuary"**, thinking that there was only one big church in this building anyway. And he led us to level 2, JCC of course! I also found out that the church service started at 10.45am, although the website said 10.30am! **"Hmmm....website not updated! Not very good."** I surmised. But somehow, we were feeling quite comfortable in the new environment.

And the rest is history. We visited JCC regularly for a year and finally decided to transfer our church membership to JCC. And the reasons are many. We like the aura of a sanctuary and the semi-structured liturgy, giving a focused sense of standing on holy ground. We enjoyed the warmth of the initial welcome and continual fellowship with Pastor Anthony and some church members. And we are glad to be able to serve God in and through some ministries.

Looking back, on that "fateful" Sunday, **it was as if God had shut down our common sense and reasoning power** and allowed us to bungle in our search for Calvary Presbyterian. We could also have been "hijacked" to another church within the JCC building if we had met somebody else!

I can only say that God knows where He wanted us to be. Perhaps another couple was looking for JCC but ended up in Calvary Presbyterian instead!





## IS BETHEL CELL GROUP THE LONGEST RUNNING DISCIPLESHIP WORKSHOP IN JCC?

By Preethi Jebaraj

In 1996, JCC organised a two-year Bible study to equip the church with “Bethel Bible Series”. Ronnie Lim, Nancy Lim, Goh Young Kwang, Iris Lee, Thomas Tan, Jenny Tan, Cassidy Yam, Esther Ang, Roy and Juria met on Saturdays for their group study sessions on Bethel Series. Upon graduating from Bethel Series, they formed Bethel Cell Group under Ronnie’s leadership to continue their fellowship to study and follow the word of the Lord. If you really think about it, Bethel Cell Group (BCG) could be considered as one of the longest running Discipleship Series in church.

In accordance to 1 Thessalonians 5:11 (“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”), cell members have grown in Christ and Christian stewardship for the past two and a half decades. Bethel, meaning

“House of God” as it is aptly named, is a living and growing spiritual community that has evolved over the years. Ronnie handed over the reigns to Thomas when he left for work overseas. When Thomas was bestowed with responsibilities in church, Shepherd’s baton was passed to Young Kwang then back to Ronnie upon his return. With most members already serving in JCC by then, Ronnie and BCG leadership had the vision for BCG to grow and multiply. Baton was passed to Frank after seeking God’s guidance through prayers to act on the vision. Under the capable hands of The Almighty potter, BCG now has spun-off into BCG2 and BCG3. BCG spin-offs are currently shepherded by Thomas and Ronnie. BCG1, the original, has 10 members in 2021, consisting of Goh Young Kwang, Iris Lee, Tai Kim Keong, Tai Se Ping, William Tan,

*continued on the next page*



Sherine Tan, Dawn Lim, Lim Cheng Teck, Frank Jonathan and me. Many of the founding members have graduated together from parents of toddlers to grandparents/prospective grandparents of toddlers since BCG was formed. But most of the founding members continue their fellowship in one of the BCGs.

BCG1 members meet alternate Fridays to nurture each other spiritually and provide encouragement for Christian Discipleship. The session starts with songs of praise that members take turns to choose as song leader. This is followed by sharing of a joy and challenge faced since the last meeting, to uplift each other in spiritual development. Scripture study focuses on practical applications on living a Christ-Like life and laying the groundwork to enhance relationship with the living Christ. Some of the members take turns to facilitate the study. We end the session by praying for each other's personal requests and needs.

Then God said to Jacob, "Go up to Bethel and settle there, and build an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you were fleeing from your brother Esau." - Genesis 35:1

In addition, we also bond over our Annual Cell Group Dinners, unofficial "Makan" sessions and overseas retreats until Covid-19 hit us. In recent times we have incorporated a healthier version of the fellowship with Saturday morning walks &

breakfast sessions in scenic locations within Singapore. The bonding sessions are often graced by our members from BCG2 and BCG3.



Frank and I joined the cell group in 2004 after Diya was born. As we built our family through God's infinite blessings, our family grew, so did our relationship with our Bethel family. Reflecting on the last 17 years in BCG, my thoughts are flooded with picture-perfect memories and anecdotes. Bethel members have been a steady presence for all of God's blessings we celebrated - births of our children, house blessings, birthdays and many more occasions. When life sometimes gave us lemons, we did not have to make lemonade; Bethel members were there to support us through prayers and to sweeten the lemon juice. When we needed advice, they were always happy to share their experiences with a firm foundation of Christian Faith.

