

FLOODGATES

May to August 2020

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Damansara Utama Methodist Church
Dream Centre, 2 Jalan 13/1, Seksyen 13,
46200 Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia
T +603.7958 7388 F +603.7958 3787
E general@dumc.my    dumcMY
W dumc.my
The church office is closed on Mondays.

From The Editorial Team:

We are living in an era of constant change, and we witness something new every day, to the point that we may be numb to it. Nothing surprises us anymore. With instantaneous information available through social media, and the constant bombardment of “news”, today’s generation can be overwhelmed by what used to be considered “unusual” or “shocking” in times before, and begin to believe that this is “acceptable” and “normal”. But it should not be “acceptable” nor “normal”.

Romans 12:2 tells us **“Do not conform to the pattern of the world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – His good, pleasing and perfect will.”**

Floodgates was created to be a vessel, a platform where we can publish articles and testimonies to bless and inspire God’s people towards Godly renewal of the mind mentioned by the apostle Paul, and which will stand out from the daily bombardment of confusing and possibly unhelpful “information”.

In Floodgates, we, as a Church, the Body of Christ, can share stories and bear witness to God’s amazing grace and give Him the glory. Also, we can remind ourselves that we are nothing without Jesus, that we would just be part of a dying world and hopeless.

On the cover, “G” is at the centre of the title, Floodgates, just as we need to place God at the centre of our all. Our name Floodgates originates from Malachi 3:10 **“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.”**

Father God, may we all, children of God, be blessed when the “floodgates of heaven pour out...” and be reminded that the presence of God in our lives is the blessed life.

Message From Senior Pastor

USEFUL *for the* KINGDOM OF GOD

by Chris Kam, Senior Pastor

Revelation 2:4
“Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first.”

This particular verse resonated profoundly in my heart during the current pandemic. “But how have I forsaken my first love?” I asked the Lord. The Ephesian church referenced here was a great church! She was a hardworking, sin-hating, doctrine-loving and persecuted church (Rev 2:2-3). Her impeccable credentials would have been the desire of many churches, yet God declared in the next verse that they had lost their first love. It was obvious that in their zeal, they seemed to have deceived themselves. Outwardly, they looked perfect, they were doing the right things; but internally, they were serving with the wrong heart or motive.

The story of Mary and Martha carries a similar message (Luke 10:38-42). Our good works can be so deceptive! Jesus cried out to the church in Revelation 2:5 *“Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.”* He did not want them around unless they genuinely loved Him. He has always been interested not so much in what we do, but how we love Him.

Our hearts and our motives are important to Him. Matthew 22:37 *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”* Love for God is, and must always be, the reason for all our good works and ministries.

The prophet Jeremiah reminded us that God is extremely interested in our motives for doing the things we do. Good works are not enough by themselves. What honours God are our motives and the posture of our hearts. Jeremiah 17:10 *“I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind, to reward each person according to their conduct, according to what their deeds deserve.”*

The MCO (Movement Control Order) can be a boon or a bane to those who are going through it. Notwithstanding the economic, emotional, or physical suffering and hardship, the posture and attitude of our hearts will determine the outcome of our lives in the midst of it. No wonder King Solomon said in Proverbs 4:23, *“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.”* Everything in life is about knowing the Truth and posturing our hearts and minds toward it so that we are not dictated to by life’s circumstances, and not living under, but above them. We may not be able to control what is happening next, but we can determine our response. It is not an easy thing to do, hence the exhortation to “guard your heart.”

The questions to all of us are: Is God recalibrating our hearts? Will we live differently after this? It is not just about the MCO, but every undesired and unexpected circumstance. We can choose to either be bitter or better. It is our choice. I hope we have done much soul searching and reflection during this extended time alone at home, granted some of us seem to be working even harder from home, with more meetings than normal via virtual calls. Time seems to be borderless between our private and work lives. There is that surreal feeling things will not be the same after we get past this. Much has been spoken and written about the “New Normal.” While churches are eager and excited to open again for physical services, I wonder if our hearts are postured the same to be more open to the things of God, with the same excitement and zeal, to align ourselves to God’s heart.

My current journey has been one of a gentle rebuke and realignment of my heart, which I have preached about in my recent sermon series “From a Superficial Faith to an Authentic Faith.” It was strange and uncanny to preach into a camera, and then watch myself later that weekend on our online church broadcast. I cannot help but realise that I am



**Is God recalibrating
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really preaching to myself first. If anything, the preacher should be the one who gains more, or is rebuked the most from his own preaching because he is the one who had meditated, pondered, and reflected the most on that subject more than anyone else in the church. To preach with integrity is to mean what he is saying and to say what he means.

It was extremely uncomfortable. They were difficult sermons to preach because it goes against the grain of being popular and keeping the members happy. But I know precisely that God is not in the business of making people happy, but making them holy! Jesus was not out to make His teachings convenient for his disciples. In fact, it was so humanly impossible to fulfill His demands and commit to His charge that we were told by the apostle John (John 6:66) *“From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.”*

So, what exactly is that rebuke? I started the whole sermon by declaring that “I can lead a ‘successful’ church without being in love with Jesus.” In a nutshell, there were four things that the Lord spoke powerfully into my heart and I believe into yours too. In case you missed them, you can view the two sermons on our DUMC YouTube channel, titled “Me, Myself and I” and “It is so easy for leaders to fake it.” It is a message in season as we wrestle through who we are as a church, what we are to do and what is preventing us from fulfilling God’s destiny for us.

These words in season are a result of my own self-reflection as I listened to an amazing exhortation online¹ and allowed the Holy Spirit to examine my posture. God simply said four things to me: “You love yourself too much. You forget to love God. You fake passion well. You follow the people you lead.” What a recalibration, especially when we can be so easily deceived into thinking that all is well, when in fact, we are rotting inside!

**God simply said four things to me:
“You love yourself too much.
You forget to love God.
You fake passion well.
You follow the people you lead.”**

Why is this important? This is because He wants the church to be ready, poised for an amazing end-time harvest of souls for the Kingdom. This readiness for holiness reminded me of the call of John Wesley: “Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin, and desire nothing but God, and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen; such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of heaven on Earth.”

We know we are still a long way from that. On a personal note, Wesley prayed, and I hope this too is our prayer: “God grant that I may never live to be useless!”²

¹ Pastor Francis Chan, Message at Desiring God National Conference
² John Wesley, “How To Pray: The Best of John Wesley on Prayer”

Mass Deception

by Pastor Dato' Dr Daniel Ho, Founding Senior Pastor

**“At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people.”
(Matthew 24:10, 11)**

2020 has been a disturbing start to the new year as well as a new decade. We have been afflicted by a massive increase of plagues and pestilences, famines and earthquakes and wars and rumours of wars. All these were what Jesus prophesied 2,000 years ago (cf. Matthew 24:1-12).

On top of that, Jesus said that there will be apostasy, betrayals and hatred of and among Christians as well as mass deception by false prophets. Jesus' words are increasingly being fulfilled. Could these be signs pointing towards the day of Christ's return? Could we be living in the last days?

Jesus warns us twice about deception related to His return in the Matthean passage of Scripture (Matthew 24:4-5, 11). There appears to be mass deception on a grand scale and this is especially taking place across the Western world. And the concern is that this is subtly and surreptitiously creeping into many cultures and countries around the world.

We recognise that the West is innovative and advanced in many areas such as medicine, science and technology. They also set an example for us in the area of respect for human rights and the worth and dignity of every human being. This and many other fields, as it is well argued by Vishal Mangalwadi in his book *The Book That Made Your World*, are the result of the fundamental contribution of the Bible and the Christian faith. It is the Christian faith that has transformed Western civilisation and culture to what it is today.

