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Covenant Vision Christian Mission (ROS 286/99 REL)

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The Harvest // Project Heartbeat // STEP OUT to Love Others, Church Camp 2014 // True Worship // Proverbs 31 Women // Building One Another Up // Which Version of Heart-ware are you using? // CVSOM

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Our Identity

A Trans-denominational Christian ministry seeking to extend love, provide hope through faith in Jesus Christ.

Our Vision

To be a living bridge to a lost and needy world.

Our Mission

To provide Word-based, Spirit-led and Faithfilled teaching, training and ministry to fulfil the Commission of Jesus Christ, to preach the Kingdom of God, to heal the sick and set the captives free.

Editor-in-chief Rev Francis Khoo Editor Trisha Khoo Designer Jenn Chew Contributors Trisha Khoo Kenneth Koh Photos Eddy Woo Hannah Faith Lau **P1** From the desk of rev Francis khoo

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Shalom DG performing during the Mid-Autumn Festival Project Heartbeat at All Saints Home Tampines. Photo by Eddy Woo.

FROM THE DESK OF REV FRANCIS KHOO

still vividly remember the encounter with God in March 1998 that led to my embracing the call to full-time ministry. God convicted me that although I had been busy in church leadership as well as ministering for Him, I had been disobedient. A vision "to be a living bridge to a lost and needy world" was given, "by bringing Word-base, Spiritled and Faith-filled teaching, training and Ministry to fulfill the Commission of Jesus Christ to preach the Kingdom of God, to heal the sick and set the captives free".

The first Covenant Vision Centre (CVC) was established on July 1st 1998. There the first Prayer Powerhouse Services and Spiritual Growth Seminars were held. In November 1998, God gave the vision for the Touch Jesus, He Heals! Healing Ministry and the first service was held in Wesley Methodist Church on 24th April 1999. Countless Services have since been held in partnership with various Churches, with awesome testimonies to the glory of Jesus!

In 1999, Covenant Vision Christian Missions (CVCM) was registered as a Society and the first mission trip to India was undertaken. Since then. mission teams have been sent and the work extended to more than 15 countries. That same year, Covenant Vision School of Ministry (CVSOM) was started. Acts 1:1 tells us that "Jesus began to both do and teach" and this was the model that led to a formal curriculum of a Certificate in Practical Christian Ministry in 2007. A Diploma program was added the next year. Since then, CVSOM has graduated six cohorts of students coming from some

65 local churches.

i the chains of ith authority



Discipleship had always been an emphasis of our Ministry. However, we realised that we could not disciple, commission or send out missioners, if they were not in an accountability relationship. Finally after much wrestling, Covenant Vision Christian Church (CVCC) was registered in September 2008 with Sunday Services starting in November of the same year.

LOOKING BACK, we can

certainly thank God for how He has led us and guided us over the past 16 years. However, as an end-time body of Christ in this 21st century, we know there will be many demanding challenges and conflicts. We are facing a "graving population" and now as a Church, there is the task to blend together the different generational groups of people born in the postwar era with their varying needs. Further, we need to remain relevant today in a fast paced world with a changing environment and fluid moral values. There will be tremendous pressure to silence the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in public meetings, and to further compromise Word-based, Spirit-led and Faith-filled teachings.

Matthew 24:37-39 clearly reveals that society will degenerate to be as evil as it was in the days of Noah. 2 Timothy 3:1-5 prophetically warns us that society will descend into a dark pit of immorality, violence, and paganism. He asserts that men will be "lovers of self, lovers of money, and lovers of pleasure." People will be "boastful, arrogant, and unholy," and children will be "disobedient to parents'. Also, people will be having "a form of godliness, but denying the *power thereof*" as well as *"ever* learning but never coming into the knowledge of truth"

We are watching these prophecies come true today, as our beliefs and moral values are being secularised, marginalised and challenged. The Church and believers will

Acts 13:22 as "the man after God's own heart."

Daniel 12:4 warns about globalisation and of the increase of knowledge with its own incumbent problems and challenges. Economic and social issues, wars and pestilences will be magnified. be attacked as being old fashioned and as *"intolerant bigots."* These attacks and persecutions are going to intensify and increase, and it is going to become increasingly difficult for Christians to stand up for righteousness. Jobs will be in peril of being lost and careers destroyed. Christians could even be prosecuted for speaking out against evils like homosexuality because such stands taken will be labeled as "hate crimes."

In Matthew 24:10, our Lord Jesus warned us that many professing Christians will "fall away" and will proceed to cooperate in the persecution of their former brothers and sisters in Christ. The Apostle Paul confirms for us the same things in 2 Timothy 3:2-4 when he states that people will be "haters of good" and that they will therefore be "brutal" and "reckless," in reviling those who would stand for righteousness.

Is there then no future and a hope for us? Matthew 24:13 reveals to us that "...he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." But what must we do or how are we to endure to the end?

