

DECEMBER 2022

THE WINEPRESS

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The world looks forward to welcoming 2023 with fireworks and great celebrations. Everyone hopes the New Year will be better than the foregoing year which had many people caught off-guard by startling events.

As Christians, we are in the world but not of the world. Therefore, we do not conform to the pattern of this world, but we transform ourselves by the renewal of our minds. Then we will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Rom 12:2)

Notwithstanding the unpleasant surprises and corrupt darkness that the world thrusts upon us, we bask in the grace of the Lord who gives us His assurance: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." (2 Cor 12:9)

Dear JCCians, as we get ourselves ready for the new year, we can start with counting our blessings and be surprised by what the Lord has done, and be hopeful of more blessings in 2023.

Ann Voskamp, a Canadian author, wisely advises, "The life that counts blessings discovers its yielding more than it seems." Being grateful and thankful, looking forward to an exciting new year with Christ as we seek the Lord and His strength, seek His face continually, keeping ourselves active in reaping the harvest into His kingdom.

Let us hear from the words of apostle Paul to the Philippi church:

*"Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."
– Philippians 3:13-14*

1. FORGET AND FORGIVE THE PAST

The New Year is a time to let go, forgetting the things which are behind.

It's a time to forget and forgive our faults, failures, unpleasant happenings, and misfortunes of the past – the burdens that we surrender to God and not carry over to the new year.

No power can resist God in doing wondrous work in our lives if we put our trust in Him:

"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." – Isa 43:9

2. PRESS FORWARD

We are encouraged to reach forward to those things which are ahead.

Continued on next page

Instead of being weighed down by dwelling on past attitudes and actions, we can allow God's Word and the Holy Spirit to shape our spiritual formation. With the perspective of a positive future of heavenly reward, let us be encouraged to grow the fruit of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control – to attain the goal of a Christ-like life.

The theme of JCC is: Growing Deep in Discipleship – Be One, Make One and As One. Pray that every JCCian will be influential to impact the community in 2023.

3. FOCUS ON CHRIST

Do people make New Year resolutions?

In Philippians 3:14, Christ is the object of Paul's goal to win the prize for the upward call of God.

Christ is the object of the believer's faith: *"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God."* (Col 3:1)

A good resolution to make (and not to break) for the New Year is to renew our focus on Christ – to focus on His return, ride on the power of His resurrection, and to walk daily with Him.

Are you ready for 2023 – renewal of faith, living out the life of discipleship and to cling on the eternal hope Christ has given us?

PRAYER FOCUS FOR JANUARY

A) GOD'S DIRECTION FOR 2023

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'" (Jeremiah 29:11)

Let us seek God's direction as we begin the new year 2023, and claim the future and hope in His plans for our personal life, our family and our ministries.

B) OUTREACH TO FAMILY/CLAN

"May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance." (2 Thessalonians 3:5)

Pray for God's love to move us to reach out to our family/clan, proclaim the gospel to them and serve them as good stewards of God's varied grace.

C) LIVE WISELY

"Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil." (Ephesians 5:15-16)

We are living in very challenging times. May God guide us to live wisely in His kingdom, allowing Jesus to rule and reign in our hearts.

D) WITNESSING WITH COMPASSION

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." (Ephesians 4:32)

Pray that God opens our spiritual eyes to see the needs of people around us, and lift our kindness to reach out to touch hearts and change lives as compassionate witnesses for Christ.



NON-CELEBRATION

There are people who don't celebrate Christmas. They give several reasons: Christmas is nowhere mentioned in the Bible; it is associated with pagan customs; we don't know the exact date of Jesus' birth; etc.

There are people who don't celebrate Easter. They allege that it is not a celebration instructed by Scripture; it is heretic when the papal authority adapted a pagan holiday, etc.

There are people who don't celebrate Mother's Day. Are you surprised that it is also claimed to have a pagan connection in ancient Greece when Mother's Day was celebrated to honour a certain goddess?

How about celebrating birthdays? Birthday celebrations, unfortunately, cannot escape from their opponents' criticism about pagan roots of the candles, granting of wishes and other linked folk belief. (Jehovah Witnesses are one group of people who don't celebrate birthdays.)

Without any "stain of paganism", wedding anniversaries are also not in the celebration list of some couples. It is not a big deal to them although it may be a big deal to others.

CELEBRATION

According to Britannica Dictionary, "to celebrate" means to do something special or enjoyable for an important event, occasion, holiday, etc.

Wedding anniversary is another example of an event that some couples shun a celebration. Well, it is not obligatory for them to celebrate if they don't wish to; and there is no need to throw a wet blanket on those who consider their wedding anniversaries as special or important to celebrate.

Regarding Christmas, there are three groups of people:

- Group 1 – Those who don't see it as important to celebrate. Well, if they have no reason to be joyful about the event, it will serve them no purpose to celebrate.

- Group 2 – Those who celebrate for the wrong reason. While they are not being accused of paganism, their celebration is certainly thick with commercialism and consumerism as the Christ in Christmas is far removed from their festive focus.
- Group 3 – Christians who celebrate Christmas with a joyous mood like the shepherds' and the angels' at the time of Jesus' birth as recorded in Mt 2:1-12.

REASON FOR CELEBRATION

We belong to Group 3.

More than 2000 years ago, when Bethlehem the town of David was still asleep, the time came for a baby to be born. An angel brought the good news to the shepherds in the fields nearby, "A Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord." (Luke 2)

The birth of Christ, our Messiah, fulfilled dozens of prophecies in the OT. It brings light into a dark world – with the hope of peace, joy and eternal life.