But sadly, the Christian faith and the Bible have been increasingly rejected by many in the Western world today. This is producing adverse consequences as a result. In their arrogance, the West is trying to redefine the fundamental elements and understanding of human life and society. It begins with redefining “truth” in the 1960s. There is no such thing as “absolutes” in life or “truth” they say. It is just to be seen as one's opinion and one opinion can just be as good as another. Then they go on to define

life and liberty resulting in the pro-abortion decision in the US Supreme Court in 1973.

Today, it is about the understanding of marriage, the family and gender identity and sex. In the area of gender identity, they say it is only a social construct, that is all. So, if you think you are male then you are a male and if you think you are female then you are a female. Gender identity is no longer seen as biological but a mental and social construct. The line between the male and female divide is increasingly being blurred if not erased. On top of that, the West is saying



that we are living today in a ‘post-truth’ culture and they would want us all to believe that!

The West says that these views they hold today are considered liberal, progressive and modern. This is what being “advanced” is all about and these proponents proclaim themselves as true advocates of diversity and inclusiveness. Such views have taken hold of almost every major bastion of Western society, whether it be in education, politics, media, art, entertainment, business, the judiciary and even the government.

For example, an American evangelical Christian preacher who holds the traditional Christian view about sex and marriage was recently invited to speak at a conference in Edinburgh hosted by an evangelical church in Scotland. The permit to use the venue was withdrawn at the last moment by the Edinburgh City Council because of the preacher's biblical views. Imagine that the machinery of the State is now being used against such Christian

views and this is increasingly happening in the West today. Such inverse intolerance in many areas is increasingly being experienced by Christians! Paradoxically, one is now only permitted to hold one view and not the other. The question now is: Who is intolerant, discriminative and bigoted in the first place?

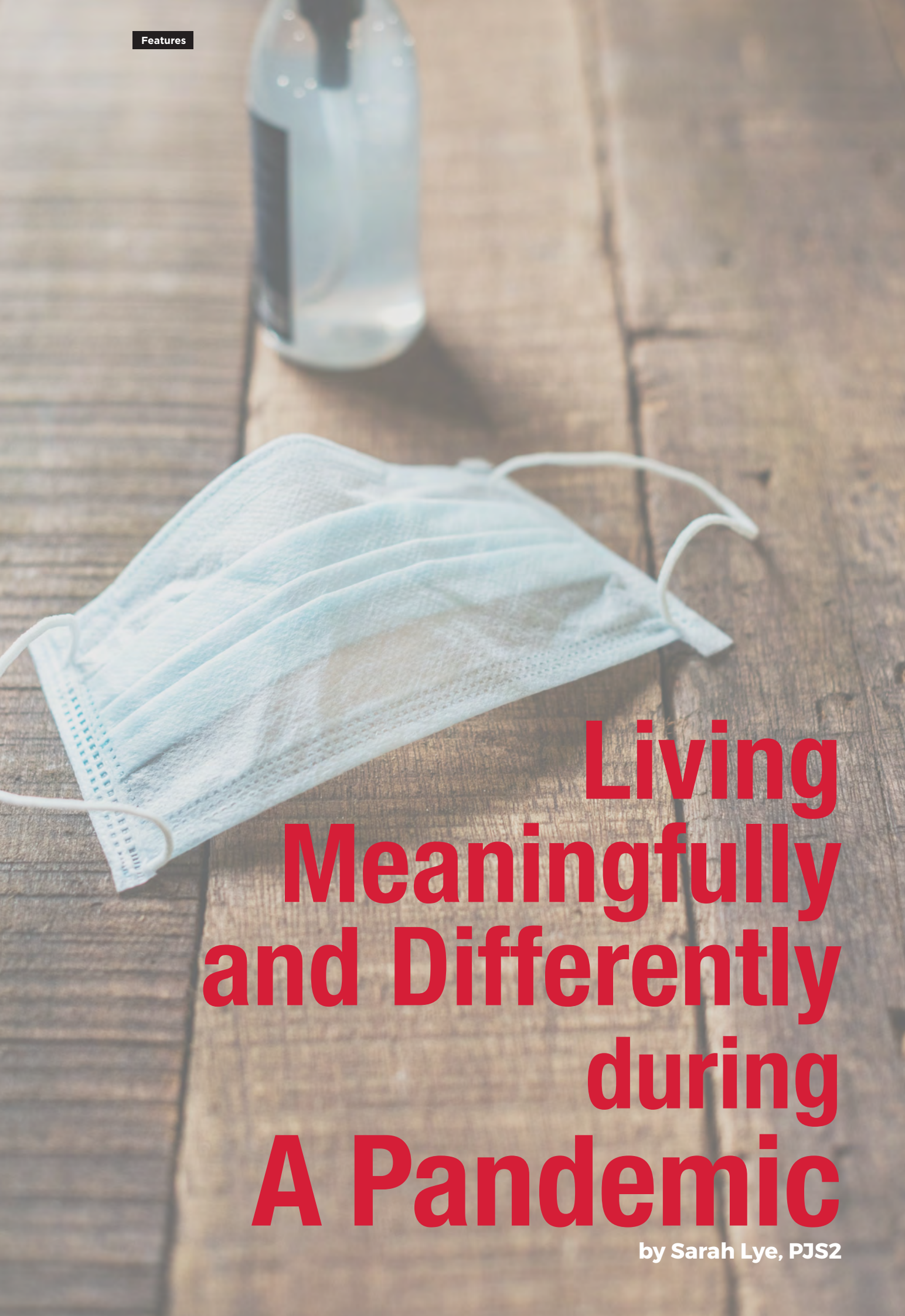
Sadly, in this culture war in the West the Church has lost massive ground and if she does not stand up and push back now it might be too late. In fact, the West has gone so far down that slippery slope that one wonders whether there is a hope of

recovery of the biblical view of man and society that Western civilisation and culture was built upon.

What is happening in the West is, on one hand, a warning to those of us in Asia, Africa and Latin America to wake up and be aware of the trend. If we do not wake up and see the kind of insidious influence of Western culture nowadays, we might be going down that slippery slope as well. Already Taiwan has gone down that path in some ways.

These people would like to perceive themselves proudly as the avant-garde of culture and society.

On the other hand, we should go back to our confidence in the authority of the whole Bible and the biblical view of man and society and to stay true to it, come wind come weather. It is the biblical view about truth (John 8:32), gender identity (Genesis 1:27), marriage (Genesis 2:24), sex and the family, etc. that must hold sway. We must remain rock-solid in our position and consistent in the teaching of the whole Bible. Then, we can pass this important heritage on to our children and all future generations. Otherwise, we could be as equally deceived as the major segment of Western society.



Living Meaningfully and Differently during A Pandemic

by Sarah Lye, PJS2

2020 has been a very significant year for everyone, mainly because all of us have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic that hit our nation. We are facing the consequences and effects of Covid-19 physically, mentally, emotionally, socially and psychologically. No one can say that they have not been affected in any way. As a nation, we faced our first lockdown in our beloved country from 18 March 2020 and we moved on to the different phases from Movement Control Order (MCO) to Enhanced Movement Control Order for certain areas, Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO) and now, the current phase is the Recovery Movement Control Order (RCMO) which runs from 10 June to 31 August 2020.

We are grateful to God for His mercy and protection over our nation. Due to the collaborative efforts of the front-liners and government authorities, the pandemic is under control. This required the combined efforts from everyone in this country to comply with the regulations and conditions to ensure our safety. The Church of Jesus Christ has also risen up to take its place to be Salt and Light of the world. Churches have had to adapt and have modified their ways of doing ministry due to the lockdown. Many churches and organisations have continued to reach out to the lost, to the poor and to those in need. Churches are still marching on and taking the responsibility to care for the poor, the marginalized, and to set free the oppressed. However, we cannot take this for granted and we must continue to be vigilant in complying to the SOPs and not let our guard down to ensure that the second or third wave of Covid-19 does not hit us.