The starting point perhaps is for us to review our priorities and make certain that God is first in our lives. We need to be brutally honest with ourselves and to stop playing games and deceiving ourselves. Many Christians have allowed their priorities to get very mixed up. Careers or wealth have become the focus with God taking a back seat. We need to ask ourselves this question: If God were to grant us one request, what would it be? Would you ask for money? fame? power? success?

Solomon asked for wisdom, and that may be good! However, David asked for something ten thousand times more profound. In Psalm 27:4, he asked for intimacy with God. Because he chose to put God first above all things. he is remembered in Acts 13:22 as "the man after God's own heart." So we must be focused and singleminded; to put God first in all things with a passionate desire to do the Father's Will!

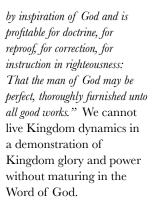
As citizens of the Kingdom, we have been given a great commission and an awesome mission with tremendous enablement! In Mark 16:15, Jesus said "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." In Matthew 24:14, after giving a list of signs in the end times, Jesus said "And this gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Jesus is going to return only when the gospel of the **Kingdom** has been preached to all and that the gospel is to be preached by you and I as believers.

We need to know the magnitude of the Kingdom to which we now belong. Too often we forget that our Lord and Master today is the King of Kings, the Lords of Lords with creative power that created the world and the whole universe. Further, the world and its fullness thereof still belongs to Him!!

In Romans 12:1, the

Apostle Paul says "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship." (NIV) Here we understand that we worship God not only in praise and worship as in music and songs, but also by the way we live our lives!

2 Timothy 3:16, 17 reminds us that *'All scripture is given*



To endure to the end, we need to get our priorities right and we need to have **evangelism** as our primary focus; we need to be **exalting** God by the way we live our lives; and we need to be **edified**, individually and mutually in the body of Christ. As you read this newseletter we will expound on these three facets and we pray you will be blessed.

THE HARVEST

Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few." **Matthew 9:37**

t is easy to talk about God's love, grace and mercy. Especially in Christian circles, we hear lots of talk about the good things God blesses us with, and about the good plan that God has for us that will give us a future and a hope (Jer 29:11). But conversations about evangelism, the lost and the great commission are a little harder to come by.

Evangelism? That's not for me. I'm not called to be an evangelist. It is true that some are blessed with the ability to win souls easily; but evangelism is not reserved for just these selected few. In fact the New Testament only refers to the actual title of Evangelist three times (Acts 21:8, Eph 4:17 & 2 Tim 4:5). In contrast, it has about 120 references to the individual believer doing the work of evangelism. Yes, every Christian is called to evangelise.

In Matthew 9:35-38, Jesus sees the multitudes and He is saddened. His heart is filled with compassion for the hundreds of people who are weary and scattered, like sheep without a shepherd. He then says to His disciples that the harvest is plentiful and because there are so few labourers, they (the disciples) need to pray that the Lord sends more labourers. This harvest is that of souls and God's desire is that none perish but that all would come into repentance (1 Tim 2:4, 2 Pet 3:9).

The Bible tells us three things about the Harvest. First, the Harvest is **great**. Jesus uses the term great or plentiful when referring to the Harvest (Matt 9:37, Luke 10:2). The Prophet Joel said that multitudes, multitudes are in the valley of decision (Joel 3:14). The quantitative size is emphasised in the repeated use of the term "multitudes". The Harvest is truly great.

The Bible also says the Harvest is **ripe**. Revelations 14:15 says an angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud. "Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe." If you walk around certain housing estates in Singapore around the middle of the year, you can sometimes spot mango trees full of mangoes ready to be plucked. Some branches are so heavy with fruit that it sags from the weight. The Harvest is like such a tree full of ripened fruit waiting to be plucked.

Finally, we are told that the Harvest can be lost. This is God's warning. If we simply ignore the fact that the Harvest is great and ripe, it can be lost. In Jeremiah 8:20, the Prophet mourns "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved!" It is a reality that thousands of souls slip into hell everyday. These could be friends and loved ones we had the opportunity to share the gospel with, but let go of the opportunity. Imagine the above-mentioned mangoes,

heavy with ripened flesh, ready for the picking. But because no one does, they fall to the ground, split open and are wasted. The Harvest can be lost!

At Covenant Vision Christian Church, we see a huge need to get back onto the cutting edge of evangelism and to win souls for the Lord. While we rally ourselves to share the good news, we acknowledge the need for evangelistic platforms for people to bring their pre-believing friends and loved ones.

Our main platform for evangelism is our monthly Touch Jesus, He Heals! service. It is held every third Saturday of the month at 7pm. We have been encouraged to see new faces every month with people giving their lives to Jesus.

