



## 34<sup>th</sup> Session, Trinity Annual Conference Methodist Church in Malaysia



Trac News

Ministers and lay delegates from our TRAC churches in West Malaysia came together on 21<sup>st</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> November 2009 for the 34<sup>th</sup> Session TRAC Annual Conference held at the Everly Resort Hotel, Melaka. That Session was significant for it marks the last of the 'quadrennial working year' and the beginning of another with a new theme, *'Spreading Scriptural Holiness, Transforming the Nation.'* Its accompanying 4 essentials are

1. LIFELONG DISCIPLESHIP
2. WHOLESOME FAMILIES
3. A VOICE TO OUR NATION
4. A VISION FOR THE WORLD.

This is in line with the General Conference's Road Map Emphases for the next few quadrenniums and that all churches are to work in tandem with these essentials.

At the Opening Worship and Communion Service, Conference President, Rev. Dr. Ong Hwai Teik spoke on the topic: **'More Beyond: The Call and Challenge to go Deeper'** based on the scripture text, Luke 5:1-11. He called on us to go deeper in the faith, in commitment and in submission to Christ; to go deeper especially in the area of the spiritual disciplines leading to transformed lives. As TRAC launches out with

a new vision, the Sengoi Mission Conference is moving into deeper waters as well, as they have launched **'Wawasan Berdikari 2020'** with the goal of becoming a Provisional Annual Conference. The confidence is that the Lord is with us when we walk into deeper waters.

We were all blessed by the Conference Speaker Dr. Steve Seamands. In his first sharing, based on Scripture text, Genesis 17: 1-22, Dr. Seamands reminded us that God wants our wholeheartedness in our love and deep relationship with Him. He wants to give us the best gift (an Isaac and not an Ishmael) but as we

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receive the best from Him, we must be mindful that we do not idolize that gift and forget the Giver. Our God is a jealous God and if we have made idols of our gifts He will call us to 'Mount Moriah' to sacrifice that gift, as he did Abraham who was called to lay down Isaac. Remember the Giver of good gifts.

Dr. Seamands used the passage Joshua 5:1-12 to explain how God wants to release us of the areas of shame, disgrace, failures in our lives so that we can go deeper in our relationship with Him. God can help us roll back the shame and pain by planting in our hearts his love, by applying to us the work of redemption through the cross.

*'Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame.'*

For his third and final message, Dr. Seamands pointed out the power of praise. The Scripture text was Psalm 71. We can praise God in the midst of difficult times and when we do that, we are putting God in charge. *"God dwells in the middle of our muddle."* In the midst of difficulties, we have to learn to give up the right to grumble and feel sorry for ourselves. Instead we surrender the situation to Him and praise Him for who He is.

*'My mouth is filled with your praise, declaring your splendor all day long.'*  
Psalm 71:8

At the end of each session with Dr. Seamands, there was altar call and many responded as moved by the Spirit of God. We were all blessed by the presence of the Holy Spirit, through the teaching, and worship sessions (led by members of the TRAC Board of Worship).

We always look forward to the TRAC Presidential Address which the President tables at the Conference Session, giving a comprehensive report on the state of the Annual Conference and the way forward. (An excerpt of the Address can be found in this issue of the Berita TRAC). The Bishop chaired that session and after the Address, delegates were given the opportunity to seek clarification and give their input where relevant. From that session all churches could get the heartbeat of the Conference and work in unity for the glory of God.

For our workshop sessions, Mr. Peter Yew gave a power point presentation on the work being carried by the members of Wesley Seremban, through **Persatuan Berdikari Seremban**. Its vision statement is *'To teach the trainees to be self reliant, giving them the right*

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to live meaningful and full lives, with a hope to move towards independent living and to be competent members of society.' The TRAC President called on all TRAC churches to support this worthy cause.

Ms. Irene Chan from EE Malaysia introduced the exciting new 'product' called XEE to the conference. XEE is an adaptation of the Evangelism Explosion training ministry which is designed to reach primarily Generation X (25-40 age group) and younger.

A memorial service was held for Rev. Eugene McGraw (May 17, 1909 – July 6, 2009) and Dr. Larry Cheah (May 21, 1935 – January 29, 2009). Eulogy for Rev. McGraw was given by Dato' Daniel Tay while Mr. Steven Lee gave the eulogy for Dr. Larry Cheah. Family members of Dr. Larry Cheah were present at the memorial service.

At the Closing Service, Bishop Dr. Hwa Yung delivered the message **'Train yourself in Godliness'** based on the Scripture text 1 Timothy 4:7-16. We are called to train ourselves in godliness which means that we are to externally reflect Christ-like character and to have the fear of the Lord in our hearts. He reminded the pastors that lay people want 3 things from pastors: that they are godly, that they work hard and that they love those put under their charge.

We cannot help but notice that our



Conference Sessions have evolved by the grace of God. As we bathe our Conference sessions in prayer, indicating our total dependence on Him, God will guide and bless with His presence. It is heartening to see more of our conference participants (30-40) coming together at 6 am in the morning to praise God and commune with Him. The Business Sessions went on smoothly as reports from the various Boards and Districts were received.

As always, the host District would always extend great hospitality, ensuring that our stay was comfortable and we take this opportunity to say *'Terima Kasih'* to the Southern District. We look forward to the 35<sup>th</sup> Session and we know that the Perak District will extend the same warm hospitality to us as well. We would like to thank the

TRAC Board of Worship and Music for the way they took their responsibilities seriously in leading His people into the awesome presence of the Lord in worship. Above all, we thank the Lord Almighty for this family of TRAC, for His guiding hand and we pray that we will not be complacent but be willing to venture deeper for His glory.

Submitted by:  
Mrs. Lily Ch'ng



# PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

(An excerpt)

34th Session - Trinity Annual Conference



## 'Wrapping up': The Old Theme of 'Open Heavens, Global Missions'

The following is an excerpt of the Address, delivered by Rev. Dr Ong Hwai Teik on 22nd November, 2009 at the 34th Session.