As for DUMC, we have now changed our IMPACT theme to IMPACT Now. We are encouraged to reflect on our lives and to search our hearts and motives for any area that we need to change, and to live simply. We also need to change the way we think,

the way we live our lives and how we work, as these are new norms. We need time to adjust to the new norms and we need to live our lives meaningfully and differently.

We need time to adjust to the new norms and we need to live our lives meaningfully and differently.

We should seize opportunities as individuals or cell groups to make an impact on the community out there. There are so many needy people who need the touch of Jesus. We can enjoy simple things like catching up with our neighbours when we see them outside our homes, getting to know them better, listening to their stories and caring for them by praying for them, or even prayer-walking or prayer-driving in our neighbourhoods to sense what the Lord is saying to us about the areas where we reside. After sensing and hearing from the Lord, we can then pray and bring our petitions to the Lord regarding what God has revealed to us about the neighbourhood. It could be removing curses or strongholds of the evil ones or the need for us to stand in the gap to pray for restoration and God's grace and blessings to be upon that area.

We are all adjusting to the new normal which includes social distancing, wearing facial masks and frequent washing and sanitizing of hands. But these norms do not stop us from sharing the love of Christ with the people around us. We can still do our part by being bold and courageous to strike conversations with the people in front of us as we queue to go into restaurants/outlets in shopping malls or even when we go to the bank, post office etc. Who knows, from the little conversation that we have with the people, we are able to connect and share our faith with them. At least, they have the chance to hear the name of Jesus! That is planting a seed! And God will grow that

seed in His due time. We may not reap the harvest now but in God's perfect timing, the person may come to know the Lord as his or her personal Lord and Saviour.

So, what do we do as children of God when we are even fearful to talk to strangers? We simply ask God to remove our fear, our apprehension and anxieties. We ask God to fill us with His immense love so that His love will overcome our fears and we can share with boldness. *"For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but spirit of power, and of love and of a sound mind".* (2 Timothy 1:7 NKJV)

As a cell group, we can also seek the Lord's face and direction how to go about doing IMPACT Now. This is because every cell group is different and has different gifts and dynamics. So first seek the Lord and He will show us. Deuteronomy 4:29 says, *"But if from there you seek the LORD your God, you will find him if you seek him with all your heart and with all your soul".* God promises that His presence will go before us. In Exodus 33:14 the LORD replied, *"My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."* At the end of the day, we will be surprised by God's revelation on what the cell group can do to impact its neighbourhood!

Hence, let us make a difference during this year 2020 by recalibrating our lives and living life differently because life is so fragile and yet precious. There will be mistakes, disappointments and frustrations along the way but that is the learning curve. God's grace will carry us through as we depend on Him and not on our strength. 2 Corinthians 12:9 says, *"But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me."* We definitely do not want to miss out on what God has in store for us during these unprecedented times!

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LAMENTING IN A TIME OF CRISIS:

Responding to The Covid-19 Pandemic Through Lament

by Alex Tung, PJN1

Lament. You have probably heard our pastors talk about it. You may have even seen laments in your Bible – in fact, there is a whole book in the Old Testament titled Lamentations; and if by some chance you have missed the whole book, you would likely catch them in the Psalms as more than half of all the Psalms are laments. Even throughout the New Testament, numerous records describe Christians and Christ Himself lamenting at various points of their lives. There is no getting away from laments; laments are as prevalent throughout the Bible as they are (and should be) throughout Christian life.

But more than the possibly blasé notion of seeing laments as ancillary to complaints, groans, whines, or grumbles, lament – or theologically put, the Discipline on Lamenting – is significantly weightier and more spiritual than it is nonchalant. And given the severity of the Covid-19 pandemic, the need to lament, and lament rightly, has become more dire than ever.

WHAT IS LAMENT, AND WHAT IS IT NOT, AND WHY SHOULD WE LAMENT?

In a gist, to lament is to pray. But more than a heartfelt groan of despair or a cry of sorrow – both of which are emotional expressions – lament is spiritual in nature and can only be addressed to God. Lament is a language of worship through which we process our grief with God as a way to make sense of our circumstances. Whilst confiding in others for comfort and validation is undeniably helpful, lamenting seeks a different outcome: given that lament is a form of worship, and worship can only be addressed to God, the purpose of lamenting is then to commune with God – and through a deepened commune with God, build faith and trust.

Through lament, we reaffirm our belief that God remains in control regardless of how bleak the condition is; we lament of our distress to God and leave the outcome

entirely in His hands. Through lament we may also additionally seek clarity for our predicament and reason for our suffering, or even pray that He would see it fit to end our misery. But at its core, to lament is to understand and trust that regardless of the outcome post-lament, He remains omnipotent and unconditionally worthy of our praise, and it would be right for us to worship Him regardless – as David’s 13th Psalm shows us:

- 1 How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?
- 2 How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me?
- 3 Look on me and answer, Lord my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,
- 4 and my enemy will say, “I have overcome him,” and my foes will rejoice when I fall.
- 5 But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation.**
- 6 I will sing the Lord’s praise, for he has been good to me.**

Psalm 13

David’s lament in the 13th Psalm starts as all laments do – it is a raw cry of frustration and despair. Here David is evidently at a dead end with no viable solution. He groans to God of his pain and prays that God will answer him favourably and give him victory over his enemies. But in spite of his circumstance and even without an answered prayer in sight, we see that David’s lament takes a “turn” at verse 5 where he says *“but I trust in your unfailing love...”*. This change of attention turns David’s focus away from his predicament and instead upholds that God’s love remains unfailing and regardless of the outcome (and even if he is defeated by his enemies), he will continue to sing his Lord’s praises. This “turn” is what differentiates laments from all other expressions of grief as it refocuses our attention to God’s omnipotence rather than our situation.

It is crucial to note, however, that in lamenting and accepting that that God is in control, we are not absolved of our responsibilities nor does lamenting show weakness in our (or God’s) ability to save ourselves. Far from this, lament requires grounded faith and takes our prayer life to a higher level of intimacy with God. Talking to God as a response to the agony and frustration we experience, instead of succumbing to a knee-jerk reaction of emotional

compromise, helps us to interpret the world and our situation through Biblical lenses. Lament turns us back to God and instils in us the very difficult theology of humility as we learn and re-learn how to rely on God rather than ourselves.

To cry is human, but to lament is Christian.



THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A CALL TO ACTION, YES; BUT FIRST – LAMENT.

The current Covid-19 pandemic has certainly disrupted the normalcy of our lives – from curfews to lockdowns and from lost jobs to lost lives, it is safe to say that there has not been a crisis in recent years which universally shook the world as severely as this pandemic has. Sure there have been disasters and calamities in recent years but none have had such a crippling effect on peoples from all walks of life and socioeconomic status, of all nations and of all ages.

That said, calamities are hardly novel for mankind. Throughout Biblical history, there are numerous records of many different crises befallen upon mankind. From severe famines to global flooding, epidemics to pandemics, the Christian world is no stranger to such tragedies. What is crucial in responding to such tragedies is not to be obsessed in rationalising why such a tragedy has occurred but instead to seek God’s will for us in the circumstances – as our Senior Pastor Chris Kam puts it:

God Himself may send storms like challenges and adversities to teach (not necessarily to punish) us. We should have a deep trust in Him. We shouldn’t be asking Him, “Why is this happening?” but rather, “What are you trying to tell me through this experience?”

Senior Pastor Chris Kam¹

¹ Paraphrased from Senior Pastor Chris Kam’s sermon of 1st and 2nd February 2020 weekend entitled **“Jonah - Running from God - Boundless Compassion”** – specifically on how we should respond when God sends a storm over us, an unpacking of Jonah 1:4.

