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Prayer Book

PRAYING WITHOUT CEASING



October - December 2014



The Council for World Mission (CWM) is a worldwide partnership of 31 Churches, committed to sharing their resources of people, skills, insights and money to carry out God's Mission.

AFRICA

FJKM – Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar
UCCSA – United Congregational Church of Southern Africa
UCZ – United Church of Zambia
CCM – Churches of Christ in Malawi
UPCSA – Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa

CARIBBEAN

GCU – Guyana Congregational Union
UCJCI – United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

EAST ASIA

HKCCCC – Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China
GPM – Presbyterian Church of Malaysia (Gereja Presbyterian Malaysia)
PCT – Presbyterian Church in Taiwan
PCS – Presbyterian Church in Singapore
PCK – Presbyterian Church of Korea
PCM – Presbyterian Church of Myanmar

EUROPE

CF – Congregational Federation
UWI – Union of Welsh Independents
URC – United Reformed Church
PCN – Protestant Church in the Netherlands
PCW – Presbyterian Church of Wales

PACIFIC

CUNZ – Congregational Union of New Zealand
KPC – Kiribati Protestant Church
UCPNG – United Church of Papua New Guinea
PCANZ – Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand
CCCS – Congregational Christ Church in Samoa
EKT – Ekalesia Kelisiano Tuvalu
NCC – Nauru Congregational Church
UCSI – United Church in Solomon Islands
CCCAS – Congregational Christian Church in American Samoa

SOUTH ASIA

COB – Church of Bangladesh
CNI – Church of North India
CSI – Church of South India
PCI – Presbyterian Church of India



OUR VISION

“Fullness of life Through Christ,
for all Creation”

OUR MISSION

“Called to partnership in Christ to
mutually challenge, encourage,
and equip member churches to
share in God’s mission”

General Secretary’s Message

The end of each year often sees us in a naturally meditative state. We mull over decisions we’ve made, important life events that occurred and relationships strengthened or weakened over the course of the year. Part of this prepares us for the year ahead – we learn to repeat or forgo certain behaviours because we now know the results they yield. Another important part though, is celebration. It is from our trials that come experience for which we are thankful and can therefore celebrate.



Let the end of this year then, be a time of exultant thanksgiving. Let our prayers be those of unrestrained and joyful thanks for this year’s lessons and experiences. Let us be thankful for the moments we have shared together, prayed with each other; and for the things we have taught one another that have brought us all closer together in the family of Christ.

This is the last in the series of the quarterly prayer book. As of next year we will be sharing a week-based prayer book focusing on the 52 Sundays of the year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Reflection and Research team for their work in putting together these volumes and all our contributors from the CWM family around the world. Your prayers have brought us closer together and we are all the richer for them. I also would like to thank those of you who have taken the time to give us useful feedback on the productions.

I wish you all, my brothers and sisters, a most joyous festive season, a blessed Christmas and a year ahead that holds unfettered promise and hope.

“For last year's words belong to last year's language
And next year's words await another voice.”
T.S. Eliot; Four Quartets

Collin I. Cowan
General Secretary of CWM

Programme Secretary's Message



We come to the last quarter (Oct-Dec) for CWM Prayer Book 2014. First, I want to express my thanks to all the contributors to the Prayer Book. Without your contributions, besides those that we gleaned through your websites, the production of the prayer books was not possible. And also appreciation to Mr. Santono Yap who helped to put this volume and the previous volumes together. Come 2015, the Reflection and Research will embark on a weekly Prayer Book entitled "Sundays with CWM" featuring the prayer concerns of our member churches, partners-in-mission and ecumenical partners.

The theme of this year's Prayer Book is "Praying without Ceasing" taken from 1 Thessalonians 5:17 where Apostle Paul encourages the Thessalonian Christians to pray at all times. While we have been praying for each other, we must not forget that there are many unjust practices that are happening in our communities and the world today. As I write this, we hear of Russians' invasion into the Ukrainian territory; people mourning over the death of their loved ones when a missile hit the flight MH17 which they were in; a respite for the Israelis and Palestinians to Gaza after 5 weeks of relentless death and destruction; and the prevailing plight of the poor and marginalized because of economic greed and injustice. In all these circumstances, we pray:

"Lord, have mercy on us!
Let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an everflowing stream." (Amos 5:24)

As we draw near to the end of another year, we look back with God's mercy and faithfulness with thanksgiving and humility, trusting God to work justice and love in all of us.

Tan, Yak-hwee (Rev. Dr.)
Programme Secretary, Reflection and Research

Wednesday, 1 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 42; Exodus 19:9b-25; Matthew 9:2-8

A light so bright and lively,
In the darkness shines so lovely
Giving us everyday comfort
Like Jesus Christ who is our Fort
And Shelter from all troubles

Pour some oil, let it burn
Like making butter in a churn
Feed it every day without fail
As a board held by a strong nail
It will give us strength daily

With God's word as our oil
Let us outshine, drawing oil
Flowing from His everlasting life
It gives us strength for every day
With words declared in the Bible

Source: "Poems of Peace" by D.Kagiso Malar Samuel

Thursday, 2 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 19; Exodus 23:1-9; Colossians 2:16-2

Mr. Samoelijaona and Ms. Parfaite R.

Rasolonjanahary are Partners-in Mission from Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (FJKM) to Kiribati Protestant Church (KPC).



Samoelijaona serves as a teacher whereas his wife, Parfaite serves as a dentist. They are currently based in Kiritimati Island, located in the Republic of Kiribati. Ms. Parfaite shares her experience as a partner-in-mission as follows:

“Jesus’ ministry attends to all human needs: bringing people to be in communion with God (preaching and teaching), health (physical, spiritual and mental) and compassion, to make people having fullness of life.

As a Christian believer and a Partner-in Mission, I have the conviction of having a part in our Lord’s ministry when daily I look after people’s oral and dental health. I feel concerned when I look at people having dislocated or broken jaw or people with so many problems in their mouth, especially when I do not have enough materials to handle the cases, but my faith in Jesus encourages me to take action and to have compassion.

With those cases, I can feel the hand and the heart of Jesus working in me, and when I see people recovering from their problems, I have the satisfaction of having worked for Jesus. Healing the sick is completely part of our Lord’s mission. I feel blessed and privileged to do God’s mission. And I thank Him I am useful where He has called me to serve Him through the people in need of my skills.

PRAISE BE TO GOD!”

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Please pray that Jesus will equip me with appropriate tools for carrying out the mission He has assigned me to do and pray for healing ministry.
- 2) Thanksgiving to God for giving us (CWM missionaries and CWM Staff in Singapore) the opportunities to serve Him.

Friday, 3 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 19; Exodus 23:14-19; Philippians 2:14-18



The **Church of South India (CSI)** is formed from a union of churches of varying traditions: Anglican, Methodist, Congregational, Presbyterian, and Reformed. Discussions concerning union had begun at a conference at Tranquebar (now Tarangambadi) in 1919. After India attained independence, the union was completed on 27th September 1947. The General council of Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon, General Assembly of South India United Church and South India Provincial Synod of Methodist Church joined together to form the Church of South India. It is the largest united national church in India, and continued to grow and further enriched with the joining of the churches of Basel Mission and the Anglican Diocese of Nandyal.

The Church vision is to equip the local congregation, pastors, lay people, especially youth and children, towards being transformed to transform. Believing in the motto, 'Be Servants of the Servant Lord', the department focuses on equipping each one of them to have a clearer vision about God, Church and society and deeper passion for Christ and His gospel, rooted in justice and truth. The Church has thus planned activities and programmes such as:

- Publication of Bible Studies, Advent Meditation, Lenten Thoughts, Sermon Outlines, Almanac.
- Scholarship Programme for Theological Higher Studies, Training in Counselling, Journalism, Homiletics, Liturgy and Worship.
- Holy Land Study Tour.

Prayer Request:

- 1) Pray for the Church as they embarked on the above programmes and activities to engage the local congregation to know more about God and the relationship between Church and society.

Saturday, 4 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 19; Exodus 23:10-13; John 7:40-53

Meditation on John 7:40-53

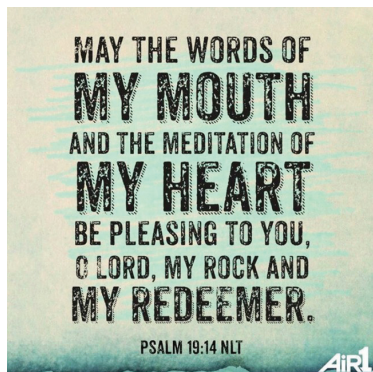
In John 7:40-45, the people were puzzled about Jesus' identity. Some in the crowd said, "This is really the prophet." Others said, "This is the Messiah and isn't the Messiah is to come from Bethlehem. Isn't he from Galilee?" These are words of irony. From the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, we read that Jesus was from the line of David and born in Bethlehem, the city of David.

Moreover, the reaction of the temple police was also one of confusion. They were impressed by what Jesus said. And they were reprimanded by the chief priests and Pharisees for their ignorance, just like the people. Taking pride in being trained in the law, the religious leaders declared that they would not succumb to such deception. However, another irony happens. Nicodemus, a religious leader protested that even the Law says that a person should be given a hearing before judgment is passed. He was ignored: "no prophet is to arise from Galilee."

John 7:40-53 reveals the responses of people towards Jesus and his message. There is not escape for anyone when confronted but to reflect one's relationship with Jesus and also with others. How do we see our community and its leaders, or family, friends and neighbors, strangers and outsiders? Let us be open to the many things which Jesus Christ could reveal to us, our need and even the "Pharisee" in us.

The Psalmist says:

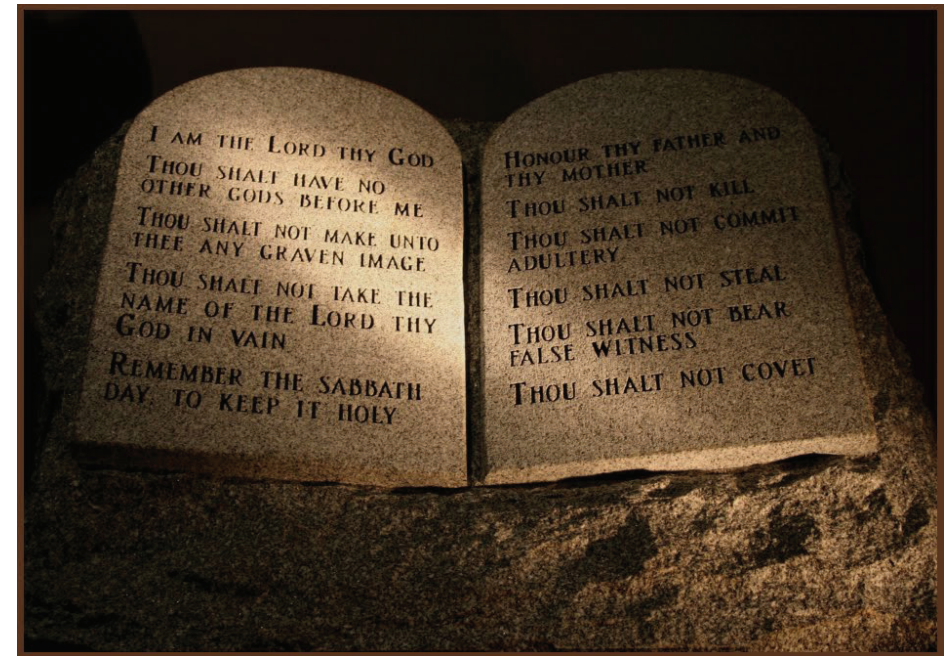
Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer. (Ps. 19:14)



Source: www.duoparadigms.com.

Sunday, 5 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 19; Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20; Matthew 21:33-46



Source: http://abcparish.blogspot.sg/2011_09_25_archive.html

Monday, 6 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 119:49-56; Deuteronomy 5:1-21;
1 Peter 2:4-10



David Cruchley, Programme Associate for **The Council for World Mission European Region**, shares the following update for the Region. Following the success of the first CWM Europe Internship Programme, the second programme will be commencing in October 2014-April 2015.

The internship is based with two different sites in Manchester: The Congregational Federation Youth and Children's Office in Heaton Park, Prestwich and Altrincham URC. This programme will primarily be based working with the CF youth team, providing administrative support and helping to implement activities and programmes across the country which engage with young people in Congregational churches.

With Altrincham URC, the intern works with volunteers from the congregation, adding capacity and energy to existing mission work and, in the forthcoming programme, will work with the congregation to develop the use of the newly refurbished church facilities.

The Intern for the 2014-2015 programme is Becky Leggett:

"My name is Becky and I have just finished a History degree at Derby University. I am currently taking a year out from study before going on to complete a PGCE. Which will then hopefully lead to a job as an education officer in a museum or place of historical interest. Having been brought up in a Christian family I can't remember a time when I wasn't a Christian, for me God has always been a part of my life. Because of this I don't have a dramatic coming to faith story, but I have always known I can rely on God in any circumstance. This has gotten me through the challenges in my life so far and encourages me to continue to trust him with the future."



As I am aiming to work with children, I applied for this internship as it is a great opportunity for me to expand on the experience I already have working with children and young people. It is also an ideal way for me to do this in a faith context. I'm looking forward to the new challenges that the internship will bring and getting to know new people."

Tuesday, 7 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 119:49-56; Deuteronomy 5:22—6:3;
2 Corinthians 5:17-21



The first resident missionary to today's Kiribati came with some Hawaiian pastors in 1857, through the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM). They settled in Northern Kiribati and established a school to teach young people to read and write. Although their success in evangelization was limited, their greatest contribution was the translation of the Bible, completed in 1893 and the translation of Christian hymns into the Kiribati language. In 1870, a number of Samoan missionaries came with a missionary from the London Missionary Society (LMS) to Southern Kiribati. The ABCFM finally left in 1917 and entrusted all the schools and churches in Northern and Central Kiribati to the London Missionary Society. By 1945, after World II, the local pastors gradually took over from the Samoans and started to prepare plans for autonomy which culminated at the first general assembly of the Gilbert Island Protestant Church in 1968. The name changed to **Kiribati Protestant Church (KPC)** in 1979 when the Gilbert Islands – the larger part of the British Gilbert and Ellice Islands colony – became independent as the Republic of Kiribati.

KPC is developing the New Strategic Plan 2013-2017 for endorsement and implementation by the Church's Executive Council. The major focus is on Empowering Mission, Empowering Education, and Strengthening of Self-Reliance. In the area of Empowering Mission, the Church is looking to develop people resource in Theology. That is, to train the clergy locally rather than to send them abroad which is costly, especially for the Bachelor degrees. Therefore, it is important for current faculty members of the Theological College be upgraded to the level of Ph.D. so as to teach a bigger number of pastors.

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Pray that the New Strategic Plan of the Church is Spirit-led.
- 2) Pray for the theological training of the clergy and leadership of the Church.

Wednesday, 8 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 119:49-56; Deuteronomy 6:10-25; John 11:45-57

God's love is costly, generous, and trustworthy,
Deeper than our expectations,
higher than our hopes.
Accept in your heart the promise of new life,
and proclaim with your lips
the inexhaustible goodness of God:
Holy, Holy, Holy,
Love's empowering might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
We give you glory, God most high!

Source: Brian Wren in "What does the LORD require?"

Thursday, 9 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 106:1-6; Exodus 24:1-8; 1 Peter 5:1-5, 12-14

Ms. Vanrammawii Hrahsel, affectionately known as "Latei", was a Partner-in Mission from Presbyterian Church of India (PCI) to Kiribati Protestant Church (KPC). She taught at William Goward Memorial College on Tarawa, the capital of Kiribati in mid-2010 before returning to India to serve with PCI in the Mizoram Synod, teaching in the Presbyterian Mission School situated in Diphu.