The jubilation in our celebration is well-captured by the following hymn:

*"Come On And Celebrate,
His Gift Of Love, We Will Celebrate
The Son Of God Who Loved Us And Gave Us Life
We'll Shout Your Praise O King,
You Give Us Joy Nothing Else Can Bring
We Bring To You Our Offering Of Celebration Praise
Come On And Celebrate,
Celebrate, Celebrate And Sing
Celebrate And Sing To The King"*

In celebration, Christians remind one another, "Jesus loves you."

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." (John 3:16-17)

NOT THE DATE BUT THE EVENT

If your birthday falls on 29th February, the importance of the event to you is not diminished if you decide to celebrate it on 28th February, 1st March or any preferred weekend nearby. Similarly, many senior folks have their birthdays recorded on their NRIC as on the 1st day of a month, or even the 1st of January, out of expediency because they don't know their actual date of birth. It is no less meaningful in various ways when children and grandchildren gather in celebrating a life, appreciating the wonderful ways God has made the birthday child special and a blessing.

Admittedly, 25th December may not be the exact day of Christ's birth. Nevertheless, whether Christmas is celebrated on 25th December or on 6th January (as the Armenian Church does), the sacredness of the event (the birth of our Redeemer) is not lost a bit in our heart.

Christmas is a contraction of the term "Christ's Mass." Our focus of Christmas is on Jesus Christ and His gift of eternal life. There is no pagan link in our thoughts of celebration. The spirit of Christmas is in the season, not just a single day; it is a time to spread the Good News so that many unbelievers will come to receive Christ as their personal Saviour.





GOD IS NOT DONE
WITH YOU YET
BY BENEDICT LEE



Half time: Argentina 1 (10') – 0 Saudi Arabia
Full time: Argentina 1 – 2 (48' & 53') Saudi Arabia

The internet is raving about how Saudi Arabia's coach Herve Renard engineered one of the great upsets in World Cup history with his half-time speech. In the dressing room, Saudi Arabia was visibly dejected from its disappointing performance in the 1st half. The odds were stacked against them, especially with them down against one of the tournament's favourites. But Herve was not done with Saudi Arabia! And Saudi Arabia responded by scoring 2 decisive goals in less than 10 minutes of its return to the field to seal the victory!

This episode reminded me of one of my favourite segments in the movie "Facing the Giants", where Mr. Bridges walked into Coach Taylor's office at the lowest point of his life and career and said, "Revelation Chapter 3 says: We serve a God that opens doors that no one can shut, and he shuts doors that no one can open... He says: Behold, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and not denied my name."

Coach Taylor, the Lord is not through with you yet. You still have an open door here, and until the Lord moves you, you're to bloom right where you're planted... I just felt led to come and tell you that today."

Brothers & Sisters, God is not done with you yet!

The Israelites thought it was over when they reached the Red Sea. The disciples of Jesus thought it was over when Jesus was crucified on the cross.

It may be natural for many of us to think that it is over or that God is not with us:

- when others do not understand us or twist the facts to frame us or accuse us;
- when situations at work (e.g. layoffs, office politics, etc.), school (e.g. poor results, non-qualification to a desired school/course, etc.) or even family (e.g. deaths, broken relationships, etc.) go downhill;

- when we face seemingly insurmountable obstacles in life (e.g. illness, disability, poverty, etc.); or
- when we keep committing the same sin(s) over and over again despite our efforts to change.

Though fully aware of the sinfulness, imperfectness and unfaithfulness of man, the apostle Paul still declared, "I am convinced and confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will [continue to] perfect and complete it until the day of Christ Jesus [the time of His return]."

- Philippians 1:6 AMP

Paul's confidence was not in himself, but in God, despite him being in prison. Paul was sure that it is He (God) who first initiated the good work (of salvation) in us. And it is He (God) who will (not "may") continue this work (of sanctification) till it is finished at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Salvation & sanctification are all of God's work and have nothing to do with our own strength and will. Neither our eternal security in Christ nor our becoming like Christ depends upon our works at all. And if there is any doubt of God's promises on account of our sinfulness, God has already settled it on the cross.

"He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us."

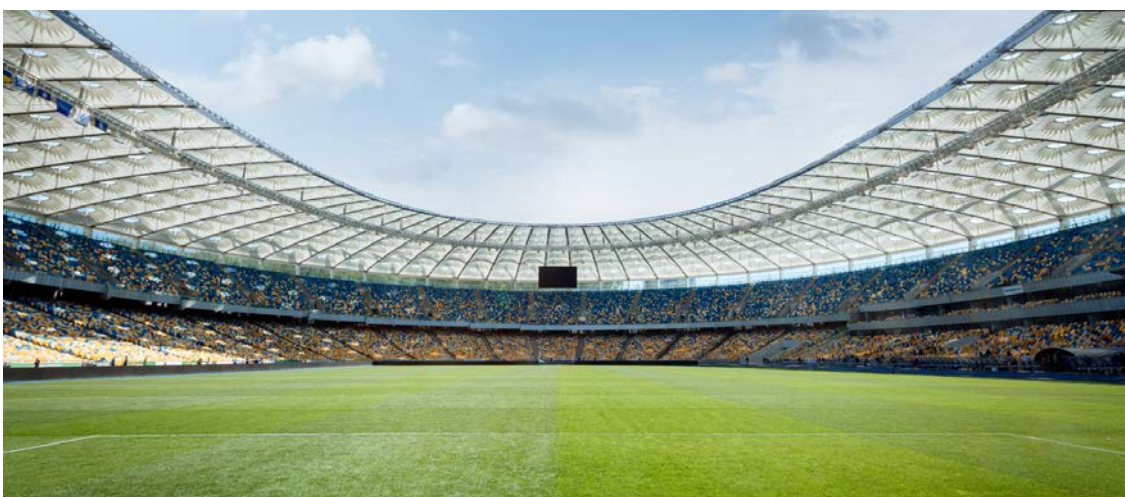
- Psalm 103:10-12 ESV

"If we are faithless, he remains faithful – for he cannot deny himself."