To sum it all up, BCG members have:

- Enjoyed 25 years of Christian Fellowship in "House of God";
- Built a Lifelong Friendship in Christ; and
- Strived for an Eternity of Membership in God's Kingdom.

BCG was a way for me to join God's family and grow in my walk with Jesus. I would urge all of you to be part of a Cell Group and encourage each other to find your path to grow in God's faith.



## "FEAR FLU" OR "FAITH VACCINE"

By Rev Anthony Loh

We are living in a challenging world where all sorts of tensions are increasing – political, economic, terrorism-related, diseases, etc. Sometimes, we may feel overwhelmed by pessimism after prolonged bombardment by bad news.

Our faith and steadfastness in the Lord are being challenged by “gigantic enemies”.

2 Cor 10:3-4 tells us, “For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.”

Are we easily struck down by the “flu of fear”?

The story of David-and-Goliath depicts a situation in which the soldiers of God were totally unnerved by the giant, Goliath. Only David was not intimidated. What “vaccine” made David immune to the enemy’s threat?

When facing challenges, our focus makes a lot of difference. When people of God focused their minds wrongly in a crisis, they suffered from the “Fear-Flu” and stumbled:

### LOOKING AT THE ENEMY’S DESTRUCTIVE POTENTIAL

“A champion named Goliath ... came out of the Philistine camp. His height was six cubits and a span. He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of bronze weighing five thousand shekels; on his legs he wore bronze greaves, and a bronze javelin was slung on his back. His spear shaft was like a weaver’s rod, and its iron point weighed six hundred shekels” (1Sam 17:3-7)



Goliath was a super-sized formidable destroyer. The Israelites felt defeated before a fight. Reason: They focussed their attention wrongly on the enemy’s fear-inspiring attributes.

### SUCCUMBING TO INTIMIDATION

“Goliath stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, ‘Why do you come out and line up for battle?’ ‘Then the Philistine said, ‘This day I defy the armies of Israel ...’ On hearing the Philistine’s words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.” (1Sam 17:8,10-11)

The spirit of intimidation from the enemy scared the Israelites out of their wits. It happened even to many of the spiritual giants in the bible such as Elijah who fled upon hearing the threat by Jezebel. (1 Kings 19:3)

Finally, God used a shepherd boy to kill the gigantic enemy with a single stone. David was not a mighty commando trained for battle. He wore no armour and was not believed by his family as capable of anything.

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David demonstrated for us the art of spiritual battle. His secret for courage and success was his "Faith- Vaccine" given by God:

### REMEMBERING PAST VICTORIES

*"Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine." (1 Sam 17:36)*

### CLAIMING THE LORD'S NAME

*"David said to the Philistine, 'You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come*

*against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head.'" (1 Sam 17:45-46)*

Do we remember God blessing our past victories? Small victories are like pebbles that pile up, building our faith layer by layer. Unlike the faithless soldiers of Saul, David's growing faith shaped by past victories formed his confidence in the LORD. His faith was bigger than the size of Goliath, and thus he easily conquered the enemy.

Believing who God is and claiming the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, enable us to be overcomers. The names of God show us who God is. David knew exactly the God whom he believed.

### IN CONCLUSION

Are you struck by the "Fear-Flu" when hearing an enemy's intimidating roars?

Let us inoculate ourselves with the "Faith-Vaccine" to keep the "Fear-Flu" at bay.

The risen Lord on Easter Day reminds us that He has conquered death and all principalities in this world. Jesus is on our side!

*"If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Rom 8:31b).*



## ANSWERS FOR LENT OBSERVANCE PUZZLE (FEB WINEPRESS)

1. The first day of Lent is called Ash Wednesday.
2. The Sunday before Easter is called Palm Sunday.
3. We commemorate The Last Supper on Maundy Thursday.
4. The original meaning of the word "Lent" is Spring.
5. The season of Lent is a period of 40 days?
6. The liturgical colour for Lent is Purple?
7. Lent is also called the Passion season.
8. Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration.
9. 9) Peter, James and John went with Jesus to the Mountain.
10. 10) We observe Lent with repentance instead of rejoicing.

Dear Lord,

- It is difficult to love those who wronged me.
- Sometimes I feel like hitting back at them.
- I cannot stand being misunderstood.
- Who do they think they are to judge me?

My precious child,

- I want to keep your spirit pure and blameless.
- I know exactly how you feel in each situation.
- I am watching every event and detail.
- You focus on doing what is right.