In December 2014, we are conducting a Christmas Evangelistic Outreach. It will be a chance for our CVCC family to invite pre-believers for a meal and hear the Gospel. As a follow up, we have already planned for an Alpha Course beginning of 2015 for the new believers. Evangelism also needs to be part of our lifestyle. Rev Francis often says that we are the 67th book of the Bible. Our lives speak louder for the Lord than perhaps the four spiritual laws recited from memory. If people can see Jesus in us and witness how we go through life as overcomers, they will ask and we will have the opportunity to share the Good News with them.

IF PEOPLE CAN SEE JESUS IN US AND WITNESS HOW We go through life as overcomers, they will Ask and we will have the opportunity to share The good News with them.



Ultimately, God is looking for labourers whose hearts beat in tandem with His heart for the Harvest. It has been said that more than 90% of Christians never lead a soul to Jesus. May that never be true of us.

Parts of this article was adapted from Pastor Carl Butler's teaching at the 2nd session of the CVCC Church Camp 2014.

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: FEATURE CHURCH CAMP 2014 PULAI DESARU BEACH RESORT 8-11 JUNE





G iving our church camp the theme **STEP OUT** was a rally cry to move us forward to love others. As Christians, we all have a mandate to go out and make disciples of all nations, baptising them and teaching them to obey Jesus' commands (Matt 28:19-20).

This year, we were blessed to have Ps Carl Butler, a man who travels round the world evangelising and winning souls for Jesus, inspire, challenge and provoke us to STEP OUT for Jesus. With lots of snippets from his life and his ministry, coupled with vivid illustrations to drive home his points, Ps Carl managed to open our eyes to see that the harvest is great; the harvest is ripe and that we can't let the harvest pass. We were all also encouraged to STEP OUT of our comfort zones, and to step into the purposes that God

has for us.

There were also many sessions of ministry where Ps Carl laid hands, prayed, spoke words over every camper. God's presence was so tangible at these ministry sessions as people brought their dreams, fears and needs to the altar. We believe each one received a touch from the Lord.

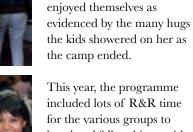
The children too had their own programme by Ps Joy Yeo. She taught the children and encouraged them to



12 MEN, WOMEN AND Children took the step to get baptised







for the various groups to bond and fellowship outside the church setting. Many hit the pool and beach, especially the children. There were also games organised and a tour of

STEP OUT even at their

young age. They thoroughly

the fruit farm nearby. Some of the campers even woke up extra early to catch the Desaru sunrise. One highlight was the Family night. Games, quizzes and performances by the Firestarters, Dynamitez, the Mighty Men and the Proverbs 31 Women provided much entertainment for the entire camp.

Perhaps one of the most significant parts of the programme was the Baptism Service held on the afternoon of 10th June. A grand total of 12 men, women and children took the step to get baptised and to outwardly declare their identification with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. What made it even more momentous was that almost the whole camp was present to witness the baptisms.

All credit is due to our Lord Jesus Christ for making the camp a success. Truly we can say that we serve and worship a God who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or imagine, according to the power that works within us (Eph 3:20). Hallelujah, praise the Lord!!

STEP OUT TO Love others

R ecently, there has been much media coverage about how certain Megachurches in the West have portrayed Christianity as a very self-centred religion. These preachers inspire thousands with self-love theology and teach that God really wants YOU to be happy. They have taken the focus off Jesus and placed it squarely on the individual. Sadly, many are lapping it up.

Nowhere in the Bible does God tell us to love ourselves. We are specifically instructed to direct our love in two directions: towards God and towards others. When the Scribes asked Jesus which was the greatest commandment, He said "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'' (Matt 22:37-39)

We must first put God in the centre of our lives. We are to love Him with our whole being. It is out of that love we can then love others. When we love God and our lives are aligned with Him, we will begin to desire what God desires, and our hearts will break for what breaks His heart. And God loves His children. Each He made in His image and likeness. If we love God, we will also love others whom He loves.

When Jesus says that we should love our neighbour as ourselves, He is not saying we must love ourselves first. Throughout the Bible, it is assumed that we love ourselves. It is part of human nature. Paul says in Ephesians 5:29 *"After all, no* one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church." Because loving others doesn't come naturally to us, God has to explicitly tell us to do so. To what extent should we love others? To the very extent we love ourselves.

As a body of Christ, we need to make the conscious effort to love others. These may include our loved ones, friends, colleagues, neighbours, acquaintances and even strangers God would send along our paths. We even have to love our enemies. Jesus illustrates who our neighbours are, and how we are to treat them in the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37). The Samaritan man not only puts racial prejudices aside and helps the injured Jewish man, he goes beyond the call of duty and pays for everything the injured man needed. Imagine what impact that act of kindness would have had on the Iewish man. We too can make that kind of an impact on our neighbours if we STEP OUT to love others.

This year the theme for CVCC, STEP OUT to love others, was chosen to highlight the need to consciously and purposefully step out of our comfort zones and to show love to others.