- 2 Timothy 2:13 ESV

God loves us. Jesus died on the cross that we may be reconciled to God. He will never leave us nor forsake us. We can trust and hope in Him in all circumstances. Regardless of how desolate our situations may be or how faithless we may become, Jesus will still continue to perfect the work He has begun in us until the day He comes again in the fullness of His glory and power.

Therefore, even as the Church marks the beginning of the Advent Season and as we await the Second Coming of our Lord, let us continue to run with endurance the race that is set before us and look to Jesus Christ for He is the founder and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:2)! Amen.





GOAL! OR IS IT? BY MARTIN CHEAH

In the ongoing FIFA World Cup 2022, video assistance referees (VAR) are so frequently used to rule for a penalty or off-side offence that it becomes very presumptuous for players and fans to celebrate a goal until the VAR is consulted. So many goals have been disallowed after the VAR showed very hairline offside offence committed by a player. Maybe an arm or a foot had crossed the line.

One can only imagine that one day hackers can hack into the VAR system and control the whole game by making players seem to be breaking some of the rules by moving the graphics slightly.

"Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Matthew 5:48) Many think that they are good enough, not considering that the Holy God is perfect and we are to be like Him.

"I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy."

- Leviticus 11:44a,

Jesus said, *"No one is good—except God alone." (Mark 10:18)*. Many people cannot accept that they are not good enough as they try to work their way to heaven through good works. It saddens me to think that after doing all their "good" works, they find themselves offside because they could not reach God's perfect standard. Possibly, not even man's standard.

There is a common statement – You can't please everyone, which would imply that you choose something less than 100% as your perfection.

Accept that we are only imperfect humans and need God's Victorious Almighty Redeemer, Jesus, to save us.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son (Jesus), that everyone who believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."

- John 3:16

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

- Ephesians 2:8-9



for
**BOLD
CHRISTIAN
LIVING**
BY BRYAN TAY

NAIL IT TO THE CROSS

"Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." - Galatians 5:25 (NIV)

Our Lord Jesus died on the cross to offer us salvation, healing, and deliverance from sin, sickness, death and all kinds of bondages. When we accepted Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, He has forgiven us all our sins and cleansed us from all our unrighteousness. We are a new creation. It is as if God had packed all our sins, transgressions and iniquities in a tight bundle, dropped it into the deep ocean and placed a sign over that spot that says: "No Fishing". Now that we have crossed over from the kingdom of darkness into His marvelous light, we are no longer condemned. Do not believe the devil's lies.

As we grow in our spiritual life, we will continue to experience ups and downs in life. We will continue to falter and sin against God, others and ourselves. But as long as we continue to abide in Jesus and allow Him to shape our lives, like clay in the potter's hands, He will strengthen us and complete the good work that He has begun in us. Because of that, we can live each day confidently and purposefully under the shadow of His wings without any condemnation.

WHAT DOES GOD SAY ABOUT THIS?

*"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."
- Romans 8:1 (NIV)*



*"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."
- Galatians 2:20 (NIV)*

*"Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."
- Philippians 1:6 (NIV)*

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PRACTICAL LIVING?

We are God's chosen people. We are a royal priesthood. We are His sheep. There is no turning back to our old ways. We are no longer dead in sin. The Holy Spirit has entered into our lives to quicken us and made us alive in Him. His own presence resides in us in full power. In fact, that same power that raised Jesus from the dead now lives in each of us 100%! That power can save the lost from eternal damnation, heal the sick, deliver the demon-possessed and break the chains of those in bondage to sin.

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We need to live each day as a new day and rejoice in it. If we are tempted by the devil or our selfish desires, reject them and command them to flee in the name of Jesus. If we are tempted to wallow in our past sins and regrets, ask God to take our thoughts captive and fill our minds with His Word. Keep short accounts with God. Establish a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit, who is our Senior Partner. His job is to empower us, reveal God's will to us and guide us into all truth. God has not given us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and a sound mind. Do not look back. Look ahead.

REFLECT AND RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

- What are some "old" things in your pre-Christian days that the devil is digging up and using them to condemn you? Nail them to the cross and walk away a free man.
- What do you need to do to overcome the wiles and flaming arrows of the evil one aimed at dragging you down into self-condemnation?
- Choose a buddy with whom you can share your personal struggles. Pray for one another and check in with each other during the week to provide encouragement.



LET'S THINK & TALK STRAIGHT

BY BRYAN TAY

SAY WHAAAAAT?!



"A son honors his father, and a slave his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me?" says the LORD Almighty.

- Malachi 1:6

Let's face facts. How do the people around you actually view your Christian faith? Deep down in their hearts, do they feel that you must be a simpleton or lunatic to actually believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ? From the virgin birth to the resurrection of Jesus to the second coming of Christ... do all these sound like fantasy or fiction? Are they quite happy to leave you alone and let you nestle in your religious comfort zone, as long as you do not disturb them by trying to share the gospel with them? If that is what the people around us are thinking, then there is something seriously wrong about our Christian living.

Is your faith bordering on fantasy or fiction?

Our faith ought to be an active one. Faith without works is dead. We must not be ashamed to defend and speak of righteousness, truth, mercy and justice. Most importantly, we must abhor sin, disobedience and rebellion against God.