**WHAT SHOULD I DO?**

**TRUST ME TO TAKE ACTION.**

## **God will not be mocked A MAN REAPS WHAT HE SOWS**

Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save, nor His ear too dull to hear.

Isaiah 59:1 (NIV)

Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.

Romans 12:19 (NIV)

For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

Matthew: 7:2

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

Galatians: 6:7



## THE 80'S AND BEYOND

By Tan Swee Long

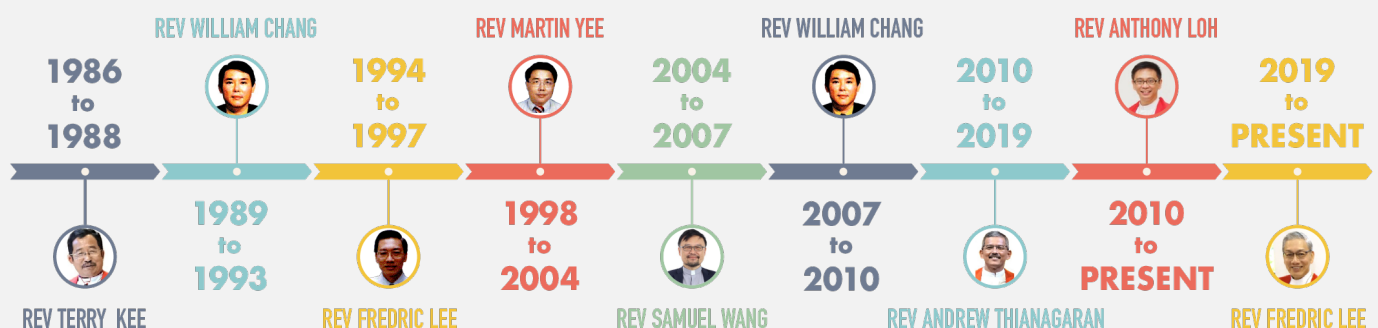
Taman Jurong went through a renewal process in the 1980s, newer and better flats were built replacing the dormitory type housing. New residents moved in, mostly young families. This provided a certain level of renewal for the Church with new members becoming part of the church community. Richard Lee, Kin Cheong, Jennifer Chee, Christopher Wang, Cassidy Yam and their families were among those who became active members. A number of Malaysian students studying in the local Universities also worshipped in JCC, most have left after graduation, Kim Keong and Se Peng being the few who remained. The redevelopment of the housing estates around Taman Jurong in Jurong East and West saw Christians who have relocated there joining JCC, these included John Lee, Martin Cheah, Patrick Boey, Tony Koh, Kong Chan Seng, Harry Lim, Alan Yeo and many more.

After the Missionary Pastors left in 1982, the

Church saw many changes of pastoral leadership particularly with young fresh graduates taking on their first assignment in JCC. Edmund Lim was the first local Lutheran Pastor. Upon graduation from SBC he was assigned to JCC.

In 1993 three members of Jurong, Martin Yee, Anthony Loh and Michael Christian responded to God's call and embarked on their theological education at Singapore Bible College supported by JCC. This was a milestone event for the Church responding to the call to equip members to serve God and bless His people. Anthony spent a number of years on staff with Campus Crusade before returning to JCC as staff worker in 2001. Michael Christian served in JCC and went on to work in Tomorrow's Hope engaged in ministry through community work and an orphanage in Nias Island, Indonesia. Martin Yee was Pastor in JCC from 1998 to 2003 before taking up an administrator role in LCS.

### Pastors who have been assigned to serve in JCC



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## PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS



Into the 80's the Church was entering into its 30's, leadership renewal and grooming of new leaders was needed. With that in view JCC embarked on a concerted effort to engage the youths. In 2000 the Youths were organised with a separate dedicated ministry renamed PULSE. There was a Youth service concurrent with the Adult Worship service, youth are organised into cells and the ministry was overseen by the Youth Council.

## A RECORD OF OUR JOURNEY, A VIEW TO WHAT'S AHEAD

JCC has grown modestly over the years. For a church in her fifties, she needs to not just look back but to look forward. A major milestone was the rebuilding of the aging church building. The new building represents a vision that goes beyond that of JCC looking at its own needs, but that of blessing churches within God's greater community in Singapore. A Church Hub was conceived, with a building that offer space to churches that do not have a permanent home, given the limited land sites allocated for religious use in Singapore. God has blessed this act of magnanimity and love, the building was completed within 3 years in Dec 2016, fully paid for. Beyond the brick and mortar, what makes up the Church really is its members. The pioneer group are now in their late 50s and 60s and a transition and succession of leadership is inevitable and urgent. We have raised a second generation of leaders among the youths, in their late teens, twenties and thirties. They are called to take on the mantle of leadership and bring JCC to the next level of spiritual growth and to meet the challenges the changing time confronts us. Many are seeking their personal spiritual growth; may God imbue them with a greater sense and purpose for God and His calling for JCC in the coming years.

