

Rest for Tired Souls ~ By Adrian Toh

Receiving God's Peace in a Restless World

There are seasons when tiredness is not only in the body. We may sleep, yet wake with the sense that we have not really rested. We may stop working for a while, yet find that our minds continue to labour. We may sit quietly, but inwardly remain alert, carrying unfinished tasks, unresolved conversations, family concerns, financial pressures, and the quiet anxiety of things beyond our control.

Such tiredness is not always dramatic. It often hides beneath ordinary life. We continue to fulfil responsibilities, attend meetings, reply to messages, care for others, serve in church, manage our homes, and plan for the next day. Outwardly, life continues. Inwardly, many carry a kind of hidden weariness.

A World That Does Not Make Rest Easy

We also live in a world that does not make rest easy. The environment itself can feel unsettled, with extreme heat and changing weather patterns turning ordinary days into bodily strain. News of war and fragile ceasefires travels quickly across our screens. Reports of stress and worry remind us that many around the world are carrying emotional burdens. Even when these events are far away, they shape the atmosphere in which we live. The world may continue to function, but the human heart often absorbs more than it realises.

Closer to home, tiredness is often normalised. In Singapore, long days and shortened nights can appear to be part of responsible living. We speak of packed schedules, late-night work, school demands, caregiving duties, and constant availability as though they are simply the cost of modern life. Yet the body tells the truth gently but firmly. We are not machines. We cannot live indefinitely on shortened sleep, hurried meals, constant screen time, and unbroken demands.

Local sleep research has observed that poor sleep and short sleep are common among working adults in Singapore. In one study of 464 full-time employees, 42.5% reported poor sleep quality, 66.2% slept fewer than seven hours a night, and nearly three in four had either poor sleep quality or short sleep. Another Singapore study

involving 4,777 healthcare staff found that poorer sleep quality was progressively associated with higher emotional exhaustion, higher depersonalisation, and lower personal accomplishment, the three dimensions commonly used to understand burnout. A more recent nationwide study also found that poorer sleep quality was associated with lower physical and mental quality of life. These findings do not tell us anything entirely new. They give language to what many already know by experience: when rest is neglected, the effects do not remain only in the body. They touch our emotions, our attention, our patience, our relationships, and our sense of meaning in daily work.

This is why rest is not a small matter. It is not merely a private lifestyle preference, nor simply a reward after productivity. Rest reaches into the whole person. It concerns the body, the heart, our relationships, and our life before God.

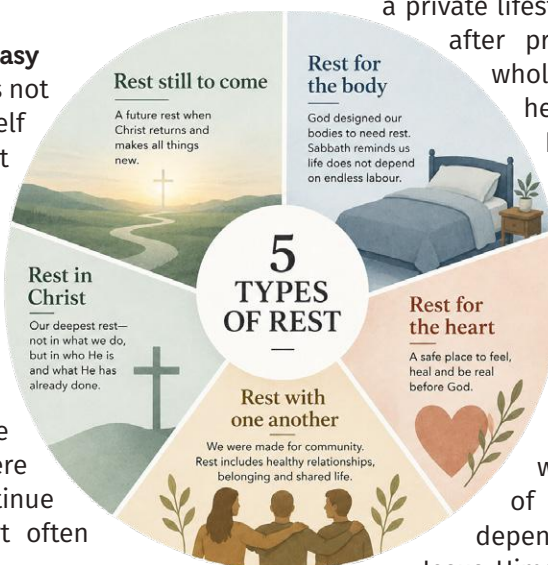
The Invitation to Come

Scripture speaks of rest with surprising depth. From the beginning, rest is woven into creation. God rested on the seventh day, not because He was tired, but because His work was complete and good. Later, Sabbath was given to Israel as a rhythm of trust, a reminder that life did not depend on endless labour. In the Gospels, Jesus Himself withdrew to pray. He slept in a boat during a storm. He welcomed those who were weary and burdened, saying, "Come to me... and I will give you rest."

That invitation is important. Jesus does not merely say, "Stop." He says, "Come." Christian rest is not only the absence of activity. It is a movement towards Christ. It is the weary person bringing the weight of life before the One who is gentle and lowly in heart.

Rest for the Body

There is, first, a rest that belongs to the body. This may sound simple, but it is often the first rest we resist. To need sleep, food, quiet, and recovery can feel inconvenient in a world that honours output. Yet our physical limits are not accidents. They are part of our creatureliness.



(Continued on Page 3)

CONTENTS

Rest for Tired Souls ~ Receiving God's Peace in a Restless World	1
Annual Congregational Meeting (ACM) 2026	4
PSPC Easter Service 2026	5
PSPC MEN'S MINISTRY 2026 Retreat Reflections	6
PSPC LADIES' MINISTRY Be Seen, Be Known, BeLoved! [Summer]	7
ART & FAITH SERIES Art and the Church – Renaissance and the Sistine Chapel (Part 2)	8
After Kairos: From Jerusalem to Judea	11
HELLO CLASS MINISTRY A Vessel for His Kingdom Purposes	12
Yamagata Reflections	13
CR25 - True Spring in Ban Klang 芒草岗上现春天	15
Reflections from the CR25 Team Members	18
LESSONS FROM CHURCH CAMP 2026 What Might Sacred Architecture Look Like?	20
REFLECTIONS FROM CHURCH CAMP 2026 Exhausted, Yet Full of Joy and Purpose	21
Children's Ministry Corner	22
UP CLOSE & PERSONAL New Captain of the Girls' Brigade 7th Company, Sharin Huang	23
BOYS' BRIGADE (BB) 1ST COMPANY - 2nd Quarter Update	25
CANCER SUPPORT GROUP Stretch and Relax	26
In & AROUND PSPC	26
Prinsep Lighthouse (PLH)	27

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A Personal Note

¹⁸ "As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world." **John 17:18**

²⁰ "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me." **John 17:20-23**

We have just concluded the church camp, with the theme of unity - "Foundation in Christ, Building as One" and are embarking on Missions in Focus (MIF) month. Read the reflections on church camp on pages 20-21, as well as the MIF features on pages 11-19.

As we can see from the passage above, the two are not isolated events but are inseparable. Unity is not an end in itself, but a powerful witness to the world.

But unity requires connection, and connection requires that we know one another. While I myself did not go for the camp, I understand that the camp committee had a difficult time deciding whether to organise the buzz groups according to cell groups or to deliberately mix people, as there were advocates of both approaches. My own view is that while there is safety and joy in being with one's cell group, church camp is precisely the place where we can step beyond our familiar circles and cliques, and get to know brothers and sisters whom we may not otherwise meet. This is particularly so for those of us who are more reserved or shy.

Of course, that does not mean that it is easy to love one another. I struggle with this. But as John reminds us, if we cannot love our brother, how can we love God? (1 John 4:20). Let's start by saying "Hi" to the folks we met at church camp, and get to know others beyond our usual circle. Let's obey the Great Commandment so that we can together fulfil the Great Commission.

As the song goes, "And they'll know we are Christians by our love."

Chia Gaik Bee

July 2026

If you have any feedback on *The Messenger* or would like to be part of the writing team, do let us know at pspcmessenger@gmail.com

The body reminds us of a truth the soul often resists: we are dependent. We need night as well as day. We need stillness as well as labour. We need to stop not only when everything is finished, but because we ourselves are finite. There will always be more work to do, more needs to meet, more messages to answer, more responsibilities waiting. If we rest only when everything is completed, we may never rest at all.

Physical rest is therefore not laziness. It is an act of humility. It is the body's way of confessing that we are not God. We are creatures held by God, sustained by God, and invited to receive what we cannot produce by effort alone.

Rest for the Heart

But rest is also emotional. There is a tiredness that comes not from movement, but from carrying too much inwardly. Worry can keep the mind active even when the body is still. Regret can rehearse what has already happened. Fear can pull tomorrow's burdens into today. Responsibility can become heavy when we begin to live as though everything depends on us.

Emotional rest does not mean that all concern disappears. Scripture does not call us to indifference. Love itself makes us attentive to the needs of others. But emotional rest means that the heart is no longer carrying every concern as though it has final responsibility for every outcome. It is the quiet learning that we may care deeply without pretending to be sovereign.

Jesus' words in Matthew 6 speak tenderly into this human tendency: "Do not be anxious about tomorrow." He was not forbidding thoughtful planning or responsible action. Rather, He was calling His hearers away from the burden of carrying tomorrow as though the Father were absent from it.

This kind of rest is difficult because many of us are used to confusing vigilance with faithfulness. We feel that if we stop thinking about a problem, we are neglecting it. If we release a burden, we are being careless. Yet prayer teaches us another way. In prayer, we do not deny our concerns. We place them before God. We name what we cannot control and entrust it to the One who can.

Rest with One Another

There is also relational rest. Some people leave us more tired. Others help us breathe again. In the presence of those who are safe, loving, and patient, we remember something of the rest of God. We do not have to perform. We do not have to defend every weakness. We do not have to carry ourselves so carefully.

This kind of rest matters deeply in the life of the church. Christian community is not merely a place where tasks are organised and programmes are run. It is meant to be a people among whom the weary can find grace. We are called to bear one another's burdens, to encourage the fainthearted, to be patient with all. In this sense, we may become, in small ways, a Sabbath to one another.

Relational rest does not mean that community will be free from difficulty. Churches and families are made

up of imperfect people. Misunderstandings happen. Words wound. Expectations disappoint. But when grace is practised, relationships can become places where the anxious heart is steadied. Forgiveness, patience, listening, and gentle presence all become forms of rest.

This is especially important because tiredness affects how we relate. When we are depleted, we may become more easily irritated, less patient, less able to listen, and less open to the needs of others. Rest, then, is not only for ourselves. It is also for love. A rested person is often more able to be present, to respond gently, and to see others not as interruptions, but as persons to be received.

Rest in Christ

Yet beneath physical, emotional, and relational rest lies a deeper rest: spiritual rest. This is not merely feeling calm. It is being secure in the love and finished work of Christ.

Much of our restlessness comes from striving. We strive to prove ourselves. We strive to be enough. We strive to manage impressions, secure outcomes, protect ourselves, and justify our place in the world. Even in religious life, we may quietly turn service, discipline, and duty into ways of proving our worth.

The gospel speaks a better word. We do not rest because our work is complete. We rest because Christ's saving work is complete. We do not come to God as those who have finally made ourselves acceptable. We come in Christ, received by grace, held by mercy, and made secure by what He has done.

Hebrews speaks of a rest that remains for the people of God. This rest is not merely a break from labour. It is a participation in God's own rest, a trusting in His promise, His provision, and His completed work. Spiritual rest begins when the soul stops trying to earn what can only be received.

This does not make Christian life passive. Rest is not the opposite of faithfulness. Rather, rest becomes the ground from which faithful living grows. We serve not to earn love, but because we have been loved. We work not because everything depends on us, but because God has given us meaningful work to do. We care for others not as saviours, but as those who ourselves have been saved.

The Rest Still to Come

There remains, finally, an eternal rest. In this life, our rest will always be partial. We may sleep and still wake tired. We may pray and still carry concerns. We may forgive and still feel the ache of what has happened. We may enjoy moments of peace, only to return to the noise of ordinary life.

Christian hope does not deny this. It does not pretend that all weariness disappears now. Rather, it reminds us that the rest we receive in this life is a foretaste of the rest still to come. One day, God will make all things new. The burdens of sin, suffering, fear, grief, and death will no longer weigh upon His people. The restless heart will finally be home.

(Continued on Page 4)

Learning to Receive Rest

Until then, rest remains both a gift and practice. We receive it imperfectly. We learn it slowly. We return to it again and again. We sleep. We pray. We keep Sabbath. We simplify where we can. We allow others to help us. We come to Christ with burdens we cannot carry alone.