Latei shares her experiences on the activities besides her duties in school:



"Other than the school and church duties in Diphu, four of us who are missionaries attached to Presbyterian Preaching Station at Pongpirbi Village, located in the sub-urban area about 20 kms away from Diphu. There are six (6) households with about 15 adult members. The preaching station was opened in March 2014 and the Mizoram Synod of PCI assists and gives aid in various ways, such as constructing and furnishing the church building. As most of the members are newly

converted Christians, the Mission supports them to improve and strengthen their daily Christian life and to operate as a church by teaching in church administration and ministerial work."

Life in the Diphu district is not without challenges. The demand for the creation of an autonomous state is a major issue amongst the local populace. Indefinite road blockages were created to force political parties to make their stand on the autonomous state clear. Social ills, like extortion and crimes, have also hindered people's daily life as well as the development of the town. The school itself had to postpone classes due to an indefinite bandh (a form of protest or strike) in the middle of the semester exam.

Prayer Request:

- 1) Pray for the Preaching Station at Rongpirbi that they may grow, be strengthened and unite in life's challenging journey and developing their faith in Christ.

Friday, 10 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23; Exodus 24:9-11; James 4:4-10

Rev. Lyim Hong-Tiong, General Secretary of the **Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT)**, shares with us the following update for his church:

That the PCT may become Taiwan's Sign of Hope

A very significant commemoration of the 150 Anniversary of the PCT will take place in 2015. The main celebration will be on Easter Sunday on April 5. The World Council of Churches General Secretary, Dr. Olav Tveit, has agreed to be the preacher for the occasion. The annual PCT General Assembly will take place from April 7 to 11. We ask our partner churches and the ecumenical organizations to join us in giving thanks to God together for planting God's vineyard on our beautiful island.

A major event took place in March 2014 when students occupied the Legislative Assembly as a protest against a proposal by our government to increase service and trade between Taiwan and China. The PCT opposes the proposal because it is inherently economically unjust.



This "Sunflower Movement" was supported by the general public with a major demonstration by about a half million people to support the students demands. The proposed agreement will enable China to open local banks, local businesses such as family restaurants, laundry shops, in our towns and villages. Taiwan cannot afford such an influx of competition and saturation of small businesses in our struggling towns and small villages. Our own merchants are already suffering from loss of income due to lack of growth.

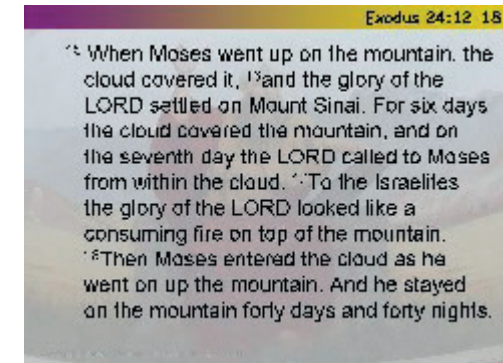
Prayer Requests:

- 1) Pray for PCT as they speak for economic justice for the people of Taiwan.
- 2) Give thanks to God for God's faithfulness as the Church seeks to witness faithfully in Taiwan.



Saturday, 11 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23; Exodus 24:12-18; Mark 2:18-22



Source: www.ffctideas.org.uk

Meditation on Exodus 24:12-18

One distinct feature in Exodus 24:12-18 is the notion of waiting. Moses went up to the mountain upon the LORD's instruction, "Come up to me on the mountain and wait there." And when he was setting up to the mountain, he told the elders to wait till he come back to them again. And when Moses was on the mountain, he waited some more. Six days passed and on the seventh day, the LORD called from the cloud that covered the mountain. Moses entered the cloud and went further up the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights with the LORD. When his time with the LORD was completed, he came down with the Ten Commandments written on the tablets of stone and also that Moses' face became radiant as a result of his encounter with the LORD (cf. 34:29-35).

Waiting is something that is so difficult for many of us to practice, especially in an age of "instants." We have "instant coffee," "instant noodles," instant communication in the form of emails and cell phones. We feel that God has disappointed if we don't get an immediate answer to our prayers. But waiting is a discipline to change and transform us. While waiting on the LORD, Moses was changed not only physically but spiritually. That encounter on the mountain has changed him. What about you? Have you been to the mountain top, waiting and listening to the LORD, like Moses?

The Psalmist says:

Remember me, O LORD, when you show favour to your people;
help me when you deliver them. (Ps. 106:4)

Sunday, 12 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23; Exodus 32:1-14; Matthew 22:1-14



Source: <http://wesleymemorial.files.wordpress.com/2011/10/exodus-32.jpg>

Monday, 13 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 97; Exodus 32:15-35; Jude 17-25



Rev. Philip Woods, the Programme Secretary of CWM Programme Area, Mission Enabling shares the following:

"Having successfully completed the first phase of the Team Visit programme, the Mission Enabling team are now moving forward with organising the next phase, beginning with a Team Visit to the CUNZ in November. The Team Visits build on the team's core work of accompanying member churches with their mission programmes, now given new impetus following the launch of MSP4 by the Council in June, with its focus on assisting members to develop missional congregations. As part of this accompaniment of members the Mission Enabling team work closely with the regional teams and the other global teams.

In October such collaboration will see the holding of a consultation for Finance Officers from CWM's Pacific members (13-17 October, in Fiji) working with them to ensure that they can meet CWM's (and our regulators) reporting requirements. It may not sound exciting, but the financial and narrative reporting of our members is how we know what is being achieved, and what is working most effectively, which then become the stories that we share to encourage and stimulate the development of mission across our membership. By the same token, where we see things are not going so well, there we know to offer more assistance. It is in this walking together that we grow as partnership of churches in mission."

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Give thanks for all the people who have volunteered to lead and/or serve as visitors in the Team Visits programme.
- 2) Pray for more offers from churches willing to receive Team Visits in the coming year.
- 3) Celebrate the privilege of being able to share in the journey of such a rich company of churches across the world.

Tuesday, 14 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 97; Exodus 33:1-6;
Philippians 3:13—4:1



The **Protestant Church in the Netherlands (PCN)** is the largest church in the Netherlands in terms of membership. The Church has 2.1 million members, with nearly 1800 local congregations and over 2200 ministers. These local churches are faith-based communities of people who are united by their belief in Jesus Christ. The vision for the life and work of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands is expressed in four themes, one of which is being a church with others, “together with all saints.” (*The heartbeat of life. Memorandum concerning the vision for the life and work of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands*)

PCN is part of the worldwide body of Christ, recognizing that it is living in the age of globalization. Witnessing God’s workings in Africa, Latin-America and Asia encourages the Church and assists the Church to wake up from its often lukewarm Christian existence. PCN acknowledges that almost a million Christians from the Global South have come to the Netherlands, seeking to be Christians in the Dutch context. The contact isn’t always easy. There may be substantial differences in culture, theology and faith experience; these differences can result in mutual prejudices. Immigrant churches show vitality and dynamics and daily experience of faith which PCN can be challenged and learn from.

PCN intends to be a church connected with other churches, especially with those of the Protestant heritage. Together with the Roman-Catholic church, they are commissioned to bear witness to the gospel. On the other hand, the Pentecostal churches address them about being a church in the power of the Holy Spirit. Working with other churches is a demonstration of PCN’s concern regarding the Church, in the Netherlands and worldwide.

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Pray for PCN as it seeks to be challenged by immigrant churches in their spiritual life and ministry in the Netherlands.
- 2) Thanksgiving for the ecumenical spirit that prevails amongst the different churches in the Netherlands, for the sake of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Wednesday, 15 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 97; 2 Kings 17:7-20; John 6:25-35

We acknowledge your greatness, O Lord.

You are the everlasting God, the mighty Creator,

The King of the universe, supreme over all.

*May the thought of your greatness enter deeply into
our hearts,*

To enlarge our vision of you,

To enrich our worship of you,

To increase our faith in you.

You are great indeed, O Lord, and highly to be praised

By us and by all creation.

Great is the Lord and highly to be praised!

(Psalm 48:1)

Source: “Prayers for Today” by Frank Colquhoun

Thursday, 16 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 99; Exodus 33:7-11; 3 John 9-12

Rev. Hsieh Ta-Li is a Partner-in Mission from Presbyterian Church of Taiwan (PCT) to Presbyterian Church of Singapore (PCS), serving in Abundant Grace Presbyterian Church as the Senior Pastor since 2008. He motivates the congregation to work with him on a number of new initiatives such as overseas mission, community service, children's ministry and ministry with workers from China. He completed his missionary service in September 2014.



With his passion and experience in cross-culture mission work gained previously as a missionary in Indonesia, Rev. Hsieh inspires members of the congregation to engage in mission trips to different countries in Southeast Asia, personally led by him. Moreover, because of his interest in oral history, Rev. Hsieh was invited by the Council of the Four Denominations Chinese Churches (the Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian) to conduct a workshop on "Oral History & Church Documents" in

February 2014. The workshop left a positive impact on a good number of church pastors and leaders.

The excellent track record of his pastoral ministry as well as his active participation in the Chinese Presbytery of the PCS has affirmed the cooperation of the PCS and the PCT. One can look forward to more cooperation in the future with confidence.

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Pray for Rev. Hsieh's family to adjust to life back in Taiwan after his missionary sojourn, especially for his two children as they have to attend classes conducted in Mandarin instead of English.
- 2) Pray for Rev. Hsieh as he pursues his PhD studies back in Taiwan. He is interested in missiology and hopes that he can share with the local churches about his missionary experience in Singapore
- 3) Pray for God's direction for Rev. Hsieh's future in ministry, and also God's providence to equip him.

Friday, 17 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 99; Exodus 31:1-11; 1 Peter 5:1-5



The witness of Inter Faith Mission at Community House, **Presbyterian Church of Wales**, Maindee, Newport is steadily impacting the local community. In view of fostering bonds and fellowship amongst groups of different faiths and backgrounds, the Community House has organised a number of inter faith events, such as:

- Invited speakers, for example, a Canadian Muslim academic to address to Muslims and Christians together, on the importance of Inter-faith, organised through the Community Cohesion lead of Newport City Council, herself a Muslim.
- One World Week/Interfaith Week annual events run in conjunction with this group
- A consultation of the Interfaith Council for Wales
- Regular meetings of Newport Interfaith Group (set up by Cyril Summers about fifty years ago).

As a member of the aforementioned Newport Interfaith Group (representing them on the Interfaith Council for Wales) and Christian Inter Faith Practice in Action (CIPA), the inter faith worker of the Community House has been able to network with people in a wider area. She has spoken about the work of Community House to Interfaith groups in Bangor Normal College and Betsi Cadwallader Hospital, Bangor. She was also the keynote speaker in an Inter faith Week day at Glyndwr University, Wrexham.

The work in the community was well-known and was quoted as an example of good practice on the Welsh Assembly Government's document on Community Cohesion launched in December 2009 (see <http://www.wlga.gov.uk/past-events-documents/28092010-wag-presentation-a-community-cohesion-strategy-for-wales/>)

Prayer Request:

- 1) Pray for the different events that are being organised by the Community House to foster understanding amongst the different religious groups.

Saturday, 18 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 99; Exodus 39:32-43; Matthew 14:1-12

Meditation on Matthew 14:1-12

Matthew 14:1-12 is about the death of John the Baptist at the hands of Herod Antipas who ruled over Galilee and Perea during the life of Jesus and beyond. Herod heard of the extraordinary things that Jesus did and because he had executed John the Baptist for the wrong reasons, was afraid that the John's spirit came back to taunt him for killing God's servant. And hence, Matthew tells the event that led to John's death.

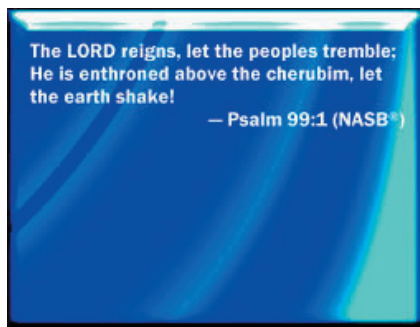
John was fearless and openly criticised Herod for taking his half-brother Philip's wife, Herodias, as his own partner. Of course, Herod was under much pressure from Herodias to get rid of John who has caused much embarrassment to their relationship. Moreover, John was a prophet and spoke in the name of God. And Herodias got her chance at Herod's birthday by asking her daughter, Salome to dance in his presence. Herod was greatly impressed by her performance and he, likely drunk, promised the girl he would give her anything she wanted, even half his kingdom. She asked for the head of John the Baptist. Herod was shocked but for fear of 'loss of face,' he could not take back his words. John was decapitated and handed to her who gave it to her mother.

While the story reveals John as a martyr who died for justice and truth but on the other hand, it also speaks about power, the abuse of power. Herod abused his power even though he knew he was in the wrong (cf. 14:9). With whom do you identify?

The Psalmist says:

The LORD is king; let the peoples tremble!

He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake! (Ps. 99:1)



Source: www.bibleencyclopedia.com

Sunday, 19 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 99; Exodus 33:12-23; Matthew 22:15-22



Source: <http://distantshoresmedia.org/resources/illustrations/sweet-publishing/exodus>

"On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled. Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the Lord descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace, and the whole mountain trembled violently. As the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and the voice of God answered him.

The Lord descended to the top of Mount Sinai and called Moses to the top of the mountain. So Moses went up and the Lord said to him, "Go down and warn the people so they do not force their way through to see the Lord and many of them perish. Even the priests, who approach the Lord, must consecrate themselves, or the Lord will break out against them."

- (Exodus 19:16-22)

Monday, 20 October 2014

**Bible Readings: Psalm 63:1-8; Exodus 40:34-38;
Revelation 18:1-10, 19-20**

Rev. Fei Taule'ale'ausumai Davis is the Regional Secretary of **CWM Pacific Region**, the largest region geographically and also in terms of member churches. She shares the following prayer requests:

Climate Change

We pray for the communities and churches in the Pacific who live with the threat of global warming and the effects of climate change every day. We pray that support systems are put in place and disaster relief and broadcasting systems are put in place.



Kiribati, sea wall on the right shows the vulnerability of the land amidst the vast ocean.

Teen Pregnancy

We pray for the pressing issue surrounding Teen Pregnancy in the Pacific, that the Pacific churches, ministers and leaders are resourced to educate, support and create awareness among communities, congregations and homes.

Nauru:

Nauru: with an anticipated influx of Asylum Seekers arriving in Nauru via Australia the expected number is 7,000, 3,000 shire of the entire Nauruan population.

We pray for the nation security: as country they have lost their chiefly system, their culture and are also afraid of the impending loss of their language as well as the imminent fear of losing their country.



Tuesday, 21 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 63:1-8; Numbers 12:1-9; Revelation 18:21-24



After 18 years of negotiations, the **Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar** (known in Malagasy as *Fiangonan'i Jesoa Kristy eto Madagasikara, FJKM*) was founded in 1968 through the union of three churches which arose out of the work of the London Missionary Society, the Paris Missionary Society and the Friends Foreign Mission Association. These historic links continue in a new sense of partnership in mission through the church's membership of CWM and Cevaa and Quaker Peace and Service. FJKM is the biggest Protestant church in the country.

The National Council of FJKM elects officers of the church from among its members: the President, two Vice Presidents – one ordained minister, one laity, a Treasurer, and two Advisors who also are one ordained minister and one laity.