***Coming in the next issue... Reflections of Pastors and Ministry Leaders***



## REFLECTION OF PASTOR KUSSEROW, MISSIONARY PASTOR TO JCC, 1974-82

By Pastor Kusserow



When we finished language school, Pastor Neff was assigned to Lenggong in Malaysia and I was assigned to Singapore. I did not want to go to Singapore and Pastor Neff did not want to go to Lenggong. So we spoke with Pastor Ray Nyce, the president of the Lutheran Church in Malaysia and Singapore at that time, about the possibility of switching our assignments. He was not happy, but he agreed. I went to Lenggong and really enjoyed my ministry there and Pastor Neff went to Lutheran of our Redeemer Church in Singapore and really enjoyed his ministry there. Eight years later, I was assigned to Jurong Christian Church. And when I got into that ministry I wondered why it was that I had not wanted to go to Singapore earlier.

I was always impressed by the strong faith of our members and how our church was growing as our members shared their faith with their friends and brought them to church. We always had visitors in our worship services and many of them became faithful followers of Jesus.

One of my good memories of Jurong Christian Church is the joy our members had being together. Truly, we were a family in the faith. Often members were at the church, just enjoying being together. My wife and I were very happy raising our three sons – Hans, Kurt and Tim – in that setting. Their faith has always been strong and I think one reason for that was their years as part of the membership of our church in JCC.

After serving in Singapore for eight years. I started to feel that God wanted us to return to the United States. I felt uncomfortable with that, as did my wife, but we prayed about it. Then, one day I received a phone call from a congregation in the United States asking if they could consider calling me to be their pastor. They were considering several pastors and the committee chose me. At the same time, we had two graduates from seminary but only one position. If I would leave, that would create a second position so that both of those seminary graduates could serve. Pastor Edmund Lim became your next Pastor. So, we came home, thinking that it was God's will for me to serve a congregation here. What a surprise it was when the congregation later said that they did not want me as their pastor! Again, we prayed so that we might know God's will for us. And we then received a call to go to Tanzania, East Africa. Again, I really enjoyed my ministry there. God was working to lead us to a new challenge and to create a position so that both of our seminary graduates could serve in Singapore.

We were blessed by our eight years at the Jurong Christian Church and hope that our being there was a blessing for all in the congregation as well.

We pray that God will continue to lead and bless you as you serve in JCC.



## 迦南团契的见证 (之一)

作者 胡映玉/高国梁

我们在此见证神的作为，写下来以向人们证明祂是又真又活的神，我们亲眼看见并经历到神在迦南团契的工作，是神，祂亲自在引领我们。在2007年的某一天，淑节看到教会里几位中国同胞，又看到我常常去教会祷告，我相信是出于圣灵的感动，她对我说：“我们教会有几位中国同胞，你可以带领他们吗？”我一听，就高兴地答应说：“好啊！”这也正是我能传福音的机会。于是，我们就在老图书馆里，围着一张桌子就开始了聚会，当时只有两、三个中国同胞，其中有一位北京人，叫海鹏，他就快回中国了。当他回去中国后，有时候下雨天没有人来，我和瑞华茫然地看着外面雨中的黑夜，期望着有人出现，有一

次，真的没有人来，瑞华跑出去哭起来了。但是，神的灵在坚固我们，我们都即使摆着空凳子，也要坚持聚会。主将淑真姐妹带来了，她曾经痴迷于藏传佛教，但在信主后非常热心，她将不少同胞带来团契。当看到有七、八位同胞的时候，我们期望着有十二位就知足了。当有一天超过十二位的时候，我们就更加看出来，神真的有在工作，是祂在引导。