As at 31 Dec. 2008, TRAC has a membership of 14,935, with a total of 74 church services. Out of these, 6 are BM/Indonesian, 6 are Chinese, 3 are Nepali and 1 each in Vietnamese, Cambodian and Tamil. TRAC has another 5 Preaching Points.

### A brief survey of the 5 Essentials.

- 1. Leadership and Development:** The Local Preacher's License has resulted in producing 3 Supply Pastors, 3 Approved Supply Pastors and 2 part-time Approved Supply Pastors. We now have a growing list of LPLs who can be harnessed for local church ministries. The TRAC Executive Board, together with the pertinent Boards will be drawing up the syllabus of a new leadership module on "Organizational Leadership in TRAC" with the goals of addressing structural and 'church management' issues.
- 2. Community Building:** It is our aim that every TRAC church has small group ministry for vital discipleship. As our churches grow, we need to be watchful in building communities of unity. Through the leadership of the Bishop, Presidents and GCEC, we are also building stronger inter Annual Conference community and more recently, we are also strengthening the wider regional Methodist Community connection through the relief funds that we send to our sister churches in Myanmar, Taiwan, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and the Philippines.
- 3. Missions and Outreach:** More TRAC churches are actively involved in Myanmar. Part of the resulting post Nargis cyclone disaster relief includes TRAC churches supporting 9 towns/villages/projects for church planting. The Perak District held a consultation (5 April 2009) on the work in Bangladesh, and worked out a policy of support that prioritizes personnel equipping and training. We continue our support for Nepal and Vietnam. The TRAC Missions Conference (9-11 October 09) had for its theme, "Discipling the Nations" with a local and global Unreached People Groups

(UPGs) emphasis. We have begun to identify theological students from our adopted countries who come not only to receive training but also minister to their own communities in our migrant congregations (Myanmarese and Vietnamese work). Our support for the Persidangan Missi Sengoi will continue, especially in the light of their "Wawasan Berdikari 2020" where they aim to be a Provisional Annual Conference.

### 4. Discipleship and Spirituality.

We had the ICM Public lecture series on the theme "The Heart and Soul of Spiritual Formation." The ICM also introduced the SWOT analysis which had contributed to the evaluation and forward planning processes for the 15 churches that participated. The Soul-Talk Series, "the Journey" was also implemented.

The Lent Meditations booklets produced through the Board of Worship and Music had continued to bless a wider audience.

Our Prayer track/movement continues to make some progress as we held the 4th TRAC Prayer Conference (20-22 March) in KL. This was followed on 15-17 May by the Watch Hour Retreat for intercessors in Fraser's Hill. Our Youth Prayer Conference was on 19-22 Mar in Ipoh Wesley. At the end of 2008, statistics show that there are 126 prayer groups in our churches.

### 5. Family: Children, Youth and Seniors Ministry

As church leaders, we must intentionally support our local and TRAC level youth programs, especially spotting and subsidizing local youths for the Jeremiah School. The 1st TRAC Young Adults Convention (20-31 August) in Sepang had 62 from TRAC churches attending. They have started a Facebook website as a community connecting point for TRAC young adults. The 2nd Convention will be held in Ipoh.

Our MSF is planning to have a Directed Retreat with our ICM Director as facilitator next year. They are also re-visiting the need for the setting up of Retirement Homes/Community for our senior community.

## NEW QUADRENNIUM THEME: 'SPREADING SCRIPTURAL HOLINESS, TRANSFORMING THE NATION'

### Accompanying 4 Essentials :

**Lifelong discipleship, Wholesome families, A voice to the nation, A vision for the World.**

All reports from 2010 – 2013 will follow this new 'template'.

### 1. Lifelong Discipleship – following Christ, Becoming Like Christ.

The goal of the Great Commission is not merely to win "converts" but to make disciples.

#### Goal :

To have every disciple continue to grow holistically through mentoring and spiritual formation at all levels towards Christ-likeness.

#### Strategies:

- Emphasis on Small Groups
- Implement and further develop the Christian Growth Strategy.
- To challenge our people to take up church based vocations.
- To equip and empower our members for authentic discipleship in the market place and public square.

### 2. Wholesome Families – Growing strong families in Christ.

As an Annual Conference, we want to see strong families experiencing deepening spiritual dynamics, healthy relationships, committed in faith and service as a household of believers. A strong Christian family will make for a strong family of Christ in the local church.

#### Goals:

- To build strong marriages with mutual submission and clarity of roles.
- To strengthen parenting relationships of parents and children.
- To cultivate godly values and biblical standards for families.

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### Strategies:

- Setting up Family Devotion in every home.
- Introduce Intergenerational Family Worship in church services regularly every year.
- Develop, train and implement Marriage courses and parenting courses.
- Establish a Think Tank for Family Ministry.

### 3. A Voice to our Nation – Seeking our Nation's Welfare in Christ.

We must take our responsibility of citizenship in this land seriously and be prepared to take action to give these responsibilities meaning.

### Goals:

- To be a voice that speaks up for social concerns, social justice and social action.
- To be a voice that pricks the conscience of the nation.

### Strategies:

- Educate, inform, mobilize and getting our constituents and friends to be personally involved in projects based on our Methodist Social Principles.
- Adopt specific foci annually –

**2010:** Theological basis for social involvement, political life, human rights and responsibility.

**2011:** Church and General Welfare and ecology.

**2012:** Christian and economic order.

**2013:** Family and marriage.

### 4. A Vision for the World – Embracing Local and Global Missions for Christ.

We shall reach out locally with planting congregations in tertiary education institutions, in street ministry centers, among migrant communities and market places where offices are. We will also continue to be committed to cross cultural and overseas missions.

### Goals:

- Witnessing to the nations far and near, reducing the Unreached People Groups both global and local.
- Sending missionaries
- Reaching out to migrant workers.
- Planting congregations/churches.

### Strategies:

- Establish the TRAC Mission Society for common focus/direction for growth
- Reach the unchurched in our neighbourhood: continue to train using XEE (Evangelism Explosion), ALPHA, lifestyle evangelism.