With the National Council's approval, the President appoints a General Secretary to manage the day-to-day affairs of the church. The President is the head of the decision body maker of FJKM. The role of the FJKM General Secretary is quite different from the other churches. The officers of the church led by the President meet twice a month as an executive committee to oversee the running of the church with the General Secretary serving on that committee in an *ex officio* capacity.

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Pray for the effort of the Christian Council in Madagascar to continue its process of Reconciliation in the country.
- 2) Pray for God's blessings for the launching of the 35th anniversary celebration of the Christian Council.
- 3) Pray for the on-going dialogue between FJKM and the Muslim community.
- 4) Give thanks to God for the completion of most of FJKM programs such as the national meeting of catechists, deacons, and pastors spouses
- 5) Pray for God's blessings upon FJKM Insurance Company project.

Wednesday, 22 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 63:1-8; Numbers 13:1-2, 17—14:9; Matthew 17:22-27

You in our past: Gracious,
Steadfast
Reliable,
Long-suffering.
You are a mouthful on the lips of our grandparents.

The hard part is you in our present,
For after the easy violations we readily acknowledge
Then come the darker, hidden ones:
Aware that appearance does not match reality;
Aware that walk is well behind talk;
Aware that we are enmeshed in cruelty systems
Well hidden but defining;
And we have no great yearning
To be delivered from them.
Forgive us for the ways in which we are bewitched,
Too settled, at ease in false peace.

You in our present: Gracious,
Steadfast,
Reliable,
Long-suffering.
We in the shadows asking you to do what you have done;
To be whom you have been,
That we may do what we have never dared dream,
Be whom we have never imagined...
Free, unencumbered, unanxious, joyous, obedient...
Yours, and not ours. Amen.

Source: "Awed to Heaven, Rooted in Earth" by Walter Brueggemann

Thursday, 23 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17; Deuteronomy 31:14-22; Titus 1:5-16

Rev. H. Sangkhuma is a Partner-in Mission from Presbyterian Church in India (PCI) to the Presbyterian Church of Wales (PCW). He shares the following account:

THE BEGINNINGS OF A NEW STORY : MEETING REAL NEED

After 10 years in Bridgend District Project as Mission Enabler, the Life and Witness Board offers me a different challenge. I have been appointed as one of the Life and Witness Officers to ensure the effective running of the work of the Board with respect to the pastoral care and management of our 10 workers and projects in South Wales, in addition to other 18 workers in North Wales.



I was privileged to work with these gifted and committed mission partners, chaplains, mission interns and volunteers. They labour because of their love for God and for members of the church. They explored new ways of witnessing the gospel and identifying new opportunities and challenges to reach out people for Christ through 'hospitality evangelism' for international students in Swansea, the 'Rainbow café' and the community work in a deprived area in Penrhys, and through the 'interfaith dialogues' and 'Peace garden' in building peaceful communities in Newport. Chaplaincies in the University, Airport and Steelworks were other areas to introduce a Christian presence in the workplace. Their core business is the people and their relationship with God. Worship is their daily life. Evangelism is their lifestyles, along with outreach and discipleship that follows to rise up leaders in the marketplace.

I also have been appointed as Mission Enabler for South East and South West Wales Presbyteries. Part of my role is to enable churches to look at what is taking place in our culture and especially in our respective communities, to see if we can introduce people to church in a different shape, at a different time or on a different day, for those who want to explore faith in a more informal way. There were already some innovative expressions of church happening throughout Wales. People who are not interested to attend Sunday service in a church or not able to because of work or family or other commitments, are experiencing an awakening of faith and enjoying the opportunity to explore their belief in God in a new way.

Prayer Request:

- 1) Pray for Sangkhuma that God will bless the work of his hands in the new roles he plays.

Friday, 24 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17;

Deuteronomy 32:1-14, 18; Titus 2:7-8, 11-15



基督教新加坡长老大会
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
IN SINGAPORE

The **Presbyterian Church in Singapore (PCS)** is in the process of constructing the Presbyterian Hub, an integrated network of facilities that includes worship, meeting and office spaces. It will also function as the new headquarters of the Presbyterian Church in Singapore. Elder Wong Pock Yeen, the Church's Executive Director, shares with us the following prayer requests for PCS.

1. The Presbyterian Hub:

Please pray for God's wisdom to be upon PCS as we present its concept and benefits to the Government for approval.

2. The Presbyterian Run and Walk (8 November 2014):

Thank God for the Organising Committee and the professional help this fundraising project has received thus far. Pray for fine weather and a good turnout. Pray that all who participate will deepen our walk with the Lord and with one another.

3. Asian Institute of Calvin Studies:

Thank God for the good response for



- Synod Youth Internship Programme (SYIP), which was catered to the "O" level and "A" level school leavers.
- Synod Training and Exposure Programme (STEP), which was catered to University undergraduates.
- Presbyterianism classes in Chinese which 70 church leaders and members attended.
- Presbyterianism classes in English which 100 church leaders and members are attending

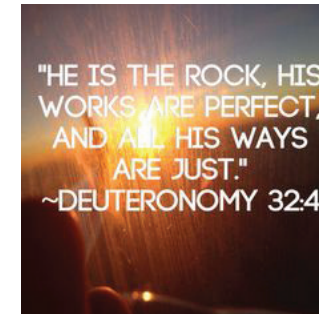
4. Presbyterian Care Singapore - Network (26 July 2014):

The inaugural Presbyterian Care Singapore - Network was successfully organised for unity, and synergy. Pray that we will pull our resources together, as a denomination and as a CWM member church to serve those in need.

Saturday, 25 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17; Deuteronomy 32:44-47; John 5:39-47

Meditation on Deuteronomy 32:44-47



Source: www.pinterest.com

In Deuteronomy 31:19, God instructed Moses to write a song and also to teach to the people of Israel. This song is a witness of God's faithfulness to the people of Israel (Deut. 32). This song chronicles God's dealings with Israel. Israel is reminded of God's care for them even though Israel has been unworthy. They went after other gods and spurned God's jealousy. And God warns them that God will deliver Israel will be held captives in the hands of their enemies. However, God will show mercy to Israel in that God will avenge their blood among the nations.

At the end of the song, Moses instructed the people to take heed to the words of the song, "Take to heart all the words ... this is no trifling matter for you, but rather your very life; through it you may live long in the land that you are crossing over the Jordan to possess." (Deut. 32:46-47). The people of Israel were called to remember and to recite the law that God has handed to them. By reciting, the people said aloud the laws and commandments that they wanted to remember and in remembering, they retained what they have learned.

We pray the Lord's Prayer and recite the Apostles' Creed at our Sunday service, affirming and remembering our Christian faith in Jesus Christ.

The Psalmist says:

Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.
Before the mountains were brought forth,
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God. (Ps. 90:1-2)

Sunday, 26 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17; Deuteronomy 34:1-12; Matthew 22:34-46

**THE LORD
REIGNS
LET THE EARTH
BE GLAD
LET THE DISTANT SHORES
REJOICE
CLOUD AND THICK DARKNESS
SURROUND HIM
RIGHTEOUSNESS AND
JUSTICE
ARE THE FOUNDATION OF HIS
THRONE**

Source: <http://charlesgrinsted.wordpress.com/2011/02/03/psalm-971-2/>

Monday, 27 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 119:41-48; Numbers 33:38-39;
James 2:8-13



The history of the **Congregational Union of New Zealand (CUNZ)** started in 1842 when a Mr. Jonas Woodward commenced services in his home in Wellington, New Zealand. The first Congregational Church at Auckland was formed in 1851, followed by churches in Dunedin in 1862 and Christchurch in 1864. Many other churches sprang up all around New Zealand during this period of time, in main city centres as well as many small settlements. In 1863, the Auckland Congregational Union and Mission were formed to serve the needs of the northern Churches. Similarly, the Congregational Union and Mission of South New Zealand was created in Dunedin to serve the southern churches. One year later, both Unions were united in Wellington, where The Congregational Union of New Zealand held its first meeting.

Never large in numbers, Congregationalists in New Zealand have nevertheless always had an influence well out of proportion to their numbers. Kate Sheppard the well-known activist for Women's Rights (whose image is on NZ \$10 note, shown below) was a member of Trinity Congregational Church in Christchurch. In 1893 New Zealand became the first country in the world to grant women the vote – despite claims that families would be abandoned and the economy destroyed. Ms. Sheppard was vindicated when 65% of New Zealand women took the chance to vote in their first general election.



Prayer Requests:

- 1) Thanksgiving to God's faithfulness to the Congregational Union of New Zealand.
- 2) Pray for the congregations of CUNZ as they seek to influence in the life of the people in the New Zealand society.

Tuesday, 28 October 2014

**Bible Readings: Psalm 119:41-48; Exodus 34:29-35;
James 2:14-26**



The Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa (UPCSA) was formed through the union of The Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa (PCSA) and The Reformed Presbyterian Church in South Africa (RPC). Both former denominations are started by the Church of Scotland - the former came into being in 1897, at its first General Assembly held in Durban through the amalgamation of a number of different congregations established by Scottish settlers in Cape Town, the Eastern Cape and Natal. The latter was founded by the Missions Committee of the Church of Scotland with its base mainly in the Eastern Cape.

UPCSA's vision is to be a reconciled community of Christians who exercises a prophetic witness to Christ. And their mission is to proclaim the Triune God in Southern Africa through bearing witness to the saving love of Jesus Christ, building vital and reforming congregations for worship, ministry and discipleship, and proclaiming the Kingdom of God through unity, justice, peace and love. In order to work towards this mission, UPCSA has set some mission priorities to facilitate the process, such as evangelism, development of missional congregations, and engaging in reconciliation and stewardship. The Church also holds itself accountable to its congregations for these priorities, by reporting its progress to the denomination through its General Assembly.

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Pray that the congregations of UPCSA continue to bear witness to the saving love of Jesus Christ through preaching and action.
- 2) Pray that congregations of UPCSA passionately engage with the mission priorities set forth by the Church such as, evangelism and stewardship.

Wednesday, 29 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 119:41-48; Deuteronomy 26:16—27:7; Matthew 19:16-22

Living God,
We praise you for the beauty of creation,
we praise you for the rich variety of life,
we praise you for your delight in us, your people,
we praise you for giving us the care for all that lives.
we praise you for your trust in us.

Loving God,
forgive us our indifference,
our cruelty and our lack of care.
Fill us with your love,
so that even yet we may fulfil your purpose for us,
turning everything that lives and breathes and grows
to goodness.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord,
Amen.

Source: Cathy Bott in "What does the LORD Require?"

Thursday, 30 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37; Joshua 1:1-11; Romans 2:17-29

Patricia, known as 'Pat,' is a Partner-in Mission from Methodist Church in Great Britain to Church of Bangladesh (COB). She shares her missionary story as follows:

"I am a Community Health Advisor working with the Church of Bangladesh Social Development Programme (CBSDP). This is the development wing of the Church of Bangladesh (CoB) a united church. My home is Northern Ireland where I worked as a Community Nursing Team Leader.

For three years I worked in a rural area of the country working with and alongside nurses and development staff. I am now based at central office in Dhaka where I am involved in strategic issues, training of staff, write and edit project proposals and reports and visit project areas. Recently I have been appointed as the person responsible for gender in CBSDP. This is a new role for me and I look forward to linking with other organisations to help combat issues for women where many face great difficulties just because they are female."

Please pray for Pat that:

- 1) She can continue to improve in Bangla, the main language used in Bangladesh.
- 2) For safety as she travels with others to project areas.
- 3) for the many changes in CBSDP of personnel and work focus that will all be carried out sensitively and for the benefit of all our beneficiaries.



Friday, 31 October 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37; Joshua 2:1-14; 2 Peter 2:1-3



The London Missionary Society began its missionary work in today's Papua New Guinea in 1871. Several groups of Christians from the Pacific islands came to work with the mission which expanded through the Papuan mainland, such as the Australian Methodist Church, not the Uniting Church in Australia. In 1962, the London Missionary Society, together with the mission of the Presbyterian Church in New Zealand and other body, formed the Papua Ekalesia which was the largest single church in Papua at that time. A further union took place on 19 January 1968 when the Papua Ekalesia, the Methodists and the Union Church of Port Moresby together established the United Church in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. In 1996 the general assembly of the United Church in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands (UCPNGSI) resolved that the existence of one united church covering two independent countries should no longer be maintained. Thus, the **United Church in Papua New Guinea (UCPNG)** came into being as an autonomous church on its own.

The vision of UCPNG is to teach, preach and live the Good News of Jesus Christ in her faith, life and witness; in loving and caring ministries through the united participation of the people of God until he returns. The following are some of the mission goals in the light of its vision and which we could keep the Church in prayers:

- Enhance the teaching and proclamation of the word of God.
- Encourage members to be prayerful and live Christian lives, expressing Christian faith in life and witness.
- Provide health and education and other social services to the community.
- Promote continuous communication among her people.
- Promote, encourage and provide opportunities to enhance participation by all.
- To be good stewards of resources.
- Continue and maintain ecumenism and partnership in mission with partner churches.

Saturday, 1 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37; Joshua 2:15-24; Matthew 23:13-28



Source: www.bibleodyssey.org

Meditation on Joshua 2:15-24

We are familiar with the story of Rahab and the spies who were sent by Joshua to spy on Jericho. The spies came to the house of Rahab who lied to the king of Jericho that the spies had left her house when in fact, she had hid them in the roof with covered flax. After the king and his men had left the house, she informed the spies and demanded that the spies made a covenant with her regarding her safety as well as her entire household when the Israelites come and attack Jericho. The spies agreed and they were bound by their oath to Rahab.

Often times, our sermons are focused upon Rahab the harlot rather than Rahab the hero. In this episode, Rahab showed faith and courage. Rahab risked her life to protect “enemy” spies because she has heard of their God who had delivered them out of Egypt and also conquered the two kings of the Amorites. Even though she did not witness these events herself, yet she believed that the spies’ God was more powerful than all others and would take care of her and her household. Here is a woman of faith and courage.

Rahab the hero challenges us faith and courage in the face of challenges that one might encounter. Sometimes the least expected people are used by God for great things.

The Psalmist says:

Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
for his wonderful works to humankind.
For he satisfies the thirsty,
and the hungry he fills with good things. (Ps. 107:8-9)

Sunday, 2 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37; Joshua 3:7-17; Matthew 23:1-12



Source: <http://revivetsf.wordpress.com/2013/02/08/no-you-didnt-build-that-deuteronomy-610-25/>

“When the Lord your God brings you into the land he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you—a land with large, flourishing cities you did not build, houses filled with all kinds of good things you did not provide, wells you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves you did not plant—then when you eat and are satisfied, be careful that you do not forget the Lord, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.”

- (Deuteronomy 6:10-12)

Monday, 3 November 2014

**Bible Readings: Psalm 128; Joshua 4:1-24;
1 Thessalonians 2:13-20**



Mr. Wei Chung from **CWM East Asia Region** shares the latest updates of the Region.

The CWM East Asia Region held the Regional Assembly in Hong Kong, hosted by the HKCCCC (Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China). The theme for the Assembly to reflect is "Hope in Action." Two groups were focused, namely the youth and women and were especially invited to represent their Church. Rev. Julie Sim, the Deputy Moderator for East Asia Region shared that East Asia Region has consistently demonstrated its interest and commitment to pursue its mission priorities, seeking to express the ethos of the Council for World Mission: 'fullness of life through Christ for all creation'. Therefore, the values ingrained into East Asia Region's mission priorities are to include:

1. Zero compromise on gender justice.
2. Continuous leadership empowerment for pastors and youth leaders.
3. Consistent pursuit to explore new models of mission and evangelism in Asian contexts.
4. A strong commitment to expand our interest in migrant issues and ecological justice.