Perhaps this is the quiet invitation before us: not to wait until life is peaceful before we rest, but to rest because Christ is our peace.

The world is restless. Our bodies are limited. Our hearts are often burdened. Our relationships need grace.

Our souls need more than distraction.

To the tired, Jesus does not say, "Try harder." He says, "Come."

And in coming to Him, we begin to learn the rest for which we were made.

Adrian Toh is a Clinical Psychologist and currently serves as President of the Singapore Psychological Society. He is involved in clinical practice and teaching, with a focus on making psychology thoughtful, practical and accessible.

Annual Congregational Meeting 2026 Foundation in Christ, Building As One

By Thaddaeus Tan

On Sunday 26 April 2026, Prinsep Street Presbyterian Church members gathered for the Annual Congregational Meeting (ACM), held across the Conference Room, Fellowship Hall and Multi-Purpose Hall. In this sense, this year's ACM was unique and more logistically challenging, given the ongoing works in the Sanctuary. Nonetheless, we praise God for His gracious providence and a smooth, well-run ACM.

The meeting opened with prayer by Rev Darryl Chan, and was called to order by Session Clerk, Eld Andrew Aw. Drawing from Acts 6:1–7, Eld Andrew reminded the congregation that congregational meetings have their biblical roots in the early church, where the apostles appointed seven men full of the Spirit and wisdom to serve so that the ministry of the Word and prayer could continue, and the Word of God spread and the number of disciples multiplied greatly. A quorum was duly confirmed, with 406 members present at the start of the meeting, well above the constitutional requirement of 237.

Election and Re-election of Elders and Deacons

The congregation affirmed the election and re-election of Elders and Deacons by electronic vote. We are thankful to share that all candidates were elected with strong congregational support:

- **Eld Andrew Ong** – Eldership (Re-election for 2nd Term);
- **Eld Aaron Tan** – Eldership (Election for 1st Term);
- **Dn Lai Kian Fong** – Deaconship (Re-election for 2nd Term);
- **Dn Benjamin Smith** – Deaconship (Re-election for 2nd Term);
- **Mr Eric Cheung** – Deaconship (Election for 1st Term); and
- **Mr Gregory Ng** – Deaconship (Election for 1st Term).

We give thanks for their willingness to serve, and ask the congregation to uphold them in prayer.



Personnel Updates

Rev Darryl Chan presented an update on personnel matters, giving thanks for the congregation's generous giving over the past 10 years which has enabled PSPC to raise, equip and support a steady pipeline of full-time workers.

The congregation was also encouraged by news of broader opportunities of service in the wider church. **Rev Kelvin Chen** will teach a module, "Introduction to Christian Spirituality", as SBC Adjunct Lecturer from July to November 2026, and **Rev Darryl Chan** was elected to serve a 2-year term as English Presbytery (EP) Moderator and Synod Exco member from 2027 to 2029. We give thanks to God for these opportunities for PSPC to give back to the body of Christ beyond our walls.

Two significant transitions were shared. **Rev Ron Tan** would complete his service in April 2026 following the sudden passing of his mother in March, and the church has made provision for him to undergo counselling and spiritual direction. **Ms Dorothy Koh** will complete her service at the end of June 2026 to embark on a PhD in New

Testament with Ridley College (Melbourne) by distance learning, while remaining in Singapore to care for her family. The congregation was asked to hold them and their families in prayer. The Staff Relations Committee will initiate recruitment for a pastoral staff for the Chinese Ministry and an Admin/Finance Executive for the Church Office, and members were encouraged to pray that more would come forward to explore full-time ministry through the Prinsep Internship Programme.

Building Renewal Project

Eld Andrew Ong, Chairperson of the BRP Steering Committee, presented an update on Phase 1 of the Building Renewal Project (BRP). He opened by reading from Psalm 127:1 – “Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain” – reminding members that PSPC’s foundation continues to be in Christ as the congregation builds as one. As of 16 April 2026, scaffolding has been put up around the sanctuary, with works on the roof, side corridor, and specialist conservation of the Shanghai plaster and red brick façade underway. The project remains on track. An additional 15 to 20 workers will arrive in May 2026. Initial scoping has also commenced for BRP Phase 2.

Financial Report and Budget

Eld Wan Kum Tho (Treasurer) presented the FY2025 Audited Financial Report, which received an Unqualified Opinion from the auditor. The church recorded an overall surplus of S\$366,000 and a total liquid position of approximately S\$6.97 million. The Audited Financial Report was adopted, with thanks recorded to the Audit, Investment, and Finance teams who serve faithfully behind the scenes.

The FY2026 Budget of S\$2.66 million was also adopted, guided by the principles of strengthening congregational care, resourcing the upcoming renovation, and providing for future ministry growth, while remaining realistic and prudent as good stewards. With an aging congregation and offerings trending lower than expenses, the congregation is asked to pray that God will continue to direct, guide and equip the ministries of PSPC, and to grant wisdom in the use of the resources entrusted to us. Tan & Teh were re-appointed as auditors for FY2026.

Any Other Matters and Closing

Members raised thoughtful questions on the pastoral oversight of the youth and young adult segment in light of the transitions ahead. Rev Darryl Chan and Eld Andrew Aw shared the leadership’s thinking: Dn Shaun Lee will serve as Ministry Leader and Pastoral Advisor for Youth and Young Adults, Eld Aaron Tan and the core team will continue to provide pastoral care for Young Adults, with the recruitment of a pastoral staff for the Chinese Ministry – which remains unfilled since 2025 – as the most urgent priority.

Eld Sim Kang, the incoming Session Clerk, gave thanks to God for the Pastoral Team, the EDC and ministry leaders, the church office, the ACM organising committee, and the congregation for their faithful contributions throughout the year. Appreciation was also expressed to Eld Andrew Aw, who is stepping down from the EDC after serving two terms. Eld Sim Kang closed the meeting in prayer at 12:10pm, and the ACM concluded at 12:13pm.

As we move forward, we do so together, founded in Christ, building as one, trusting that the God who has been faithful through PSPC’s 183-year history will continue to lead us in the days ahead.

PSPC Easter Service 2026

Photos by Gary Chong





PSPC MEN'S MINISTRY 2026 Retreat Reflections

BOBBY TAN

God is good. The retreat and the message shared among all our brothers-in-Christ could not have been more timely for me. Praise God!

For the two weeks leading up to the retreat, I struggled with a sudden and distressing spike in my tinnitus. It triggered intense mood swings and deep bouts of anxiety. This difficult season coincided with major changes on multiple fronts — my dad was warded, and I found myself constantly rushing between hospital visits and making arrangements for his long-term care. At the same time, there were significant structural changes at work, alongside a busy ministry season as I tried to wrap up a course of studies.

All these pressures converged into the perfect storm — one I never imagined I would experience personally.

Besides consulting a series of doctors and undergoing TCM treatments, I threw myself into prayer and reflection. One night, I awoke at 4:30am with three distinct convictions impressed upon my heart:

1. At work, I feared losing my relevance as I grew older, so I kept pushing myself to go the extra mile at the expense of my own well-being.
2. At home, I seemed to be trying to outdo my siblings in caring for our parents and managing family responsibilities.
3. In ministry, I realised I had been “working” hard, perhaps for assurance and affirmation.

I think God was revealing the deeper crisis beneath it all: I had been seeking my identity and affirmation in the wrong way — even though they were tied to good and meaningful things.

Pastor Kelvin's message on the “Three Ways to Live,” based on the parable of the prodigal son, made me realise that I could very well be like the elder brother — weary, striving, and perhaps even quietly embittered from labouring so hard on every front to preserve my place and identity in the Father's house.

Without the relentless din of the tinnitus, perhaps I would never have heard the Father gently saying:

“My son, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours.”

And in that moment, I was reminded to rest — not in what I do, but in being His child.



RICHARD HO

In a world that measures a man by his success, position, and ability to provide, it is easy to anchor our worth in what we do rather than in whose we are. Many of us carry the unseen weight of expectations — to be a good son, a faithful husband, a dependable father, and a capable provider. The striving can become relentless, and the soul weary.

Through Rev. Kelvin Chen's sharing at the recently concluded PSPC Men's Annual Retreat, I was reminded again of a truth both simple and profound: my deepest identity is not found in accomplishment, but in being God's beloved child. This identity is not something I earn through effort or merit; it is a gift of grace, lovingly given by the Father.

When this truth truly sinks into the heart, there is freedom — freedom from the endless need for approval, freedom from fear of failure, and freedom to rest in God's unfailing love. By faith, I long to hold more firmly to this identity, especially in moments of weakness, disappointment, and self-doubt.

In this season of project-based work, I realise even more how easily identity can become intertwined with work and usefulness. As these things fade into the background, God gently reminds me that my worth has always rested in being His beloved child.

GREG NG

I joined this retreat hoping to know more church brothers, but God used it to remind me who I truly am. After a few decades in the corporate world, it's easy to let titles and responsibilities define me. But my real identity is as a child of God, and His calling never retires. The story of the prodigal son's brother also showed me how often I see “fairness” from my own view. But when I remember that my salvation is purely by grace and not my works and, I learn to love my brothers the way Christ loves me, my idea of “fairness” changes, and I become more thankful for what God has already given rather than for what has not been given.

To help stay focused and on the spiritual track, I now hope to build deeper spiritual friendships, sharing gratitude and struggles as we walk toward Christ together.

Be Seen, Be Known, BeLoved! [Summer]

Words by Candice Lim. Photos by Carol Ng.

The speaker at the Ladies' Ministry summer edition of "Rooted in Christ through Every Season" on 16 May 2026 was Jemima Ooi, a Singaporean missionary to East Africa.

When I first read about the Ladies' Ministry talk, I was not sure what to expect. "Summer... East Africa ... Love..." For someone who associates East Africa with violence and unrest, it was very difficult to wrap my mind around the idea that, in the same talk, there would be elements of happy sunny summer and cosy feelings of love. It was most intriguing to me, so I resolved to attend the talk.



The Ladies' Ministry pulled out all the stops to decorate the Fellowship Hall with cheerful beach-themed props, making it the perfect backdrop for cute photos. Additionally, each guest received a specially printed name tag (also beach-themed), which was a very thoughtful touch during registration. Summer - check!

After worship and a quick introduction, Jemima took the stage. In retelling her experiences as a missionary to East Africa, Jemima showed us an intensely destitute and macabre side of humanity that many of us might have read about or seen in movies but never witnessed with our own eyes. In equal measure, her stories were gloriously uplifting because of the unfathomable forgiveness, hope and love that eventually conquered the day. From the start of the session to the end, there were peals of laughter, gasps of shock and little snuffles heard from different corners of the room.

What did all these stories have to do with love? They painted a picture of unconditional love, freely given by God and the same love being poured out through the people He loves. In the deepest jungles of Congo, where homes are ravaged

and villages are razed, God's love still pours into and through the hearts of believers, many of whom had literally nothing to give to God but the dedication of their lives. In Jemima's stories, the ways God showed His love were nothing short of miraculous – you really must hear them for yourself! Perhaps in the depths of despair, we see His love and power more evidently. In the comforts of Singapore, have I missed out on His acts of love for me? Is the love I show to others transactional? East Africa and love – check!

Jemima asked us one question, which I had never been asked before. She asked, "What are three things that God likes about you?" There was a lingering awkwardness in the room because we pretty much had the same doubts, wondering to ourselves, "How do I know that is what God likes about me and not what I think that I like about myself?" We were encouraged to take a quiet moment with God to hear His voice. I appreciated that precious moment because it reminded me of all the times my parents would tell me what they liked about me. I've only ever considered all the wrong things that God saw in me.