Our Church Camp was a pivotal point as evangelist Ps Carl Butler, taught and challenged us to fulfill the great commission. This vear we also re-launched Project Heartbeat, our ongoing social concerns project to give our church family a chance to show love to the old folks at All Saints Home, Tampines. We visited the home twice this year to bring cheer during Chinese New Year and Mid-Autumn Festival. Next year, the church will conduct a special Project Heartbeat event for children.

The Mighty Men have also organised more



As a church we are looking forward to more platforms for our CVCC family to reach out and show love. If we keep showing love towards others, it will become natural to us to love others, and the more we do so, the more others will see Christ in us.



: FEATURE PROJECT HEARTBEAT



ou can tell a lot about what is on a man's heart when he says his parting words. A man who is about to leave his family for a long business trip may tell his wife to take good care of the kids. A lady who is about to go into surgery may ask her mother to watch her dog. Or business partner who is about to leave for another posting may make a stop at the finance department to ensure his pay cheque is credited on time. Jesus' last words before His ascension were telling:

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8





Jesus promises the Holy Spirit and gives His disciples their mandate – to be witnesses. That's His heartbeat... for the people of the world who have not come to know Him. He desired to be reconciled with His people and He had died on the cross to provide the way to Himself. Jesus didn't want anyone to perish but ALL to repent





and come into the saving knowledge of who He is.

Project Heartbeat was launched to reflect the heartbeat of the Lord. As a church, we wanted a collective effort in reaching out to share the love of Jesus with others. When Project Heartbeat was first launched in 2010, CVCC distributed food packets to hundreds of households in our neighbourhood.

This year, the church organised two Project Heartbeat events with All Saints Home, Tampines. On 8 February, we brought



faces made for a very

fulfilling morning.

BUT SEEING THE SMILES ON THE RESIDENTS' FACES MADE FOR A VERY FULFILLING MORNING.

During the Mid Autumn Festival (6 September), we once again prepared a programme for the residents of All Saints Home. The Good News was once. again shared and we had performances by various groups and DGs in a variety of dialects to entertain the residents. This time, we distributed freshly baked mooncakes with their packet lunches. During the walk-about, one of our own brought a resident to Christ! Praise the Lord.

Our next Project Heartbeat will be focused on the disadvantaged children in Singapore. We are praying towards bringing joy and hope to some of those in our future generation that don't see much of a future for themselves.

We must take hold of every opportunity to be salt and light, to be witnesses to those around us and to share the love of Jesus. May we all beat in tandem with the Lord Jesus Christ.

TRUE WORSHIP

But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. John 4:23-24

Stand B White

hen we use the term "worship" in our conversations, more often than not, we refer to the dedicated time during our church service where we sing songs to the Lord, lift our hands in praise and declare how much we love Him. We have scores of Christian music available and a large number of Christian bands and artistes we can follow to help us worship God.

Whilst weekly praise and worship in church is important, we must realise that this is not all that worship entails. When Jesus spoke the familiar words that true worshippers worship the Father in Spirit and in truth (John 4:23), He was addressing a Samaritan woman who was essentially living in sin. He had called her out on her adultery and she was deflecting Him by asking Him a controversial question: who worshipped in the right place, the Jews at Jerusalem or the Samaritans at Mount Gerizim?

Jesus tells her straight that it's not about *where you worship*, *it's about how* and *whom* you worship. Worship is not an external act that you accomplish by going to church. Jesus in Matthew 15:8 declares that the Pharisees honour God with their words but their hearts are really far from Him. He explains that authentic worship is worship in spirit and truth. John Piper, founder of *Desiring God* has this to say:

The two words, spirit and truth, correspond to the *how* and the *whom* of worship. Worshipping in *spirit* is the opposite of worshipping in





mere external ways. It's the opposite of formalism and traditionalism. Worshiping in *truth* is the opposite of worship based on an inadequate view of God. Together the words "spirit and truth" mean that real worship comes from the spirit within and is based on true views of God.

What this means for us is that we need to be worshipping God beyond our church walls. We need to be living our lives as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God (Rom 12:1). Worship has to be a lifestyle.

Here at CVCC, although we believe that we need to be at the cutting edge of evangelism, we also realise that we need to be bringing new believers into a proper



understanding of what it means to worship God. We need to teach them that saying the sinner's prayer is not simply an entry ticket to heaven. At the very point in time we receive the Lord into our hearts, He accepts us as who we are and we are reconciled to Him. But He expects us to grow, transform and become more and more like Him. As we get to know our Lord better, we will grow in our love for Him, in our understanding of who He is, and our hearts can slowly pattern after His. Out of this love and understanding can we

really worship Him in spirit and in truth.

The Jews in the Bible had to go to a physical temple to worship God. But today we know that once we become a Christian, our body becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit. We can worship the Lord every minute of every day and we can carry His presence everywhere we go. How amazing is that! It does, however, still require effort on our part and our prayer is that as the Lord searches the earth for authentic worshippers, he will find such worshippers in us.