For thematic expressions of women and youth, the Women group used four short plays to express their multiple roles and different situations. They are mother, employee, student, and householder. The Youth group tried to bring together the common issues that youth encountered by member churches, such as gender justice, youth empowerment, LGBT, volunteering in church service etc. These expressions show the realities of women and youth in local churches.

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Thanks be to the Lord for a colorful and multicultural region.
- 2) As the region faces many challenges and obstacles, pray that the churches work together in partnership to overcome them.
- 3) Pray that member churches work out the theme, "Hope in Action" as a witness to Jesus Christ.

Tuesday, 4 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 128; Joshua 6:1-16, 20; Acts 13:1-12



The formation of the **Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China (HKCCCC)** can be traced back to 1918 when the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in China called a meeting in Nanjing to look into the desirability of forming a union of churches. In the current day, the Church has 68 congregations with 35,000 church members and 73 ordained ministers and 132 preachers.

Pastor Eva Chan of HKCCCC shares the following for prayers and concerns.

Today's Hong Kong

Hong Kong has been under Chinese sovereignty for seventeen years. The longer the expectation on the election of the Chief Executive ("CE") by universal suffrage has been unfulfilled, the more discontent has been accumulated in the society. The more the two economies, Mainland China's and Hong Kong's, have been integrated through the Individual Visit Scheme ("IVS"), the more conflicts have been encountered between Mainland people and the local residents as both groups tried to meet their particular needs. A number of controversial government decisions in the recent period has aroused tremendous concern and has led to increasing tensions between the public and the SAR Government and, to a certain degree, with the Central Government as well. Strains have also been increasing among different parties within the society on different political stances. Trust between groups and even individuals are on shaky grounds and relationships have been hostile in many public situations. Christians, and in particular church leaders, face not only external pressures on guidance or challenges on principles, but also internal contentions on the varied biblical interpretations and applications for all the political and social issues.

HKCCCC Ministries highlights

- The integration of education mission and social services
- The collaboration of churches and schools
- A Ministry for Building Life-Affirming Communities
- Responses to major public events in the society

Wednesday, 5 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 128; Joshua 10:12-14; Matthew 15:1-9

We are strange conundrums of faithfulness and fickleness.
We cleave to you in all the ways that we are able.
We count on you and intend our lives to be lived for you,,
and then we find ourselves among your people
who are always seeking elsewhere and otherwise.
So we give thanks that you are the God
who yearns and waits for us,
and that our connection to you is always from your side,
and that it is because of you goodness
that neither life nor death
nor angels nor principalities
nor height nor depths
nor anything in creation
can separate us from you.
We give thanks for your faithfulness,
so much more durable than ours. Amen.

Source: "Awed to Heaven, rooted in earth" by Walter Brueggemann

Thursday, 6 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 78:1-7; Joshua 5:10-12; Revelation 8:6—9:12

LONELY?

Isaiah 41: 10 "Do not be afraid-I am with you! I am your God-let nothing terrify you! I will make you strong and help you; I will protect you; and save you."

We cannot stand loneliness!
Alone, we experience distress!
Alone, we feel our minuteness,
And live a sense of weakness.
Turn to God, taste his promise!
Your prayer, He will not dismiss.
Talk to Him, peace you possess!
You have a friend, what bliss!
People ignore you in their busyness.
They forget you in their selfishness.
Or they address you, but how listless!
In their heart you swim in dryness.
With God, you will not know such abyss.
With Him, you will connect with ease.
In his love, a friend you will not miss.
Listen to Him, your joy will increase.

Your lack of energy, God will process.
He knows you, and does not guess.
You do not need his love to assess,
But He keeps you in his tenderness.
Every second, his love, you practice,
By his care, your worry He'll appease.
His faithfulness, you will learn to kiss!
Value his affection, it will not decrease.
Sometimes, we create our own loneliness
Avoiding joining people in happiness.
We raise fence around as in fortress
Then we complain in our solitary stress.
God reaches out to our egocentrism
Opening our fence for more altruism.
He changes to joy our euphemism
And we get out of general ostracism.

- By Samoelijaona R. Rasolonjanahary, Partner-in-Mission to KPC

Friday, 7 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 78:1-7; Joshua 8:30-35; Revelation 9:13-21



Rev. Patrick W. Mputi, the General Secretary of **Churches of Christ in Malawi (CCM)** shares with us that CCM has been going through a reconstitution process. The process has not been easy, as much of the time, energy and resources were spent in resolving discord and

misunderstandings that have challenged the church. In addition, the new constitution which is still in its draft form poses additional obstacle to the church.

Rev. Mputi writes, *"Our main source of encouragement actually is the Scripture and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Our hope still, is that CCM once becomes a formidable tool of preaching the gospel of Christ in Malawi and beyond."*

As a tool of preaching the gospel of Christ, CCM is much concerned of its future. Therefore, the following are some plans and objectives which call for prayers and concerns.

- a) The restructuring and capacity building of the church through the installation of the systems of accounting and development in the church.
- b) The strengthening of the grassroots through the process of decentralization.
- c) To enable the people to stand on their own socially and economically.
- d) That the spirit of love, understanding and fear of the Lord be instil in the entire CCM leadership and its members through worship, teachings and ministry in an orderly and responsible manner that is consistent with biblical/Christian teachings.

Saturday, 8 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 78:1-7; Joshua 20:1-9; Matthew 24:1-14



Source: www.eaf.net

Meditation on Matthew 24:1-14

After denouncing the scribes and the Pharisees with the seven woes and his lament over Jerusalem (Matt. 23), Jesus foretold of the destruction of the Temple, much to the dismay of his hearers. To the Jews, the Temple was the center of their religious life and to prophesy such destruction was a judgment itself. Jesus admonished the disciples not to seek after signs but rather God's kingdom. There will be signs, such as false messiahs, wars, betrayals and persecutions before the end of age. And they point to God's ultimate judgment. However, Jesus also foretold that those who endure to the end will be saved (Matt. 24:13).

On the one hand, Jesus' prophecy points to God's judgment but on the other hand, it is also about the gospel being 'proclaimed throughout the world as a testimony to all the nations' (Matt. 24:14). Then, the end will come. What does this two-edged sword prophecy means to the hearers during the time of Matthew? And today? To you? And to me?

The prophecy calls us to bear witness to all nations, as 'salt of the earth' and 'light of the world' (cf. Matt. 5:13-14).

The Psalmist says:

Give ear, O my people, to my teaching;
Incline your ears to the words of my mouth. (Ps. 78:1)

Sunday, 9 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 78:1-7; Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25; Matthew 25:1-13

Fishing for Funds

- Jesus needed to pay a tax.
- Jesus was not expecting a pay check.
- Jesus did not save money for the tax.
- The tax collector was asking Peter, Jesus' disciple, money for both Jesus and his own personal tax.
- Jesus was busy doing what God wanted Him to do.
- He had confidence that His Father would take care of this need.
- Jesus sent Peter, the former fisherman, to get the tax money from a fish's mouth.
- Peter got the coin as Jesus said.
- The tax was paid.
- **We all learn a lesson that we need not worry when we are busy doing our Heavenly Father's will.**

Following the footsteps of Jesus



"And when they had come to Capernaum, those who collected the two-drachma [tax] came to Peter, and said, "Does your teacher not pay the two-drachma [tax]?" He said, "Yes." And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect customs or poll-tax, from their sons or from strangers?" And upon his saying, "From strangers," Jesus said to him, "Consequently the sons are exempt. But, lest we give them offense, go to the sea, and throw in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a stater. Take that and give it to them for you and Me."

Matthew 17: 24-27

Source:

http://wwwFOUNDATIONSforfreedom.net/Topics/AnxietyOA/OA03/OA03_13.html

Monday, 10 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 78; Joshua 24:25-33;
1 Corinthians 14:20-25



The United Congregational Church of Southern Africa

(UCCSA) was established in southern Africa by the London Missionary Society (LMS) which started work in Cape Town in 1799. Within a few years mission stations had been established throughout the Cape Province, in present-day Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe. After the withdrawal of the LMS from the Cape, the churches it had established, together with the English-speaking congregations, formed the Congregational Union of South Africa in 1859. This church united in 1967 with the Bantu Congregational Church to form the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa, incorporating the work of the two bodies in South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia and Zimbabwe. A further merger took place in 1972 when the UCCSA was reconstituted to include the congregations of the South African Association of the Disciples of Christ.

The Church has been prominent in ecumenical church life in southern Africa, most notably in the national Christian Councils of the five countries where it is represented and playing a decisive part in the Church Unity Commission. Such responsibilities give rise to the need to develop quality leadership and credible ministers, which led the church to invest in its education.

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Thanksgiving to God for the work of UCCSA in Southern Africa, and pray for unity amongst the member churches of the Church.
- 2) Pray for UCCSA Leadership Academy as they seek to develop lay preachers for the congregations of the Church.

Tuesday, 11 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 78;

Nehemiah 8:1-12; 1 Thessalonians 3:6-13



Since the arrival of the first missionaries of the London Missionary Society (LMS) to bring the Gospel to American Samoa, the Church has been known by the name of LMS since the year of 1830. In 1961, its name was changed to **the Congregational Christian Church in American Samoa (CCCAS)** and gained its independence in 1980. The CCCAS (EFKAS) is firmly established in the United States (mainland), Hawaii, New Zealand, Australia and American Samoa. It currently has 39,000 members with 115 congregations.

The CCCAS is a self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating church. In 1983, it established its own theological college in Kanana Fou, which offers a diploma in theological studies and a BD degree. The theological college also serves the Ekalesia Kelisiano Tuvalu in training their ministerial candidates. The CCCAS also runs an elementary and a high school. The Church placed much emphasis on youth activities both in local communities and at the national level, and has undertaken the construction of a multi-purpose youth centre. The Church is also concerned with problems affecting the Samoan society such as drug and alcohol abuse and the influx of religious sects. The Church has sent and continues to send its own missionaries and fraternal workers to Africa, Europe, the Caribbean, Australia, New Zealand, to other Pacific nations and to the United States, reflecting its mission in different places.

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Pray for the young people in American Samoa to be protected from substance abuse, such as drug and alcohol. And also for the Church seeking to involve the young people in the various activities in the multi-purpose youth center.
- 2) Give thanks for the faculty and students in the theological college in Kanana Fou as the students are under preparation for the ministry in the region.

Wednesday, 12 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 78; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Matthew 24:29-35

Lord God, you have placed in our hands the gift that you want us to share with everyone: the Good News of Jesus Christ.

You offer forgiveness to all in their sin,
in their brokenness, in their alienation,
in their failure and in their guilt.

You offer the way of life to those who grope in darkness,
experimenting with every new religious heresy,
sampling every craze and every novelty,
yet finding no direction, no purpose.

You offer eternal life to all of us,
trapped between our birth and our death,
racing against time.

You give yourself,
the Father of us all,
desiring the greatest good for each one of us,
pursuing us in your love.

Lord, Father, this is what you give to your church, and this
is what you intend for all mankind:
make us faithful in offering to others what you have given us;
may we not give stones instead of bread.

Source: "More everyday Prayers" by Henry McKeating, John Reardon and Michael Walker

Thursday, 13 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 123; Judges 2:6-15; Revelation 16:1-7

Ms Liantluangpuui, who is also affectionately known as “TP”, is a Partner-in Mission from Presbyterian Church of India (PCI) to Congregational Christian Church of American Samoa (CCCAS). Since 2007, she serves as a missionary teacher in Kanana Fou High School which is run by the Congregational Christian Church of American Samoa (CCCAS).

She shares with us the following update of her missionary journey:

“My work here in American Samoa concentrated mostly on teaching Biology, Marine Biology and Chemistry. Apart from this we the missionary teachers look after Christian Club in our school.

With God’s guidance, 2013 - 2014 school year has gone by and a new school year is just around the corner. I have gone through happy and hard times in my schoolwork and I thank God for His never-ending love and guidance through all those times.

I was involved in after school tutoring more than the years before. Tutoring students who were in need gave me extra work but I could manage to help these students by the grace of God, and this in turn gave me a great joy. Through tutoring these students I could have an access to share the good news.

We have renewed our contract for another two years. We are on furlough at the moment and I am so glad to have a good time with my family whom I’ve longed to spend time with them for a long time”.



Prayer Requests:

- 1) Pray for students of Kanana Fou HS-to have a personal relationship with God.
- 2) Pray for students who are willing to learn but weak in their studies.
- 3) Thank God for giving us (partners in mission) a good opportunity to spend time with our families.

Friday, 14 November 2014

**Bible Readings: Psalm 123;
Judges 2:16-23; Revelation 16:8-21**



The Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand (PCANZ) was formed by early settlers in New Zealand in 1840. It is a bi-cultural church within a multicultural context. This means that the Church is committed to a partnership with the Maori who express their life in the Church through their Synod, Te Aka Puaho. The Church makes its distinctive contribution to New Zealand society, and to its own members, through the life and activity of its parishes. No two Presbyterian churches are the same. But they do have things in common that make them part of the same family. Things like the importance they give to the Bible and the way they share leadership. Presbyterian churches are places where people can experience a spirituality that nurtures them, sustains them, and encourages them to serve in mission, both local and global.

The Church has more than 400 congregations with mission programmes that link them to the life of their communities. In some of our churches, worship is traditional and formal; in others, services are contemporary and informal. One might encounter organ music, Island gospel choirs, contemporary bands, ancient Psalms, or café worship to name a few.

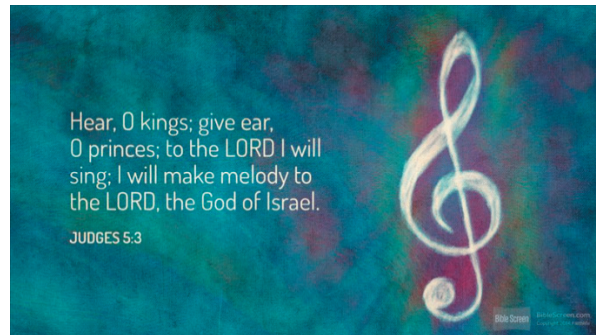
The Church also embarks on a Going Global Project, jointly developed by the Church’s Global Mission and Youth departments. It aims to facilitate cross-cultural mission experiences for the younger people from New Zealand with their partner churches in Asia and the Pacific, and deepening awareness of their respective mission context and provide mutual support in their respective faith journeys. Through this Project, the Church hopes to educate its younger generation in giving them a global perspective of missions.

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Pray for the Church to move to a deeper commitment to becoming a multicultural church; for effective new forms of mission to meet the challenges of sharing Christian faith in a largely secular nation.
- 2) Pray for the Church to continue to grow in their relationships with the different people groups, and for a spirit of unity to unite them in Christ, even as they come from different cultural contexts and backgrounds.

Saturday, 15 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 123; Judges 5:1-12; Matthew 12:43-45



Source: biblia.com

Meditation on Judges 5:1-12

The Song of Deborah is a song of praise! It was a song that celebrates victory which God has given to her over Sisera, the commander of the army of King Jabin of Canaan and King Jabin himself. Together with Barak and God's help, Deborah outmanoeuvred Sisera and his army (cf. Judg. 4:16). Sisera fled and came to the tent of Jael who killed him while he was asleep (cf. Judg. 4:22). From that day onwards, God subdued the King Jabin of Canaan till they were destroyed.