To some extent it may be inevitable that our natural knee-jerk reaction to understanding or accepting news of such tragedies is to try to postulate a reason or speculate on God's rationale in His allowing this disaster. Such a strict rationalist approach is not only theologically incomplete, it also corrodes our faith structure by assuming rationalism above God's will. God cannot be fully understood and any attempt to fit God onto a petri dish for us to inspect His workings to our satisfaction runs contrary to God's supremacy over us.

Whilst it is granted that the Bible does record instances where God had provided His explanation for why He had allowed suffering – think, for example, the story of Noah where God's reasoning for allowing the flood was made known to Noah and his family, this is not always the case. Consider, for example, the case of Job whom God gave no explanation for the numerous tragedies that struck him. Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar attempted their personal flavour of rationalism in trying to console Job. The trio hazard guesses hither and thither at what could have been the cause of his facing such misfortunes – none hinted at any direction of truth and fewer still made any sense. In the end it was through Job's own lamenting to God that he found comfort and perseverance to remain steadfast.



So lest we jump onto the bandwagon of rationalism and of quick conclusions to why God had allowed this pandemic, let us pause and instead ponder whether we have even allowed ourselves space to lament upon this disaster that continues to torment us. As N. T. Wright points out:

It is no part of the Christian vocation, then, to be able to explain what's happening and why. In fact, it is part of the Christian vocation not to be able to explain – and to lament instead.

N. T. Wright¹

It is then only after having spent time in prayer and lament that we would be able to discern God's direction of where and how He has called us to serve Him. Any decision of how we can help those affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, or which arm of DUMC's IMPACT Now initiative to volunteer our help, would then come from a place of understanding that regardless of the reason this pandemic had occurred, we as Christians are called to ministry. Like Jesus going out of His way to help the lepers during the leprosy outbreak when all others kept a distance or like the disciples in Antioch rallying together to help their brothers and sisters in Judea during the time of famine when everyone else was fleeing, so too are we called to be of service to our brothers and sisters who have been impacted by the pandemic.

Before we can answer questions in anything other than the broadest outline, we need a time of lament, of restraint, of precisely not jumping to 'solutions.' These may come, God willing, but unless we retreat from our instant reactions, we may not be able to hear them. If we spend time in the prayer of lament, new light may come, rather than simply the repetition of things we might have wanted to say anyway.

N. T. Wright¹

Lest we pull an Eliphaz, a Bildad or a Zophar in our gambling guesses of why God had allowed this pandemic, of which there are as many theories as there are rationalists, let us instead fall to our knees in lament and understand that the correct question is not why God had allowed this pandemic but rather what is God teaching us through it and what is God calling us to do. Whether we are called to support our IMPACT Now initiative financially, to rally with our Social Concerns and Community Development missions, to volunteer on our Social Concerns projects, to ramp-up our evangelistic efforts to those desperate for salvation, or to sustain the church as a whole in fervent prayer, it is after having soaked in God's presence that we would be able to answer the great question of where God is calling us to. That is how we can be responding to this pandemic.

² Extracted from N. T. Wright's article on Time titled **"Christianity Offers No Answers About the Coronavirus. It's Not Supposed To"** published on 29 March 2020

¹ See also N. T. Wright's latest book entitled **"God and the Pandemic: A Christian Reflection on the Coronavirus and Its Aftermath"** which explores this article's theme to significantly greater breadth and depth. This book was recently released in June 2020 and is published by Zondervan. At the time writing, it is not yet available at local bookstores and can only be purchased online.

Myanmar Boy Who Survived The Flames

by Puk Lim See Tho, PJN6

What was meant to be a routine chore to make an instant noodle supper on 30 April by a dad for his five-year-old son, Khaw Thang (Michael) turned out to be a nightmare for the family. Somehow the lit stove exploded and before they knew it, the tiny kitchen of their apartment had quickly caught fire. Despite frantic efforts to put it out, the fire spread wildly and little Michael who happened to be in the kitchen was caught in the flames. Although he was retrieved and sent to the hospital at once, it was later confirmed that more than 50% of his skinny body was severely burnt. He was admitted to the ICU of Klang General Hospital and a week later was transferred to the ICU of Selayang General Hospital. His dad was also burnt on his arms and legs but not as severe.

Three weeks after the mishap, on 20 June, through a special arrangement between Joel Kap (President of Zomi Association Malaysia) and the ICU department of Selayang General Hospital, I was able to visit little Michael. It was a very meaningful date as it was World Refugees Day. We, however, could not meet his dad who was still recovering at home. Otherwise it would have been even more meaningful as the next day was Father's Day. I had very much wanted to affirm and encourage him.

To see a heavily-bandaged Michael writhing restlessly on the bed was indeed painful. As his lips and mouth were burnt, he had to be tube fed. Also, being sedated, he could not respond to me, so the best thing I could do was to pray a short prayer for him: "Lord, thank you for sparing Michael from being



burnt to death. Thank you for the nurses and specialists in treating burn victims who attend to him. Enable him to survive and live to tell others your marvellous love and mercy upon him in all these."

Towards the end of the visit, Joel Kap showed me a pharmaceutical bill of special dressings needed for Michael which amounted to RM6,151. He asked whether I could connect with potential donor(s) to meet that payment. On top of that were other bills which had amounted to more than RM22,000. As a refugee child, Michael was not entitled to free medical treatment and hospitalisation. However, as it was a severe case, UNHCR agreed to meet 50% of the costs. The refugee community had tried to raise funds but it was slow to meet the target.

Before I connected the dots, I believe our Heavenly Father was already preparing kind-hearted donors to answer to the plight of the Lian family. Though unintentional, I was able to relate their plight to DUMC Elder Peter Cheong who then brought it up at their Elders Council meeting two days later. And promptly they approved the amount to settle the dressing bill through the Social Concern and Community Development Department. God was at work indeed!

At the same time, I contacted an old schoolmate who was the ex-Governor of Rotary International District 3300, Malaysia. Immediately, he got in touch with the in-coming President of the Rotary Club of Gombak. I could not believe it when I later found out that the President was

none other than a long-time friend and DUMC member, Aimee Liew. Through her efforts, she was able to come up with RM5,000 in the form of a cheque which was handed over to Michael's mother, Mary Lian on 4 July at the Zomi Association Malaysia office. The balance of more than RM 11,000 was finally paid off by the Christian NGO Beautiful Gate Foundation. No tragedies of His beloved children escape the keen eyes of our Heavenly Father.

In the meantime, Michael had been transferred back to Klang Hospital and gradually he was being fed light porridge and could also sit upright on his own – a relief for a change. As if the Covid-19 pandemic was not challenging enough, the Lians, especially little Michael, had to undergo the severest of 'furnace' testings!

As a close observer of their journey through it all, I have been so touched by their resilience in trusting the sovereign goodness, mercy and dependability of God, amidst literally the fiery trial of life.



The Call is Greater than the Struggle

by Vera Tay, Missionary to Cambodia



I have been on many short-term mission trips. Each time I returned to work after a mission trip, I would feel that my job was meaningless. I felt alive when I was in the field, connecting with the people, preaching, praying and leading them to Christ. Yet when I was back in Malaysia, I would get caught up in all the trappings of the corporate world. I enjoyed my work. I took pleasure in climbing the corporate ladder, the adrenaline of achieving results and the taste of power and position. I felt that I was in control of my future.

When I am on the Mission field, I am stripped of it all. I become a servant of Christ and yet there is a deep sense of peace and satisfaction.

There are many challenges in the field, but I have learnt that God knows our limits.

There are many challenges in the field, but I have learnt that God knows our limits.

I went for a month to Cambodia and God changed my heart but when I returned, I had many excuses why I was not a suitable candidate for missional work.

I shared with Pastor Kelvin. I said to him “You know if you send me to Cambodia, at the most, I will only survive for three months in Baray. I am a city girl. I will be a failure in the village.” Pastor Kelvin replied “DUMC is now looking at sending missionaries to the city. You can be based in Phnom Penh.” So excuse number one was knocked down. God knows our limits.