I left the talk with a huge burden removed from my heart. Not because I finally pieced together what summer, East Africa and love have to do with one another, but I felt God reminding me that I am enough and my parenting is enough. In the madness of ensuring that the kids ate "enough" nutritious food, had "enough" outdoor play, practised "enough" for spelling and tests, slept "enough", picked up "enough" social skills and knew "enough" about God, it is easy to slip into feelings of inadequacy and lose focus on my faith. God reminded me that my children are, first and foremost, His children. They are Seen, Known and Loved by God, and they are enough.



ART & FAITH SERIES

Art and the Church – Renaissance and the Sistine Chapel (Part 2)

By Clifford Chua

A visit to the Sistine Chapel is a once in a lifetime must. It is as aesthetically sublime an experience as one can get. During my recent sabbatical, I got myself onto one of those ‘skip the line’ guided tours and arrived two hours before the doors opened to the public, and already the lines were forming. Snaking through the queue barriers for the bag checks, our guide turned to the group and offered a piece of trivia in her thickly Italian-accented English, “Do you know that the Sistine chapel was modeled after Solomon’s temple?” I expressed my



surprise ... I did not know that and pondered over the symbolism and theological intent. Rome as the new Jerusalem? We were herded through a labyrinth of stairs and corridors and eventually ushered through a narrow doorway into the sacred chamber. To say that the chapel took my breath away is putting it mildly. The space is imbued with sheer visual splendor, the jaw-dropping kind that inspires awe and disbelief.

Built between 1473 and 1481, the Sistine Chapel serves not only as the pope’s private chapel but also functions as a stage for papal ceremonies, conclaves and coronations. It is at once a liturgical space, a Renaissance masterpiece and a monument to Christian Humanism. The frescoes along the walls painted by prominent artists of the era, together with Michaelangelo’s ceiling and altar decorations form an epic catechism centred within the narrative dramas of Creation, Fall, Redemption and Judgement. While the famous ceiling and altar frescoes remain the star attractions of the chapel, the panel paintings along the walls deserve closer scrutiny.

THE WALL PAINTINGS

Facing each other along the length of the chapel, the fresco panels established a typological dialogue between the Old and New Testaments, bringing to life the Augustinian teaching that ‘the New is in the Old concealed; the Old is in the New revealed’. The theological



Image credit: Pietro Perugino, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

understanding that the OT is not superseded but consummated in the NT through Christ forms the thematic core of the fresco narratives. The south side of the wall depicted episodes from the life of Moses, representing the old covenant mediated under the Law. The north wall frescoes, directly opposite, depict the life of Christ – the embodiment of the new covenant. The typological conversation begins, nearest to the altar, with the pairing of Perugino’s paintings of Moses’ journey to Egypt and the circumcision of his son with the baptism of Christ by the Jordan. The theological logic of this pairing can be found in Paul’s letter to the Colossians, “In Him you were also circumcised...having been buried with him in baptism” (Col 2:11-12). Baptism is the new covenant circumcision – the initiatory rite by which a person is incorporated into the family of God. The old covenant sign written in flesh finds its fulfilment in the new covenant sign conferred in water and the Spirit. Read together across the chapel, the two panels tell the story of how God’s people are brought into the fold and marked as His own. The summary table below shows the typological pairings along the gallery of fresco panels and the corresponding synopses of their theological significance

South Wall: The Type (Moses)	North Wall: The Antitype (Christ)	Theological Meaning
Circumcision of Moses' Son	Baptism of Christ	Baptism is the “spiritual circumcision,” the new sign of the covenant.
Moses in Egypt & Midian	Temptations of Christ	Both figures are tested in the wilderness before beginning their public missions.
Crossing of the Red Sea	Calling of the Apostles	Moses saves from physical bondage by passing through the waters; Christ saves from death/sin via the “waters” of the Gospel.
Lawgiving at Sinai	Sermon on the Mount	The Old Law of the Tablets is fulfilled by the New Moral Law of Christ.
Punishment of Korah	Giving of the Keys to St. Peter	Contrasts those who rebel against divine authority with those who receive it.
Last Testament of Moses	The Last Supper	The final acts and words of the leaders before their departure/death.



Image credit: Michelangelo, CC BY-SA 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

Of all the typological pairings, none carries greater weight than the two paintings at the end of the chapel: Botticelli's 'Punishment of Korah' and Perugino's 'Giving of the Keys to Saint Peter'. The former narrative, found in Numbers 16, described the rebellion of Korah and the community leaders against the God-given authority of Moses and Aaron and the devastating consequence of God's judgement. In contrast, Perugino's depiction of Peter receiving the keys of the kingdom directly from Christ renders the moment the gravity of a commission, a conferring of ecclesiastical authority and the laying of a foundation. The message here is clear; spiritual authority is God-given and to challenge it was to rebel against Him.



The theological urgency of this pairing sharpened dramatically as history unfolded. About 30 years after the chapel's completion, Martin Luther launched the Protestant Reformation when he nailed the 95 theses on the church door in Wittenburg. At the heart of the Reformation was a dispute not only about grace vs works but also about papal vs scriptural authority. The frescoes speak directly into this dispute. Who speaks for God? By what right does the church bind and loose? The Reformers challenged the divine origin of papal primacy altogether, arguing that the keys given to Peter belonged to the whole church, not a single bishop's successors. Within the Vatican, these works did not merely serve decorative purposes - they were visual statements and arguments about the authority of the church and warnings concerning the seriousness when that authority is challenged.

THE CEILING DECORATION

When Pope Julius II asked the reluctant Michelangelo to paint the ceiling in 1508, the original idea was rather modest. Eager to elevate the power and glory of the papacy, he

wanted portraits of the twelve apostles to be painted across the ceiling in a bid to amplify the line of papal succession as originating from the apostles, thus solidifying their political and ecclesiastical legitimacy. Michelangelo had more ambitious ideas. What ultimately emerged was a cosmological vision centred on the themes of creation, fall and redemptive history found in the book of Genesis. The central spine of the ceiling illustrates the opening nine chapters of Genesis, designed and organised along nine panels sectioned into three distinct segments of three resembling triptychs (three-sectioned altarpieces). Starting from the altar, the first set of three panels is centred on God's acts of creation: God separating light from darkness, God creating the sun and moon, God separating land from sea. God is shown here not sitting passively on a throne but actively surging through space in explosive energy, separating light from darkness, calling the heavenly bodies into being and giving form and life to creation. Michelangelo does not paint a distant, abstract deity; his God is a personal being for whom creation is an act of passionate intent.

The second set of three is centred on the creation of mankind; the creation of Adam, creation of Eve and the fall of man and expulsion from the garden. The image of God's outstretched arm reaching out towards Adam's finger has become so ubiquitous and iconic of the artist and the era that it is difficult to see it with fresh eyes. In this fresco Adam is shown lying languidly, hand extended, waiting for life to be poured into him by the creator. The tension of the work is in the blank space between the two fingers that are about to touch. It is not a failure of connection but a theological statement that life flows from God; it cannot be manufactured, only received.

The third set of three is centred on the narrative surrounding Noah; the sacrifice of Noah, the Flood, Noah's drunkenness. These panels follow God's first act of rescue after the fall - the Flood, the Ark and God's covenant with



(Continued on Page 10)

Noah. Even here, Michaelangelo reminds us that Noah, himself, saved by grace, falls into sin again and that the covenant made with Noah is not the final resolution and must wait for its future and complete fulfilment in Christ.



THE ALTAR WALL – THE LAST JUDGEMENT

When Michaelangelo was asked to return in 1536 to paint the altar wall, he was already sixty-one and the world had changed. The Reformation had fractured Western Christendom and the

city of Rome itself had been ransacked and burned. It was out of this crucible of crisis that the terrifying vision of the Last Judgement was forged.

The painting covers the entire wall and is populated with over three hundred figures surging across a vast field of blue. At the centre of the composition stands Christ, young, beardless and powerful. His right arm raised, not in a gesture of blessing but in command and verdict. He is the Pantocrator of Medieval tradition but rendered with a vitality and authority that owes more to the Greco-roman sculptures of Apollo and Augustus Caesar than the Byzantine icon. Around Him, the Virgin Mary and the saints (depicted with the instruments of their martyrdom) press close, their eyes averting or else gazing at the Saviour, uncertain and anxious. Below, angels blow their trumpets and the dead rise from their graves. On the one side and aided by the angels, the blessed ascent. On the other, the damned are dragged downward in expressions of horror and despair. This is not a resurrection painting that soothes and assures one of vindication and eternal rest. This is one that refuses to give easy comfort and confronts one unequivocally with the unsettling question, "Where will you stand on that day?" It was said that Pope Paul III was so terrified by the sheer majesty of the painting when it was unveiled in 1541, that he fell to his knees and prayed, "O Lord, charge me not with my sins when you come on the day of judgement."

The fresco was not without controversy. Under the fervor of the Counter-Reformation, the painting's overt nudity was a sore point of contention. The papal master of ceremony reportedly complained to the Pope that the figures were more suitable for a bathhouse or a tavern than the Pope's own chamber. Michelangelo was unperturbed by the criticism and believed that the naked human body in the context of the resurrection was not an occasion for shame but for awe and proposed a compelling defence that before God in judgement, all souls stand equal; naked and unadorned, stripped

of every earthly distinction of rank, wealth or clothing. Still, the masterpiece was eventually spared from destruction only after a compromise was made to have the unmentionables painted over with drapery.



Near the centre of the painting, close to the feet of Christ, the apostle Bartholomew is depicted as holding his own flayed skin – the instrument of his martyrdom. Only that the sagging, anguished face on the empty skin is not that of Bartholomew's but Michelangelo's own. This self-portrait is one of the most searching acts of personal confession by Michelangelo.

He did not place himself among the blessed, rising toward Christ but rather as an empty, discarded skin in the hands of the apostle, dangling in between the ascending saved and the falling damned. It is the confession of a man who does not presume on his own salvation, who knows with unflinching honesty that whatever he has made and achieved counts for nothing before the judge he now faces and that his only hope is not in his talent, his piety or his years of service to the church, but in the mercy of the one who died for him. We see this most ardently expressed in this beautiful sonnet;

*The course of my life has brought me now
Through a stormy sea, in a frail ship,
To the common port where, landing,
we account for every deed, wretched or holy
So that finally I see
How wrong the fond illusion was
That made Art my idol and my King,
Leading me to want what harmed me
My amorous fancies, once foolish and happy,
What sense have they, now that I approach two deaths –
The first of which I know is sure, the second threatening.
Let neither painting nor carving any longer calm
My soul turned to that divine love
Who to embrace us opened his arms upon the cross*

I sat in the chapel for an hour gazing upwards - soaking in the beauty and etching the sublimity of the experience deep within the recesses of one's soul. The theological underpinnings of much of the art in the chapel underscore the complexities of the issues that have plagued the church throughout its tumultuous history, the profundity of which weighs heavily on one's heart. I looked across to the altar and the Last Judgement, and gave thanks for the assurance that salvation does not depend on my confession to any particular creed or my baptism or denominational allegiance but solely on the finished work of Christ. On that I can depend. Hallelujah!

After Kairos: From Jerusalem to Judea

Michael attended the Kairos course on world missions in 2018. What was his journey after Kairos?

By Michael Chong

Jerusalem: Missions at our Doorstep

In the Kairos course, there is an emphasis on how we could put into practice what we learnt. And part of that is outreach or evangelism, not necessarily across the border but also domestically. Elder Justin Lee introduced me to YWAM's Operation Honour in 2025. Two Thursdays a month, YWAM in Geylang organises a food distribution point for migrant workers, primarily from the construction industry. They can collect fresh food like eggs, vegetables and fruits, and dried food such as rice, noodles, coffee and tea bags. There is a corner where they can collect free cutlery, pots, pans, water bottles and clothes. Most of these items come from corporate sponsors, churches and supermarkets. Donations come from individuals as well. The objective is to bless them and honour their presence. This allows opportunities to befriend them and



bear witness to God's love. The volunteers serve them drinks/food, start conversations and befriend them. I have witnessed some Chinese nationals coming to Christ. So it is interesting to see a line for food, and nearby, in a corner, there is an area where they have Bible study.