The song of Deborah provides us insights into Judges 4 about two godly female leaders, prophetess Deborah and Jael, the wife of Heber. Deborah and Jael were willing to risk their lives for God's purpose. They are women of courage and God works through them in a time of crisis for Israel when they offer themselves willingly (cf. Judg. 5:2). The song focuses upon the glorious power of God as metaphorically described in Judg. 5:4-5, 'the earth trembled, and the heavens poured ... the mountains quaked before the LORD' when the LORD marched from the region of Edom."

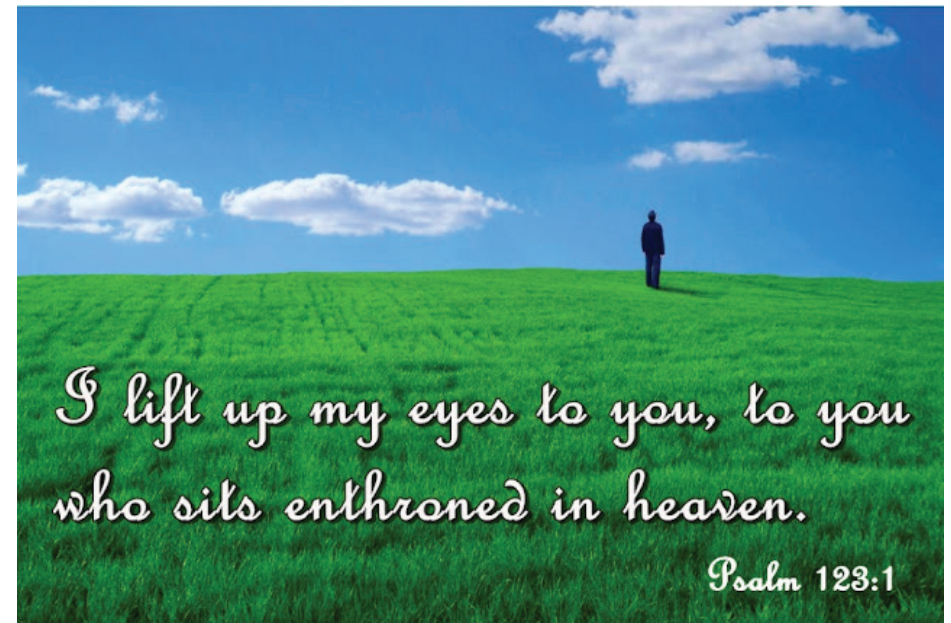
In Judges 4-5, we learn about two godly female leaders, Deborah and Jael who were willing to risk their life for God's purpose. They are women of courage. Our churches need leadership that includes women and men to lead the world to Christ and indeed, God's heart goes out to all "who offered themselves willingly among the people."

The Psalmist says:

To you I lift up my eyes,
O you who are enthroned in the heavens! (Ps. 123:1)

Sunday, 16 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 123; Judges 4:1-7; Matthew 25:14-30



Source: <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-religion/2976333/posts>

Monday, 17 November 2014

**Bible Readings: Psalm 83:1-4, 9-10, 17-18; Judges 4:8-24;
Romans 2:1-11**



The Union of Welsh Independents (UWI) is a voluntary union of 430 congregational churches, the majority of which worship through the medium of Welsh, a language spoken by 19% of the population of Wales. Welsh congregationalists number about 24,000, and the number of serving ministers is about 80.

Throughout their history there has been a strong emphasis on effective preaching of the gospel, and educating and empowering church members who have always been known for their strong social conscience. The Union is a free and voluntary body. Its aim is to help, as far as possible, to make churches “fellowships that will be free to serve Jesus Christ”. Today it acts as a forum for discussion, seeking to encourage the churches to face the myriad challenges of the 21st century.

Currently the Union is implementing a mission strategy known as 'The Welsh Independents' Development Programme'. Its main emphases are developing individual church programmes, development of new leadership roles, outreach, providing resources, education and training and the development of local 'county' church unions.

The main challenge for the Union at this time is to enable churches to witness more effectively in their communities. For this to happen, there must be a rediscovery of the spiritual gifts needed to fulfil the task, and heartfelt wish among church members to see others come to Christ.

Prayer Requests:

- 1) that the churches in Wales will be inspired and equipped by God to fulfil their mission.
- 2) that the youth of Wales be led to Christ as their Redeemer.
- 3) that God will raise both ministers and church leaders in Wales.
- 4) that God will embolden church members and give them confidence through His Spirit to reach out to their communities.
- 5) that the Union may serve both God and the churches faithfully
- 6) that Wales will experience an outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Tuesday, 18 November 2014

**Bible Readings: Psalm 83:1-4, 9-10, 17-18; Exodus 2:1-10;
1 Thessalonians 5:12-18**



The General Secretary of Gereja Presbiterian Malaysia (GPM), Elder Mok, shares the following update concerning GPM.

Youth ministry

Training and discipleship of youth is one of our most important ministries. In 1992, Presbyterian Training Institute (PTI) was set up to disciple young people. Since then about 450 have graduated from this three-month program. In recent years, there has been increasing number of applicants with the annual in-take increased to 30-40 people which is the maximum that can be accommodated. 90% of the students are from the 18-20 aged group. The residential program not only trains them in the knowledge of the Bible, basic Reformed theology and Presbyterian tradition, also equip them with living skills and ministry skills.

We praise God that so far about 10% of the students have pledged to serve God fulltime in the future. Since 2012, 1-2 PTI graduates have entered the seminaries every year to equip themselves for fulltime ministry. We pray that by 2020 there will be at least 30 of them serving in full-time ministries. As in all developing countries, Malaysian college students and working young are busy and preoccupied. Stress and temptations of the world have made it difficult for them to take part in various youth ministries or to attend church-run training programs. We thank God that every year there are still a small group of young people who are willing to sacrifice their time to attend the three- month program and be trained to become more God pleasing Presbyterians. All PTI graduates continue to maintain contact and networking with each other throughout the years, and they have become a valuable resource in their respective congregations as well as many GPM-organized programs.



Prayer requests:

- 1) That God will send 40 willing learners for year 2015 in-take.
- 2) That through the three-month discipleship curriculum more will be equipped to take up full-time ministry and leadership roles in the church in future.
- 3) That the young people of Malaysia will embrace a biblical value system in life and become a cohesive force to witness for the Lord in this generation.

Wednesday, 19 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 83:1-4, 9-10, 17-18; Esther 7:1-10; Matthew 24:45-51

Father, our God,
save us from all those things that would threaten our commitment to you,
save us from all that makes for triviality.
We worship you in your love, your holiness, your justice and your truth;
may our understanding of you never be less than that;
a crutch to lean on when everything else has failed,
a passing interest fitted into a busy schedule.

We ask, Father,
that our hearts may be constantly renewed by the fire of your love,
that our vision of your glory may not diminish with the years,
that faith may always be a glorious enterprise,
a consuming passion, a matter of life and death,
a burning conviction;
may you be the centre of our whole being.

Source: "More everyday Prayers" by Henry McKeating, John Reardon and Michael Walker)

Thursday, 20 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 100; Genesis 48:15-22; Revelation 14:1-11

Ms. Hilda Asukile was sent by the United Church of Zambia (UCZ) to the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (FJKM) for her missionary appointment. She teaches English to the local teachers in FJKM Institut de Formation Et de Recherche Pédagogique (IFRP) so as to enable them to teach English themselves. Hilda's missionary service began in 2006 and a year later, her husband, Japhet joined her in missionary service. He works with SAF/FJKM, a development department of FJKM. This is what Hilda has to say regarding her furlough in June-August 2014, "A furlough with a difference."



Our furlough was also different in that my husband lost his immediate young brother who passed on exactly eight days after the wedding of our daughter, Melody (see 18 December 2014). God has His own way of doing things! After the wedding, my husband and one of his brothers travelled to Dar es Salaam to see the ailing brother. They arrived at about 05 00am, spent three hours talking with the brother, who had rejuvenated and gained strength upon seeing them. He poured out his heart and shared about his illness and aspirations upon recovery. Japhet and his other brother went to a nearby church... only to be called five minutes later and be informed that their brother was not breathing! They rushed him to hospital, but was pronounced dead upon arrival. This was shocking and unbelievable to think that the person for whom they had travelled a thousand kilometers to see, had only spoken to them for three hours, had gone to be with the Lord!

Travel arrangements had to be made to transfer the body to the village where Japhet's parents live, which was another thousand kilometers away. Necessary arrangements were made, this time not for a wedding but a funeral! The funeral was held at the village, and this brought out different emotions. Burial took place in the church grounds. Funerals are always a reminder to be ready to be with the Lord.

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Pray for God's comfort for all family members following Japhet's brother demise.
- 2) Pray for renewed strength in work assignments and effective training of the student teachers that Hilda teaches.

Friday, 21 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 100; Isaiah 40:1-11; Revelation 22:1-9



The **Church of North India (CNI)** is committed to announce the Good News of the reign of God inaugurated through death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in proclamation and to demonstrate in actions to restore the integrity of God's creation through continuous struggle against the demonic powers by breaking down the barriers of caste, class, gender, economic inequality and exploitation of the nature.

The Church itself is spread across whole of India including the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, barring four southern states.

Mr. Alwan Masih, the General Secretary of CNI Synod requests prayers for the leadership and the various activities of CNI Synod:

- Kindly pray for the Leadership of the Church of North India, Moderator-The Most Rev. Dr. P. P. Marandih, Deputy Moderator-The Rt. Rev. P. K. Samantaroy, General Secretary-Mr. Alwan Masih and Acting Treasurer-Mr. Prem Masih; for all the Bishops and Presbyters and congregations;
- Kindly uphold Church of North India as it continues its journey for the Dalit and Tribal people in bringing them from the periphery to the centre specifically when it is fighting for scheduled caste status to Dalit Christians.
- PDS Model of Hostels for the Poor/ Needy/orphans/semi orphan Children;
- Theological Education (B. Th. B. D. and M. Th. and PhD) for Pastors;
- Stewardship Ambassador Ministry;
- Mission Evangelism;
- Sunday School Programme;
- Spiritual revival meetings/programmes.
- Pray for the rural churches where at places people are still not safe in proclaiming their faith.

Saturday, 22 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 100; Ezekiel 34:25-31; Matthew 12:46-50



Source: vertiasdomain.wordpress.com

Meditation on Ezekiel 34:25-31

We are familiar with Psalm 23, "The LORD is my shepherd" and love this Psalm of comfort and assurance that was penned by David who was a shepherd boy before he became king. The motif of shepherd is not only found in Psalm but also in Ezekiel when God is depicted as the true Shepherd (Ezek. 34:11-23). In this passage, God says that God will search for God's sheep, look after them and search for those who are injured and lost. And God will make a covenant with them, metaphorically described as the 'sheep' who heed to God's way. The covenant is a 'covenant of peace' as described in Ezek. 34:25-31. The benefits of the covenant are described in a list of blessings such as 'showers in their season' that produce bountiful crops and people will live in security and free from threats of their enemies (Ezek. 34:27-29).

This is the vision of Ezekiel while the people of Israel were in exile that God is faithful will bring to pass of their trials and tribulations. Their exile was as a result of corrupted leadership of Israel but unlike them, God the true shepherd will rule over them with justice and compassion and also the mediator of peace.

Let us pray for our church leaders to be feed and led by the Jesus, the Great Shepherd who laid down his life for his sheep. Jesus, the mediator between God and God's people.

The Psalmist says:

Know that the LORD is God.

It is he that made us, and we are his;

We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. (Ps. 100:3)

Sunday, 23 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 100; Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24; Matthew 25:31-46

"Make a
joyful
noise unto the LORD *all ye lands.*
Serve the LORD with **gladness**
come before His presence with *singing.*
Know ye that the LORD **HE IS GOD:**
it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves;
we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.
Enter into His gates with **thanksgiving**
and into His courts with praise:
be *thankful* unto Him, and bless His name;
For the LORD is **good**
His mercy is everlasting;
and His truth
endureth to *all generations.*"

psalm 100

Source: <http://www.dearlillie.com/product/psalm-100-free>

Monday, 24 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 28; Numbers 27:15-23; 2 Timothy 2:8-13

CWM Caribbean Regional Secretary, Mrs Karen Francis, shares the following updates from her region:

CWM Caribbean placed human trafficking centrestage in the Regional Assembly held in Kingston, Jamaica in March 2014. Over 60 persons from member churches – the Guyana Congregational Union (GCU) and the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands (UCJCI) - gathered for the accompanied by ecumenical partners. The theme: **Human Trafficking – Facing the Facts...Embracing the Challenges**, provided impetus for participants to learn about human trafficking and what is currently being done by Governments and other stakeholders, to study Scriptures, pray and develop ideas for responding through their churches and communities.

Participants were deployed as 'agitants' to impact their communities with the message and to garner further support. In addition to sharing in his own congregation, Sydney Tait, GCU, has provided information for a community forum for students from the University of Guyana on the Rights of a Child and has plans to include the topic in the summer programme of his community library.

Kraig deLeon Deidrick, young ministerial graduate intern in UCJCI, says he has always read the scriptures with an awareness of social justice. The Assembly gave him an opportunity to look at scriptures again in light of this issue. Kraig asserts that the existence of human trafficking forces the church to respond. Kraig has been inspired to challenge the members in the congregations he leads to think about the church's role in society and how to translate the Sunday morning experience to a 'during the week walk'.

UCJCI participant Faithlyn Stephens' eyes were opened to the magnitude of human trafficking in Jamaica especially the cases of children being taken from unsatisfactory economic and social circumstances into more favourable ones where they are put into servitude instead of provided with care. She is now determined: *'If I can help to prevent one case, it will be one less life, one less family ruined'.*

Prayer Requests:

- 1) For the successful completion and broadcast of a documentary on human trafficking in the Caribbean.
- 2) For courage for the 'agitants' as they impact their communities.
- 3) For success in efforts to combat human trafficking in the Caribbean and around the world.

Tuesday, 25 November 2014

**Bible Readings: Psalm 28; Zechariah 11:4-17;
Revelation 19:1-9**



The Congregational Christian Church of Tuvalu (Ekalesia Kelisiano Tuvalu) traces its origins back to 1861. The London Missionary Society (LMS) began working in the island in 1864.

Tuvalu was also a mission field of the Samoa Congregational Christian Church. The church became autonomous in 1968. Its doctrinal bases are the Apostolic and Nicene Creeds. About 96% of the population of Tuvalu belongs to the Church, which plays an important role in the cultural, socio-political and religious development of the society. The primary schools and one of the two secondary schools established by the LMS have been taken over by the government. The Church has kept and revived the other secondary school, and celebrated its centenary in 2005.

The Church is concerned with the effects of global warming on Tuvalu. Tuvalu is a small independent island nation located in the central Pacific. It comprises of nine small low lying coral atolls with a land area of 24 sq.km. with the highest point of 4 meters above sea level. Tuvalu is known to the world because of climate change related to sea level rise. As for the drought in the island nation, Tuvaluans notice that it is the result of climate change yet they contribute almost nothing to the problem of global warming. Yet they are the first to feel the adverse impact of climate change. So, the Church cannot stand on the sideline and watch the people suffer. EKT is working hard to incorporate every single effort from church partners and NGO's to assist the people of Tuvalu in this current state of emergency for the nation and its people.

Prayer Request:

- 1) Pray for the leadership of EKT as they seek to address the problem of climate change and integrity of creation for the island and its people.