- To intentionally plant congregation/churches especially in urban areas.
- On-going mission awareness of missions: to train using Kairos course.
- Expand outreach ministry to migrant workers, including partnering/adopting missionaries sent here.
- Continue organizing annual TRAC Missions Conference/Consultation
- Equip members with knowledge of other faiths/religions.

### III 'Staying Connected': Matters of Wider Connection.

#### 1. Some General Conference Matters.

- Methodist Book of Discipline 2008** edition is now available.
- GC Combined Pastors School 2010:** Sibu, 27-30 April 2010.
- GC Road Map** for the long haul – hopefully to be ready by the earlier part of next year.
- Methodist Prayer Convention 2011** - to be in Sibu on 29 April – 1 May 2011.
- Mission Support for SIAC:** We will continue to fulfill our 7 year financial support to SIAC which started in 2007.

#### 2. Global Day of Prayer 2010: local and international observance/celebration.

- This will be celebrated locally on 23 May 2010 in the Melawati Stadium.
- On the same day in Cape Town, S. Africa, there will be a global gathering in a stadium.  
The Bishop, Council of Presidents and Annual Conference Lay Leaders will be participating.
- The Malaysian National Prayer Network will have its 3rd Annual National Prayer Leaders Consultation on 7-9 December 2010 in Kajang.

#### 3. Council of Churches of Malaysia.

The CCM Building Fund stands at RM1.8 million, with another RM6.4 million to be raised over the next 2 years. CCM continues to ask all local congregations to give at least RM100 annually or take an offering for its administrative and ministries costs.

CCM Triennial Assembly will be in Sibu, on 21-24 June 2010.

CCA Assembly will be held at the Grand Seasons Hotel, KL, on 14-21 April 2010

#### 4. The Malaysian Christian School Council

The Malaysian Christian School Council has produced a booklet with a DVD presenting a 10 minute video clip called "Teaching as a Mission and Vocation." It is to challenge more of our young people to serve the Lord in this most important and strategic vocation which can give our nation depth of character and hope for the future.

- TRAC is being used by the Lord to initiate the launch on 7 December 2008 of the Wesley Methodist Secondary School, Ipoh. The WMSI Primary is scheduled to be launched on 4 January 2010. It remains a GC and COE institution/project.
  - The GC and COE are now in the process of progressing our education policies which will see the establishment of a stable of quality Methodist schools and colleges.
  - We in TRAC should not lose sight of 're-using/ re-digging' these 'wells' of education for evangelism, spreading Scriptural holiness and transforming the nation.
5. TRAC continues to give support and partnership to **Seminari Teoloji Malaysia** and **Malaysian CARE**.

### Conclusion

It is with deep thanksgiving that I take stock of all that had happened in TRAC this year.

- For the generosity of 4 Selangor churches and 1 in Perak which contributed towards the building of a Chapel/Rumah Kumpulan in Kampung Jelintuh, Gopeng which was dedicated on 9th October, 2009
- The launch of Projek Jahitan Berdikari PMS at Pusat Latihan Raub Methodist. 12 sewing machines were bought for training of young Sengoi ladies.
- For the support of the Annual Conference in making my May 2009 completion of the D.Min program with Asbury Theological Seminary, Kentucky, USA
- For the many in our TRAC churches who continue to keep me and our Annual Conference work and workers in their intercessions. I must thank those who continually sustain me with their prayers, good words and encouragement and truthful feedback.

*To Christ be the glory for ever and ever.*



# Pastoral Appointments for 2010

## EASTERN DISTRICT

District Superintendent	Rev Ashok Amarasingham
Bentong Christ MC	DS, Pastor Assigned
Kuala Lipis Wesley MC	Rev Joshua Khong, Pastor Assigned
Raub Wesley MC	DS, Pastor Assigned
Kuantan Wesley MC	Rev Joshua Khong Chee Leong, Pastor

## NORTHERN DISTRICT

District Superintendent	Rev Hwa Jen
Alor Setar Wesley MC	Mr Lee Peng Chiat, Approved Supply Pastor
Sg. Petani Wesley MC	Mr Lee Peng Chiat, Approved Supply Pastor
Kulim Wesley MC	DS, Pastor Assigned
Butterworth Wesley MC	Mr Andrew Yeoh Boon Lay, Part-time Approved Supply Pastor
Penang Wesley MC	Rev Hwa Jen, Pastor
Penang Trinity MC	Rev Woo Kit Sang, Pastor
Parit Buntar Wesley MC	Rev Rev Woo Kit Sang, Pastor

## PERAK DISTRICT

District Superintendent	Rev Dr Timothy Ong
Ipoh Wesley MC	Rev Dr Timothy Ong, Pastor
Ipoh Canning Garden MC	Rev T. Jeyakumar, Pastor
	Rev Audrey Yap Yin Har, Approved Supply Pastor
	Mr Richard Leow Kok Khuen, Approved Supply Pastor
	Ms Elaine Low Chooi Ling, Approved Supply Pastor
Taiping Wesley MC	Mr Tan Yee Ho, Approved Supply Pastor
	Mr John Baru, Approved Supply Pastor
Bercham MC, Ipoh	Rev Rev Dr Timothy Ong, Pastor
Grace, Ipoh MC	Rev T. Jeyakumar, Pastor Assigned
Kampar Wesley MC	Rev Yong Wai Yin, Pastor
Teluk Intan Wesley MC	Rev Bernard Yogaraj Lazar, Pastor
Sitiawan Wesley MC	Rev Henry Yong Wei Choong, Pastor
	Mr Milkias Padan, Approved Supply Pastor