The first thing I learnt was that I didn't need to leave Singapore, I just needed to be available, to see and get involved with what was happening. The second thing I learnt was the importance of befriending, because you can't really share the gospel unless you spend enough time with the people.

I volunteer twice a month. On distribution day, I will be there around 6pm to help with the administration. Most of the volunteers will come by 7:30pm when the event starts, ending at around 9pm. There is no fixed commitment required, and there are volunteers from many churches. Some come on their own, others in groups, and there are also families that volunteer regularly. One could offer services just as an assistant to help move things, talk to the people who are queuing up, or serve food. So while one may not be involved directly in witnessing to somebody, the wonderful thing about this experience is that you're part of the process. And God doesn't really say

you're underperforming or you're overperforming. He just says be available. So that is what we can do. Just be there and be available to God.

Judea: Reaching out to Refugees from the Nations

This year, I found out about the work of El Shaddai among refugees in Kajang and Klang in Malaysia. The English Presbytery Mission Committee organised a mission exposure trip for the Presbyterian churches in March to have a better understanding of the work there. I joined a small group with one other person from PSPC, Rosmeria, and several members of Bukit Batok Presbyterian Church.

We visited a children's education centre where we participated in games, songs, dances and arts & crafts. We also met with a few refugee families. Some families have been waiting there for five to ten years for immigration papers to travel onward to other countries. Some cannot return to their home countries for fear of reprisals. We listened to their stories and testimonies and realised how fragile peace, security and stability can be. There are many refugees, from countries such as Myanmar (Rohingyas), Iran, and Pakistan, who fled oppression or war in their home countries. Life is very difficult as they try to survive in the host country. Being stateless, they are unable to get employment or send their children to national schools. They have basic needs, and NGOs like El Shaddai have been helping them.

El Shaddai's work involves refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless people and other marginalised diaspora

OPERATION HONOUR

(<https://www.mercy-centre.org/operationhonour>)

"When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God." Leviticus 19:33-34

Operation Honour began during the COVID lockdown in 2020. Friends of YWAM's Mercy Centre were concerned about the staff and students and gifted food to them and their neighbours, the migrant workers. Mercy Centre started distributing the donated food weekly. From an initial 20-30 workers a week, the numbers multiplied, and the Centre now reaches out to several hundred migrant workers on alternate Thursday nights.

EL SHADDAI

In 2026, the English Presbytery Mission Committee began organising quarterly exposure trips to Klang and Kajang. The objectives of the trip are to engage in cross-cultural learning and mission exposure, to witness the impactful work among refugees, stateless, and undocumented workers, and to strengthen faith through fellowship, prayer, and reflection.

One more trip for 2026 has been planned for 15-21 Oct. Two compulsory training sessions will be conducted prior to the trip. Contact Eld Justin Lee to find out more.

(Continued on Page 12)

communities in Malaysia. They provide a platform for four core services: Vocational training, Education, Social Work and Healthcare. In the limited six days we had there, we met with the El Shaddai team, primarily involved in the education centres in Kajang for refugee children in the 5 to 16 years age range to learn English. We also observed two vocational training centres for gemstones and clothes knitting. It was so uplifting to see the tremendous efforts being made to train these refugees with skills so that they can find employment, even self-employment, to support themselves and their families someday when they are resettled by UNHCR in the new countries.

HELLO CLASS MINISTRY

A Vessel for His Kingdom Purposes

By Ow Yuhao

Acts 20:35 ...It is more blessed to give than to receive.

My name is Yuhao. I have been worshipping at PSPC with my family for about five years. I have been serving in Hello Class for about a year, and the experience has been nothing short of amazing.

I am a relatively reserved person of few words. I am also not confident in explaining the Bible and theology; hence, being a teacher, let alone a teacher of the Word, seemed very far-fetched to me.

One Sunday after church service, my wife, Serene, and I were exploring ministry booths at the Ministry Open House at PSPC. Both of us were keen to participate in the Love in Action ministries, and that was where I chanced upon the Hello Class ministry. It was a ministry I was keen to serve in, but, being my pragmatic self and not knowing whether I would be able to “do well” in it (due to my own beliefs, as mentioned above), I sat on the fence for some time.

My cell leader, Lawrence, is a facilitator in the class. After praying about it for some time, I decided to take a baby step of faith and asked him whether I could join the class for a few sessions as an observer. It was still very nerve-wracking to imagine myself teaching the Word, albeit in simple English. However, I decided to take another baby step by eventually committing myself to serving in the ministry.

God has shown me that my thoughts are not His thoughts (Isaiah 55:8). In preparing for the lessons each week, I have learned more about Him and His promises through the truths in His Word. In facilitating the lesson, I consider myself less of a teacher and more of someone sharing the good news of Jesus, and at the same time being reminded of who God is and His love for me. In praying for friends in Hello Class, I learn about their lives and various situations that they face here and back home, and I am encouraged by their lives as a living testimony of faith. In planning for events and taking on roles that

Much more than this is El Shaddai's work and their contextualised approach to mission work. It left me transformed in my understanding of how to share the message in a cross-cultural context. And interestingly enough, the work is just a ride across the causeway. There is no need to fly away, and there is no excuse not to get involved.

If you would like to find out more or participate in Operation Honour or the El Shaddai trips, contact Eld Justin Lee at 9672-6288 or to contact Michael Chong, please email mchongksmail@gmail.com

I may not be good at, I heeded the call to be “one body of Christ with many members” (1 Cor 12:12), fellowshiping and serving with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. Indeed, I have truly experienced what it means “to be blessed in giving more than receiving” (Acts 20:35).

In our Bible study on Matthew 14, Jesus called Peter to “come” and walk on water to Him. The “little faith” of Peter, or so it seemed, led to an action. When Jesus called, Peter answered. God has called me to serve in Hello Class, and in serving, I have been blessed in ways beyond what I could have imagined.

God has also been strengthening our family even as I serve Him. I am grateful to Serene for taking on the care of our toddler, Joy, while I am serving. It can be tough at times, but God has shown us grace and enabled us to serve in our respective areas. As I look back, I thank God and humbly pray that I can continue to be used as a vessel for His kingdom purposes, for His glory.



Yamagata Reflections

By Esther Ong

Japan is one of the countries with the fewest Christians, even though it's a developed nation with no formal barriers to the gospel. Facing a rapidly aging population, churches in rural areas often have +/- 10 members. Why were the barriers to belief so high? What did life as a missionary in this polite, yet guarded, society look like? Before I had to face the reality of working life and 18 days of annual leave, I wanted to do things only a student with two months of holiday could do. So, I reached out to Levene and Shao Xiong. They graciously hosted me for



a month and arranged for me to visit three other missionary families in Tohoku (northern Japan) – Morioka, Hanawa and Sakata – to share my testimony, see the variations to mission life, and observe different churches. These are my reflections based on my limited experience and small sample count, spliced with the wisdom I've heard from those living on the ground.

1. The State of Christianity in Japan

I stayed with a veteran missionary who had lived in Japan for ~30 years. "How has Christianity changed since you came?" I asked.

"It's gotten older."

In the smaller churches of the more rural parts of Japan, the average age of church attendees looks closer to 70, mimicking the demographic decline. A Sunday School of ten children was already a miraculous gift. Despite heightened interest and more missionaries coming to Japan, the new believers were rare, new pastors even more so. But why?

Barriers to Belief

Culturally, the barriers to belief are high and multifaceted. It's like a spiderweb; you might overcome one barrier, but the others remain. These are some I've noticed:

- **Perfectionism:** The need to understand 100% before they can commit, probably linked to the risk-averse culture. The need for certainty is observed in the business context, too.
- **Language:** The nuances of the Japanese language could result in a different interpretation of what believers should do. For example, the word for disciple in Japanese has the connotation that you should just watch and learn from the master (e.g. like in Karate or Judo), so the idea of being a disciple may be misunderstood as bringing people to meet your pastor/missionaries and hear from them, rather than doing personal evangelism.
- **Culture:** Unconditional grace is an alien concept.

- **Religion as dangerous:** Religion is seen as imported and almost cult-like sometimes, given a bad press in Japan due to past experiences with cults. Some Japanese may not be able to differentiate between cults and Christianity.
- **Conformity:** In Japan, it's bad to be different and to stick out. They worry about what others think. Becoming Christian = becoming the minority = sticking out.
- **Work culture:** The Japanese work culture is extremely busy, leaving them little time to think about other things.
- **Not knowing any Christians:** In Hanawa, apart from the missionary family, there was only one other Christian. Apparently, it takes meeting about ten Christians for someone to convert.

Challenges to Living a Christian Life

Being a Christian in Japan is like fighting against 99 other people – by yourself. That's the reality of being the 1% minority in Japan, as the Elder of a church said.

While Christians aren't persecuted, the challenges are high. Firstly, the danger of being ostracised. If everyone in your town contributes towards a community fund, but most of the funds go towards maintaining the local shrine, do you contribute towards the fund? If community clean-ups are on Sundays, do you still go to church? In Japan's conformist culture, refusing to contribute could lead to ostracisation. And even if, as a Christian, you're willing to accept that, how about your children who haven't accepted the faith as their own? The ostracisation could push them further from the faith.

The pressures facing children growing up in the church are immense. Many leave the church as they get older. It was saddening to see many faithful elderly Christians attend church alone. When I shared my testimony, they asked me questions afterwards, and I was saddened by their implications.

"Wasn't going to church tedious for you as a kid?"

"Didn't you feel like you were forced to go by your parents?"

I hadn't really considered those questions before. Growing up with friends in Sunday School and Lighthouse, church was a commitment I had never begrudged (a shout out to all the Lighthouse mentors and Sunday School teachers who helped our youth stay in church!). In Japan, oftentimes children are the only ones in their age group in church. CCA practice is held on Sundays, too – of course, they'd rather spend time with their school friends. When your church has only five kids ranging from 3-17, it's quite difficult to have Sunday School friends your age. This made me grateful for the intergenerational families at PSPC, which I had previously taken for granted. Faith is indeed personal, but communal factors facilitate personal cultivation.

(Continued on Page 14)

Being Grateful for the 1%

The often-asked question is “Why is less than 1% of Japan Christian?” But it is also appropriate to say, “Thank God for the 1% who have persevered in the faith!”. How many of us would continue to attend church if there were only 10 other people (smaller than most PSPC cell groups) and you had no close community in church? And some of that 1% have been serving God in amazing ways. For example, there’s an elderly architect in Yamagata Nambu church who turns up for the daily 6:30am prayer meetings before work and has built/designed over 30 churches in the region! What a wonderful way to serve God with his talents. I was encouraged by their faithful service.

2. A Missionary’s Life

Its Varied Nature

What do you think of when you hear the word “missionary”? I used to think of someone who preached, evangelised, and organised lots of outreach activities. While that is true, mostly it’s living your life out in the community – Missions is incarnational: raising your kids in the same system, grappling with the highly variable preschool ending times, and facing the same tedious paperwork. I got a taste of Japanese life outside Tokyo by shadowing the missionaries. For example, I went to Emma’s preschool graduation, went to the local indoor playground, and attended the local community club’s fukiya (blow darts) training sessions, where the next-youngest person was approximately three times my age.

The missionaries I visited had surprisingly different activities. One family comprised missions coordinators – so lots of meetings, emails and admin work. Another family was at the pre-church plant stage – just being a witness in the community, e.g. by organising playdates for their three kids. Another widow was there to support the local church and was integrated into the community via the local community centre. I saw how God uses people in different ways, in their context, based on their strengths and life stage. While there are some shared character traits, like being resilient, convicted in their faith and trust in God, and not materialistic (traits I think all Christians should be striving towards regardless), there was no cookie-cutter “missionary”.