: MINISTRY FEATURE PROVERBS 31 WOMEN

e believe that women play a very important role in the Kingdom of God. They are helpmeets to their husbands, mothers to their children, as well as role models to their siblings, colleagues and everyone God brings along their paths.

We find that many women today need ministry and support; but because they are immersed entirely in their daily routines, many fall through the cracks and end up burnt out or discouraged. It is therefore important to provide a safe and non-threatening environment for ladies to come together to grow in the Lord, cheer each other on in our individual journeys and learn from one another. In fact, the Apostle Paul instructs older women to admonish, teach and guide younger women (Titus 2:4).







Proverbs 31 Women is a fellowship for women at CVCC. Led by Sis Shirley Khoo the ministry aims to spiritually nurture and provide prayer support, encouragement, fellowship and Bible-based ministry for women. We understand the challenges women face and aim to point them back to Jesus and see Him in all that they do.

Meetings are held quarterly and Sis Shirley invites various women of God to share on real life issues and minister in these womenonly sessions.

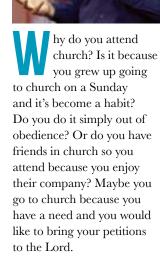
WE UNDERSTAND THE CHALLENGES WOMEN FACE AND AIM TO POINT THEM BACK TO JESUS AND SEE HIM IN ALL THAT THEY DO.

In the last year we have had Sis Ong Ai Boon sharing on what it means to be a Proverbs 31 Woman and Sis Esther Wong sharing on Submission. We also had Ps Linda Ng of Riverlife Church share on what it means to be a daughter of God and Sis Jemima Ong, a missionary with YWAM, share on intimacy with God.

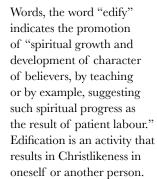
We are thankful that in all these meetings, as the

speakers have shared and opened their hearts, Jesus has shown up in a big way to minister to the women of CVCC. As we continue to grow as a community, our desire is that the women of CVCC will be able to worship God in whatever situation or circumstance they may find themselves in, and to purpose to be instruments God can use for His purposes.

"Ps Linda Ng shared her own personal testimony and struggles. Her personal testimony was very moving and touching and I believe it touched the hearts of many. So when the altar call came, many stepped forward and some were crying. We were indeed filled with God's baptism of love that night." Sis Catherine Lim **BUILDING ONE ANOTHER UP**



Perhaps we should ask ourselves why God wants us to go to church. The writer of Hebrews instructs us not to forsake coming together as saints (Heb 10:25). Why? Simply put, we need to **be edified**. The Greek work for edify oikodomeo in the New Testament literally means "to build a house". According to Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament



Yes! In fact, individual edification is necessary. We need to grow spiritually through our daily spiritual disciplines. The Bible tells us that the church is edified when the individual Christian grows (Eph 4:16). Only when we have love and good works ourselves can we effectively provoke them in others (Heb 10:24-25).

Edification in the New Testament largely refers to mutual edification within

But can't we edify ourselves?

the body of Christ. We are meant to live within a community of believers so we can build one another up. In this, the role of those in Spiritual leadership is so important. The Apostle Paul tells us in Ephesians 4:11-12 that Jesus gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of *Christ.* These need to teach and guide the church with Bible-based doctrine and to cultivate a love for the Word in their congregations. They need to set the foundations right so that we can all grow and mature in the Lord, to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (Eph 4:13).

As we grow in the Word, it needs to be worked out practically in the life we

lead. If we gain knowledge for the sake of gaining knowledge, the Bible warns us that we can be puffed up and arrogant. But if the knowledge is translated into love, it edifies (1 Cor 8:2).

So let us not be ignorant to what God desires for His church. Let us purpose to grow in the Word, both by learning from our Pastors and Teachers, as well as through the daily reading and studying of the Scriptures. Let us then continue to build one another up in true fellowship with accountability, finally spurring one another on to love and good works.

At CVCC, we are thankful that God has brought gifted Bible teachers to minister at our pulpit. We believe that God brings these men and women of God to complement the teachings of our CVCC pastors. This year we welcomed Dr Jerry Horner, prolific teacher, preacher and author to our pulpit. We were also privileged to partner International Christian Mission Global and Oral Roberts University to organise "Gainfully Deployed", a three-night

teaching seminar with Dr Horner on the life and ministry of the

This year, we also had the honour of having Dr Neal Patterson, Rev Dr Rick Seaward & his wife Diane Seaward, Ps Carl Butler, Ps Amanda Wells, Rev Albert Kang, Ps Daniel Hendrata, Ps David Holdaway, Dr Keith Johnson, Rev Timothy Khoo, Dr Khoo Hin Hiong, Ps Tony Anthony and Rev Ken Harrison minister at our church.