Next, I did not hear God calling me to any particular country. Unlike most missionaries who have a call either for a people group or country, I did not. I had been to Myanmar, Thailand,



Nepal, Indonesia and Sarawak and I did not hear any specific call for any people group or country. While all these conversations with God were taking place, I was also serving in Crossfields as DUMC's field co-ordinator for Nepal but I felt the tug to go to Cambodia and Laos for my Missions Intern Training. However, after one month in Cambodia, I was approached by the church to lead the Nepal Mission team in December 2018. If I did not go, the trip would have to be cancelled. Thus, I stepped up in obedience and submission to the church leadership and cancelled my training to Laos.

On the last day of the Nepal trip when I was preaching in church, I heard God saying that He loves the Nepalis and He told me to tell them. I obeyed God and as I was in the midst of verbalising it, I heard God whisper that He loves me and I felt the overwhelming love of God enveloping me. I choked with emotion as I tried to verbalise to the congregation the love of God. Then He whispered that He loves the Khmers too. All this was taking place in the Land of Mount Everest. It all sounds very confusing but in the midst of confusion, God will bring clarity. This is only possible if we walk closely with Jesus and obey Him. When we feel that our life is in a state of confusion, we have to actively step out in obedience to God. Trust Jesus, obey Him and only then can Christ give us clarity in our confusion.

Trust Jesus, obey Him and only then can Christ give us clarity in our confusion.

God continued to speak to me, expressing His love for every people group and tribe in the world. He told me to obey Him and not to delay which country to go but to just go. At this point, **the Call became Greater than the Struggle.** In the midst of my struggles, God was teaching me to take one step of faith at a time in my journey. **The Call of God does not come on a smooth path but the Call will become Greater than any of the struggles we are facing.** I am still on my journey of faith and there are hurdles but I have peace. John 14:27 flashed before me, Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

When the peace of God flooded my heart, the **Call became CLEAR.** Cambodia will be where I will operate from for the next three years. Amid the ongoing coronavirus outbreak I departed for Cambodia with the confidence that God will take care of me and my family back in Malaysia. He is a good, good Father and will never short-change His children. This is my faith journey. I trust Him. I pray you will too.



CHASING THE LION:

KLANG SUBZONE COMMUNITY OUTREACH JULY 2020

Participating Cell Groups in Klang; Andalas, Bukit Tinggi, Taman Chi Liung & Klang Jaya

by Quay Chew Leong, PJS3

HOW IT STARTED

What seemed like a good partnership with a public corporation became a big challenge to the Klang cells. We were told that funds would be provided and we just had to distribute aid to the needy, the B40 group and those who were jobless. It seemed easy, so we thought, until the corporate organization pulled out of their obligation at the last moment. After all the ground work and connections that the cells did, we just could not be still and groan about it. We could not bear to see the huge disappointment on the faces of the various groups of needy people that we were in touch with within our community.

So the cell leaders and zone leaders got together to discuss the fate of the project. We decided to continue with the project and face "THE LION" ourselves. The cells decided to form a committee in order to move quickly. The target was to reach out to 150 families in Klang, a scaled-down number from the initial 200 families when the project was first mooted.

1 Peter 4:10 - "Each of you should use whatever gifts you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."



CHASING THE LION

We set a one-month timeline to complete the project, knowing it would not be easy but fully trusting God to provide. It seemed like an uphill task to raise funds for food packs for about 150 families without further taxing cell members who had been doing so much in reaching out to neighbours, the elderly and small communities around them. Amazingly, after we decided to continue by faith, we began to see God touching many people to donate generously towards our plight and community. Within two weeks, we were able to raise close to RM10,000 but it was still short of the target. All of us put in our effort for one last push to reach the target of RM12,000. The final total in the third week was way beyond and above our expectations! Our God never ceases to amaze when we become His feet, His hands, His mouthpieces as willing partners in His work to feed the poor.



John 1:16 - "From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another."

The committee decided to utilise the extra funds for Phase 2 or even Phase 3 to help those who need help for a longer period, and also for medical needs and to help pay rent and utility bills. Indeed our God is Jehovah Jireh who provides. After our list of recipients was finalised, we had 158 families to whom food packs would be distributed, each pack costing slightly above RM80.



WEEK OF DISTRIBUTION

On the distribution weekend, we formed three teams according to the list of beneficiaries provided by the cells. The feedback from each distribution group was very touching. The plight of the needy is real, yet some are quite selfless. Some expressed their willingness to share the very little that they received from us with other families that did not receive the aid.

"Terima kasih kepada orang Tuhan yang sudi menolong kita."
- from a group of Sabahans.

Thang Shwe, a Myanmarese who has been paralysed for three years - "I am very happy you came. I cannot go out. My wife is taking care of me but for the last four months, she has no job so we cannot pay for the rent and for my medication. Thank you for helping. Please help find work for her."



Nehemiah 8:10b - "Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

"Thank you for helping. I know of another four families who need help as we do. Can you help them also?" This came from a Pakistani family.

Even as the recipients were touched, we too were encouraged by the glow in their eyes as they received the food packages and the thankfulness and gratitude that shone from their hearts were just beyond words. We are sure they were all smiles beneath the masks they were wearing. All in all, Malaysians of various ethnicities and religions, and migrants received the Food Aid. The teams always ended up praying for them before leaving.



OBSERVATIONS

We made some observations as we reflected upon the completion of the project:

- The need of people in our community is immense.
- The poorest of the poor are more than willing to share what little that they have with their friends.
- There are many Malaysians who are willing to donate in kind; many are pre-believers.
- The love and care for one another is still alive in our society. Even as we stopped by the road shoulder to hand out the Food Aid and to pray for the recipients, many concerned neighbours, stopped to ask if they were facing any problem.
- Many are living day to day as they know not where their next meal would come from.
- Eviction from their homes is a reality if no one comes to the aid those who have lost their jobs and ability to earn.
- Children suffer as much, if not more.
- The recipients' cry is for us to help find jobs for them. They are not lazy but are victims of circumstances.

CONCLUSION

There is hope for Malaysia as many came forward to donate generously to the project. Without their generosity, we would have to scale down the number of families we intended to reach out to. The care and concern of ordinary Malaysians for their neighbours, even aliens in their community, deserve special mention. Most of all, with Jesus Christ, there is hope for all.

BRUSHES WITH VULNERABLE FOREIGN IMMIGRANTS

by Puk Lim See Tho, PJN6

It is noteworthy that out of the more than 15,000 recipients (at the time of writing) of the Social Concerns Food Project, over 85% were refugees and migrant workers. In our outings to deliver food to them, many of the volunteers had come up close with these foreigners. Consequently, many of our hearts were profoundly touched by their extreme vulnerability and plight during these pandemic times.

In just my second outing, I was sent to a group of Indonesian migrant families living in Kampung Pandan Dalam. Both my partner and I, in separate cars, had to drive through single-lane kampung roads to reach them. Our cars could almost touch the gates of the low, terraced houses in some parts.



Once we got to the recipients' houses, the neighbourhood being alerted earlier, out came families of elderly people and children, shirtless men in *sarongs* and women in all kinds of casual wear. But none were wearing face masks nor bothering to distance themselves from us. As such, we had to be very firm and alert to maintain social distance from them. They were asking if the food was meant for all. After receiving their packets, many said "Thank you" in English!

Subsequently, other outings were made to some Myanmar families living in low-cost apartments and flats. Many of the young couples were out of work and, with little savings, they struggled to feed their families. One young woman came forward to receive her package which included milk powder. I learnt that she was looking after four children ranging from pre-teens to a four-month-old baby girl. There was also this father who had to provide for three children including two teenagers. Most of their anxieties centred on the uncertainties facing their futures as many depended on restaurant and menial jobs.