The Difficulties and Blessings

Apart from the barriers to witnessing, life as a missionary in Japan is difficult for other reasons, too. When I saw the schedule Levene sent me, I thought it was quite chill – it seemed like there was quite a bit of free time. I was very wrong. Life was much more tiring, but also fulfilling, than I had envisioned.

Firstly, the language barrier made even a normal prayer meeting twice as tiring. I would have to spend at least half an hour the night before to decode the devotional. Even

praying for other people was a tiring exercise. I enjoyed using what little language skills I have, but it also resulted in me missing my bed at 3pm.

Secondly, children are a blessing, but also extremely time- and energy-consuming. I’ve avoided serving in Sunday School like the plague, hence never learnt how to deal with small humans. Suddenly, I was living with kids ranging from 3 to 14 years old. “Empty” slots on the calendar often mean entertaining children, and I learnt newfound respect for my parents and grandparents. But children are such an aid for Missions work – they open doors to the gospel. People are much less intimidated when their kids are invited to a Christian event by another kid. Meeting other parents became easy – everyone wants an excuse to entertain their kids via playdates. And in general, families seem a lot less intimidating. God uses people of all ages for the gospel!

Thirdly, Missions is deeply relational. From meeting other church pastors to meeting language partners and guests who want to encourage you, free time is often spent with people. It’s a blessing to have such a community. But for an introvert, it’s also draining.

3. What Can We Do Back Home?

Firstly, we can pray for the Spirit to move in Japan. The Spirit is always needed for conversion, but when you see the seemingly insurmountable challenges to witnessing and conversion, we are reminded tenfold that it is only by the Spirit that people can believe. Nothing is impossible through Christ. So please pray for Japan and go to the EPJM prayer meetings! Pray for more Japanese Christians to step up and serve as pastors as well. In the next 5-10 years, 2,000 – 3,000 churches may be pastor-less due to many retiring. Each year, fewer than 100 pastors graduate from theological college.

Secondly, give financially. Some small churches don’t have the finances to hire a pastor, especially if most of the members are retired. In general, we could prayerfully consider approaching PSPC’s Missions Committee to enquire about how to support our missionaries and their work!

Thirdly, if you feel called, join EPJM or reach out to the Japanese in Singapore! Being overseas significantly eases the cultural pressures. We have the privilege of being able to witness to people from across the world in cosmopolitan Singapore.

And lastly, be missionaries for Christ where we are placed. The life of a missionary is surprisingly ordinary. And while they need to make a conscious, concerted effort to get to know people in their community, most of us are already blessed with several of them in Singapore. We don’t need to navigate cultural or language barriers. We just need to be intentional about living for Christ, and in a way that makes others want to know Him.

1 If supporting the local church in Japan has been placed on your heart specifically, OMF has a Japan Church Apprenticeship Fund that supports Japanese Christians who have chosen to work part-time in a secular position and devote the remainder of their time to working with the church or to ministry training. Lack of finances can often be a barrier to Japanese Christians getting more involved in ministry and this project seeks to help address this. You can simply donate through OMF Singapore and quote P60009 under the project number.

CR25 - True Spring in Ban Klang

芒草岗上现春天

By Wong Lee Jeng (汪丽贞).
Edits and English translation by
Samuel Ng & Ek Ping.

教会公布了泰北宣教日期后不久,我和外子便收到君伦弟兄的邀请。去年我的左膝盖复建得不错,忠仁也有所感召,于是我俩报名了2025年泰北宣教,圆多年来未能成行的夙愿。

经过4个月的密集培训,宣教大队出发了。逸萍和仪娴此行担任领导,君伦、蓉华、丽霞和大学生子扬都有到泰北的宣教经验;初信的宏美、刚上班的逸良、职场达人雪芳和健朗的乃彬叔叔则是新成员。

12月12日星期五,众人经曼谷转机,抵达清莱时已近黄昏。车子一路北上,从乡镇转进村庄,余晖染橙山野的天空。车子转进芒草岗基督教浸信会时,李文秀师母和她的“孩子们”如银铃般的清脆笑声迎接众人。卸下了行李,众人为平安旅途和香味四溢的家常饭菜感恩。清莱的第一个夜晚,山风送来凉意,蛙鸣、鸡啼不绝于耳……

(1) 祈祷是得胜的记号

每日晨修使我们得着力量。面对与城市不同的文化与习俗,我们更需谨言慎行,披戴基督,存谦卑的心彼此服事。队员间的提醒与鼓励,使大家更深刻体验宣教的意义。我们也没有忘记,新加坡的弟兄姐妹们正以祷告托住这事工。

(2) 探访让关系延续

我们与芒草的年轻人分组探访慕道友和会友,延续前一年的“传统”,让他们看见信徒的关怀是不间断的心意。我们带来的礼包虽然只能给每户家庭微薄的帮助,却承载着新加坡磐石堂众弟兄姐妹的友爱与问候。令宣教队最感恩的是,几乎每一组探访队都有村民愿意接受主的救恩!往年努力撒下的福音种子终于成硕果累累,荣耀归主名!

我们在15至17日探访离芒草岗以外的惠外、达模和巴西三个高地村落。这里生活条件比较艰困,多数房屋以竹片为墙,难耐风雨。酗酒问题与毒品使不少家庭破碎、医药费累积成债、老人无所依靠、孩子失学令人惋惜;村中的巫医自身生活也十分拮据。祈愿主耶稣释放他们脱离生活困境!

探访的另一层意义,是亲自邀请村民参加布道会。尽管山上夜晚寒冷,他们仍信守诺言到来聆听见证与信息。衷心希望磐石堂与芒草教会的配搭能逐年带领更多人归向基督。

(3) 福音就是好消息

清莱此次探访约250户人家。每到一处,我们分享“五色福音”、圣经故事和个人见证。当有人表示愿意接受主时,李师母就剪去他们手腕上的绳索,意味着脱离了偶像与巫灵的依附;看到他们欣喜和平静的反应,大家都觉得很受鼓舞。

团队也受邀请到“美斯乐小学”进行两堂英语教学活动,由逸萍老师主持。我们透过化学实验、游戏和手链制作融入福音的元素,呈献泰语诗歌和圣诞歌曲并向教师赠礼致谢,希望孩子们能体验不一样的圣诞庆祝方式。短短一个下午,我们就接触了约800名师生,收获丰盛。

Not long after the church announced the dates for the Northern Thailand mission trip, my husband and I received an invitation to join the trip from Brother Ho Kuen Loon. Since my left knee had recovered last year, my husband Tong Jen and I, having felt the same calling to go, signed up for the 2025 Northern Thailand mission trip to Chiang Rai. This led to a fulfilment of a long-held wish that did not materialise for years due to various circumstances.

After four months of intensive training, the mission team set off. Ek Ping and Athelia served as leaders on this trip. Kuen Loon, Ronghua, Lai Har, and university student Riki had prior mission experience in Northern Thailand, while Michelle (a church intern), Joshua (just starting work), Grace (a seasoned professional), and Uncle Nai Pen (fit and energetic) were new members.



On Friday 12 December we travelled via Bangkok and arrived in Chiang Rai at dusk. From there, we journeyed north, moving from towns into villages as the evening sky cast a warm orange glow over the mountains. When we reached Ban Klang Baptist Church, Mrs Li Wenxiu (wife of the late Pastor Li) whom we affectionately addressed as Shi Mu, and the youth of the church greeted us with bright, cheerful laughter. After settling in, we gave thanks for a safe journey and enjoyed a delicious home-cooked meal. On the first night in Chiang Rai, we were greeted by the cool mountain air filled with the sounds of frogs and roosters.

(1) Prayer as Our Strength

Daily morning devotions sustained us. Faced with a culture and way of life so different from the city, we learned to be mindful in both speech and conduct, to be ambassadors of Christ, and to



serve one another with humility. Through mutual encouragement and gentle reminders, we gained a deeper appreciation of what being in God's mission field truly means. We were also mindful that brothers and sisters back in Singapore were faithfully supporting this work through prayer.

(Continued on Page 16)

(4)年轻人影响年轻人

磐石堂支援芒岗教会的福音事工十余年,当年的儿童已成长为青年,有者身在职场却仍忠心事奉,有者进修神学准备委身,也有在的最高学府就读。我们看见易志坚弟兄与祈恩传道所带领的青年小组,个个忠诚事奉,品格端正,志向磊落,倘若将来成为教会接棒人,必定能在泰北甚至更远的地方为主发光。

(5)是教会,也是情感联络站

主日的清晨,芒岗教会传出崇拜小组的器乐声与歌声,仿佛欢迎着众人前来敬拜天父上帝。不久后,身着各族服装的村民携家人而来,礼拜堂很快坐满,教会外面还有许多会友站着崇拜和听道;阿卡语、泰语和华语是主要的用语。

对当地人而言,芒岗教会已成为他们每星期相聚的情感联络站。会后教会提供午餐,众人一同吃饭交流,好不愉快!厨房里,来自不同族群的阿姨们忙碌地准备饭菜、汤品和点心;每周这朴实而温暖的一餐,其意义当然不仅限于提供温饱而已。

(6)守望羊群的责任

住在芒岗的这段日子,让我见识到了李文秀师母过人的精力和热忱。她每日承担繁重事工,培训、讲道、探访、翻译、行政一肩挑起。圣诞主日前夕,她还亲自制作装饰字样,布置教会到深夜。某个晚上,有两位自称别家教会的“传道人”要求留宿,协助我们的事工,但因对方无法出示证明,师母婉拒了这两名男子。这份守望与警醒,实属不易。

(7)泰缅边境的见面会

一天早晨车子把我们载到了泰缅边境的一处树林边。我们被告知有一群村民步行了两小时来到这个临时会面处。原来缅甸在冬季物资匮乏,基督徒和村民只能求助于边境的泰北村庄和教会。当他们几十人缓缓走来、放下肩上竹箩的那一刻,我们看到的是小小女孩脸上的愁绪以及皮肤黝黑

的青年人眼里的沉默。但当我们一唱起他们熟悉的诗歌、以圣经的话安慰他们又一起祷告时,大家依然能够感到温情的流露。

吃过饭以后,缅甸村民收拾上教会带来的棉袄、衣物、鞋袜等,背上他们的竹箩又走上回程的山路时,那缓缓离去的背影,不由得让人心生怜悯。那股惆怅只有主耶稣的话足以安慰我们:“我们爱,因为神先爱我们。”(约翰一书4:19)

结语

“芒岗”之名源于长满芒草的山岗。这偏远贫瘠的山区里住着无数渴望被爱的灵魂。在这里,我看见了得耶稣医治的人生命的转变,我看见了福音的春天!2026年的12月,也请弟兄姐妹们到芒岗来一起耕耘,让这里的春天更亮丽吧!

(2) Visits that Build Lasting Bonds

Together with the local youth, we went out in groups to visit pre-believers and church members, as was the practice of the local church. These visits demonstrated that Christian care is not a one-time event, but an ongoing commitment. The small gift packs we brought offered only modest help, yet they carried the love and greetings of Ban Klang Baptist Church and our church in Singapore.

We were especially encouraged that in almost every group that went out to the villages, some villagers were willing to receive the gift of salvation. Seeds of the gospel sown in past years had now begun to bear abundant fruit—glory be to God!

From the 15th to 17th, we visited three remote highland villages—Huay Wai, Damo, and Baxi. The living conditions in these villages are harsh. Many homes are built with bamboo and offer little protection against wind and rain. Alcohol abuse and drug problems remain rampant and have torn families apart, medical bills weigh heavily, the elderly are left without support, and many children are unable to continue their education. Even the village shamans, spiritual leaders of the villages, struggle to make ends meet. We pray that the Lord will bring freedom and hope to these communities.