Apostle Paul.

Whilst we are being equipped, challenged and encouraged through the teachings at our services, our Discipleship Groups (DGs) play an important role in helping us grow as a community and keeping one another accountable as we apply the teachings to our





daily lives. Read more about our DGs on page 18.

Finally, we must keep reminding ourselves that edification can only take place if we allow ourselves to be edified. On our own, we need to keep growing and as a community we need to keep challenging one another on to Christlikeness and continue to "build this house" with Christ as our firm foundation.

: MINISTRY FEATURE DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS







n churches today, we place a high value on the individual's personal relationship with Christ. Yes, it is important, but in so doing, we sometimes don't highlight enough the need for corporate relationship within the body of Christ. John Wimber once said "Christianity is not a solo flight". We see this also in how the New Testament lifestyle was very much communal. We know that people in the early church met in houses to worship and learn about Jesus Christ (Rom 16). They shared their

resources (Acts 2:45). When Paul needed help, they banded together to send aid (Phil 4:10,16). Even within the leadership, we saw how Paul, when faced with an issue, travelled miles to seek Godly counsel from Peter and James in Jerusalem (Acts 15).

At CVCC we believe in community. While the pastors edify the church through the teachings at the pulpit, we see the need to move people from merely sitting in the sanctuary to investing their lives in community with others. We encourage growing together as a family and cheering each other on as we walk the path towards Christlikeness.

Our Discipleship Groups (DGs) are important for mutual edification. Through these small gatherings, the CVCC family can grow in their understanding of who God is and who we are in Him. This year, our DGs have been going through the book "Victory over the Darkness" by Neil Anderson and it has been a good platform for learning and walking alongside one another. Because they are small, the DGs provide conducive environments to learn about our identity in Christ and how that translates to our daily lives. As DG members get to know each other better and learn to respect one another, they are also able to hold each other accountable. Our DGs also allow for more focused prayer for one another and provide a system of support in times of difficulty and hardship.

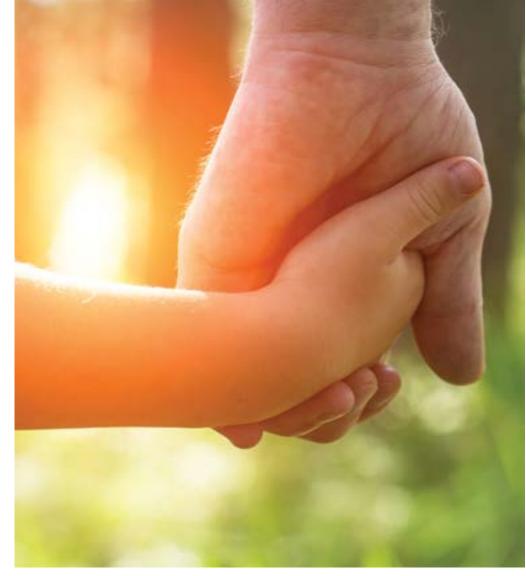
This year, we have continued to encourage our DGs to serve and minister as a group. Two Sundays a month, DGs take turns to not only cater food for the church, but serve the people as well. Furthermore, the DGs have also been rostered to minister in various capacities at the Touch Jesus, He Heals! healing services every 3rd Saturday of the month. Additionally, we have even seen some DGs band together to put up performances for the folks at All Saints

Home during our Project Heartbeat events.

In choosing a name for the small groups, the Pastoral team decided to call them Discipleship Groups to remind everyone that the ultimate goal for us is to mature as disciples, to become more and more like Jesus. Our prayer is that through the DGs, we will always be spurring each other on to love and good works (Heb 10:24), so that our Father in heaven may be glorified (Matt 5:16).

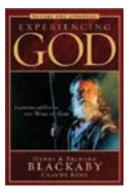
AND LET US CONSIDER HOW WE MAY SPUR ONE ANOTHER ON Toward love and good deeds heb 10:24





BE PART OF GOD'S Work in Your Children's Lives

S ometimes as parents we can forget that God is also at work in our children's lives. Perhaps in our bid to bring them up in hectic Singapore, we may have not only missed this but we may have neglected being part of God's work in their lives.



In his book *Experiencing God*, Henry Blackaby points out that God's eternal purpose for each of our children's lives is that they be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. God still wants to draw them into a unique relationship with them. He gives a few practical points about how we can join in God's activity in our children's lives. And the earlier we start to do this, the better.

1) Pray with and for your children

We don't always know what is best for our children and as much as we love our children, we can't begin to imagine all God has in His heart for them. That's why we need to pray. We communicate with God and hear from Him and in that He can adjust our lives so we can be on His agenda (not ours) for our kids lives. 2) Talk to your children about God's activity Point out to your children God's ongoing activity in their lives so they learn to recognise God's activity for themselves. Share God's activity in your own lives so they have a model to follow. As you pray together, help them see the connection between what you prayed for and what happens next and give God praise before your children.