Wednesday, 26 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 28; Jeremiah 31:10-14; John 5:19-40

Blessed are thou, king of the universe!

We name you King, Lord, Master, Governor
And by such naming we relieve our deep anxieties
In confidence of your rule.
And yet, we notice your stunning irrelevance
To the issues of the day
That require hands-on attention.

We name you King and pray daily for your coming kingdom.
And yet, we also notice that you creep over
Into violence and oppressive demand.
We name you King and loudly proclaim that your messiah
Will come again, come soon, in glory and power.
And yet, all the while, we grow weary,
With the brutal powers of the day.

We name you King and wait for your show of
Vulnerability and mercy and compassion
That will "new" the world and heal our common life.
We name you, and we wait.. but not patiently.

Blessed art thou, king of the universe!

Amen.

Source: "Awed to Heaven, rooted in earth" by Walter Brueggeman

Thursday, 27 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Zechariah 13:1-9; Revelation 14:6-13

Rev. Zauva Zaidarhzauva was a Partner-in-Mission sent by the Presbyterian Church of India (PCI) to the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT). He was accompanied by his wife, Sapi and their children. Rev. Zaidarhzauva spent 25 years in Taiwan ministering to different groups of indigenous people, such as the Bunun tribe and other aboriginal tribes. During that period, he also worked in various organisations in Kaoshiung County, before returning to Mizoram, India in July 2012 to serve in Interserve India.

Rev. Zaidarhzauva is involved in the Church Relations Team and the International Students' Ministry of Interserve India. The Church Relations Team selected ten Indian cities to set up Friends of Interserve Prayer partners or cell groups, which are existing in a few cities now. He also helps in their fund raising programmes to encourage donations. The International Students' Ministry is led by a couple who are full time workers. Rev Zaidarhzauva serves with them to outreach to foreign students in Pune city. Some Christian students have joined the ministry, and spend every Sunday evening together for Bible study and sharing.

Sapi, Rev. Zaidarhzauva's wife, is mainly responsible for taking care of the Interserve guests. She works as a caretaker for the Interserve rented house, which doubles up as their residence in Pune. Whenever Interserve partners, On Trackers (volunteers) or Guests come to Pune, they mostly stay at their home. She is also helping Griha Shiksha (Home Schooling), and goes to office three days every week.

Prayer Request:

- 1) Pray for Rev. Zaidarhzauva and his wife, Sapi that they will experience fruitfulness and recognise the goodness of God through their ministry as they serve different groups of people in India.

Friday, 28 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Zechariah 14:1-9; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-18

Rev. Valeska Austin, the General Secretary of **Guyana Congregational Union (GCU)**, shares the following updates of the Church:

"Recognizing the need to remain relevant and effective in carrying out God's mission of reconciliation, healing and restoration, the Guyana Congregational Union embarked on a restructuring and revisioning process through a series of consultations and team visits. During the process a strategic Plan was structured to fashion the way forward. The focus of attention is as follows:

1. **Vision Statement:** The holistic development of God's creation as in Jesus Christ.
2. **Mission Statement:** The Guyana Congregational Union exists to be bearers of the Good News so that all God's creation may experience fullness of life and equip people to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ throughout the world.
3. **Value Statement:** We believe in God; God's love for all creation as demonstrated in the life of Jesus and that we must worship God in word and deed.
4. **Mission Priorities:** Five areas were identified: Congregational Renewal, Community Engagement, Leadership Foundation, Spirituality grounded in Scripture and Governance. The anticipated rate of the implementation process is challenge in many ways. However, we give God thanks for what we have done so far and the many lessons we are learning and the directions He is pointing us."

Prayer Requests:

1. That the programmes planned receive maximum support.
2. That hindrances to changes needed be removed.
3. That there would be clarity and decisiveness in communicating the steps to be taken along the way.
4. That persons with special skills and talents avail themselves to fulfil specific needs of the ministry and mission of the church.

Saturday, 29 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Micah 2:1-13; Matthew 24:15-31



Source: slbc2u.org.

Meditation on Micah 2:1-13

The word of the LORD came to Micah to prophesy to Judah concerning God's judgment against Samaria and Jerusalem. He did not mince his words but denounced the social evils of the cities of Judah. However, there were false prophets who declared that "disgrace will not overtake us" and that they will continue to enjoy life, "wine and strong drink" (Mic. 2:6, 11). But Judah had committed terrible injustice.

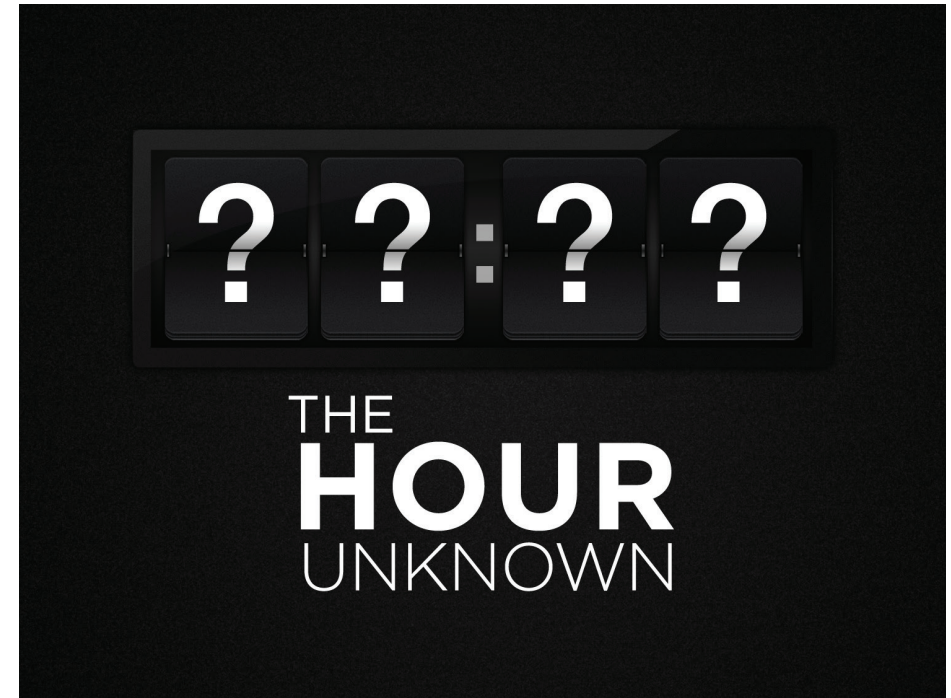
Those in power had coveted the land and houses of their people. The people were thrown into poverty and powerlessness. To covet someone's land is to rob that the future of that person and his descendants. For Israel, the land was an inheritance. But God saw these injustices and God would bring judgment upon those who did violence. Their land would be taken away by foreign invaders, "the LORD alters the inheritance of my people; how he removes it from me! Among our captors he parcels out our fields" (Mic. 2:4). Moreover, in the midst of this message of judgment, is the message of hope for God will gather a faithful remnant and offer restoration to them. At this Advent season, the coming of Christ offers us hope in the midst of many injustices that we see in our church and society.

The Psalmist says:

But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one whom you made strong for yourself.
Then we will never turn back from you;
give us life, and we will call on your name. (Ps. 80:17-18)

Sunday, 30 November 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Isaiah 64:1-9; Mark 13:24-37



Source:

<http://www.childrenssermons.com/lectionaryPowerPoints.asp?theDate=12/2/1984>

"But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch.

Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'" – Mark 13:32-37

Monday, 1 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 79; Micah 4:1-5; Revelation 15:1-8



The **United Reformed Church (URC)** is a member church of Council for World Mission (CWM). Congregational and Presbyterian churches were established in Britain in the 16th and 17th centuries, and they maintained their separate identities until recent years. The union between the Congregational Church in England and Wales, and the Presbyterian Church of England took place in 1972. In 1981 the Reformed Association of Churches of Christ was united with the United Reformed Church and in 2000 the Congregational Union of Scotland united with the United Reformed Church.

The United Reformed Church is exploring different ways to inspire their members to share their faith more readily. Currently, their Mission Committee is consulting people across the Church to get their comments on an evangelism project. Clearly, many people do not find this topic easy or comfortable. They have reminded themselves that most Christians in the United Kingdom (UK) would say that they come to faith because of meaningful relationships they experience as children. How might they enhance their work with children and young people? And they have welcomed the fact that British culture prizes authenticity and personal integrity, which are Christian values they do their best to embody. They hope that this work will not only enable their members to share their faith more openly that it will contribute to the ongoing discussions about evangelism that they have with their European Region partners.

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Pray for the Church as they explore ways to inspire their members to share their faith more readily.
- 2) Pray for the Church as they seek to contribute to the ongoing discussions about evangelism with the European Region partners.

Tuesday, 2 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 79; Micah 4:6-13; Revelation 18:1-10

The origins of the **Presbyterian Church of Myanmar (PCM)** first began in year 1914 to 1950, when Mizo immigrants who are Presbyterians moved into the Kalay and Kabaw valleys in Upper Chindwin. They were taught by a local Baptist minister and later by Methodist ministers, but chose to maintain their Presbyterian tradition and ways. Thus, Presbyterianism spread across the Chin Hills, starting with a first congregation in Losau Village in 1956, and in 1962 the church is constituted at a national level with 5000 members.

PCM has been moving toward with her colourful dialects in the midst of the major Buddhist tradition confronting the new political challenges headed by the civilian Government. The General Assembly of Presbyterian Church of Myanmar, the highest governing body of the Church supervises 9 Regional Synods, 3 Working Boards, and 2 Working Departments to equip 232 local Congregations with her Church mission in different projects. The Church has been involved in outreach Gospel mission through evangelizing animists and Buddhists in different parts of the Country. However the Church does not stand at big population of member as she is one of the main-line churches in Myanmar and works actively with Ecumenical Organizations at national level and international level. With the kind support of Council for World Mission and partner-churches the Church could assist Synods, Boards and Departments with different projects through supporting water-pipes in hilly region for drinking water, providing relevant tools and facilities to disable people, setting boarding houses for rural students and constructing Mission-Quarters for Missionaries in Mission outreach fields.

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Pray for the Church to stand firm in their faith as it seeks to bear witness in the midst of the major Buddhist tradition.
- 2) Pray for the various church projects that provide the basic necessities, such as water-pipes, to the communities in the hilly regions as well facilities for rural students.

Wednesday, 3 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 79; Micah 5:1-5a; Luke 21:34-38

Father, we praise you for the kingdom in the midst of us:
invisible and full of divine power,
a world more real than the transient things that we see, hear and touch.

We praise you, heavenly King,
Lord above all earthly power,
for finally yours is
the kingdom, the power and the glory.

We ask Lord, that what is unseen may become visible in the lives of your people:
May our actions proclaim the presence of the kingdom in the midst of the world,
may love be apparent in selfless service,
may faith be glimpsed in radical commitment to Christ and his truth,
may hope be seen in the courage and daring of the disciples of Jesus.

We ask, Lord, that the word of the kingdom may be heard in what we say:
Bless the word of the preacher that it may clearly point men and women
to the gate that leads to eternal life;
may the kingdom be heard
in words of reconciliation,
in words of encouragement and reassurance,
in the telling of Christ's story,
in the praise of the Church,
in the writings of theologians.

Send us, Lord, to tell everyone --
the kingdom is coming!

Source: "More everyday Prayers" by Henry McKeating, John Reardon and Michael Walker

Thursday, 4 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; Hosea 6:1-6; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-10

Ms Sylvia Coombs was a former Partner in Mission and staff from CWM Office. She served as a missionary in the Solomon Islands for 18 years from 1972 to 1989, and then worked with CWM as the Mission Coordinator until 2008. She witnessed the awareness of God's presence in every aspect of the life of the local community. She writes:



"One Saturday morning, I was washing some clothes in the bathroom. Outside the window, two school girls were also doing the washing in the laundry sink, but they were quite unaware that I was less than a yard away on the other side of a slightly open frosted glass window and listening to every word of their conversation.

And I did listen, fascinated, because one of the girls, Mareta (who is now a minister in the United Church in Solomon Islands) was telling the other girl about her Christian faith and how much she enjoyed studying the Bible.

I come to realise that whatever the activity we do, even if it is only doing the laundry, people are aware of the spiritual dimension of life and not afraid to talk about it. There is much that we can learn about carrying out Jesus instruction to be His disciples to be His witnesses 'in Jerusalem, Judaea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth' from the Pacific Region."

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Give thanks to God for the Christians who are actively aware of the presence of God in every aspect of their lives, and their willingness to put their trust in God and be His witnesses in the Pacific.
- 2) Pray for the Christians that they will continue to share their faith actively and helping others to come to know God in the Solomon Islands and the Pacific region.

Friday, 5 December 2014

**Bible Readings: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; Jeremiah 1:4-10;
Acts 11:19-26**



The **Presbyterian Church of India (PCI)** had its beginning in the year 1841, with the coming of Rev. Thomas Jones I and his wife who arrived at Sohra on 22nd June 1841 as the first missionary of the Presbyterian Church of Wales (then Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Missionary Society). From Sohra, the ministry of evangelization spread to Sylhet, Cachar Plains, the Cachar Hills of Assam, the Lushai Hills (now Mizoram) and later on to Manipur and Tripura. As the missionary work made rapid progress, the Church grew in character and membership; the Synod of the Presbyterian Church in Assam was constituted in 1926 as the highest Church Court having two constituent Assemblies: the Khasi Jaintia Presbyterian Church Assembly and Lushai Assembly. In 1968, the name Presbyterian Church in Assam was changed to the Presbyterian Church in North-East India (PCNEI), which was later changed again to "Presbyterian Church of India" in 1992.

The mission of the Church is as follows:

1. To pray and promote peace, justice and communal harmony in the country;
2. To eradicate poverty;
3. To build inclusive communities of women and men in the Church and the Society;
4. To protect the environment and to be good stewards of God's creation.

To realise and facilitate the mission of the Church, PCI has actively been organizing seminars on theological and social issues and promoting peace and justice. On the issue of ecology and environment, a Working Committee is entrusted to a) create awareness programme through media to make the people know and understand the threat on environment; and b) that the Church should take a serious concern on environmental issue by initiating a specific programme and action plan.

Prayer Request:

- 1) Pray for the mission of the Church as it seeks to be the 'light' and 'salt' in the communities, especially in their care of the environment.

Saturday, 6 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; Ezekiel 36:24-28; Mark 11:27-33



Source: Biblia.com

Meditation on Ezekiel 36:24-28

Ezekiel was in exile with his people in Babylon when the LORD asked him to prophesy to God's people. Some of his prophecies were filled with fantastic imagery and also personal drama and actions. In spite of God's name having been defiled, disgraced and discarded by God's own people among all the nations, God sought to restore God's name through the very people who had disappointed God. God's covenant of love binds God to God's people. Therefore, God commanded Ezekiel to prophesy God's blessing and renewal to God's people and part of it is found in today's reading, "A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you. I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances" (Ezek. 36:27-28). Just like in the creation when God breathed God's spirit to the human so as to give life, likewise, this same spirit will remove bring to life where once there was death. It will only be the Spirit of God that animates, preserves and restores.

In the Christian community, the life-giving spirit that brought life to God's creation is replaced by God's grace, the Holy Spirit who sustains us, moves and guides us toward the light of truth in Jesus Christ (cf. Rom. 5:5).