The highlight for me was being part of a team of five to deliver food to 111 families belonging to an indigenous church established in 2011 to reach out to Myanmar families living around Bandar Sunway. The middle-aged pastor told me he and his



leaders (mostly young fathers) had been fasting and praying for many days for God to intervene and send people to bring food for the congregation. Among his members were a young couple with a four-year-old suffering from a rare disease that crippled her limbs and who needed to be fed with a special milk formula.

Sometime towards the last week of April, together with two fellow volunteers, we delivered aid for the very first time to 22 Bangladeshi construction workers living on the site of a mega multi-storey project. We learned from them that there might be another 500 workers from other nationalities living beyond the gate. This outing came just before news came out of Singapore's alarming rise of infections amongst migrant workers. Piqued by this news, I requested permission from another NGO to join them as an observer as they delivered provisions to 200 Indonesian construction workers at a large *kongsi* located on the fringe of the city. When the food was unloaded on the dirt compound next to the guardhouse, streams of Indonesian workers of both genders and all ages came from their "dorms". An affable, middle-aged "chief" with a tattered log book showed me the names of those entitled to the allotment. Many others walked away empty-handed.

I found out that there were more than 700 Indonesians beside hundreds of Bangladeshis living in another section of

this large *kongsi*. It had been in existence for more than nine years and housed workers serving the many large nearby projects. I took a walk through their "dorms" which were two-storey old wooden shacks with small, dark rooms crammed with 4 to 5 persons each. The compounds were strewn with rubbish and people had to cook and bathe in common areas. By comparison, the dorms and fenced compounds of Singaporean foreign workers were a class above.

My visit and observations were reported to Sophy Lim and a week later supplies from Social Concerns Food Project were delivered by another volunteer and myself to some 30 Bangladeshi workers. This time, the package was dropped outside the gate and several workers came out to receive it. A peep through the narrow gate showed us thirty or so workers lining up to see if they had a share in the supplies.

My key takeaways from these outings to the foreigners is two-fold. Firstly, I saw the mercy of God upon them. Thus far, there has been a sporadic spread of positive Covid-19 cases among them but none like the scale happening in Singapore. Secondly, I saw the corruption resulting in the exploitation of the thousands of foreign migrants, especially of the illegal and undocumented ones, in our midst. The pandemic has forced the authorities to be more earnest in tackling the long-standing social problems arising from these mostly illegal immigrants. It is my prayer that the churches in Malaysia will rise up to take the lead to serve the downtrodden and marginalized, to advocate justice and protection policies for these, the least of the least.



Sayang Selayang Project

by Puk Lim See Tho, PJN6

Sometime towards the last week of April, our Social Concerns Head, Sophy Lim broke the news to the Food Aid volunteers that relevant government authorities had permitted our Social Concern and Community Development (SCCD) Department to prepare 1000 food packets to be distributed to Selayang Enhanced Movement Control Order (EMCO) residents - no mean task! A recent census of that hot-spot had confirmed that there were 22,000 residents of which 6,000 were locals and the remaining 16,000 were immigrants. So, our 1,000 food packets were a just a drop in the ocean.

Immediately, the Food Bank along with a team of packers and another team of deliverers were mobilised to tackle this mission. Even though the logistics of the operation were most daunting, nevertheless, the first 500 packets were loaded onto a DHL truck by noon of 30 April after four days of combined dedication and toil. It was a feat accomplished through the great hand of God upon all who were involved. I was privileged to be among a select few assigned to deliver, although the other behind-the-scenes volunteers were just as significant.

A convoy of six cars accompanied the truck to the DBKL Enforcement Department in KL where the Deputy Minister of Federal Territories, Dato' Seri Edmund Santharan, together with senior officers of the police, army and DBKL, officially recognised the partnership with SCCD as they took over the 500 packets. Dr George Kumar and myself were then allowed to accompany a few officers and the DHL truck to a giant warehouse. Upon arrival at the warehouse, officers checked and procured the bulk before it was finally unloaded by RELA officers.



Meanwhile, packers back at the Food Bank worked tirelessly to complete the other 500 packets and again with the collective effort of many, we managed to load the bulk to be sent directly to the warehouse the very next day.

Shortly after that, DBKL authorities provided pictures to show that 500 packets were distributed to locals and the other 500 to foreigners. This feedback was indeed cause for great rejoicing for all the volunteers involved. We prayed that Selayang EMCO recipients would turn their gratitude to God who had answered and provided for them at their hour of great need.

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you visited me.' "
Matthew 25:34-36

An Unanticipated Encounter At Selayang Wholesale Market

by Puk Lim See Tho, PJN6

FRIDAY 15 MAY

Alan Lee, co-pioneer of PBCC (the Selayang Pasar Borong Community Center) and a fellow member of DUMC, with whom I had spoken over the phone a week earlier, informed me that the very next day, staff from PBCC would be distributing food to their clients and regular contacts. Instantly, I accepted the invitation to go along and observe the proceedings. PBCC is a ministry that has been serving foreign migrant families for the past 12 years and, among others, offering basic education to migrant workers' children aged from 4 to 16 years. DUMC has been a major supporter of this ministry all along.

SATURDAY 16 MAY, 9.30AM

We arrived and parked opposite PBCC, located on two floors of a row of shop-lots just a five-minute walk away from the wholesale market. From our parking area, just a stone's throw away, a large group of personnel from the Health Ministry were already assembled. Through a loudspeaker, there were repeated blares asking all residents in the shop-lot floors to exit and assemble along the roadside. It was clear to us all that they intended to conduct wholesale sanitization via fogging.

Half an hour later, RELA officers were pounding on the gate of our premise to get us to exit. By then, a large crowd of foreign migrants as well as locals were on the road. Police and RELA enforcement officers were patrolling and giving stern instructions to maintain social distancing. Two fogging officers entered PBCC and surprisingly I was allowed to videotape their operation. The classrooms and office were thoroughly fogged. Outside RELA officers were chatting with Alan Lee and the other PBCC staff.

The crowd was very subdued and cooperative. Alan and I got into our car and drove along the stretch of road. It was lined by crowds of foreigners and locals and there were numerous health officers and enforcement personnel to ensure order and efficiency.



SATURDAY 16 MAY, 11.30AM

Upon exiting the wholesale market vicinity, we drove five minutes away to nearby Taman Sri Murni. It was a large, fenced compound consisting of a dozen or so high-rise flats. The area was popularly known as 'Little Myanmar'. According to Alan Lee, it is estimated that some 10,000 Myanmar people of different ethnic/dialect groups reside in these flats. They are part of the large group of foreign workers, both legal and illegal, taking up all kinds of DDD (Dirty-Dangerous-Demeaning) jobs around the wholesale market. The Enhanced Movement Control Order had been lifted just a week ago, and in many sections, barbed-wire barricades were still in place.

I came just to observe distribution of food to PBCC clients but ended up witnessing all this drama. It truly opened my eyes to realities on the ground of all that the news media was highlighting. All these came on the heel of the spikes of infected cases in Singapore brought about by the large number of foreign workers clustered in dormitories in that city. The Malaysian authorities were very concerned that a similar trend would occur in enclaves such as the Selayang Wholesale Market, Selayang Baru and similar districts. Later developments confirmed their concerns as many infected clusters were detected around these sites where hundreds to thousands of foreign migrants congregated.

The Covid-19 pandemic has pressured the current authorities to have no choice but to come out and face the reality of the millions of immigrants in Malaysia. Approximately two million of them are legal immigrants and about four million are illegal ones. Our poorly maintained immigration detention centres are packed to the brim. It is known that health standards and humanitarian rights are well below UN human rights expectations. Thankfully, there are churches and many NGOs such as Malaysian CARE etc. who take it upon themselves to reach out to them. But certainly much more can still be done as God's redemptive agents for these considered as "outcasts". This pandemic and post-Covid-19 scenario has opened wide doors of opportunities to fulfill this.