## FEDERAL TERRITORY

District Superintendent	Rev Andrew Tan Kok Khoon
Kuala Lumpur Wesley MC	Rev Andrew Tan Kok Khoon, Pastor
	Rev Buell Abraham, Associate Pastor
Ampang Christ MC	Rev Peggy Seow Kooi Nai, Pastor Assigned
Cheras Faith MC	Rev Peggy Seow Kooi Nai, Pastor
Kepong Wesley MC	Rev Yew Nieng Song, Pastor
Sentul Grace MC	Rev Yew Nieng Song, Pastor
	Miss Tan Chew Mae, Approved Supply Pastor
Puchong Life MC	Rev Christopher Rao, Pastor



**SELANGOR DISTRICT**

<b>District Superintendent</b>	<b>Rev Lawrence Francis</b>
Petaling Jaya Trinity MC	Rev Ricky Ho Kim Hock, Pastor
	Mr Andrew Lim Teng Siang, Assistant Pastor
Damansara Utama MC	-- to be appointed
Petaling Jaya Emmanuel MC	DS, Pastor Assigned
Sg. Way/Subang MC	-- to be appointed
Subang MC	Mr Robert Khaw Hock Pang, Approved Supply Pastor
Kelang Wesley MC	Rev Ashok Amarasingham, Pastor
Sungai Buloh Trinity MC	Rev Lawrence Francis, Pastor

**SOUTHERN DISTRICT**

<b>District Superintendent</b>	<b>Rev Yew Nieng Song</b>
Johor Bahru Wesley MC	Rev Joshua Hong Kee Soon, Pastor
	Ms Lucy Lee, Director of Chinese Ministry
Segamat Wesley MC	Mr Ngoh Peng Teck, Part-Time Approved Supply Pastor
Melaka Wesley MC	Rev Thomas Chin Shen Loong, Pastor
Taman Asean MC	DS, Pastor Assigned
Seremban Wesley MC	Rev Paul Santosh Christie, Pastor
Taman Ujong MC	Rev Anthony Loke, Pastor Assigned

**SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS***\* on behalf of Bishop*

Seconded to Faculty of Seminari Theoloji Malaysia*	Rev Anthony Loke
Seconded to Council of Churches Malaysia	Rev Dr Hermen Shastri
Superintendent, Methodist Sengoi Mission	Rev Bah Uda Aman
Senior Advisor to Methodist Sengoi Mission Conference	Rev Balahu Hassan
Part-time Coordinator, Sengoi Workers Training Centre (SWTC)	Rev Bernard Yogaraj Lazar
Part-time Director, Methodist Seniors Ministry	Rev Hwa Jen
Prayer Director	Rev Ong Hwai Teik
Prayer Retreat Director	Rev Peggy Seow Kooi Nai
Prayer Coordinator	Rev Christopher Rao

<b>On Sabbatical Leave for 2010</b>	Rev Ting Moy Hong,
<b>On 3 months short study leave and 3 months special leave</b>	Rev Raymond Wong



I shall not start this article with a catchy or attractive phrase. I would like you, the reader, to read this, not just for the sake of it, but because you would want to read about my experience with God last December. If you're not in the mood or too lazy, I suggest you come back and read it later when you're in a better mood

I had just finished my PMR and all that I wanted to do was to relax and do whatever I wanted. Sadly, that caused me to backslide without me realizing it

I had signed up for TRAC's Youth Leaders Development Programme (YLDP) 2009, mainly because my friends who attended the year before said it was really, really fun, plus, most of them were going again. I also took it as an opportunity to get away from home.

YLDP consists of 4 levels; Pre-level (Ages 13-14) and Levels 1-3 (Ages 15 onwards).

Each level has its own syllabus. Around 200 participants or more (if I'm not mistaken) attend each camp. The last one was held at I.J. Barre in Cameron Highlands and lasted 5 days and 4 nights.

The first day started off with most of the participants gathering at TMC PJ. Two buses were required as there were so many participants. I was put in charge

of one. After our super long journey of about 3 hours, we finally arrived at our destination! We were greeted by the helpers and were told to collect our nametags. Since the theme for this year's YLDP was "Touchdown" (As in the phrase used in American Football), our group names were the positions of American Football players.

Soon after, we regrouped and had our scrumptious dinner. Right after dinner, there was the camp's first worship session! WOOH! Everyone was pumped! There were loads of jumping and fast paced worship songs, so fast that we had trouble singing some of them. But it didn't matter. It was all for God, at least that's what I kept telling myself. For our first plenary, many questions were asked. Our speaker, Michael Ngui, related our daily spiritual lives to a game of American Football, like how we had to get in the game. He also made us ask ourselves, what really was our main aim as Christians? I mean, we call ourselves Christians, we go to church and all, but do we really understand WHY we're Christians? What's our purpose as to why God calls us? And where is God calling ME to serve, right now, at this very moment. All these were points we had to ponder upon for the night as we headed to our dorms.

Day 2 for me began with a nice warm shower. Thank goodness there was hot water. After our not so delightful

breakfast, we broke into our devotional groups. Devotion was followed by a worship session to get us spiritually pumped! Quoting the song, 'The Freedom We Know', "We're gonna dance, dance, dance in the freedom we know!" Which was exactly what we did! For our first session at the camp. We broke into our level groups to cover our syllabus. Right after our lunch and rest, we had our team building session. To put it in simpler terms, GAMES!

Coming up with a game involving 200 people would be very difficult, but the helpers managed to pull it off. So we headed out of the compound to a nearby field where we would play our 'WAR' game. This game was similar to turn-based strategy games. All in all, although the game was painstakingly slow, it was fun because my team won! We were the least soaked and all our flags were still intact. Thus, victory was ours!

As night arrived, we had our second plenary session where we learnt about "Learning from the best," on how we ourselves needed to be led before we could become leaders. The story of Moses and his successor, Joshua was cited for he learnt from a great leader like Moses and he remained faithful to God. In relating this to our modern day lives, we were asked, "Who do we look up to in church? Our pastor? Youth worker?" We were encouraged to approach the people we look up to and ask them

*Pictures by Christopher Sam*



**YOUTH LEADERS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME  
(YLDP) 2009**



whether they would be willing to mentor us. But the real question we would have to ask, was whether we were ready to be mentored? I suppose many people went to sleep praying about this, seeking guidance.