3) Minister with your children

One of the greatest joys is ministering or serving God alongside vour children. It is important to model for our children how to join God's activity. You can do this in church or outside church. Bring your children to visit and pray for someone in the hospital. Bring them on a mission trip if it's possible. Share with them when you sense God leading you to financially support a cause for God and allow them to contribute even a couple of dollars from their pocket money.

This is true whether our children are 3 or 30, still studying or already earning a steady income. As parents we never stop being models for our children. So let's purpose in our hearts to be involved with God in any activity He is doing in their lives.







Article was adapted from Experiencing God (Henry & Richard Blackaby and Claude King), Unit 12, Pages 259-260.

: MINISTRY FEATURE FIRESTARTERS







arenting is tough. The daily struggles with our children are real and the pressures from society these days make it even harder to decipher what it means to be a good father and mother. Throw in a robust education system and parenting goes from being tough to almost impossible.

The demographics of CVCC reveal that our community has a significant number of families with young children and adolescents. Whilst we believe that the responsibility of discipling our children lies primarily with the parents, we recognise the important roles the church and Christian community play in supporting the parents.

Firestarters, our Children's Ministry is led by Bro Jonathan and Sis Catherine Foo. Under the guidance of Senior Pastor Rev Francis Khoo, they, together with their dedicated team of volunteers, teach, challenge, and encourage the children to grow in their relationship with the Lord. But it doesn't end there. Each week, the team sends out emails to the parents outlining what their children were taught so they can reinforce these at home.

What is nice about being in a community is that the parents also support one another in their parenting journeys. A whatsapp group was set up initially to disseminate information to the parents, but as God would have it, we have seen this group also evolve into a support system for parents who message when they need help or prayer from fellow parents.

This year we have also seen our children getting involved in the two Project Heartbeat events. Each time, they sang a mandarin song telling of the love of Jesus. The kids practiced hard for their performances and we believe these have brought joy and cheer to the residents of All Saints Home Tampines. Being involved in Project Heartbeat was also important for the children, as it was an opportunity for them to see others



who were suffering and how these people need Jesus. Our desire is that the children will continue to consider those that are not as fortunate as they are and develop the desire to share the gospel with those around them.

There is an African proverb that says "it takes a village to raise a child". We believe it takes dedicated parents who lead and model Christ for their children. But to have support from the church and the community certainly helps!

WHILST WE BELIEVE THAT THE RESPONSIBILITY OF DISCIPLING OUR CHILDREN LIES PRIMARILY WITH THE PARENTS, WE RECOGNISE THE IMPORTANT ROLES THE CHURCH AND CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY PLAY IN SUPPORTING THE PARENTS.



WHICH VERSION OF **ARE YOU USING?**

BRO KENNETH KOH

Apple announced their latest version of iPhone. "Response to iPhone 6 and iPhone 6 Plus has been incredible, with a record number of preorders overnight," Apple said. The demand was so high, Apple's online store and various carriers couldn't keep up, with outages that plagued the Apple Store site for more than two hours after the iPhones became available for presale.

Whilst many of us rush to upgrade our telephone hardware on a regular basis, how often do we conduct an audit to check our heart-ware, to see if there is a need for maintenance, repair, or upgrade? Matthew 13:1-9 teaches on the parable of the sower. Would you describe the state of your heart as "wayside", "stony places", "among thorns" or "good ground"?

The four states would be analogous to: 1) An unbeliever who does not understand the Word of the kingdom (wayside). 2) A believer who receives with joy, but without taking root

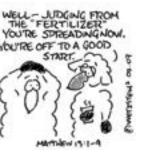
he stumbles (stony places).

manifold (good ground).

deceitfulness of the world (among thorns).

3) An uncommitted disciple who is choked by the cares and

4) A committed disciple who bears fruit and produces



n 9th September 2014,

Author Philip Jenkins writes of Europe: "In 1950, a list of the world's leading Christian countries would have included Britain, France, Spain, and Italy, but none of these names would be represented in a corresponding list for 2050. Over the past century or so, massive secularisation has seriously reduced the population of European Christians... Rates of church membership and religious participation have been declining precipitously in a long-term trend that shows no signs of slowing."

One of the great problems facing today's churches in growing disciples is that too few disciples are taking personal responsibility for their own spiritual growth and development. The church can provide a process of discipleship only for those individuals who are willing to be a part of such a process. What about you? Which direction are you heading towards? "Good ground" or "wayside"? The actions you take, or lack of, would determine the "version" of your heart.

COVENANT VISION School of Ministry

ovenant Vision School of Ministry was set up to teach ministry skills that enable believers for relevant, meaningful and practical Christian Ministry. The objective is to position Christians to encounter God and be changed in His love and presence, to equip the saints and build up the body of Christ.