We must not only avoid them like a plague but make known to others that a holy God will not tolerate them. He demands repentance and restitution that can only be provided by Jesus. As we rest secure in God's love and strive to keep in step with the Holy Spirit's guidance in our daily living, in words and actions, we will see the power of God in turning our faith into factual proof of His presence, power and deeds.

GOD IS ASKING

- How do people react when you start talking about Jesus and their need for salvation?
- What are you doing to demonstrate the reality of God's power in daily living?
- Do a reality check: Why do you believe what the Bible says?

I welcome your comments, thoughts and sharing on this reflection. Write to jccwinepress@gmail.com. We will publish your contribution in the next issue.

ΑΩ ALPHA TO THE OMEGA

BY SAMUEL CHONG



R ROGERS. MISTER

"Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these"." (Matthew 19:14)

WHO WAS MISTER ROGERS?

Fred McFeely Rogers (1928 – 2003), more commonly known as Mister Rogers, was an American television host, author, producer, and Presbyterian Minister. He was the creator, showrunner, and host of the children's television series *Mister Roger's Neighborhood*, which ran from 1968 to 2001 and was critically acclaimed for focusing on children's social and emotional concerns, such as sibling rivalry, school enrolment, divorce, and even death – thus serving as a unique example of a "television ministry".

EARLY LIFE

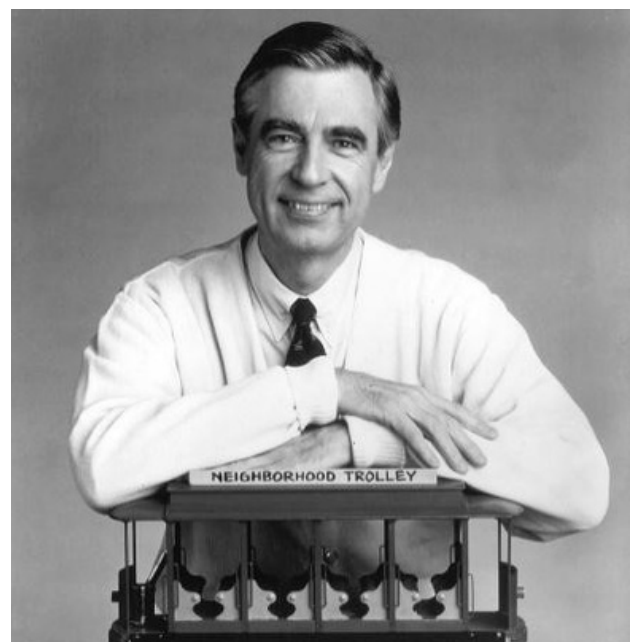
Rogers was born in 1928 in Pennsylvania. An only child until age 11, he spent most of his childhood alone, playing with puppets and picking up the piano – skills he would employ later in his career. Rogers is distantly related to Tom Hanks, who later portrayed Rogers in the 2019 film *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*.

Rogers started to overcome his shyness in high school, becoming president of the student council and editor of the school yearbook. After being deemed physically unfit for military service, Rogers entered university and graduated with a Bachelor of Music in 1951. He met his wife, an accomplished pianist, in university and were married from 1952 until his death from stomach cancer in 2003.

FORAY INTO TELEVISION

An encounter with a TV in 1951 left Rogers with a dislike of its regular programming. He nonetheless still chose to enter the TV industry rather than seminary to nurture TV audiences. Rogers worked as a program developer on a children's show, creating puppets, characters, and music which he would also employ in his later work.

Not forgetting his earlier calling, Rogers concurrently attended Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and was ordained as a Presbyterian minister in 1963. He also attended the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Child Development and met child psychologist Margaret McFarland, who later became a consultant for Rogers' scripts and songs.



Fred Rogers and the Neighborhood Trolley (1988),
Wikimedia Commons

MISTER ROGER'S NEIGHBORHOOD

After a stint in Canada hosting his own children's show, Rogers returned to America in 1967 to start *Mister Roger's Neighborhood*. Initially filmed in black-and-white for its first season, the show received charity funding for colour filming for subsequent seasons.

At the start of each episode, the show's logo appeared as the camera pans slowly over a model of the neighbourhood and into the Rogers' television house. Viewers would then see Mister Rogers coming home with his jacket on, singing his signature song "Won't You Be My Neighbor?" (which he composed himself) as he went into the closet, swapped his jacket for a cardigan zipper sweater (a different coloured one each episode) and his dress shoes for sneakers. This simple ritual was repeated in every episode.

During the episode, Rogers spoke directly to the viewer about various topics and took them on external tours, demonstrated experiments, crafts, and music, and interacted with his friends.

Each episode also contained a puppet segment on occurrences in the "Neighborhood of Make-Believe". Viewers were transported in and out of the world of Make-Believe via the movement of a miniature motorised trolley. From the third season onwards, Rogers made a clear distinction between the realistic world of his television neighborhood and the fantasy world of Make-Believe. This reality/fantasy distinction was in sharp contrast with other children's series like *Sesame Street* which freely mixed realistic and fantastic elements.

At the end of each episode, Rogers would sing another song while reversing his entrance ritual (i.e. dressing to leave the house). Before leaving, Rogers would remind viewers that they were still loveable just the way they were and assured them that he would be back.



Opening credits for *Mister Roger's Neighborhood*, screenshot taken from PBS KIDS Youtube Channel

Mister Rogers' Neighborhood ran for 895 episodes from 1968 to 2001. At its peak in 1985-1986, 2.1% of all television households (~1.8 million homes) tuned in to watch the show. When averaged out across its 33-year run, the show still had a remarkable rating of 0.7% (~680,000 homes).