These visits also gave us the opportunity to personally invite villagers to evangelistic meetings. Despite the cold mountain nights, many kept their word and came to listen to testimonies and the message. We pray that the partnership between our church and Ban Klang Baptist Church will continue to draw more people to Christ each year.



(3) The Gospel as Good News

During this trip, we visited about 250 households in all. At each home visit, we shared the gospel using the “five-coloured beads” tool, Bible stories, and our personal testimonies. Should a villager choose to accept Christ, we would ask them if we could cut off the string (a spiritual item given by the shaman) tied around their wrist—a symbolic act of turning away from idols and spiritual bondage. Seeing the joy and peace on their faces when they received the good news was deeply moving and encouraging.



We were also invited to conduct two English activity sessions at Mae Salong Primary School, led by Ek Ping. We wove in elements of the gospel message through simple science experiments, games, and bracelet-making, and also presented Thai hymns and Christmas songs, and gave small gifts to the teachers as a token of appreciation. In just one afternoon, we reached around 800 students and staff — a truly remarkable and fruitful time.



(4) Young People Reaching Their Peers

Our church has been in partnership with and support of Ban Klang Baptist Church's ministry for over a decade. The children we once knew have now grown into young adults. Some are working but remain faithful in service; others are studying theology in preparation for full-time ministry; while some are currently pursuing higher education locally. The youth group leaders, Teacher Yi Zhijian and Preacher Qi En (whose theological studies were supported by PSPC), stood out for their faithfulness, integrity, and sense of purpose in serving the Lord. They are a reminder of God's faithfulness and hold great promise as future leaders who will shine for Christ in Northern Thailand and beyond.



(5) A Church and a Community Hub

On Sunday morning, music and singing from the worship team filled Ban Klang Baptist Church, as if inviting everyone to come and worship God. Soon, villagers dressed in traditional attire arrived with their families. The sanctuary quickly filled, with many others standing outside to join the service. Akha, Lahu, Thai, and Chinese were the main languages used in the service.

For the local community, the Ban Klang Baptist Church has become more than a place of worship—it is a weekly gathering point for connection and support. After the service, lunch is served, and everyone shares a meal and fellowship together. In the kitchen, women from different ethnic groups work side by side to prepare dishes, soups, and snacks. This simple meal reminds us that it is not just physical nourishment, but warmth, belonging, and care that truly matter.

(6) The Responsibility of Shepherding

During our stay, I witnessed firsthand the remarkable dedication of Mrs Li Wenxiu. She carries a heavy load each day—teaching, preaching, visiting, translating, and handling administrative work. On the eve of the Christmas service, she even stayed up late to decorate the church herself.

One evening, two men claiming to be ministers from another church asked to stay and assist in the ministry. When they were unable to provide proper identification, she declined their request. Such vigilance and discernment reflect the weight of her responsibility in caring for the flock.

(Continued on Page 18)

(7) A Meeting at the Thai-Myanmar Border

One morning, we were driven to a forested area near the Thai-Myanmar border. We met a group of villagers there, who had walked two hours to cross the border to reach us. During the winter months, daily necessities and resources in Myanmar are scarce, and many rely on help from churches and villages across the Thai border for provision of supplies.

As they approached us, carrying bamboo baskets, we saw the worried look on the faces of young children and quiet hardship in the eyes of the adults. Yet when we began singing familiar hymns, sharing Scripture, and praying together, a sense of peaceful warmth and connection filled the air.

After the meal, they packed the cotton jackets, clothes,



shoes, and socks provided by the church, lifted their baskets, and began the long journey home. Watching them leave stirred deep compassion within us. In that moment, we found comfort in the words of the Apostle John: "We love because He first loved us." (1 John 4:19)

Conclusion

The name, Ban Klang, in Mandarin translates to "hills being covered with grass". In this remote and rugged land, countless people live longing for God's love. Yet it is here that I witnessed lives transformed through the healing of Jesus, and I saw the gospel bringing new life—like in springtime.

May there be more brothers and sisters from PSPC joining the year-end trip to Chiang Rai to labour together!



TAN TONG JEN:

This trip has reinforced the sense of urgency for our Great Commission, after seeing the plight of the stateless / unregistered immigrants / marginalised ethnic minority villagers living in squalid conditions. I am blessed to have witnessed how one person's love for these villagers could impact so many people by mobilising the community to join forces to reach out to these villagers. May God continue to motivate more adults and youths to venture out of our cocooned lives and go on mission trips to spread God's love and hope to the lost and destitute.

SAMUEL NG:

This trip reminded me that what we bring to our partner church is neither talents nor gifts, but merely encouragement - and a reminder to them that the global body of Christ is never alone. What a privilege it was to witness God's work in Thailand! Let us continue to pray for workers in the field that He may sustain them physically, mentally and emotionally.

Reflections from the CR25 Team Members

MICHELLE CHAU:

I came to Chiang Rai with an open heart and open mind, not really having any expectations but to simply go as the Lord leads. Praise God that my expectations were exceeded spiritually, mentally & emotionally (it was physically tiring on some days). The level of hospitality surprised me, not only in the meals and accommodations, but in the community's embrace of us. The child-like belief in Christ by the local villagers was also very sobering. I am heartened to witness God's growing work in Thailand.

RIKI TAN:

The trip has reminded me of God's sovereignty and perfect plan. Despite many unexpected changes, God carried us through the trip. He gave us good weather, lifted us and the people of Chiang Rai up in good spirits, and gave us plenty of opportunity to witness His work in action.

GRACE GOH:

This mission trip was a good opportunity for me to serve God, spread the gospel, serve the community and at the same time learn about Thai culture. I'm glad we could work as a team with BKBC as one big family, showing the villagers God's love. I'm also grateful that God blessed us with good health and weather during this whole trip.

JOSHUA WEE:

To be honest, during our training and preparation sessions leading up to the mission trip, I was quite skeptical that we would be able to explain the Gospel sufficiently for the Thai villagers to be able to understand and receive Jesus. The cultural, language, and educational barriers were formidable, and we didn't have much time at each house we visited to talk to people we had just met. However, seeing the pre-believing villagers being so open to my clumsy sharing and the believers expressing the joy and peace they experienced from knowing the Lord, I am heartened and humbled to see how God reveals Himself to simple hearts, often in a stronger and surer way than to us who have so many messy thoughts in our heads. 1 Cor 1:27 "But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong."

SIEW NAI PEN:

Prior to joining this mission trip, I was worried about how I would be able to spread the Word of God to the villagers in Chiang Rai. However, God led me and granted me the courage to accomplish my wish.

Despite having different cultures, different religions, different languages, and different living environments, there are no barriers to sharing and spreading the gospel to the villagers with Jesus' guidance. This trip taught me to be patient and humble, and to show our love and care to them, that our God loves everyone regardless of race and religion. God's Word is an international language. No matter how bad the terrain is, with God nothing is impossible.

ATHELIA LOW:

God is sovereign over all things and graciously invites us to take part in His mission. Last year, I shared the gospel with a villager named Namisor, and this year I learnt that God had stirred her heart and led her back to Christ after 16 years. This year, I shared the gospel with a man and his son who accepted Christ — only to later discover they were Namisor's family. I am deeply grateful to witness how God worked across time and beyond language limitations, to reach this family and draw them to Himself.

HO KUEN LOON:

This was my fourth NT mission trip and it was the most thought-provoking one thus far. I truly give thanks to God for this humbling experience and opportunity to serve Him. The Fathers' Day Sunday Service at BKBC was really emotional; the ~25 house visits over three days of field trips were truly evangelistic and I am so glad to see many accepting Christ (and for me, to cut the shamanistic bracelet of a believer was a new experience), the three gospel rallies were heartwarming, and most touching of all, the encounters at the Thailand-Myanmar border were surreal and reminded me of the huge needs in the field.

XIE RONG HUA:

This year's trip saw the most sudden and big changes in its schedule. I believe this is also an aspect that God wants us to experience and learn during the mission trip. It requires us to cultivate greater faith to rely on the Lord more in unexpected situations. It also trains us in humility when working alongside others. Shimu's wholehearted service and zeal for sharing the gospel moved me all the time. This is the quality we should emulate.

WONG LEE JENG:

This mission trip to Chiang Rai once again reminds me that it is not by our might nor our talents, but the power of God's Word that brings salvation to all nations! Our presence and our prayers have helped BKBC and its young mission team to the open doors of many villages as they are not often visited by foreigners. Your participation will definitely make a difference in their lives – and yours! Come join the NT mission 2026!

CHOU LAI HAR:

I thank God for giving me the opportunity to go on this Chiang Rai mission trip.

I was encouraged by villagers stepping forward to testify about God's work in their lives during the evangelistic night. What moved me most was seeing children choose the 5-colour gospel bands over pagan religious ones—a simple yet powerful sign of changed hearts.

God's heart is always among those who have not yet heard the gospel.

And this is not just a trip, but a renewed sense of calling from God.

SIAU EK PING:

This year's mission trip to Chiang Rai reaffirmed my calling to do short-term mission work on a long-term basis. PSPC first partnered with BKBC in 2013 and we have since journeyed together for 12 years in the outreach work to the hilltribe people groups. I was particularly touched by the youths who were serving together with us - in Sunday School, Sunday services, Outreach to Lahu villages and to the Thai school – as these were youths who used to be Kindergarten children when I first met them back in 2013. I thank God that He has raised these children to be God-fearing youths who continued serving fervently in the church. They are now playing an invaluable role as many help to lead songs, lead games, translate for us, and also share the gospel with the villagers that we visit. It is my prayer and hope that our PSPC youths would have the opportunity to meet them some day and serve together.

What Might Sacred Architecture Look Like?

What comes to mind when we think of the church and sacred architecture?

As Christians, images of iconic Gothic or Gothic-influenced structures might occupy our imaginations, perhaps the Notre Dame de Paris, or Antoni Gaudí's Sagrada Família in Barcelona, with their soaring steeples, symmetrical facades, and intricate adornments.

Closer to home, St. Andrew's Cathedral or St. Joseph's Church might similarly emerge as examples of religious structures that fit our impressions of what sacred architecture should look like. Yet, an inordinate focus on physical forms or outward appearances could obscure other structural dimensions that ought to define the church.

At this year's PSPC Camp, our speakers, Revs. Tom and Judy Harvey, prompted us to go deeper — to

extend our imagination past the aesthetic, important as it may be, and consider what the spiritual, social, and indeed, sacred architecture of a body built up in Christ might look like.

Sacred Architecture is Christocentric

Drawing from Ephesians 2:19–22, Tom pointed to Christ as the cornerstone on which the church ultimately finds her stability and alignment. Through Christ, we as “saints and members of the household of God” (v.19b) are “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets” with “Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone” (v.20).

The sacred architecture that constitutes the church is therefore fundamentally Christ-centred or Christocentric. In contrast to the tabernacles and temples that came before, Paul described how believers are constituted as the church in Christ, “joined together” and growing “into a holy temple in the Lord” (v.21).

The implications are profound.

Where God had formerly dwelt in the Holy of Holies, we as believers are now “built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit” (v.22). And where God's divine presence was formerly accessible to Israel's high priest alone, once a year on the Day of Atonement, we as believers who are justified by grace through faith (v.8) now enjoy bold and direct access to God through Christ as our Great High Priest (Hebrews 4:14–16).

Sacred Architecture is Covenantal

The sacred architecture that constitutes the body of believers, one that transforms the very structure of our relationship with God, is established by God Himself.

Formerly alienated and strangers to the “covenants of promise,” living without hope and without God in the world (v.12), we are made secure and united with Christ as

fellow citizens through the fulfilment of God's covenantal faithfulness in Christ — every believer a living stone, fitted and built together into a “dwelling place for God by the Spirit” (v.22).