神要万人得救的心意也彰显在这些来新加坡打工的同胞们身上，是神将这么多中国同胞带到新加坡，相对来说，离乡背井的移工们在新加坡要比在中国更容易信主。

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一天晚上我看到聚会的椅子上放了诗歌本，诗歌本的封面写着“迦南团契”，这是牧师为我们起的名字，这是我们从来都没有想到的，是神通过人在工作。我们在此感谢教会一路开绿灯，感谢钟牧师、淑节传道、希米牧师，加兴牧师、淑美传道，总是随叫随到地，充满喜乐地尽力帮助我们。以下是2019年十年感恩聚会的时候，高国梁弟兄创作的三句半《迦南见证》。三句半是一种中国的曲艺。一组表演词仅三句和一个短语。表演者为四人，前三人每人说一句，第四人则念诵归纳前三句内容的词或短语，反复循环至结束。四位弟兄演员击锣和碰铃以加强气氛，并不断变换队形。



这是四位弟兄的三句半的演出照片。（表演自左至右依次为：高国梁，白东华，苏子腾，刘东玉）

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### 三句半《迦南见证》

1. 我们四个台上站，(高国梁)  
表演传统三句半，(白东华)  
说说咱们中国团，(苏子腾)  
迦南。(刘东玉)

2. 迦南团契真蒙福，  
弟兄姐妹神眷顾，  
各个都有灵见证，  
有福！

3.1 先说讲员胡映玉，  
祖辈全都受洗礼，  
父亲文革劫难擦肩过，  
历险记。

3.2 映玉老师初来新，  
工作生活波折多，  
圣灵引导多忍耐，  
跪上帝。

3.3 顺服儿女有神顾，  
工作转机出奇迹，  
神赐时间敬拜主，  
无亏负。

4.1 再说弟兄侍崇清，  
女儿得病危难中，  
教会祷告齐相助，  
脱险境。

4.2 崇清弟兄感激神，  
主的话语理解深，  
回国不离读经群，  
传主恩。

(未完待续)



# WHY CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLE IN CHURCH TO WORSHIP

By Rev Fredric Lee

We thank God that we can gather in JCC to worship on Sundays. Even with safety measure restrictions, most, if not all members can go to Worship Service in Church. However, since the introduction of online worship due to severe restrictions in the early days of the pandemic, we hear that Christians, not just JCCians, have adapted so well to live streaming worship that it is now their preferred choice. It is definitely more convenient. But online worship is an exceptional practice to address the unique situation that we were in. It is not the norm for Christian Worship and it is not a biblical practice.

*First, ever since the Church was born, Christians always assemble in worship (see [Acts 2:42-46](#)). This is the biblical picture of the Church in worship now and in eternity.*

After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.<sup>10</sup> And they cried out in a loud voice:

“Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.” (Rev 7:9-10)

We see that worship is gathering together as one congregation, standing before the presence of the risen Lord, wearing robes cleansed by the blood of the Lamb (cf v14) and lifting up holy hands to worship in one voice.

So it is necessary to gather physically in Worship



Service. We worship God not just spiritually but with our whole being. Being bodily present together as a Church. That's what it means to worship in spirit and in truth – the truth that worship involves the whole person.

*Second, we should be bodily present because God is bodily present to meet us.* We believe and confess that “The Church is the assembly of all believers among whom the gospel is purely preached and the holy sacraments are administered according to the gospel.” (Augsburg Confession, Article VII)

As believers, the Church assembles as a congregation in Divine Worship Service, to receive the grace of God in the gospel and the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. Receiving the Gospel of salvation in Christ Jesus is the focus of Divine Worship. The Gospel comes to us in the Word and Sacrament. Not just hear the Word

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preached but receiving God's gifts of grace in the Gospel given in the Word and Sacrament by the Holy Spirit.

"I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith."  
(Martin Luther, Small Catechism)

Worship is much more than hearing an interesting sermon or listening to good music. It is receiving what God wants to give us because He loves us – His forgiveness, faith and life. God's gifts come to us in person. In Divine Worship God is present to give through the ministers, e.g. in the Absolution, reading of God's Word, sermon and Benediction, and especially in Christ's body and blood in Communion. We must be bodily present in Divine Service to receive them in person.

**Third, we become disciples, make disciples and are united as disciples of Jesus Christ when we gather as a congregation in Divine Worship.** We become disciples through the waters of baptism in Divine Worship ([Matthew 28:19-20](#)). Then we continue to

receive forgiveness and sustenance in the body and blood of Christ in Communion ([John 6:53-57](#)). Thus gifted and empowered by God's grace in the Word and Sacrament we are sent into the world to make disciples. And in Divine Worship, Christ unites us as His disciples in His Word and Sacrament.



The purpose of online worship is for those who are sick, home bound, or overseas. So let's not neglect to come together in Divine Worship Service, but encourage one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near ([Hebrews 10:25](#)).