NOT YOUR USUAL CHILDREN'S SHOW

Mister Rogers' Neighborhood emphasised children's social and emotional needs rather than cognitive learning (as exemplified by *Sesame Street*). As such, Rogers covered a broad range of topics over the years, and the series did not shy away from issues that other children's programming avoided. He regularly discussed the topic of anger, focusing on peaceful ways of dealing with angry feelings.



Rogers changing his shoes at the start of an episode (1969), Wikimedia Commons

He also discussed racism – a 1969 episode had Rogers share a foot bath with an African American cast member, breaking the colour barrier in a country just emerging from segregation. Death too was discussed – from the death of a pet goldfish to Robert F. Kennedy’s assassination.

Rogers also made it a point to behave naturally on camera rather than act out a character, stating that “One of the greatest gifts you can give anybody is the gift of your honest self. I also believe that children can spot a phony a mile away.”

NOT YOUR USUAL “TELEVANGELIST”

As a committed Christian, many of Rogers’ messages expressed through *Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood* were inspired by the core tenets of Christianity. While he rarely spoke about his faith on air, he believed that teaching through example was as powerful as preaching. He once said that “You don’t need to speak overtly about religion in order to get a message across”.



Rogers and François Clemmons sharing a foot bath (1969), Wikimedia Commons

Rogers also responded to every letter sent to him, seeing it as his “pastoral duty”. A well-known incident arose from one of these letters. A blind girl who watched the show expressed concerns about the show’s pet fishes and whether they were being fed; Rogers made it a point from then on to always announce that he was feeding the fishes as he did so.

WON’T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOUR?

Fred Rogers lived an exemplary life and while he never considered himself a televangelist, his TV work served as a unique ministry that was not based in a church nor limited to time and space, thereby earning a distinct place in church history. A generation of children grew up learning from Mister Rogers and reruns of the show continue to nurture the children of today. Certainly, we can learn from this Good Neighbour who lived out the second greatest commandment (Matthew 22:39).

All information and pictures taken from the respective Wikipedia articles unless otherwise stated.



Rogers on set with some of his puppets (1984), Wikimedia Commons

AUTHOR'S RECOMMENDATION

The author recommends parents to show episodes of Mister Rogers' Neighborhood to young children, to help them learn godly values to grow up well in a messy world. Episodes can be found on YouTube.

Furthermore, the series is notable for its use of calm, soothing jazz-inspired music that is simple yet blends with Roger's songs and sketches.

In the author's opinion, the gentle (yet masterful) music set a very different mood/tone for the show that prioritises children's learning by augmenting content rather than being distracting noise.

For further reading:

[Fred Rogers](#)

[Mister Roger's Neighborhood](#)

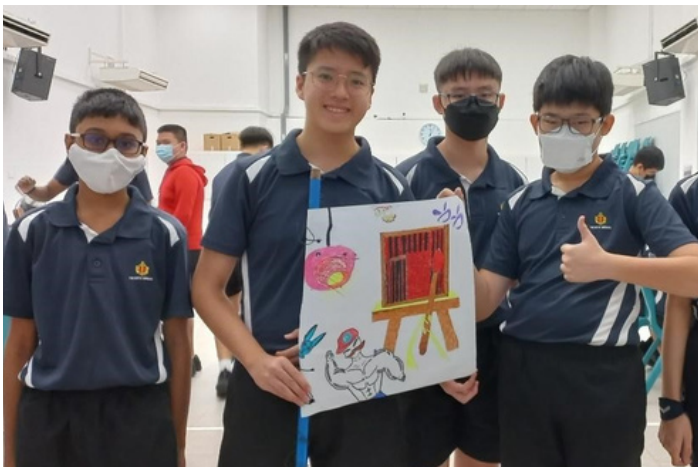
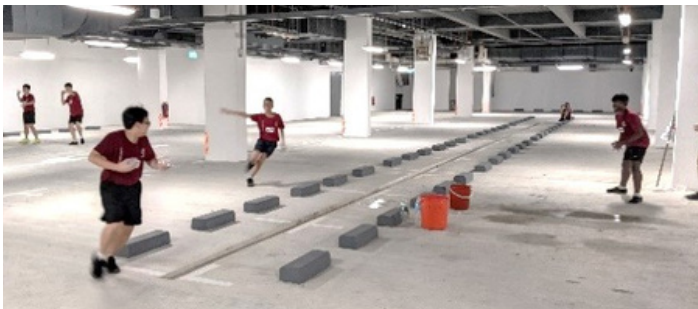


Hello, I am CPL Caden Lee and I am writing to share with you my unforgettable experience during the End of Year Boys' Brigade camp. The camp was held in Jurong Christian church (JCC) from 17-19 November 2022.

In this camp, the people who were involved were the Boys of the 28th Singapore Boys' Brigade company and the officers. The camp objective was to learn how to be proactive for which I am glad that I tried my best to show it through my actions during the camp.

There were many fun activities during the camp but the few activities that made an impact on me and also gave me a memorable experience were the leadership lessons which were carried out by the officers, the games such as the water games, and lastly the hike to Bukit Timah hill. All these activities gave me so much fond memories and helped me to build greater bonds between myself and the Boys and my officers. This camp helped me so much in being more proactive and guiding me to become a better person and a better leader.