On day three, after beginning the day with our usual agenda, we had our level sessions again. One of the important things I learnt in level 1, was assessing myself. We were given a DISC assessment which stood for, Dominance, Influence, Steadiness and Compliance. Each one of these 'personalities' as I would put them, was related to a character from the Bible. I was declared a high 'S' just like Abraham. I was shocked to see how accurate that assessment was. For example, one of the characteristics that related very much to me was resisting quick change. I for one, have trouble adapting to new situations fast. After assessing ourselves, we broke into our groups and were given a topic to plan out. Strangely enough, our behaviour and responses reflected our personalities according to the characteristics stated. We were all very amused by this and were happy that we had found and understood ourselves.

That third night, we played station games! Our bond amongst each other was growing rapidly. We were so comfortable just talking and relating to each other. So the games were a piece of cake for us. After a night of great fun and games, I thanked the Lord for everything and retired for a good night's rest.

As morning broke, I felt an adrenaline rush throughout my body along with a

case of butterflies in my stomach. I got dressed quickly and headed downstairs for prayer which was optional. We spent some time meditating there, connecting with God. The reason I was all worked up was because I was to lead worship that morning. Yes, ME! My first time at YLDP and already I had a heavy responsibility to carry out. When you look at it from your point of view, you might be thinking, "So what? It's just worship. Sing a few songs and you're done." To me it was more than that. Not to say that I haven't done it before, I just had so many thoughts going through my mind like "What if one of us screws up?" or "Are we doing this for ourselves or for God?" During our devotion session, a question was asked, "Where do you think God wants you to serve right now?" That question hit me so hard; it kept going through my mind over and over again. The answer however, was quite simple; RIGHT HERE, RIGHT THEN I wanted to worship God and leading others into an encounter with God through worship. Along with the rest of my worship team,

we prayed that in everything we would do during worship, it would be all for Him. No matter how badly it might go, all the praise was to be for God.

Once the first note was played, everything else didn't matter. We worshipped our hearts out. Something that caught my attention though, was a group of people dancing right in front

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of us. That really did put a smile on my face. From that day onwards, I realize that all things are possible with God by my side. Everything went smoothly. The fact that we had supportive friends also contributed to our spirit to do our best for God. The moment worship was over, I knew I had found God again.

After our last session and lunch, we had another team building session, which of course meant more games. Our final plenary that night was about 'The Game' or in more relative terms, 'Life'. The main point was for us to be sure of why we're playing the game and who we're living for. Living is for God and living for His glory.

Right after our plenary, was our powerful worship session, a time to connect with God. This is what the youths refer to as 'Emo Session'. Once I had given in to God, I cried my heart out. It just happened and I can't really describe the experience adequately to others. You'll have to experience it for yourself. The helpers came to each and everyone of us to pray for us. A few of us even prayed for each other, and I'll tell you this, it was really meaningful. That night, God really touched me like never before. I've been to many youth camps and church camps, but nothing as powerful as this. Therefore, I thank God for everything he has done for me, for creating me, and for being in my life.

That night being our last night, we just sat outside gazing upon the stars which were so beautiful. We, being city kids are barely able to catch a glimpse of even a few stars back home. Some people even went overboard doing ridiculous stuff like taking off their shirts to see who could stand the cold the longest. It was truly, the best and most simple way to end an awesome camp.

Sadly, our last day arrived. After carrying out our regular routine, there was the closing ceremony. The new committee of the TRAC MYF was introduced to everyone. Special prayers were carried out for certain people such as a counselor who was about to undergo an operation, as well as the new students for Jeremiah School 2010. I was so touched to just see how caring we, as Christians were towards one another. After packing our bags and having our lunch, we said our goodbyes to our new friends as the buses had arrived to take us home. However, we didn't stay sad for long because we were given the date for Youth Quake 2010 when we can meet again at this national youth gathering.

I hope this sharing on my experiences at YLDP 2009 has been presented well to you. It is truly an experience you cannot miss out in your life. To all you youths who have missed out on it, don't worry. Although there won't be a YLDP for 2010, there's Youth Quake 2010! It's sort of like a national youth rally. So it's going to be even better! Parents, I strongly encourage you to send your children for this unforgettable

experience. But of course, don't just force them to go for it. Encourage them. Thank you for taking time to read this 'longer than usual' article. I personally have no regrets going for this camp. God through this YLDP camp has truly transformed me. God bless!

*Submitted by:*

*Dion Matthew Lee Hsien-Yoon*





# CAMP 18UP

**F**or about a month, I wrestled with the Lord as He continued to push me into going for 18UP camp this year. Well, like Jonah, when God called, I ran. I kept coming up with new excuses so that I would not have to go for the camp. I had so many reasons not to go. My excuses included that the camp was too long and I could not find any friend to go with. However, whatever excuses I gave, God had an answer for it. He kept pushing and pushing, and finally being MYF president and LCEC member, I felt almost obliged to go for this camp. After running for so long, I decided to go for it, reluctantly.

On the day of camp, with so much unwillingness to go for the camp, I had to drag myself out of bed and headed for church. When I arrived at the church, I was glad to see some familiar faces from my college who came to get a lift from our church to our campsite. When we reached Cameron Highlands, I did not feel any better as I felt lost not knowing the people there. As usual we started with ice-breakers and then broke into our respective groups. I was happy to find Pastor Wai Yin as my group facilitator.

Throughout the first two days of camp, I felt worse. I just wanted the camp to end then. After all, it wasn't my choice to attend the camp. As Uncle Sam (Dr Samuel Ong) had put it, I was one of the chosen few (there were many others who did not willingly sign up for the camp as well).