Having been made alive in Christ and brought near to Him — not through any merit of our own but through the Holy Spirit (vv.13, 18) — Tom emphasised that just as the Gospel has broken down the dividing wall between Jew and Gentile, being reconciled to God draws us into alignment towards Christ, enabling us to trust and serve one another across diverse and foreign contexts.

The architecture of reconciliation and peace that defines us as the body of Christ should therefore shape how we serve one another in love and unity.

Sacred Architecture is Cosmic

The practical consequence of being built up as a sacred architecture is that the church as a family in Christ is a visible witness of Christ to the cosmos, or the world.

Observing that there are no perfect individuals or families to be found in Scripture, yet God still loved and chose them to be His people all the same, Judy invited us to bring our wounds and brokenness to the church. The body of Christ should be a haven for the hurting and broken, a people continually moulded into Christ-likeness through the Holy Spirit. Sharing a family likeness with Christ requires us to exercise the fruit of the Spirit.

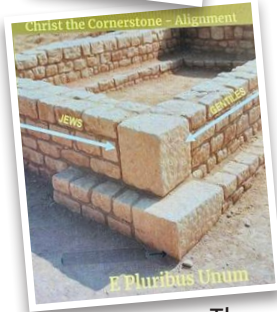
We are called to work hard at pursuing unity in Christ, and to find our true identity as children of God—to see and receive the great love that our Father has lavished on us. Having been created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do (v.10), we can now find true rest. Tom aptly described Christ as our load-bearing cornerstone. This reconciling work breaks down barriers, removes alienation, and unites a diverse people. This enables us to offer the peace of Christ to those around us.

Reflection

Rather than being found in physical structures or building materials, Judy stressed that the church is the people of God. The church “building” is the “building up” of God's people, the context in which we live out the truth of the Gospel.

What might this look like for us as a body of Christ at PSPC? As Presbyterians rooted in the Reformed tradition, the physical structure of our church adopts a simple and restrained aesthetic where stacked bricks take the place of imposing columns and plain plastered walls replace ornamentation. Yet as the Harveys reminded us, our church is made sacred not through its physical manifestation, but through the work, mind, and person of Christ amidst His people.

The faithful preaching through the Scriptures and the Gospel, the reading of the Word, our collective celebration



of the sacraments in the form of baptism and holy communion are significant elements that constitute the sacred architecture of our church. We can also observe this in the tireless and often taken-for-granted service of cell group leaders who quietly minister to and disciple members over decades, or in the teachers and mentors who persist in teaching and modelling the Gospel to successive generations of children, youths, and young adults.

Indeed, the work of the Gospel exists not only through highly visible acts or spectacular testimonies, but also in the small and the in-between. This is seen for instance, in the long-suffering exercise of care for a fellow Christian, or in offering hospitality and welcome for the stranger to the

church. And while seemingly mundane, we exercise our commitment to a distinctive unity through the exchange of the peace of Christ and our active participation in corporate worship each Sunday—a reality that we can only experience and participate in through Christ's death and resurrection.

While our collective lives as Christians are often freighted with past hurts and riddled with conflicts, a closer look around our church suggests that there is much for us to take encouragement in and to thank God for, and to continue labouring together as a body in Christ.

What might the sacred architecture of PSPC look like to you? Going further, how may we continue to build one another up as a body of Christ?

REFLECTIONS FROM CHURCH CAMP 2026

Exhausted, Yet Full of Joy and Purpose

By Ally Ow

Tired. Excited. Humbled. Privileged. Grateful. Joyful.

When Gaik Bee reached out to me for a reflection article to be featured in *The Messenger*, I readily agreed. Isaac and I were looking forward to attending our second church camp as PSPC members. As I reflected, memories of our very first church camp came flooding back — everything felt fresh and new. We were still finding our footing in church life, deepening relationships with our cell group members, and getting to know brothers and sisters we had never spoken to before. The warmth of fellowship, the meaningful connections, and the joy of growing together left us eagerly anticipating this year's camp.

Little did I know that Church Camp 2026 would be a completely different experience.

For the first time in my life, I had the privilege of serving God during church camp as a PLH mentor. On top of that, God entrusted my mother and youngest niece into our care throughout the camp. It was both a blessing and a responsibility that stretched me in ways I had not expected.

To be very honest, there were moments when I felt tired and overwhelmed. Juggling the roles as an aunt, daughter, wife, and mentor at the same time and in the same space was challenging. I have never been particularly good at wearing multiple hats simultaneously, and there were times when I wondered if I was doing any of them well.

Yet in the midst of the busyness and exhaustion, God opened my eyes to something beautiful.

I found myself reflecting on the many brothers and sisters in Christ who faithfully serve year after year while carrying countless responsibilities of their own. Through this experience, I gained a newfound respect and appreciation for them. More importantly, I realised that there is only one motivation strong enough to sustain such service over the years: the love of God. It is His love that strengthens weary hearts, gives joy in the midst of sacrifice, and makes service into a privilege.

One of the highlights of the camp was seeing the youths come together during our xPark outing. Whether they were competing in bubble futsal or cheering one another, it was heartwarming to witness the sportsmanship, teamwork, and camaraderie that emerged throughout the day. Moments like these remind me that ministry is not only built within the four walls of a classroom, but also through shared experiences, laughter, and genuine relationships.



(Continued on Page 22)

As mentors, we also had the privilege of journeying alongside the youths through the sermon sessions led by Revs. Tom and Judy Harvey. Their lessons on the Body of Christ, that each of us plays a unique and important role in God's Church, were both timely and impactful. Just as Christ is our Cornerstone, providing stability and alignment, we too are called to build one another up as part of His greater purpose. This message resonated deeply with our church theme, Building As One.

What struck me most throughout the three days was the opportunity to witness spiritual growth. As mentors, we are not merely facilitators of activities or discussion groups; we are given the privilege of walking alongside young people during a formative season of their faith

journey. We get to encourage them, pray with them, learn from them, and sometimes even be challenged by their sincerity and questions. Serving as a mentor has reminded me that while we seek to impact the youths, God is often transforming me at the same time. It is truly a privilege to be part of what He is doing in the next generation.

As tired as I was at the end of camp, my heart was also full. Full of gratitude for the opportunity to serve, full of joy from witnessing God at work, and full of excitement for what He will continue to do in our lives as His people. This camp reminded me that while serving God may sometimes leave us physically exhausted, it also fills us with a deeper joy and purpose that can only come from Him.

Children's MINISTRY CORNER

By Pr Carol Ng
Sunday School Superintendent

SS Easter Programme [5 April 2026]

For this year's Easter programme, "Paint Your Way Through Resurrection", our Sunday School children (from Kindies to P6s) explored the journey of Jesus from Good Friday to Easter Sunday. Through engaging videos and a reflection quiz, they revisited key moments: Palm Sunday, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Cross at Golgotha, and the rolled-away stone. Afterward, the children expressed their hearts through art, painting the specific scene that deeply moved them. Our prayer is that through these paintings, the children will truly experience Jesus and the power of His resurrection.

Our Nursery and Toddler classes (top left) had much fun in their Easter programme too!! The children enjoyed singing songs, hearing a special Bible story, and making hands-on crafts to remember what God had done on Good Friday and celebrating the hope of Jesus' resurrection.



Sunday School Training [18 April 2026]



Eight of our Sunday School teachers and assistants attended the Children's Ministry Conference, hosted by Kidmin SG at Yio Chu Kang Chapel. Centred on the theme "The Heart of Children's Ministry", the event opened with a keynote address by Rev Leow Wen Pin on "A Biblical Theology of Children". This was followed by a plenary panel titled "The Heart of a Teacher",

where three experienced practitioners discussed what sustains long-term, faithful service. Our team also engaged in breakout sessions covering child safety, pastoral care, and digital lesson planning. We praise God for this enriching time of growth, learning, and fellowship for our leaders.

Chiam Li Li:



"The Heart of Children's Ministry Conference was an engaging and equipping session by Kidmin Singapore. It was a full day of learning through the keynote session, panel conversations, and breakout sessions. One of my key takeaways came from our keynote speaker, Rev Dr Leow Wen Pin. He reminded us that

children belong to God - they are His gift. With this perspective, we are called to adopt a "missionary framework for children's ministry". This means that we must address the "children's minds with the gospel truth", their "hearts with character formation" and their "hands through good works". Personally, this message is not only applicable to me as I serve in Sunday School but also in my role as a parent. I pray that as I serve in Sunday School, I will always be reminded that I am not there just to teach - it is mission work.

Mary Ho:

"I particularly enjoyed the keynote on "A Biblical Theology of Children" by Rev Dr Leow Wen Pin. My key takeaways were:

- the implication that Children are a gift from God - God owns our children and children are not the exclusive property of their families.
- theology of children = theology of mission. What is God's intent/purpose for our children?
- children's ministry is underscored by a missional framework of:
 - 1) addressing their minds with gospel truth
 - 2) addressing their hearts with character formation
 - 3) addressing their hands through good works
- children's ministry = parents' ministry.

Parents must own the spiritual formation of the children and not outsource to the children's ministry. We cannot disciple the child without disciplining the parent."

UP CLOSE & PERSONAL New Captain of the Girls' Brigade 7th Company, Sharin Huang

Interviewed by Chia Gaik Bee



At the GB Enrolment Service in April 2026, Sharin Huang was appointed as the Captain of the Girls' Brigade (GB) 7th Company. Sharin was first involved with the Company when she joined the GB at Pioneer Secondary School. The Messenger finds out more about her journey.

found it quite boring and it was on a Saturday morning; that's an extra day of waking up early for school (back then parades started at 8am!) But for some reason, the school decided that I somehow needed to be moulded and probably thought that GB was the best way to do so; thus, there I was reporting to school on Saturday mornings for parades. And yup, I am still reporting to school at 9am on Saturdays until today!



In hindsight, maybe it was not the school's decision at all, but rather, God had already enlisted me for His mission long before I realised it.

Q: Tell us a little about yourself.

Sharin: I am currently working in HR. I became a member of PSPC back in 2019 when I was confirmed.

Q: When did you join GB and why did you choose this CCA?

Sharin: I joined the Girls' Brigade 7th Company when I was in Secondary 1. Ironically, GB was not my choice of CCA as I

Q: How has joining the GB impacted your life?

Sharin: The GB has impacted my life in far more ways than I could have imagined, and for that, I am deeply grateful.

(Continued on Page 24)

First and foremost, GB played a pivotal role in restoring my relationship with Christ. Growing up in a Catholic family, attending church and catechism classes every Sunday was simply part of my routine. However, what I was learning about God often conflicted with what I witnessed from my dad at home. That tension gradually led me to doubt and drift away from the faith. Things began to change after I graduated. Ma'am Jess, our GB Captain, reached out to invite me back to help organise camps, tutor my juniors, and eventually sign up for Officers' courses to become a GB Officer. During that season, she also started having weekly Bible studies with me. As someone who never really liked GB and was not particularly close to Ma'am Jess as a Girl, I often wondered how I ended up serving here. Looking back, I can only believe that it was God who led me back. What stood out to me was Ma'am Jess' faithfulness and intentionality in walking alongside me throughout my teenage years. To be honest, I was not the easiest person to handle because of how stubborn I was, yet she continued to patiently invest her time in me. Through her faithful heart work, I believe God was softening my heart during that season and allowing me to hear His voice again. Through that journey, I slowly returned to seeking, serving, and following Him, which, fittingly, is the very essence of the GB motto.