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Caden (second from left) is an NCO from 28th company and is attending ARPC with his family

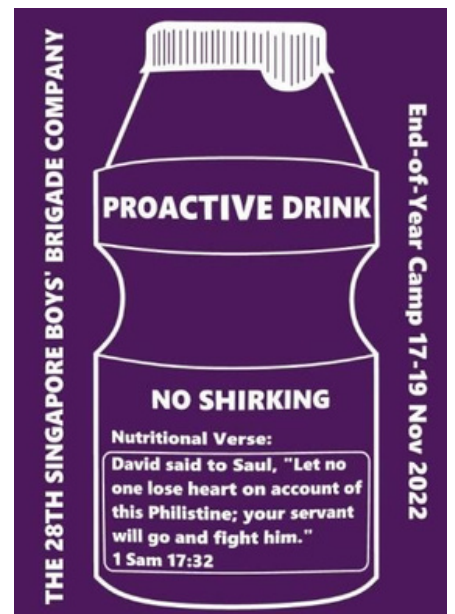
The challenge I faced during the planning stage was firstly that this was my first time planning an overnight camp so there were a lot of things to be taken note of. Another challenge was when I was informed I needed to step up and take the role of being in charge of the camp as one of the Boys needed to travel and would not be able to attend the full camp. This helped me to take up the opportunity of leading the company and making sure all the programmes were going smoothly, and last but not least ensuring all the Boys have fun and be safe.

Some of the uncertainties I faced were that I was not sure if I could lead so many Boys on my own but I learned that the other Boys were there to help me too and so I took this as a learning point and was really glad that I was praised by some of the officers about my display of leadership and above all my proactiveness. Lastly, I really enjoyed this camp and thank the committee and the Boys for the opportunity and the success of this camp.



Prioritisers	Excellence Always	Seekers
<i>noun</i> praɪˈɒr.i.taɪzər	<i>noun</i> ek.səl.əns	<i>noun</i> siː.kər
a person who decides which of a group of things are the most important so that he can deal with them first	the quality of being outstanding or extremely good	someone who is trying to find or get something (e.g. purpose)

BACK 2 BASICS





♥ MANNA BRIDGE: DGP PARTNERING WITH JCC (25 NOV) BY PEGGY LEE

A picture speaks a thousand words. The picture here shows the large group of JCCians, DGP (David & Goliath Preschool) children and their parents together in their first collaborative effort to distribute food (bread and canned items) to our neighbourhood residents. They were all eager participants in our Manna Bridge project in reaching out to the community with love in practical ways.

Notably, despite the different backgrounds of the participants, they all share a singular heart of loving the neighbours and doing good work of voluntary service. The adults set a very good example of social graciousness for the little ones, which accords with the DGP's philosophy: *"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."*

The success of this Manna Bridge collaboration between DGP and JCC did not come about without initial anxiety on how to pull it off.

When the idea was first broached by Samantha about inviting DGP to join the Manna Bridge social outreach as part of DGP's endeavour to impart to the children practical lessons on kindness, I concurred. So, I met up with the Principal of DGP and thereafter publicity began in DGP and JCC in earnest.

I prayed hard for God to grant His blessing to fulfill my goal of having 2 JCCians to 1 DGP family.

When DGP closed their applications on 18th November (exactly one week before the date of the food distribution), the report came to me that 23 families from DGP registered, which means a total of 64 persons would be joining the community kindness effort.

Wow! With such encouraging enthusiasm from DGP, I was cheered and anxious at the same time.

Continued on next page



I needed a good number of warm-hearted JCCians to match, but only fewer than 10 JCCians had registered. I queried, "How come like this, dear God?"

Day by day following my pleading to God, JCCians messaged me with their interest to help. My spirit was lifted, and I thanked God for the wonderful way He worked.

On the day of food distribution, a few families were unable to turn up for various reasons. However, I was also very touched by a family who made the effort to rush back from JB to join us. Finally, I had 16 families and enough JCCians to partner them in the food distribution, with each family given a bag of 12 loaves of bread and 12 canned items to hand out to households in two blocks of HDB flats.

On the following Monday (28th November), a DGP family recognised me when I was about to enter the lift in the church. The little boy called me teacher, and the mum said that they enjoyed the food distribution kindness project.

The boy might see me as his teacher, but my very thought of the enthusiasm for kindness shown by him and his schoolmates recalled a catchy song that kids sing, which now speaks back to me vividly about faith in God:

*"My God is so big, so strong and so mighty
There's nothing my God cannot do..."*

I thank all JCCians, DGP Principal, DGP children and their parents who have made the first collaboration effort on the Manna Bridge a success. The greatest THANK YOU to God for His answers to prayers.

May the Manna Bridge continue as a hard-wearing outreach link to the community with unwavering support from the JCC family.

May the partnership with the DGP also continue strongly in accord with the DGP mission: "To develop wholesome children in partnership with their families and the community."





Finally, the Dialect Leadership Team (DLT) got their much-deserved retreat on 26 Nov 2022. We praise God for the team's unwavering devotion to serving the dialect congregants despite the challenges they have faced through the pandemic years.

The retreat was a time for relaxation, a break away from the usual busyness of activities and work in the dialect ministry. Hence, the retreat was planned for a full day with the programme being intentionally light and pleasant, with unhurried time for relaxed interactions.

In the morning, the team assembled in MPH1 where Deacon Nathan shared his assessment of our faith and current situation, and inspired all on the directions for the Dialect Ministry in the coming year – including Prayer Mobilization, Pastoral Care & Nurturing, Outreach & Evangelism, etc. This was followed by a spot of simple game for camaraderie-building.

Note that the DLT members are mostly senior citizens. Nevertheless, they showed themselves as still nimble and young-at-heart in enjoying the fellowship through the simple game before adjourning to a food centre within the Taman Jurong Shopping Centre for a sumptuous lunch from a *zi char* menu.