But, everything changed on that second night. When we had our night session led by Annette, I suddenly

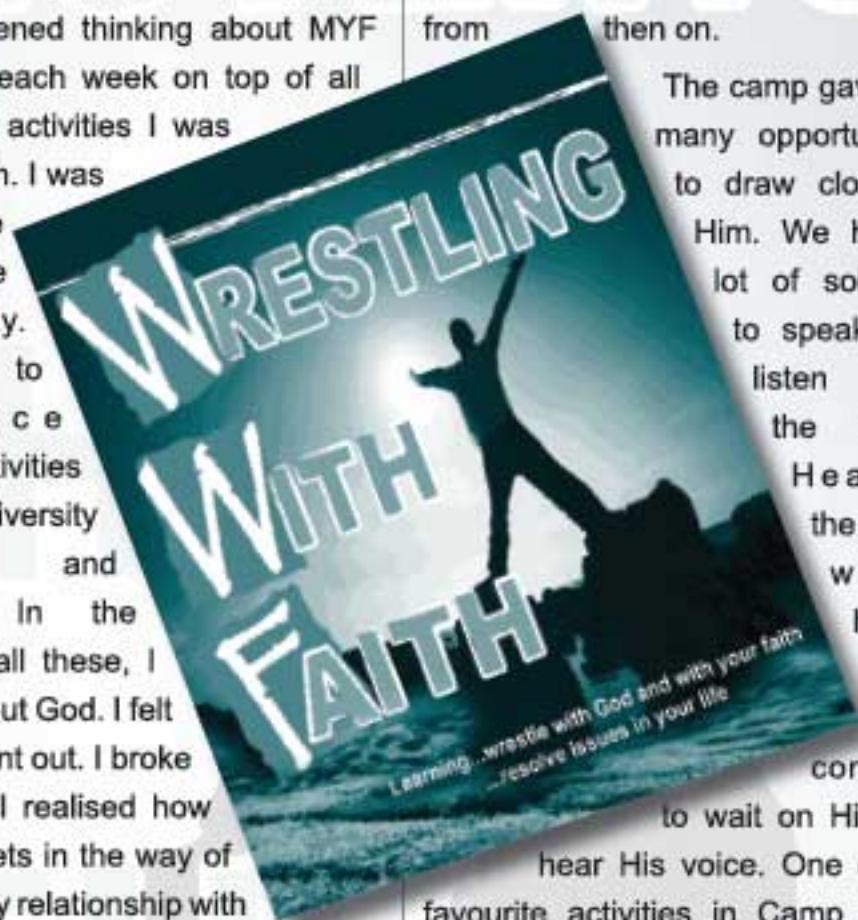
realised how far away I had strayed from God since I took up the post of president in MYF. With so much to do during the weekend, I often felt that coming to church was more of a burden than a joy. On Fridays, instead of feeling happy that the weekend was near, I felt stressed and burdened thinking about MYF activities each week on top of all the other activities I was involved in. I was

also active in the University. I had to balance church activities with university activities and studies. In the midst of all these, I forgot about God. I felt totally burnt out. I broke down as I realised how serving gets in the way of my healthy relationship with God. I decided to come back to the Lord. Pastor Wai Yin prayed

coincidence; it was definitely God's plan. Through out the camp, she was always there when I needed her. That night changed my perspective and I also decided to open up to more people and to make friends instead of being the loner I always was. The camp was a total opposite from then on.

The camp gave me many opportunities to draw close to Him. We had a lot of solitude, to speak and listen to the Lord. Hearing the Lord was hard but I'll continue

to wait on Him to hear His voice. One of my favourite activities in Camp 18UP was the 'Walk and Talk' sessions, where the facilitator and each



for me that night. I need not tell her how I felt; she somehow came up to me and prayed a prayer which I really needed. She said all the right things in her prayer. I knew at this point that God had His plan to pull me back to Him through this camp. Pastor Wai Yin being my facilitator wasn't a



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camper had a one on one time with each other. Again, I had the opportunity to talk to Pastor Wai Yin. I shared with her my struggles and burdens. I also managed to ask some of the questions and uncertainties I had about the Bible and how to experience God in my life. Those questions had been in my head for a very long time. With that one session talk, I learnt so many things and most of my questions were answered. Pastor Wai Yin understood each of my problems, struggles, and questions so well and she helped me to understand and solve them. After the talk, I could feel the weight lifted off me. I was very thankful.

In terms of friendship, by the third day, everyone was talking to each other more. There was more bonding as we played captain ball and the mafia game during our free time. Meal times were fabulous as we ate the delicious food prepared for us. We had a great time sharing, getting to know each other and chatting with the people who sat at the same table as us.

There were many great activities planned for us as well. One of those that I enjoyed most was the 8 km hike uphill to the BOH plantation. It was a very long and tiring hike, but truly enjoyable. The journey uphill was similar to our journey in life. By midway, we wished that after every turning that it would be the end. When we finally reached the top, we

had a quiet time of reflection before we joined our groups for debriefing and sharing. The hill was not easy to climb, just like the many obstacles of life we have to go through, but the end result and feeling when we reached the top was great. This reminded me of the blessings in heaven. Many times along that journey I felt like giving up and taking the car up, but I did not. Just like in the journey of life, whenever I encountered tough situations, I often wanted to give up. It was a reminder never to give up.