MEET OUR CVSOM PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Bro Kenneth Koh graduated from Nanyang Technological University with a Bachelor of Engineering and from University of Strathclyde with Master of Business

Administration. He had worked for telecommunications companies like Keppel T&T and Deutsche Telekom, and was based in Bonn, Shanghai and Abu Dhabi, before starting his own business in 2003. Coming onboard as Program Director of Covenant Vision School of Ministry since 1st July 2014, he assists Rev Francis Khoo in managing CVSOM. He is also pursuing his post graduate studies at TCA College.

We asked Bro Kenneth a few questions about himself and CVSOM and this is what he had to say.

You yourself did the CVSOM Certificate and Diploma in practical Christian ministry. How did that experience impact you? The biggest advantage of

studying in CVSOM is the journey with fellow Christians from different churches and different denominations. Seeing God through their eyes

brought fresh perspectives. Walking with them in the two years birthed new friendships and a network of believers for greater collaboration. Being a Christian for many years and serving as a leader in church took a toll on me. Ministry became "work" and I was jaded. Studying in CVSOM and putting what I learnt to practice through the Application Modules fired me up again to live out the Word of God.

What would you say to a person who is still considering joining CVSOM?

Just do it! Almost 300 students from more than 65 churches have gone through the program, and they have exhibited renewed love for God and His people. Experiencing God through studying and living it out has raised their faith, and they return to their churches revitalised.

What would you like to see at the school in the next 5 years?

I hope to see our alumni raised up to serve the students. The more they are able to minister, the more they put what they have learnt into practice. And we are prepared to extend our school curriculum to include a degree program to accommodate their continual education. As they minister and mature, mature and minister, they will then manifest the glory of God.





PLOUGHING HANDS

f you have been attending CVCC for some time. you would have seen them serving regularly on stage playing in the band and supporting our worship leaders. Daniel Iafferdeen, David Lim and Edward Teo (aged 19, 16 and 19 respectively) are three talented youths God has used mightily to bless the church with the gifts He has given them. Their dedication to serving God shows us that God can use even the younger ones in

ministry. We asked them to give us some background to how they began serving and how it's blessed them, and here's what they had to say.

How did you come to serve at CVCC?

Daniel: My family and I first came to CVCC in December 2009 and we decided to call CVCC home in January 2010. In my former church, I used to play the drums for worship. I did not expect to be given the opportunity to continue serving and learning here at CVCC!

After Ps Jun found out that I used to serve at my former church, we started discussing and praying about it. I played drums for the first time at CVCC in February 2010 and it's been a great journey since!

David: When I was young, my dad used to bring me for CVC SGS and TJHH services. At one TJHH, I picked up a random guitar and played it along with the rest of the musicians for fun. This started my playing guitar at rehearsals for the services. Shortly after that, I was formally put in the band when my dad had to preach one Friday night and there was no keyboardist. I was upgraded to keyboards and played for the first time in the real service. After that, I regularly served on either guitar or keyboards, until in 2011 and 2012 respectively when I was allowed to be rostered on bass and drums.

Edward: I came to serve in CVCC when Ps George found out I was learning drums and he approached me to see if I was interested.

Initially I was preparing for my O' levels and decided that I would wait till after the exams before considering. After my O' levels, I hesitated because I played by reading notes. He offered to guide and teach me without any strings attached. After that, I was asked to play one song per worship set and soon after, I joined as a worship team member.

How have you been blessed since serving here at CVCC

Daniel: Ever since I started serving, things have been getting better and better. For one, I've learned and improved a lot musically. With the constant guidance of Ps George and Ps Jun and the people who have helped along the way, I have become more comfortable playing and learning more about the drums!

My relationships with people in the team and church have also improved. I used to be very shy and reserved and as the years went by I found myself more confident. Lastly my relationship with God has also improved through all the events and programmes carried out for the worship team such as *Intensify*. We've learnt to be more in tune with the spirit. We also have become more faith-filled and spirit-led!

David: Since joining the worship team, my playing has definitely improved; and I have gotten to know and have built relationships with the rest of the team.

Edward: I have been blessed in many ways. For example, I improved in my drumming and I have made new friends. I am also more confident in my playing.



If you have been attending CVCC and would like to serve in some capacity, do call or email our church office.

COVENANT VISION LIFE

It is in *body life* that we see people's lives being enriched as they grow and serve the Lord together. As a community at Covenant Vision, may we always understand true fellowship (koinonia) and be constantly spurring each other on to love and good works.























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Touch Jesus, He Heals! Evalngelism, Healing and Wholeness (Every 3rd Saturday 7.00pm)



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experience the difference

Through our Certificate and Diploma in Practical Christian Ministry, Covenant Vision School of Ministry has had the privilege of training and equipping believers from more than 65 local churches in Singapore. We stand ready to partner Kingdom-minded communities in the raising and releasing of the saints for the work of the ministry.





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