The Psalmist says:

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
Righteousness and peace will kiss each other. (Ps. 85:10)

Sunday, 7 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; Isaiah 40:1-11; Mark 1:1-8



Source:

<http://sunflowersatschool.blogspot.sg/2012/08/letter-m-preschool-unit.html>

Monday, 8 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 27; Isaiah 26:7-15; Acts 2:37-42



The Congregational Federation (CF) is a federation of independent or Congregational churches formed in 1972. The objective of the Federation is the advancement of the Christian faith.

One of the programmes of the Church is the CF-XTRA is the national youth provision for all young people aged 10-29 with connections to local CF churches. CF-XTRA is led by a Core Team who are elected by youth participants from any CF church through the facilitation of the CF-XTRA Church Contact. Their challenging brief is to develop an effective strategy for participation by all Federation's young people. CF-XTRA only works because it has the support of the churches. So, the Federation poses the following questions to the churches, "Do your young people know about CF-XTRA?"

- CF-XTRA is about young people growing in faith and becoming radical disciples of Jesus.
- CF-XTRA provides an exciting programme of regional, national and overseas events.
- CF-XTRA supports young people in local CF churches – whether they are involved in Sunday worship, or attend a club or group during the week. Whatever their connection to the fellowship of the church, they are already a member of CF-XTRA.
- CF-XTRA offers opportunities for local youth leaders to meet and support one another.
- CF-XTRA is seeking to build a community of young people and to develop the relationship between local churches and the national provision.



Source: www.congregational.org.uk

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Pray for members of the core team as they seek to develop programmes for all the young people in CF-XTRA.
- 2) Pray that the churches will have the vision and course to step out in faith for 2015.

Tuesday, 9 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 27; Isaiah 4:2-6; Acts 11:1-18



The **United Church of Zambia (UCZ)** founded on 16th January 1965, in Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation in Zambia was created by the amalgamation of the following churches: The Church of Central Africa in Rhodesia, The Congregations of the Copperbelt Free Church Council, The Church of Barotseland, The Methodist Church, Paris Evangelical, London Missionary Society and the Church of Scotland. The United Church in Zambia is the largest Protestant Church in the country; with a wide spread presence in all the 10 provinces of Zambia.

Since its formation, UCZ has been experiencing an exponential growth in membership and the numbers of congregations. As such, UCZ is faced with the challenges of trained ministers for the church. The church runs the UCZ Theological College where ministers are trained. The Theological College is in the process of being turned into a university. Moreover, most of UCZ's congregations are constructing manses and church (worship) buildings and therefore, UCZ as a whole are running fund raising projects to finance construction works, outreach programmes and social services. With respect to social responsibility, the various organs of the UCZ, including the Synod Headquarters, run schools, hospitals, and other social services programmes.

The UCZ is governed and operated through the Synod Headquarters, Presbyteries, Consistories, Congregations and Sections in that descending order of hierarchy. UCZ has serious plans to construct a new office complex for occupation and for rent and it is a way in which the Church desires to achieve financial self-sustainability.

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Pray for a robust, spirit filled United Church of Zambia, with the capacity to initiate spiritual revival and social economic uplifting of the people of Zambia.
- 2) Pray for peace and stability in the country, and political tolerance between the ruling party and those in opposition.

Wednesday, 10 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 27; Malachi 2:10—3:1; Luke 1:5-17

May those who are lost, O Christ,
find a guide in you.
May those who are hungry
find food at your table.
May those who are bullied find courage,
those who are worried find peace,
those who are weary find rest
with you, O Christ,
this day and the next.
Amen.

Pray:

- For truth and reconciliation among people who are estranged
- For all who must beg for food today
- For people who are far from home in a strange land
- For what you need this day

Source: "The Awkward Season, Prayers for Lent."

Thursday, 11 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 126; Habakkuk 2:1-5; Philippians 3:7-11

Rev. Charles Chua is a Partner-in Mission from Presbyterian Church in Singapore (PCS) to Presbyterian Church of Wales (PCW). He was sent as a mission enabler to Wales in December 2002 for his missionary appointment. His wife, Molly and their daughter Annabel join him in Wales. He shares the following happenings in Wales:

"From September onward at Argyle & Rhyddings Chapel we will be back to full swing as we welcome new students from Swansea University & Swansea Metropolitan University to our "English Corner" (EC).

The "English Corner" continues to provide us contacts and some seekers and Christians will come to Sunday worship and Bible study. *Pray with us that God will bring to us young people that are seeking for reality in life and a hunger for Him. Pray also that we will have new volunteers to help us in our outreach to International students. Remember too our Christmas Outreach Dinner on 13 Dec. for 60 students, that we will all come to "know the reason for the season".*



As for Tabernacle Chapel in Gorseinon, we continue with our weekly coffee morning outreach, monthly Family Service & "Messy Church". Thank God for the many contacts made from the community. Pray that as friendships are being built, we can point them to our Saviour.



There is also plan to start a Sunday School for children from the community in Sept. Pray for God's guidance & blessings in this new ministry.

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Give thanks for the outreach work at Tabernacle Church in Gorseinon.
- 2) Pray for the Christmas Outreach Dinner on 13 December for the students that they will know the 'reason for the season.'

Friday, 12 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 126; Habakkuk 3:2-6; Philippians 3:12-16



The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands (UCJCI)

was formed following a historic ceremony held on the grounds of Sabina Park in Kingston, Jamaica on 13th December 1992. This ceremony marked the union of the Disciples of Christ in Jamaica and the United Church of Jamaica and Grand Cayman. It also was another step in a journey to fulfill what the Church believe is God's will for the life and witness of God's Church.

In May 2014, UCJCI re-launched its Children's Ministry in May 2014. This is an update from Ms. Marsha Nathalee Martin, the Coordinator of Communications and Information Technology writes:

"This was in an effort to infuse the ministry to children with new inspiration, enthusiasm and a sense of commitment. The re-launch focussed on promoting the Church's ministry to children as being committed to:

1. A ministry of Commissioned people
2. A ministry of trained and certified people (including youth)
3. A ministry to children which involves leadership of the lay and Ordained minister
4. A ministry which provides challenge towards the faith relationship with Christ
5. A ministry which is intentionally budgeted for.



Each Congregation received Posters and Buttons (each Church School Teacher and Student received a Button). Further, during the launch ceremony, each Teacher and Minister was asked to make a commitment to the Ministry by signing the partnership agreement.

Please pray with us that...

- our Ministry to Children will help each child experience the fullness of life in and through Christ.
- our Teachers will be renewed and inspired each week and that this renewal and inspiration will keep the flame of their commitment going.

Saturday, 13 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 126; Habakkuk 3:13-19; Matthew 21:28-32



Source: preceptaustin.wordpress.com

Meditation on Habakkuk 3:13-19

There are two key passages in Habakkuk that are well known to Christian readers. One is Habakkuk 2:4 and the other is Habakkuk 3:17-19 which is part of today's reading. Habakkuk 3:17-19 is the climax of this book written by Habakkuk who prophesied to Judah who stubbornly refused to repent from her sinful ways. Repeatedly, Habakkuk called his people to change but they mocked him taunt songs (Hab. 2:6ff). Habakkuk asked God, "How long shall I cry for help?" "Why do you make me see wrongdoing?" (Hab. 1:2, 3). And God replied that God's chastening rod for Judah would be the Babylonians and affirmed that "the righteous live by their faith" (Hab. 2:4).

In the course of his questions and complaints, God concludes in Habakkuk 3 that though he does not fully understand God's way, "yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will exult in the God of my salvation. GOD, the Lord is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, and makes me tread upon the heights" (Hab. 3:18-19).

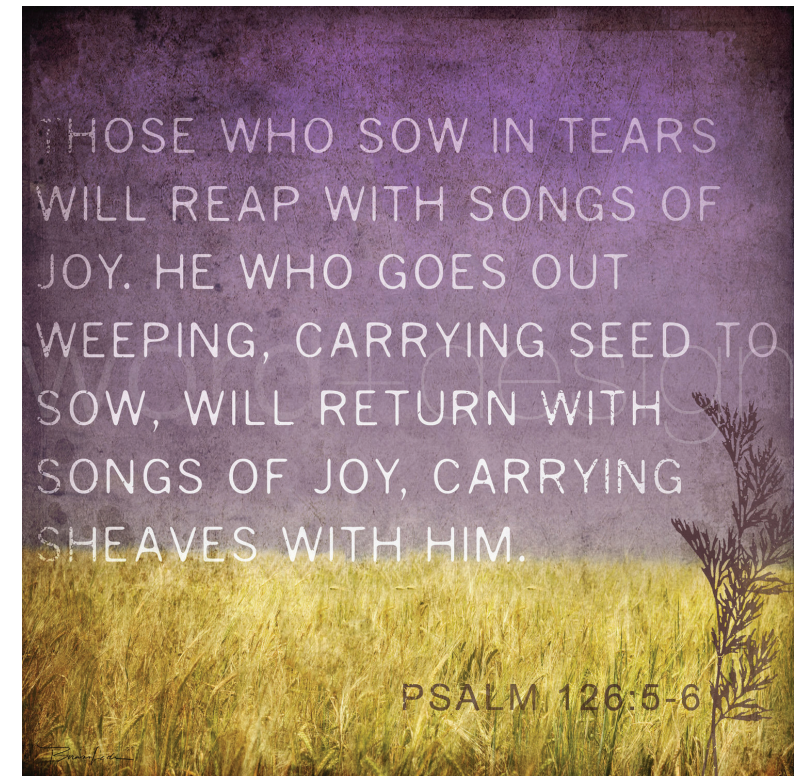
As we wait at this Advent season, not understanding the mystery of the Incarnation, yet we wait patiently for the glimpse of light and hope in Jesus Christ.

The Psalmist says:

The LORD has done great things for us,
and we rejoiced. (Ps. 126:3)

Sunday, 14 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 126; Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; John 1:6-8, 19-28



Source: <http://dwellingintheword.wordpress.com/2013/08/19/1121-psalms-126-and-127/>

Monday, 15 December 2014

**Bible Readings: Psalm 125; 1 Kings 18:1-18;
Ephesians 6:10-17**



Council for World Mission (CWM) was

created in 1977 and incorporates the London Missionary Society (1795), the Commonwealth Missionary Society (1836) and the (English) Presbyterian Board of Missions (1847). It is a worldwide community of 31 Christian churches committed to carry out God's mission.

Our Vision

"Fullness of life Through Christ, for all Creation"

We are partners of God and we participate in God's work with others. Churches are called to prophetic witness, to proclaim and live out the vision of Jesus Christ of *fullness of life for all creation*.

We envisage a different world, a world inspired by the values of love, justice, peace and compassion. It invites us to use our gifts and resources for God's work, following the example of Jesus in proclaiming his ministry of liberation, healing and hope (Luke 4: 14-20), and taking sides with the people who lived in poverty, the oppressed and the marginalized.

Our vision inspires us to action, to decisively and urgently live out our faith, walking together as partners in God's mission and working in harmony with the whole of God's creation for its freedom and wholeness. Living the values of fullness of life for all creation, and resisting the norms of Empire we participate in God's alternative.

Our Mission

"Called to partnership in Christ to mutually challenge, encourage, and equip member churches to share in God's mission"

The mission context and God's mandate of fullness of life for all creation demand a holistic understanding of mission. This compels churches today to be faithful in proclaiming God's fullness of life. We believe that this can be best lived out in the context of local congregations. We therefore commit ourselves to enabling member bodies to develop missional congregations where the affirmation of life and hope are experienced in community.

Prayer Request:

- 1) Pray for God's Spirit to give wisdom to the Directors of the Council in their deliberations on critical issues and concerns of CWM's work.

Tuesday, 16 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 125; 2 Kings 2:9-22; Acts 3:17—4:4

The following is a short introduction from Dira Ephraim of the **Nauru Congregational Church**:

In the middle of the ocean, God created an island so small that you cannot even notice it on the global map. The tiny speck of dot was discovered by Capt John Fearn in 1798 and named "Pleasant Island." The size of this oval shaped island in circumference is 14 square miles and situated 33 miles south of the Equator in the Central Pacific Ocean. It is divided into 14 districts, with 12 tribes represented by the 12 pointed star of Nauru's flag.

A missionary from Gilbert Island named Pastor Timoteo Tabwia came ashore during the peak of a civil war. He would visit the 14 districts to proclaim the gospel while surrounded by warriors with firearms. All night he would hear gunshots and rumours of wars, but his faith in continuing his passionate work did not cease. It was towards the end of 1888 that Nauru finally experience peace and silence in the absence of gunshots, when God eased the situation for by eliminating all instruments of war on arrival of the German warship Eber, which confiscated all guns from Nauru.

Ten years later in 1899, missionaries Philip A and Salome Delaporte fulfilled their mission of translating the Bible and hymnbook with the help of the Nauruan high Chief, Timothy Detudamo. In 1917, the London Missionary Society (LMS) took over and started promoting lay deacons as preachers and teachers, culminating in the ordination of the first locally born minister, Rev. Amram Itubwa in 1956.

Some prayer requests by members of NCC are as follows:

- 1) Pray for God's Holy Spirit to guide all minds, hearts and strengths of all our leaders in the government sectors, private sectors, non-governmental organizations, churches and communities.
- 2) Pray for wisdom and guidance in unity in decision-making, for humility and understanding with each other, and hopes for development to the nation, both socially and economically.
- 3) Pray for the leaders of our churches that they will have strength to uphold all situations happening in our nation. Also for knowledge to speak to members and to guide with understanding of love and faith, and the hope to endure so steps can be taken with accordance to God's will.

Wednesday, 17 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 125; Malachi 3:16—4:6; Mark 9:9-13

O Christ of the cross,
of the grave, of the road.
Before me, behind me,
beside me, beloved by me.
Where you have gone, let me go:
to the poor and the sick.
As you have cared, let me care:
for the doubting and the broken.
When you have prayed, let me pray:
at daybreak and nightfall.
Today, tomorrow, forever, O Christ,
this time, next time, all time. Amen.

Pray:

- For Missionaries who share Christ's Compassion
- For all who grieve the death of a child
- For those who work the night shift
- For joyful obedience to follow Christ this day

Source: "The Awkward Season, Prayers for Lent."

Thursday, 18 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; 2 Samuel 6:1-11; Hebrews 1:1-4

Ms. Hilda Asukile was sent by the United Church of Zambia (UCZ) to the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (FJKM) for her missionary appointment. She teaches English to the local teachers in FJKM Institut de Formation Et de Recherche Pedagogique (IFRP) so as to enable them to teach English themselves. Hilda's missionary service began in 2006 and a year later, her husband, Japhet joined her in missionary service. He works with SAF/FJKM, a development department of FJKM.

This is what Hilda has to say regarding her furlough in June-August 2014, entitled "A Furlough with a Difference,"

"Furlough or home leave is a time when every Partner-in-Mission looks forward to going back to their home country and church for a time of rest, sharing missionary experiences, refreshment and meeting family and friends.

My husband, Japhet and our daughter Ipyana and I were anxiously looking forward to our June- August 2014 furlough with a different expectation. We were going to wed off our first daughter!

Our bags had been packed for over a week, work assignments completed, farewells made, bills settled, a responsible person found to take care of our home and flights booked through our Mission Partner Co-coordinator.

Preparations for a wedding take a long time, which could be easier if all those involved are in the same place. Living so far away from home, wedding arrangements had to be done on email with our daughter and extended family members- dowry, invitations lists, wedding venue and bridal shower arrangements.

We thank God that He was on our side. We were happy that our daughter got married on July 19, 2014 at St Margaret's UCZ Church."



Prayer Requests:

- 1) Pray for their daughter, Dr. Melody and her husband, Dr. Bulaya for quick adjustment to married life and work demands.
- 2) Pray for their sons, Tumbone and Anganile's university studies; and their daughter, Ipyana for continued good health and education needs.