"...He makes sure that orphans and widows are treated fairly; He loves the foreigners who live with our people and gives them food and clothing. So then, show love for those foreigners for once you were foreigners in Egypt..."
Deuteronomy 10:18-19 GNB



I Was Blind, Now I See

by Stevens Chan, KL Zone



I lost my eyesight in 2007 at the age of 45 due to glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy. Prior to my blindness, I was a busy entrepreneur interested only in acquiring wealth and power. In my pursuit of these desires, I sacrificed my health in excessive drinking and smoking, late nights, and unhealthy eating habits. I sacrificed time I should have spent with my wife and family and even compromised my character sometimes just to fulfill my ultimate goal which was to be rich and powerful one day.

In early 2002, I was awarded a supply contract worth RM2.5 million which would earn me a whopping RM1 million in profits. Needless to say, I was overjoyed with this success after years of sacrifice. I told my long-suffering wife, Kaye, that all of her sacrifices would soon be worth it as we would be millionaires soon. Or so I thought!

A few weeks before receiving my first tranche of payment, I was stricken with a very bad headache. It was so bad that not only was my vision becoming blurry, I also could not raise my head due to the immense pain. The GP then advised me to see an ophthalmologist as he suspected the pain could be due to an eye infection.

This news came out of the blue. “Glaucoma? What’s that?” I asked my

consulting ophthalmologist, Doctor Fang. “Your headache is due to the intraocular pressure in your eyes which is very high,” he explained. If the pressure had not gone down to the normal level over the weekend, he would have had to perform surgery on me to reduce the pressure and hopefully improve the vision in my right eye.

Over the weekend, the pressure in my eye did not decrease much and Doctor Fang had to do the surgery for me the very next day. My right eye never recovered from that procedure. It was the first of a series of operations. Eight other surgeries and countless other laser treatments, eye drops, and medicine that I had to take would follow over the next few years. Yet despite these many treatments, I soon lost all of my eyesight five years later, by 2007. With the loss of sight came the loss of hope.

A friend once asked me, “How is it for you now, being blind?” I described to her that it was like taking a bungee jump and the rope did not seem like it would stop.

But stop it did. The endless rope into the abyss was stopped suddenly one day by Christ. Slowly but surely, Christ was pulling me up again, from darkness to light.

It was in 2008 on Easter morning that I accepted Christ as my Saviour and my Lord.

On the eve of Easter 2008, we received an invitation from a friend to attend a Church Easter celebration and to Kaye’s surprise, I accepted their invitation. Previously I had rejected and declined many similar invitations to attend church for prayers. After that Easter celebration, when the pastor came and asked me, “Do you want to accept Christ as your Lord and Saviour?” I just said “Yes”. As we prayed the salvation prayer, I told God to please take over my life. “I have messed up, please take over now Lord.” From that day onwards, our lives were turned upside down.

Christ was pulling me up again, from darkness to light.

From a previously self-seeking entrepreneur interested only in enriching myself, now for the past 12 years since our salvation, we have been social workers serving vision-impaired and eye patients, social activists advocating for the accessibility rights of the vision-impaired in our nation by initiating a movement to start the first Guide Dog School for the blind, and social entrepreneurs empowering and sustaining our communities through collaborations with the world-renowned *Dialogue in the Dark* experience programmes.

Who would have imagined that God can transform a blind, broken, and bankrupt hopeless person like me to be the Founder of an NGO, the Malaysia Glaucoma Society, a Christian NPO SOS Missions Bhd, and an accredited social enterprise acknowledged by the Government, *Dialogue in the Dark*?

Over the years, our work have gained much media publicity and support, appearing in many printed and virtual media portals and even on TV, not only in Malaysia but also overseas. God gave our lives a purpose when all hope seemed to be lost!

In these past years, I can never thank God enough for His amazing grace and mercies on a wretched sinner like me. Despite the numerous stumbles and falls, our Lord never failed to pick us up and to strengthen us to

press on and to endure our pilgrimage joyfully. During the course of our work, I have suffered two strokes that have left me still walking with a limp on my right leg, a badly broken right elbow, a still persistently painful frozen left shoulder and last year, a massive heart attack in Seoul Korea that nearly took my life. Kaye told me later that the doctors at the Seoul University Hospital thought that I would most likely not be able to make it through that fateful night on November 22, 2019.

The Korean doctors in their broken English told Kaye that my heart was very weak.

There were many bad blockages and I was too weak to respond to any of their treatments. They asked Kaye to call my family members and to be prepared for my demise. Kaye did the only thing that she could think of at that moment, which was to pray, and also to ask as many brothers and sisters-in-Christ as possible to pray for me.

Miraculously, I survived that night and the doctors told Kaye that they could now perform the bypass surgery for me and hopefully save my life. I woke up on the 26th morning in the ICU ward with many wires and tubes strapped on and in me. Dr Hwand and Dr Kim, the specialists that performed the bypass on me then told me that I was very lucky to be alive. Shaking my head and with the little strength I had, I pointed my finger to heaven and said thank God, smiled at them and said, "Kamsa Hamida, doctors."

Only God through Christ can accomplish this for all to see His Glory! The total cost of my surgery was a whopping RM430,000 and over 90% of that cost was covered by our travel insurance which I nearly forgot to buy. Thank God we remembered to buy the travel insurance one day before my flight. My heart attack happened on a Friday evening during rush hour, yet the ambulance managed to send me to the best heart hospital in Korea, the 108-year-old Seoul University Hospital within 15 minutes.

**Only God through Christ
can accomplish this for
all to see His Glory!**

Apparently, this hospital was not on the panel of my insurance provider, yet the doctors proceeded to do the necessary treatment without insurance approval. Somehow the insurance company approved my case within a few hours before my bypass. The insurance company agreed to pay RM400,000 of the total bill of RM430,000. The balance was loaned to me by our fellow *Dialogue in the Dark* Korea partner, Mr Song. All coincidences? No, only God can perform all these miracles. Today, if you happen to see a limping blind old man with odd uneven shoulders walking down the street that would be me, a walking miracle of God.

We pray that many, including those we serve, the vision-impaired and the eye patients as well as their family members will one day, by God's grace and mercy through Christ, see and receive His love and salvation for them and that they would

know that God loves them regardless of their condition.

Just like it was with me and my wife; Christ saved us from darkness into His Light. May Christ be seen in our words and deeds!

God saved me *from* Covid-19

by Tan Boon, PJN2

It is by God's grace that I am alive and well today.

On 18 March 2020, I was diagnosed with Covid-19, and by that time, I was already at the most critical Stage 5 for any Covid-19 patient. On arrival at the Sungai Buloh Hospital, I was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and put on a ventilator. All my 53 days in the hospital were in ICU. I was in a coma for 16 days and on the ventilator for 17 days.

DID I GO TO THE DOCTOR TOO LATE?

I first started to have symptoms on 9 March 2020. I went to the clinic once on 11 March and again on 17 March. Both times, I was treated for fever, flu and cough. On the night of 17 March, I started to have breathing problems. The next morning, I drove myself to a private hospital. I almost collapsed upon arrival. When I was tested POSITIVE for Covid-19, I was transferred to Sungai Buloh Hospital on the same day in an ambulance. I passed out shortly after Siew Lan, my wife spoke to me on the phone when I was inside the ambulance. She was in Australia with our younger daughter, Joyce, who was entering university.

THE CRITICAL TWO WEEKS

Shortly after admission, a doctor at Sungai Buloh Hospital told my wife to be prepared for the worst during the first 72 hours. My chance of survival was very slim. However, the 72 hours of critical state extended to two weeks. Often, my lungs, heart or kidneys would encounter some issues. The doctors and nurses had to monitor me very closely.