Secondly, it was through GB that I found a community that supported my growth and kept me anchored through the highs and lows of life. Back then, the Jurong

Fellowship was started to reach out to BB/GB alumni through fellowship gatherings and Bible study sessions. Attendance was often irregular; sometimes only two or three youths would show up, yet the Officers faithfully travelled to the West week after week to teach, guide, and patiently answer our questions about the Bible. Through them, I learnt the true meaning of servant leadership and discovered the joy of serving others. Their consistency and dedication to the Brigade ministry left a deep impression on me, as I saw Christ reflected in how they lived and served. It is my prayer that I, too, can continue serving in the Brigade with the same conviction and joy, empowered by the Holy Spirit. It was also through this community that I gradually became integrated into PSPC, where I found an even larger family of believers, some of whom have since become close friends. Beyond the church community, I have also had the privilege of meeting GB Officers locally and internationally who carry the same conviction and heart for the ministry. Hearing their personal stories of how GB has shaped their lives continues to encourage me to remain faithful in serving His Kingdom.

Q: How did you feel when the 7th Company went into recess, and later when it restarted at Westwood Secondary School?

Sharin: To be honest, I don't recall feeling anything in particular when I was informed that the 7th Coy would be going into recess at that point in time. When it restarted, there were many changes we had to adapt to as Officers, from a new programme structure to new uniforms and even new drill formats. Besides that, we had to quickly learn to get accustomed to the girls, and vice versa. While it took some time for the girls to warm up to us, it is heartening to see them step out of their comfort zones and grow as leaders in the Company. Some who used to be shy have become more outspoken in leading the girls. As I reflect on every pause, closure, and new beginning, I see that God never stopped paving the way for the 7th Company to continue its ministry in His perfect timing. And it is because of His faithfulness that I can be assured in His future plans for the Company.

Q: What motivated you to step up as Captain of the 7th Company?

Sharin: Stepping up as a Captain definitely wasn't in my plans, at least not anytime soon. In fact, I always had the intention to step down from the Brigade, but every time I brought it up, the answer was always "not now". However, what motivated me to take on the Captainship was the conviction that God's plans for me and for His ministry are far better than mine. I also believe in the work of the Brigade to shape girls to become future-ready leaders, not of authority but of influence. I believe the Brigade is an opportunity for us to reach out to the girls and plant seeds so they may one day seek, serve, and follow Christ, too.

Q: What was the training provided, and what do you do as Captain?

Sharin: At the HQ level, all Officers are required to attend a few courses and training before they can be promoted to Lieutenant. At the Company level, I went through "on-the-job training" by planning and executing weekly parades. As Captain, I definitely have more responsibilities, such as planning the full-year programme framework to help the girls complete requirements for promotion, as well as developing a curriculum to mentor them. There's more to the list, but I won't go into the details. Feel free to come down to our parades (either at Yusof Ishak Secondary School or Westwood Secondary School) if you're interested in finding out more!

Q: How can we pray for you?

Sharin: I give thanks to God for the work He has done in me through GB and for blessing me with very seasoned Officers who are always so willing and ready to serve alongside. Pray for wisdom in leading the Company and for creativity in planning programmes for the girls. Pray for a humble heart, aligned with Christ, in serving His ministry. Pray for the 7th Company that the girls will grow as leaders, and that the seeds will bloom in God's perfect timing.

BOYS' BRIGADE (BB) 1ST COMPANY

~ 2nd Quarter Update



THE BOYS' BRIGADE

By Ho Yew Keong
Captain
1st Singapore Company

In Term 2 of school, we received our 22 Sec 1 Boys into 1st Company. Thank God for the good recruitment. The total on our nominal roll is 88 Boys from Sec 1 to Sec 4. The Sec 4 Boys stood down after 17 April 2026 to concentrate on their studies.

We quickly began BB knowledge teaching and equipped the Sec 1 Boys with their uniforms, preparing them for our enrolment ceremony on 25 April 2026.

This term, we had a few important events.



Firstly, there was BB Blaze, formerly called Adventure Quest, on 11 April 2026, where the Boys were tested on all the skills and knowledge they had learned while in the BB. Then there was map reading, kayaking, archery, obstacle clearing (teamwork), first aid and knot tying. We sent a team of five Boys led by Wei Chuan, and they managed to clinch a Bronze medal for the Company.



Guest-of-Honour

Our Annual Enrolment Ceremony for 1st BB, 7th and 8th GB was held on 25 April 2026 at Westwood Secondary School with Mr Sean Wat, Chief of Navy, as our Guest of Honour. It was well attended by many church members, Boys, Girls, and their parents. We also witnessed the handing over of the Captaincy of GB 7th from Jess Goh to Sharin Huang.



On 22 May, our Sec 1 and Sec 2 Boys embarked on a BB Cares project: the Sec 1s visited the elderly at Bright Hill Evergreen Home, while the Sec 2 Boys prepared goodie bags for the non-teaching staff of the school, appreciating them for working behind the scenes to keep the school going.



The 1st Singapore Company was awarded the 2025 JM Fraser Award (High Distinction) on 23 May 2026. We had the honour of the School Principal, Mr Chen, receiving the award on behalf of the Company. This ceremony was attended by Rev Darryl Chan, Chaplain of 1st Singapore Company, and Teacher-in-charge, Mr Patrick Ang, together with Richard Cheung and Ang Kok Wah. Thank you, Teachers, Officers, and Helpers, for your support.



CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

Stretch and Relax

Words by Lily Tham. Photos by Carol Ng.

I recently participated in the “Stretch and Relax” session organised by our very own cancer support group, and spent a fruitful afternoon winding down. I am deeply touched by the planning team who put together such a thoughtful programme, blessing us generously with their hearts and their time.

Shu Ching shared her cancer journey and the love and encouragement she received from the brethren within our church. Throughout her journey, God’s Word spoke to her heart through the Scriptures and songs. Her journey is a testimony to God’s providence, grace, mercy, and enduring love. For those walking the same journey, her sharing must have been especially uplifting.

Faye (Victor and Doris’ eldest daughter) was our

facilitator for the day. She led us patiently through breathing exercises and meditation on prayerfully curated verses — a heartfelt contribution from the Ong-Lye cell group!

A few light-hearted ice-breaking games helped us loosen up and sharpen our reflexes. There was plenty of laughter at all the silly antics — some volunteered enthusiastically, while others were swept along by the fun — and it helped everyone ease in beautifully.

Faye guided us through a series of sequential stretching exercises targeting different muscle groups. No one said they were difficult to execute, for every hurdle was resolved with hearty laughter and a forgiving teacher. She broke down every move so that they seemed so doable for everyone — naturally, we all believed we did well.

The session drew to a close with a delightful spread of local snacks. Some joked that we were putting back all the effort of our “workout” — but nobody complained, and we heartily ate our fill over warm fellowship.



IN & AROUND PSPC

NEW BIRTHS



Parents: Lee Wei Yong & Cheryl Teo

We are definitely blessed to have **Elijah** born to us on **21 March 2026**. Thankfully, as my wife would like to say, we have a healthy baby! We now have two little ones (Ezra Lee) in our house and the house has definitely become more hectic. Please keep us in prayer as we navigate this challenging but fulfilling journey.



Parents: Chia Shao Xiong & Levene Wong

We give thanks to God and rejoice at the birth of **Timothy** on **19 June 2026** at 0655hrs Both mother and child are safe and we cherish this gift of new life! Thank you for all your well wishes and prayers.



GRADUATION

Congratulations to Rev Dr Darryl Chan on completing his Doctor of Ministry programme with Fuller Theological Seminary!

PSPC Updates

(May 2026 - Present)

DEATHS

Seng Eng Kah	11.05.2026
Eld Arnold Tan Chin Hean	17.05.2026



A Glimpse Behind The Cross: Preparing for the Easter Retreat

By Riki Tan and Nariko Prasannan (Camp ICs)

INTRODUCTION

The theme for our PLH Easter Retreat this year was “Tetelestai”, which means “It is finished”. The BRP project gave us an opportunity to change things up and try something different, since we didn’t have our Tenebrae Reflections that we usually attend with our youths. Pastor Ron and Shaun suggested that we could do a “Stations of the Cross” so our youths could experience what it might have been like for Jesus and His disciples right before He was crucified.

CONTEXT

Two months ago, we were busy preparing for the annual Easter Retreat, rushing to meet a fast-approaching deadline. There had been a lot of curveballs along the way. The church sanctuary was undergoing renovation, and the mentors and our camp speaker, Pastor Ron, had busy schedules. There was much to be done, especially with planning an alternative programme to replace the Tenebrae Reflections, which was traditionally held in the sanctuary. We wanted an approach that would remind us of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross while retaining the reflective, solemn atmosphere of previous years’ Tenebrae services. Despite the setbacks and short planning runway, we could see God working through us to reveal the message of the cross.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Being an interactive re-enactment of the events leading up to Christ’s crucifixion on the cross, Stations of the Cross was planned around three key themes within the narrative leading up to the crucifixion: the plot against Jesus, the last supper, and the trial leading up to the moment itself. Selecting these themes was the easy part; the difficult decisions would come later. In addition, many questions and doubts came to us throughout the process. (How could we portray each theme in a manner that was engaging to the youth, while remaining faithful to Scripture? What creative liberties could be taken? And how could we ensure that it doesn’t become just a “spectacle” etc.) Through much prayer, deliberation, and discernment from the Spirit, three “stations” were created, each portraying the events of Jesus’ final hours through different media.



1: “Fear”

A play that recounted the Pharisees and Sadducees’ opposition against Jesus and His ministry, and Judas’ plot and betrayal, using Matthew 26 as the source material.



2: “Feast”

An interactive role-play that saw youth participants learn about the roles of the disciples and Jesus during the last supper by acting it out.



3: “Fall, Finished”

A multi-media experience that involved participants going through a “gauntlet” that would symbolise what Christ experienced.

It was an emotional process adapting Scripture for various media, and it allowed us to dive deeper into the Word, put ourselves in the shoes of the characters, and understand the pain our Lord and Saviour went through. For the planning team, many moments in the narrative of Matthew 26-27 spoke to us.

We saw how Christ was treated with such indignity (**Matthew 26:14-16**) in being betrayed for the price of a slave, and later in the trial (**Matthew 27:15-23, 27-31**), which reminded us of the depth of Christ’s love.

(Continued on Page 28)

(Continued from Page 27)

Through the parallel account of the Last Supper (**John 13:1-17**), we saw Christ's humility when He served His disciples and washed their feet. And through our activity in Station 3 (see below), we were constantly reminded of how our sins nailed Christ to the cross.



Participants acting out the events of the Last Supper, using a script adapted from Matthew 26



Participants watching the play; and the mentors acting out the roles of the Pharisees, Chief Priest Caiaphas, and Judas



As part of the "gauntlet", participants drove "nails" into a plasticine model of the cross



(left) Actors of the play during the rehearsals.

A reflection was conducted during the devotionals to round off the youth's experiences during the Stations, and it was also a meaningful session for the planners to reflect on the whole process. While there were still many ideas we had that did not come to fruition, many last-minute amendments and various hiccups along the way, we give thanks to God who guided us through the planning process, sustained us in the preparation of the stations, and reminded us that He had sent His Son to die for our sins.



(right) Stations of the Cross room setups, using makeshift props.

Light of The World: A Movie Reflection

By Ivan Tay (Juniors)

As part of its Connect programme, PLH organised a movie screening as an outreach to the family and friends of PLHers to spread the gospel to those who may not have heard the good news yet. The movie screened was 'Light Of The World', which depicted the life of Jesus Christ and his crucifixion and resurrection. As I was watching the movie, I was shocked at how the filmmakers managed to make such a beautiful yet impactful animation. While it does not follow the gospel in its entirety, the key ideas and significant events were definitely there to bring the message across. The part that left a deep impression on me was when Jesus was crucified. The details of the process and the strong emotions shown in the animation made me understand the indescribable pain Jesus went through for us, and made me feel strongly emotionally affected. As I reflected on the contents of the movie, I felt a deep sense of gratitude for the things Jesus went through for me. I would recommend the movie to those who know what

the gospel is and want to find out more, or for those who have not heard of it. That is because this movie does not go too deep into the details of the gospel and instead keeps it simple and easy to understand while keeping the main message.



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