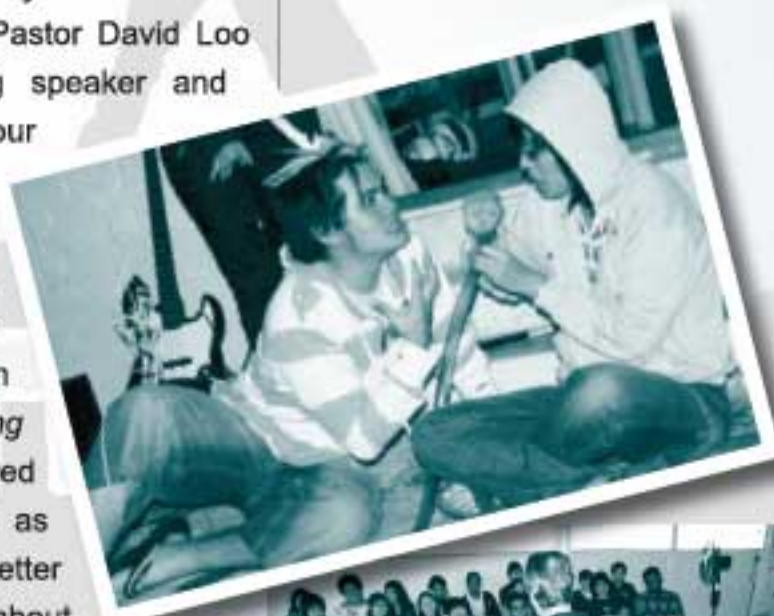
Another activity which I found interesting was the daily reflection after each day. We were asked to write down what we were most thankful for in the day and what we were least thankful for. Doing this, I realised how much God has blessed me with and how many things I am thankful for each day. The sessions were also great. Pastor David Loo was our morning speaker and Annette was our night speaker. All the topics and activities of camp were in accordance with the theme 'Wrestling With God'. I enjoyed all the sessions as they gave a better understanding about wrestling with God through the study of bible characters who wrestled with Him.

The message I took home clearly

from this camp was that I need to wrestle with God and He will be ready to wrestle with me. But in the end, He knows best and He will always win the fight. I also learnt that God doesn't want all the things I can offer to Him, like serving or giving offerings, He wants ME.

Indeed this camp was a turning point for me. God was calling me back into His arms. Though I did not plan to go for the camp, God had His plans which benefited me in the end. Uncle Sam asked me if I would encourage someone else to go for the camp. After the camp, my answer will be a definite yes. I will encourage all young people to attend this camp.

*Submitted by: Ms Rebecca Yong*





# LONG LAMAI - THE PENANS

**T**his was my first time ever coming into contact with a community of aboriginal Malaysians. It was indeed my very first time venturing into the deep of the East Malaysian jungles to meet the Penans.

The journey from Miri to Lg Lamai was a 9-hour 4-wheel drive ride plus another 45-minute boat ride. By the time we actually arrived at Lg Lamai it was already night fall. The place was almost pitch dark with no street lamps like how we have it in urban and suburban places. Yet these people, the Penans, stood at the river bank, welcoming strangers like me.

I stayed with Pastor Sammy, Pastor of the Village. His house and a few others were running on generators, which are also used to power the church that is behind his house. Speak about living without constant flow of electricity, and here I am complaining whenever the electricity gets cut due to poor maintenance back home. How privileged I truly am.

I had the opportunity to be a part of this mission team (TRAC National Youth Missions, November 24-December 1, 2009) which was led by Dr. Herbert Tan, in helping these Penans with their economic progress as well as their spiritual progress. With a 3-man team, we were able to carry in 90kg worth of cargo, which consisted of 4 books of the Old Testament in the Penan Language, air-beds, sleeping bags, life jackets, china-wares, and cutlery.

The task that was given me was to help kick-start a home-stay program for this village which has a 50-year settlement history, one of the earliest Penan settlements. This program is to help them with the basic skills and ideas on how to host short-haul tourists both domestic and abroad, who are keen on learning the rich heritage of the Penans.

I was able to be a witness of God's abundant grace and love for these people - the lowest in the social ladder in Malaysia. With abundance of food supplies from the jungle around them, they practically live off what the jungle can offer them. I also saw the passion for God in the hearts of the older generation; not so the younger ones.

My prayer is that, the little kids will be well taught in the Word of God, that they may know the Almighty God so that in the days to come, they will be God's beacon of hope to the other tribal people around them.

*by James Ong, 2009 TRAC MYF President*





# SACRED HALTS

**I** have a confession to make. For the last couple of weeks, my travels have increased, my schedule was tighter and I have been attending to different matters that were not going the way I had intended. I have felt tired. I have sensed my frustration and anger rising. And if I am honest with myself, I know that something is amiss – in the deeper places of my own heart.

**H.A.L.T.** is an acronym for **Hunger, Anger, Lonely and Tired**. It is a concept actively adopted by recovery groups like **Alcoholic Anonymous (AA)**. It teaches that those recovering from addictive behaviors must pay attention to their simple needs. They must not allow themselves to get too hungry, too angry, too lonely or too tired. The basic assumption is that when one gets too hungry, angry, lonely or tired, they become more vulnerable to troubled behaviors or they relapse into addictive behaviors. I realized how parallel this concept is to the spiritual journey - when one is too hungry, angry, lonely and tired, one is more prone to temptation and falling into sin.

I suspect my personal confession is not an uncommon state of the heart that represents most Christians in the marketplace. Many are juggling between meeting deadlines, completing projects and managing home finances. There are family obligations to meet, children to take care of and evening and weekend church responsibilities to fulfill. What about unplanned

emergencies and crisis, an on-going conflict in a significant relationship, an unspoken chaos in the family, a painful longing and an unanswered prayer.

The critical question is, therefore, how does one not only be attentive to what is going on within ourselves in the midst of life demands & disappointments but more importantly, to what is God saying and doing in such times.

## **H.A.L.T. as Indicators of Your Soul**

Allow me to invite you to take a brief inventory of yourself. How would you describe the state of your soul in the last few months?

- ***When was the last time you felt hungry? How do you respond to hunger? Have you listened to your body lately?***
- ***When was the last time you felt angry and frustrated? What usually occupies your mind and heart?***
- ***When was the last time you felt loved, accepted and listened to? How often do you feel lonely?***
- ***When was the last time you felt really rested and refreshed? Have you been tired for too long?***

These are questions we need to ask our souls every now and then.

**H.A.L.T.** has a message. Hunger is a desire for food – something that nourishes your body is depleting. Anger is an emotion resulting from a perceived loss. It is often a reaction

to pain or being hurt. It is an urgent plea for justice and action. Loneliness is a heart's yearning for love without conditions, limitations or restrictions. Tiredness is a message from your body telling you that your energy level is depleting. It is an indication of diminish of strength. Your body is longing for rest and restoration.