DLT RETREAT BY JOHN LEE

After tummies were filled, we returned to JCC. This time we gathered in the conference room for the afternoon session, adding some discussions on matters concerning the DLT and Ministry. We were still warm to the stress-free fellowship and dialogues in a lively mixture of Hokkien and Mandarin – a good testimony of conviviality within the team.

As said above, this retreat's programme was intended to be light and pleasant. Here, the pleasantness deserves singular mention. If the sumptuous *zi char* lunch was in any way not satisfying enough, there was a delectable surprise of a bigger Part II meal; i.e., a splendid dinner at the Imperial Restaurant in the Four Points by Sheraton hotel downtown, generously sponsored by DLT member Cassidy and his wife Esther.

After the retreat, work continues for the DLT. We give thanks to God for blessing the DLT that keeps the Dialect Ministry going through tough times. We pray that God will continue to bless the team in the coming year for a fruitful harvest.



♥ CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION
WITH TAMAN JURONG
BY KUN MING

On the Friday evening of 2nd December, JCC organised an early Christmas celebration for Taman Jurong residents.

I was glad to be there to soak in the warmth and friendship with our guests from the neighbourhood.

In my role as a Bridger, I served food and drinks. It was satisfying to note their appreciation by simple words of "Thank You" and the smiles on their faces.

I also managed some conversations with the residents and thereby got to know them better. In one interaction with the young sons of a resident, we were easy-going in talking about hobbies and schoolwork.

As the Bridgers, befrienders and residents mingled in the relaxed atmosphere, the younger ones were looking forward to the games. The joy on the kids' faces was infectious to the adults too.

Apart from spreading the peace and joy of the festive season, the Christmas celebration for the Taman Jurong residents was rewarding and meaningful to me personally. Through my role as a Bridger, I got to put into practice the concept of servant leadership as I have learned as a member of the Boys' Brigade.



In serving the residents, I gained useful insight into the handiness of basic practical communication skill, especially for conversations with people whose first language isn't English.

I wish all residents of Taman Jurong a blessed Christmas.



ELIDS @ JURONG BIRD PARK BY ALOYSIUS KHOO

With the coming shift of Jurong Bird Park to Mandai Wildlife Reserve, Elids cell group decided to go on an outing there together to relive the memories made at the park again; most of us have only visited Jurong Bird Park once when our age was but a single digit.

We had grand plans to start our adventure at 10am, have lunch and continue exploring the park after, and finally ending with dinner. Instead, we had a great start with being denied entry at the gate. Turned out Bird Park has a very counterintuitive ticketing system in which a confirmation email was not a confirmation of tickets until a time slot was chosen in their link. Nevertheless, we managed to catch both shows that the park offered, witnessing a talking/singing macaw and an eagle that comically failed to catch food multiple times. After 2 hours, it turned out that we had grossly overestimated the size of the park and had finished touring it. So we spent the rest of our time at, you guessed it, Decathlon :) We ended the day with buying items for our coming BBQ (wow so haps) and dinner.

If your birth year is 1999 to 2002 inclusive, and enjoy nua-ing (not a requirement), come check out ELIDS!





♥ THANKSGIVING BBQ FOR
BFF & E-LIDS (10 DEC)
BY SUSIE AND SIM SIM

Exhorted by Hebrews 10:24 to 'let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works', the older BFF and younger E-LIDS, led by Bryan and Gek Luang, gathered for a wonderful evening of fellowship and barbecue on 10 December at JCC's multi-purpose hall.

We witnessed the demonstration of love by both groups. While the older group looked into the ordering of food led chiefly by the efficient Gek Luang, the younger ones happily barbecued and served brethren that evening with mouth-watering food - beef steak, chicken chop, nuggets, Holland and sweet potatoes. While Gary contributed the delicious Haagen Dazs ice-cream, Elizabeth, a veteran chef, whipped up tasty tomato-based mushroom sauce to add to Gek Luang's palatable pasta and beehoon.

We thanked God for the good food, fun, fellowship and even reunion. A set of E-LIDS twins was surprised to meet their primary school teacher who's in BFF. We were thankful that present amongst us were the encouraging and ever-smiling Rev Anthony Loh and Rev & Mrs Fredric Lee. We were delighted that pastoral workers Joseph and Peggy and some new members and guests joined us to add to the camaraderie.

We hope that this occasion will spark us to continually 'exhort one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching' (Heb 10:25). May God Almighty bless the cell groups led by brother Bryan to be channels of blessings in the new year 2023!

 **BB SHARE-A-GIFT**
BY HEMANTH



I am CPL Hemanth from the 28th BB Company. I would like to share the uplifting experience I had with BB Share-A-Gift, BBSG for short.

BBSG is an annual event in Singapore. It allows the Boys and volunteers to give back to the community by collecting donated food products from the public, packing the hampers, and delivering them to the less fortunate.

On 10th December 2022, I was able to deliver many hampers to the needy residents around Jurong Christian Church. It was a very wholesome experience seeing the ecstatic expressions of the residents. Moreover, their gratitude for the hampers was also heartening. I also felt sympathy for a few residents due to their living conditions. For example, one of the residents who received the hamper was disabled. The house also looked as if he was the only one living in it as it was messy and dirty. I hope that the hampers delivered will help the residents in one way or another.

We often overlook the privileges we have in life. BBSG has taught me to be grateful for everything I have and not to be angry for things I do not have. Furthermore, it has taught me compassion for others. Delivering the hampers was a simple way for me to show my compassion to the residents and give back to the community.