Friday, 19 December 2014

**Bible Readings: Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; 2 Samuel 6:12-19;
Hebrews 1:5-14**



The **Church of Bangladesh (COB)** came into being as the outcome of the separation from Pakistan. The separation initially started as a movement which focused on language finally took shape through the liberation war in 1971 which created a free and independent Bangladesh. Relationship with Pakistan was no longer possible. The Synod of the Church of Pakistan on 30th April 1974 declared and endorsed free and independent status of the Church of Bangladesh. This process brings together the Anglican and English Presbyterian Churches under the umbrella of the Church of Bangladesh. Here in retrospective it is worth mentioning the contribution of the devotees and missionaries who gave their labour, lives and endured all kind of trouble to proclaim the Good News and thus established congregations in the different parts of the country and especially in its remotest villages. COB always remembers those souls with due respect and pays homage to their memory. These people will remain always dear in our hearts and minds for their devoted work, such as giving the light of education and health services alongside pastoral care.

The mission of Church is to manifest and reflect the Good News of Jesus Christ towards achieving freedom and wellbeing of the humanity that would be realized through worship and accomplishment of different welfare activities including social, economic, educational, health and others. The Church believes in and wishes for spiritual enrichment, social justice and self-sustainability those rely and reflected upon revival of moral qualities of all.

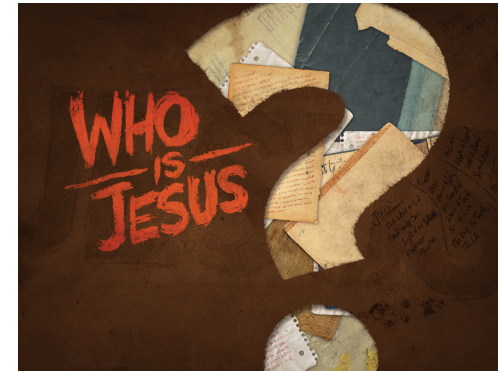
One of the challenges, amongst many, is poverty which is deep and widespread, affecting especially the Christian minority. And the Church has its limitations to address the present diverse socio-economic crisis.

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Pray for the Christian witness of the Church of Bangladesh in the midst of widespread and deep poverty.
- 2) Pray for the many Bangladeshi workers who are working abroad and in the garment factories in Bangladesh that they receive fair treatment from their employers.

Saturday, 20 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; Judges 13:2-24; John 7:40-52



Source: scpeanutgallery.com

Meditation on John 7:40-52

The teaching of Jesus created division among the crowd with regards to his identity as the Messiah. And so, there was another attempt made to seize Jesus but they did not act on it, “no one laid hands on him” (cf. John 7:30). The ‘hour’ has not come. The chief priests and Pharisees questioned the temple police for the non-arrest of Jesus, who answered, ‘never has anyone spoken like this!’ (John 7:46). Therefore, there was varied and chaotic response to Jesus and his teaching within the Jewish leadership, such as Nicodemus one of their own members who favoured Jesus (John 7:50-52).

The coming of Jesus caused division for many who heard it. Some questioned. Some returned empty handed. Some reacted with contempt. Nicodemus reacted with timidity. He heard of Jesus and even visited him but was silent when questioned in the presence of his colleagues (cf. John 3:1-10). Who is this Jesus to us whom we are waiting at this Advent season? The answer lies with you and me?

The Psalmist says:

I will sing of your steadfast love, O LORD, forever;
with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness
to all generations. (Ps. 89:1)

Sunday, 21 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Luke 1:26-38

Luke 1:38

I am the Lord's servant,
and I am willing to accept
whatever he wants.
May everything you have
said come true.

Source: <http://myeverydaygod.com/2013/07/06/hard-blessings/>

Monday, 22 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 96; Zephaniah 3:8-13;
Romans 10:5-13



World Vision is a global Christian relief, development and advocacy organisation, dedicated to working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice. The organisation serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender. It also places a particular emphasis on children, helping them to experience life to its fullness and creating an environment that cares and protects them.

One area of help that World Vision provides is hygiene and sanitation. Due to the lack of clean, safe and private toilets, one in three people in the world have to relieve themselves in unsanitary conditions. This leads to health issues in developing countries, such as diarrhoea, that kills a child every 20 seconds. These threats could be solved by the provision of toilets and consistent handwashing with soap, which would save the lives of thousands of children per day.

To advocate sanitation and hygiene part of “**WASH**” (Clean Water And Sanitation and Hygiene), World Vision built demonstration latrines in schools and health centres to promote awareness, and rally the local communities to build their own clean latrines and change personal behaviours so these facilities are properly used. They hope that through this initiative, communities can contribute to a healthy and productive life for their children.

Prayer Request:

- 1) Pray for the initiative, “**WASH**” in its task to advocate for sanitation and hygiene in the communities.

Tuesday, 23 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 96; Zephaniah 3:14-20; Romans 13:11-14

The **United Church in Solomon Islands (UCSI)** was originally a part of the former United Church in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands (UCPNGSI). UCSI traces its history back to the Australian Methodist Church which began missionary work in the Solomon Islands in 1902. The Methodists soon became the predominant denomination in that region, and together with the Papua Ekalesia and the Union Church in Port Moresby, formed the United Church in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands in 1968. In 1996, the General Assembly of the United Church in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands resolved that the existence of one united church covering two independent countries should no longer be maintained. Thus, the United Church in Solomon Islands came into being as an autonomous church on its own.

The Western Province of the Solomon Islands is an area of concentration of the United Church with Aola on Guadalcanal the only establishment further east. In the 1980s, the Church started spreading out to other parts of the country, including the capital Honiara. The Church operates around eighty Schools, two hospitals and a number of clinics. It is also involved in training people for mission, by preparing them to face challenges like distances, ethnic and linguistic diversity in mission. Other activities such as Men's Fellowship, Women's Fellowship, Youth and Sunday School, and Boys' and Girls' Brigades are also actively supported by the Church. The Women Fellowship was one of such groups that is active in the local congregation, participating in decision making at all levels of the church. The Church also looks into helping young people, providing skills training for school drop-outs and the unemployed, and work towards improving the literacy of the people.

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Pray for the social institutions of the Church, such as schools and hospitals, to shine in the nation as they provide education and medical care respectively to the locals.
- 2) Pray that the Church will receive wisdom from God to manage the institutions and come up with creative ways to assist those who are unemployed and with low literacy.

Based on: <http://www.unitingworld.org.au/partners/our-overseas-partners/the-pacific/the-united-church-in-solomon-islands/>

Wednesday, 24 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 96; Isaiah 9:2-7; Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

The preparations are over. We are ready, Lord.

Holy is your name.

Make holy our joys; holy our fellowship.

**Make holy our thoughts of those absent from us; holy
our memories of other years.**

**Be at our feast, and may our living presence enliven all
we do.**

Come, O Lord.

Source: "More everyday Prayers" by Henry McKeating, John Reardon and Michael Walker

Thursday, 25 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 97; Isaiah 62:6-12;

Luke 2:[1-7] 8-20



CWM Partners-in-Mission

The mission in which Christians engage is God's mission. God sent God's Son into the world. The risen Christ sent his disciples to continue his ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit. Christians today share in this mission.

One of the main aims of personnel sharing is to learn from one another in partnership. CWM's founding document, *Sharing in One World Mission* states, "We believe that we become participants in mission not because we hold all the answers and all the truth, but because we are part of the body of Christ. All of us are still searchers. We have glimpsed the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and what we know we love. But there are varieties of Christian experience and of Christian community we have not entered. There are doubtless many ways in which Christ comes to men and women that we have never seen. Therefore, we seek a form of missionary organisation in which we may learn from each other, for in that fellowship we believe that the Holy Spirit speaks to all through each."

The sharing of people is therefore multi-directional. Every church has something to offer and something to receive. Mission-Partners go from North to South, South to North, South to South, and North to North. This multi-directional sharing should be "person-oriented", and not merely "task-oriented". There is an emphasis on personal character, spirituality and vocation. Each sharing of a mission partner should strengthen the mutual relationship between the churches involved.

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Thanksgiving for past and current partners-in-mission of CWM in the work of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- 2) Pray for the "person-oriented" focus of CWM member churches in their outreach ministry.

Friday, 26 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 148; Jeremiah 26:1-9, 12-15;

Acts 6:8-15; 7:51-60



The history of the **Presbyterian Church in Korea (PCK)** started in 1884, when Suh Sang Ryun founded the Sorae Church, and Allen from the Presbyterian Church of North America arrived in Korea to start a medical ministry. Rev. Horace G. Underwood then came to Korea in 1885 to carry out his mission work. These efforts culminated into the founding of the Presbyterian Mission in Korea. By 1907, the All-Korea Presbytery (Dok Presbytery) was organized which united all the presbyteries in Korea as one, and the first seven graduates of the Pyung Yang Theological Seminary were ordained as pastors of the Presbyterian Church. In 1934, due to theological disputes and other causes, the Presbyterian Church divided into various denominations. The Church since then called themselves The Presbyterian Church of Korea as the Tong-hap group.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Korea was established on 1st September 1912. Based on the Bible and the constitution of the Presbyterian Church of Korea, they endeavour to spread the Gospel and carry out all kinds of ministry according to the Reformed Church tradition and ecumenical spirit.

The logo of the Church personifies the core message of PCK. The cross symbolizes Christ's work of salvation and therefore symbolizes Christianity, and the scroll represents God's Word and suggests the form of the Korean peninsula. The cross is coloured red to represent Christ's blood and the grace of God's salvation at the same time. The scroll is coloured green to present the hope and the will of the Church. The symbol portrays the hope and the will of the General Assembly to witness the evangelization not only of Korea but of the whole world based on the work of salvation through Christ's blood.

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Thanksgiving to God for God's faithfulness and love to the Presbyterian Church in Korea.
- 2) Pray that the Church makes an impact in the society in word and deed, through evangelism and social concern.

Saturday, 27 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 148; Exodus 33:18-23; 1 John 1:1-9



Source: friartucksfleetingthoughts.blogspot.com

Meditation on 1 John 1:1-9

We just celebrated Christmas two days ago and we are still in the Christmas season, remembering the mystery of the Word made flesh in Jesus Christ (cf. John 1:1-14). In our reading from the first epistle of John today, we are reminded again of the mystery of the Incarnation which John seeks to assert that he witnessed the Word made flesh, “what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, ..” (1 John 1:1). It is a declaration that Jesus is truly human. And he saw it and is testifying to it.

Furthermore, John reiterates that God is light and we are immediately brought back to John 1:1-5 which speaks that the Word is the light that “shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it” (John 1:5). And in his letter, John exhorts his readers to walk in the light for if we have communion with God and yet walk in darkness, we are lying and not doing what is true. Therefore, let us walk in God’s light.

The Psalmist says:

Praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD from the heavens;
praise him in the heights!
Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his host! (Ps. 148:1-2)

Sunday, 28 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 148; Jeremiah 31:15-17; Matthew 2:13-18



Source: <http://www.pinterest.com/pin/263319909436114813/>

Monday, 29 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 148; Isaiah 49:5-15; Matthew 12:46-50

Willy Lau, Synod Youth Executive for the Presbyterian Church in Singapore (PCS) writes that for 3 weeks in May 2014, 30 young adults from 11 Presbyterian churches came together for a training and exposure programme called STEP (Synod Training and Exposure Programme). The young adults were exposed to theological education, each other's church history, Presbyterianism, and dialogue sessions about public theology, missions, social entrepreneurship, Christian leadership and politics. The following is a reflection of one of the participants, Michelle Quak:



“He has showed you, O man, what is Good. And what does the Lord require of you? But to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8). This is the verse that Uncle Timothy from HealthServe mentioned during his orientation talk. What does it mean to “do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God?” in the present day? When we see suffering and injustice, how should we react? To love kindness (or in some translations, mercy) and respond with kindness and mercy? Will these lead us to walk humbly with God?

There are times when I questioned the documentaries which were made about migrant workers and shown on TV – “Are these problems really real, or are they hyped up to gain viewership ratings? Singaporeans aren’t that bad, right? This can’t be true.” Of course, I wasn’t doubting the reality of such injustice but the degree to which it was real. These are indeed childish selfish thoughts.

The STEP programme has given me this opportunity to be in the field to experience for myself what reality is like. This has been a real eye-opener and the stories of migrant workers are as real as it can get. The injustice they faced is uncalled for. Yes, companies are trying to cut corners and survive, but migrant workers are humans too. They have families to feed and lives to care for. This injustice need not be restricted to our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, but to fellow human beings, and also to our physical environment.”

Prayer Request:

- 1) Pray for the ‘STEPers’ as they seek to grow in their relationship with God and also as future leaders of PCS.

Tuesday, 30 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 148; Proverbs 9:1-12; 2 Peter 3:8-13



The **Congregational Christian Church of Samoa (CCCS)** traces its beginnings to the arrival in 1830 of missionaries sent by the London Missionary Society, accompanied by missionary teachers from Tahiti and the Cook Islands and a Samoan couple from Tonga. They arrived at a time of fierce warfare and fighting between local chiefs, and the people who were weary of violence and bloodshed readily received the missionary's gospel of peace. When a renowned paramount chief of a much respected family lineage officially accepted the new religion, all his followers and kinsfolk immediately followed suit. Within a few years, virtually the whole of Samoa was converted to Christianity.

A burning zeal for the gospel was engendered within the spirit of the newly converted nation. Huge numbers of people soon offered themselves for overseas mission work. In 1839, the first twelve Samoan missionaries left for mission work in Melanesia. Ever since then up to 1975, Samoans have continued to take the gospel message to other Pacific islands, e.g. Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Niue, Tokelau, New Caledonia, Solomon Islands, Wallis & Fortuna. Many of these early Samoan missionaries never returned home; they occupy many of the un-named and unmarked graves in the islands of the Pacific.

The Samoan church during the missionary period engaged itself in the "social redemption of humanity". This vision was based on the church's understanding of God's sovereignty. It saw the divine purpose of redemption not in individual terms only but also in corporate, social and political terms. The newly acquired faith had its focus on the transformation of life and society. That legacy remains a motivating force in the nation's idealism as well as in the church's commitment to active social efforts.

Prayer Request:

- 1) Thanksgiving for the missionary endeavour of CCCS in the past and also in the present. Pray that the vision of God's divine redemptive purpose be experienced in all aspects of life and society.

Wednesday, 31 December 2014

Bible Readings: Psalm 148; 1 Kings 3:5-14; John 8:12-19

Lord, we offer to you the year that is past, its joys and its regrets. Sanctify our joys, and forgive our failures, for the sake of Jesus your Son.

We offer you our thanksgiving for the growth you have given us, in experience, and in grace.

Lord of the years,
we ask your blessings on the year to come.
Give us the resilience to bear its disappointments,
energy to seize its opportunities,
and openness to accept the more abundant life
which you have promised to us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Christ, you have many services to be done.
We thank you that some are easy, some bring honour;
that in some we may please you and please ourselves.
Help us not to shirk those that are difficult or bring reproach,
in which we cannot please you except by denying ourselves.

Lord, you gave your ancient people a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire to guide them to the place which you had promised them: guide us, too (for we have not travelled this way before), in the deserts we must pass through and the waters we must cross, that at the year's end we may be nearer to the heavenly city to which you are calling us than now at its beginning.

Source: "More everyday Prayer" by Henry McKeating, John Reardon and Michael Walker.