Each has a message. The tendency for most of marketplace Christians is that we tend to get trapped in the doldrums of life and demands that we are numb to our emotions and have trouble recognizing **H.A.L.T.**. And for many, when we recognize it, we turn a deaf ear to it or we hide from it. For others, we strive unceasingly as if the world will collapse without us!

Do not underestimate **HALT**. Allow them to speak to us - they are our friends with a message for us.

## **H.A.L.T. as a Warning to Stop**

**H.A.L.T.** as the acronym suggests means 'stop' or 'come to a standstill'. When we become in touch with hunger, anger, loneliness and tiredness, it is like the flashing red light on the indicator of our spiritual-soul-meter crying out to tell us something is amiss. We need to stop to find out what is going on.

Elijah is an excellent example of a prophet who was in a state of **H.A.L.T.**, when he was running away from Jezebel who was trying to kill him. (1 Kings 19:1-1). And the first thing the Lord provided was shelter so that he can lie down to rest. Then he was



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given a cake of bread baked in stone and a jar of water. This led to an honest conversation between him and the Lord.

Sometimes we stop in time when we notice the flashing of the red light. Other times, due to our own foolishness and ignorance, we stretched the flashing light a little longer and we crash - by default. We all know too well that we cannot drive our car forever without refueling or servicing. And so, STOP we must. Due to the law of nature, **H.A.L.T.** points will inevitably lead to a standstill.

Consider unattended loneliness. Henri Nouwen wrote, "When we act out of loneliness our actions easily become violent. The tragedy is that much violence comes from a demand for love. The human heart yearns for love: love without conditions, limitations, or restrictions. But no human being is capable of offering such love, and each time we demand it we set ourselves on the road to violence. How then can we live nonviolent lives? We must start by realizing that our restless hearts, yearning for perfect love, can only find that love through communion with the One who created them."

The truth is, unattended hunger, unattended anger, unattended loneliness and unattended tiredness will eventually lead to violence, destruction and ultimately, death of the soul and spirit. This is a standstill of consequence.

Stopping as a choice is to attend to what is going on inside brings about new life. And this is crucial for the soul and the spiritual journey.

**H.A.L.T.** as an Invitation to Return Home

When we stop, we discover one of the most life-giving ways that God can offer to us just as He did with Elijah's **H.A.L.T.** in 1 Kings 19 and His loving question to Elijah, "What are you doing here?" When we stop, we begin to

seek Him. And when we seek Him long enough, we shall find Him. We will hear His question to us.

When we stop, we return Home – the deepest place of our heart where He resides. We rediscover who we are in Him, who He really is and what that means for us. Anything that draws us away from this centre will always cause a dissonance within. That is why this earthly home has only temporary effect of satisfying our personal agenda - the reason why money, status, power, security, material things are constant target of pursuits but never able to satisfy permanently.

Strangely though, He often gives us glimpses of eternity on earth. Home gives us a sense of belonging, a place of warmth and a sense of rootedness. When we are hungry, the most expensive meal in the trendiest eatery is incomparable to a simple home-cooked meal. When we are lonely, a companion offering the presence of unconditional love gives us a sense of security, more powerful than any accolade of the world. And when we have travelled around the world, lived out of suitcases even in the most luxury of hotels we still prefer to return home to the most humble of our quarters.

In our spiritual journey, consider every moment when we experience **HALT** as an invitation not only to stop and see what's going on inside. It is an invitation to return Home – where Christ lives.

Two years ago, I spent 3 weeks in a cabin in Fox Island, Gig Harbor, in the State of Washington for a silent and solitude retreat. The only thing I was allowed to do was to have my bible, journal and a 90-min session with my Spiritual Director every morning at 7.30 am. In the silence and solitude of my own company, I cannot but confront the deeper darkness of my own soul. The most healing part of the retreat was that the confrontation of the self was done in the presence of the One who holds and loves me deeply. I saw my

Creator and my Father with new eyes and heart. I saw myself in new ways – in freeing ways. In many ways, I met the Father, sometimes personified in the Spiritual Director and oftentimes in my time alone with Him. And when my three-week ended, I returned home to California and the days ahead were often filled with a new sense of Him, of me and shalom. But there are days I would miss Fox Island, the cabin and the Spiritual Director. And there are days that the darkness of the self emerges as I live life in a broken world. But I know a little more now, that my dissonance was often His invitations. And my longing was deeper than just Washington. It was a longing for the true Home - the Father.

Today, when I am in the place of **HALT**, I remind myself about home. I remind myself that I have wandered off a little and I need to go home. I need to return to the Father.

### Epilogue

And so, two weeks ago, in my tiredness and my anger, I attended a day's silent retreat. I befriended my tears and I responded to His question to me as I meditated on the post-resurrection passages assigned to us by the retreat guide. The retreat ended. My situations did not change. But I noticed my anger subsided significantly!

A week ago, I had a refreshing soul-to-soul talk with a friend.

A few days ago, I took a day off from work so I can take a long walk and sleep in.

My journey continues as I learn to sit with my Father – often in the crap of my **H.A.L.T.** – and hear Him afresh!

There is sacredness in **HALT** because they lead us Home – where Christ is.

Submitted by: Ng Wai Ling  
wailing.ng@trac.org.my



## *Vacancies Available*

Sungei Way-Subang Methodist Church in Petaling Jaya has vacancies for the following positions:

### **1. Full-Time Youth Worker**

We are looking for a youth worker to disciple young people from Form 1 to College level. Our youths are organized into age-based Discipleship Groups. The Youth Worker is also expected to strategize on reaching out to other young people.

### **2. Full-Time Chinese Fellowship Worker**

Our Chinese Fellowship has grown to a size where a full-time Chinese Ministry worker is needed. We are looking for a person who can read and write well in Mandarin as well as speak Mandarin, Cantonese and English. The person should be able to relate to both young and old people.

- The candidates for both the above positions should preferably have theological training and relevant ministry experience.
- Enumeration will commensurate with qualification and experience
- All applications will be treated with strict confidentiality.



*Kindly contact:*

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