In a nutshell, this experience was nourishing and enlightening. I hope to do it again next year.

In partnership with the BB, some JCC members also went out distributing the gifts to the neighbourhood.

HEMANTH (SEC 3)





♥ BADMINTON OUTREACH UPDATES BY PEGGY TAN

Photo above is the big group of Badminton players who came to play on 7th Dec. Pray for good relationships to be developed via the Goshen badminton bridge.

Soon Wei and Lance were sent to a Badminton competition but were unplaced. Fong and his son (Soon Wei) also took part in the Parent and Child team game and came very close, losing 29 to 30.

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:9)



GOSHEN BADMINTON CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

In recent weeks, the air in JCC must be thick with the inviting smell of BBQ as several BBQ+Christmas+Fellowship events happened one after another.

On 14th Dec 2022, we had another round of belly-good fellowship among the Goshen badminton players and guests, and a belly-satisfying serving of BBQ foods.

Consistent with the spirit of the Advent season, the musicians (Boris, Nat, Sebastian, Clement and Malcolm) duly led in the joyous singing of carols and got all ears pricked up to hear the story of Christmas from Rev Anthony who delivered it in a convivial style with audience participation in answering questions.



Hopefully, the message about our separation from God due to sin and about the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ sank into fertile soil and would in time produce a good crop for the harvest.

The mood was also right for a few rounds of games with badminton rackets, tennis balls and word formations. Token prizes were given out, but the greatest prize of all was the bond of friendship that everyone earned through so much fun and laughter through the night.

Finally, we wished all who were born in December a blessed birthday, with a lovely birthday cake baked by our sister Gek Luang.





♥ CHRISTMAS
CELEBRATIONS IN NIAS
BY
PS MICHAEL CHRISTIAN

11th December 2022 - Pastor Michael, now back in Nias, celebrated Christmas with the children and staff of Tomorrow's Hope Children's Home Nias. Here are some photos of the simple but enjoyable party.





BAPTISM - A GIFT OF FAITH BY PEH YI WEN

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

As Lutherans, we believe the Bible teaches that we are saved by God's grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ. Along with God's written and spoken word, baptism is one of the miraculous means of grace through which God creates the gift of faith in a person's heart.

11 Dec 2022 marked a special day as we welcomed the following sisters and brother to the big family of JCC:

BAPTISM

- Yong Mue Leng Alice

TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

- Cheong Fook Loy
- Swee Ley Hong Lydia
- Gildabella Rhode Muze
- Tang Mei Ai Florence

With this gift of faith, we pray God leads them onward into this new journey, keeping them firmly rooted through any storms that come their way.

♥ THE WINEPRESS 2022 - APPRECIATION TO ALL CONTRIBUTORS WHO PROVIDED ARTICLES

BY MARTIN CHEAH

Maybe many of you think that The Winepress is made up of only 3 writers, Bryan Tay, John Lee and myself. Well, you are 100% wrong and we want to take this time to thank all of you who have made it possible to produce The Winepress monthly. Without your input, we will not be able to generate interesting and informative stories and articles each month.

Special appreciation to our regular feature writers Rev Anthony Loh for the Pastor's Word and Samuel Chong for his Alpha to Omega series.

We pray that more of you will continue to support The Winepress team with your own personal, interesting and encouraging stories in the year to come.

Month	Writer	Article
Jan	Alicia Chan Peggy Tan Dr Albert Ong Judy Oh June Lim Deacon Nathan Lim	Pastors' Appreciation Dance Item The Goshen Initiative CNY Greetings – Peace Cartoon In this new year, are you pursuing your 5Cs? Reflections on things I am grateful for in 2021
Feb	Jim Lee Dr Albert Ong Tony Koh Boris Khoo Fong Sow Leong	The Epiphany Of Our Lord Safe In His Father's Arms The Joy Of The Lord Is My Strength Happenings In My Life In 2021 (Part 1) Unanswered Questions – Answered!
Mar	Kylie Chia Boris Khoo	Combined Prayer Meeting Happenings In My Life In 2021 (Part 2)
Apr	Tony Koh/Patrick Low Yap Xiu Zhen	Forging Ahead, Sharing Easter Joy GB Enrolment 2022
May	Clement Tan Patrick Low	BB Enrolment 2022 Around Singapore In 15 Hours By Bicycle
Jun	Margaret Lee Tony Koh	Discipleship And The Kingdom ABC – Combined CG Gathering
Jul	Peggy Tan Patrick Low Tan Swee Leong	Outreach With Patience Hari Raya Haji Bike Ride Lessons from the Donkey
Aug	Tan Swee Leong Peggy Tan Peggy Tan Deacon Nathan Lim	You Are The Salt Of The Earth BBQ To Join The Bicycle Club FoodBank Distribution Inaugural Dialect Ministry Men's Walking Fellowship
Sep	Peggy Tan Kylie Chia	Prayer Walk Lights in Lantern Fest
Oct	Tony Koh & family Peggy Tan Angie Law	Hannah Koh: Called To Missions PEERS Awards For JCC Cycling In The Rain
Dec	Benedict Lee Peggy Tan Peggy Tan Kun Ming Pastor Michael Christian Peh Yi Wen Aloysius Khoo Corporal Hemanth Sim Sim Oon & Susie Ee	God Is Not Done With You Yet Manna Bridge: DGP Partnering With JCC Goshen Badminton Christmas Celebration Christmas Celebration with Taman Jurong Christmas Celebration in Nias Baptism – A gift of faith ELIDS @ Jurong Bird Park BB Share-A-Gift Thanksgiving BBQ for BFF & ELIDS