On 1 April, there were signs of possible multiple organ failure. The doctor called my wife to say that my lungs were not getting enough oxygen, my kidneys were not



functioning and my heart could fail. I also needed blood transfusion. The doctors considered doing a tracheostomy, which is to insert a tube into my neck to allow air to enter the lungs.

That was the worst day, but God was still in charge. The Holy Spirit prompted my cell group to arrange for Pastor Jin Leong to lead my wife to pray on my behalf, and to renounce and repent for all my past temple worship and occult practices. Once my ties with the past sins were cut, God's power broke through.

THE AMAZING BREAKTHROUGH

The next morning on 2 April, I woke up from my coma. One of the doctors said, "You are a miracle!" I replied, "My Almighty God has saved me." Indeed, I am a miracle case. The doctors were happy that I could respond to their commands. My heart stabilized and my lungs improved so much that they considered removing the ventilator to allow me to breathe on my own.

"You are a miracle!"

I will never forget that joyous day. 2 April was also my younger daughter's 18th birthday. God had answered her prayer for me to be awake. There was also great rejoicing among cell members, church members, church pastors and all who had been praying for me.

HOW THE LORD SUSTAINED AND COMFORTED ME

During the time I was in a coma, God gave me a dream. I was seated inside a very crowded train in total darkness. The train had to go through a blazing furnace. When the train went through the fire, I felt the heat. My body was very hot but I was not burnt. Just like Daniel and his friends in the Bible, nothing happened to me but all the other people in the train perished.

Through this dream, the Lord reminded me that because I loved him, He would rescue me as in Psalm 91:14. It gave me hope that I would live and not die.

The ventilator was removed on 3 April, but the recovery thereafter was not easy. I could not speak and I could not swallow as the ventilator tube had injured my throat and cheek muscles. I had to be fed through a tube and go for dialysis. I was also treated for very painful Grade 2 bedsores



with occasional fever.

During this time, God's Word gave me comfort and hope. As I could not speak, I cried out to the Lord in my mind, "Lord Jesus, please help me. Please heal me." I told the Lord that I did not have my Bible. The Holy Spirit reminded me of Psalm 91, that the Lord was with me and no harm would come to me.

During this time, God's Word gave me comfort and hope.

The Lord also assured me that the cell group was praying earnestly for me, just like how they had prayed for another church leader when he went for a risky brain surgery. Whenever I was in pain, I would sing in my mind hymns like "How Great Thou Art" and "Amazing Grace". I could feel God with me and I knew that He would never leave me nor forsake me.

On 17 April, I spoke to my wife for the first time on the phone. I was very happy to know that my family was well and many people – cell members, friends, relatives and pastors from DUMC and other churches – had all been praying for me.

I am very grateful to the body of Christ. My cell group played a very important role in supporting me and my wife during the tough time. The members gathered daily online to worship and pray for me for more than 50 days. Initially, when my condition was very critical, they gathered twice a day. In the process, their faith also increased. On days when my medical report was bad, they didn't give up. They firmly believed that God would save me and restore me fully.

GOD HAS INDEED RESTORED MY HEALTH

9 May 2020 was another unforgettable day. I was discharged and it was a joy to be back home after 53 days. I am very grateful to all the doctors and nurses who took great care of me. I still had bedsores and could not walk without support, having lost 40% of my muscles and 23 kg in weight. With God's favour and good care from my wife, I soon regained my strength.

After 12 days at home, I could already walk without support. When my 14-day quarantine ended, I could drive again and could also walk up and down the stairs with no problem. My doctors at Sungai Buloh Hospital have recently confirmed that all my key organs – heart, lungs and kidneys are fine. Even my bedsores have fully healed. My next medical appointment is scheduled for next year.

A NEW LEASE OF LIFE

While I was on my hospital bed, I realized many things. Firstly, money is not everything and money should not be my priority in life. Secondly, I realized that family is very important. I have a very good wife and a beautiful family. Going forward, I will appreciate my wife more and spend time with my family.

I plan to go deeper into the study of His Word, which can bless, heal and give hope to people. As God has made me His miracle story, I will share His story, proclaim His goodness and point people to Jesus. I want to serve God and make my life count for Jesus.

To God Be All Glory!



LIFE, MORE THAN A MIST

by Wendy Tan Min Litt, PJS1

This is my personal reflection of what has transpired in my life since Covid-19 spread in Malaysia.

MORTALITY

Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." (James 4:14-15)

Shortly after my manager told me that my name had landed on the 'right-sizing' list, James 4:14 came to mind. I looked up the verse and was drawn to the subsequent one. Nineteen years of working in MPH had flown by. I told God that my life was in His hands, and that if it was in His will, then I knew that I would get through this season.

I had been asking God at the beginning of every year since 2017 if it was time to leave the company. In 2017 and 2018, He said, 'No'. In 2019, He was quiet. That same year, I was transferred from the bookstores to the distribution arm. Then in early 2020, I decided that it would be nice to quit in 2021 as it would mark 20 years in the company, but God responded that 2020 was also a nice number.

I went for a spiritual retreat in Cameron Highlands, and attended my cell member's wedding in February. The situation in the country was still bearable but the coronavirus was spreading and soon the Movement Control Order was implemented. Two weeks in, I had a meltdown. Work was stressful, and being indoors 24/7 took a



toll on me. Devotion and worship songs did not help. For a few weeks, I grew dry and distant from God. Tension grew at home between my mother and me. Yet, I could still run virtual CGs and appear fine. Away from the camera, tears would just flow. I did not know then how long I could hold in my frustration and pain.

Finally, I was back in the office in May, and eventually getting the news of the retrenchment gave me closure to all that had happened in the past few months. I felt a burden lifted off my shoulders and peace around me knowing that God had been and was still present. He had been patiently helping me traverse this unfamiliar path all along. I sensed that He was nudging me to continually follow His lead.

PLANS

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

Soon after, “What are you going to do after you leave?” was a question that was asked often of me. I asked the same of others should they get an eventual cut. Most were uncertain and had no definite answer.

In 2016, when I contemplated pursuing an MBA, my heart was in much unease. I was finally talked out of doing it. Years have passed now. Priorities and interests have changed. This time round, when I mentioned to friends about my intention to study, none of them stopped me. I asked them, “What subject do you see me taking up?” Their answers did not surprise me, but rather they affirmed what was already in my heart. I had been thinking about going to a bible school or seminary.

I recall when I had wanted to my job in 2021, I would have had to fork out money from my savings to study. With this retrenchment exercise, I received an ex-gratia package. The amount is not huge but would probably be sufficient to cover the cost of my impending studies.

God’s providence truly overflows and He has proven it so many times over, not just in monetary terms, but in giving me the right people in my life. I praise Him for His grace and mercy in many situations.

HEART

“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.” (Proverbs 4:23)

Having walked ever more closely with God in the past four years, I have learned to be discerning of His voice and will in my life. I knew in my despair that I had to recover quickly. I thank God for reaching out to me through various ways. An online sermon sparked a light in my heart one night. I turned to God in repentance for wallowing in self-pity and complacency.

As the situation improved, the opportunity to serve as an online prayer host for our online church celebration came about. The recent shifts within the writing team then gave me a new sense of belonging and a confidence that I am heading in the right direction.

*My story has not ended.
The future has not arrived.
In this present time, I will savour all these experiences I have had with God.
He is my good, good father.
A promise keeper.
I know that my future is securely anchored in Him.*

DUMC Congregations & Ministries

CONGREGATIONS

ENGLISH

Pr Chris Kam
english@dumc.my

BAHASA MALAYSIA

Pr Eddy Marson
bahasa.malaysia@dumc.my

CHINESE CHURCH

Pr Dr Ling Shui Nyuk
chinese@dumc.my

NEPALESE

Adrin Sant
nepalese@dumc.my

MYANMAR

Pr Sarah Aye
myanmar@dumc.my

TAMIL

Pr Ravindren Arumugam
tamil@dumc.my

FILIPINO (Fellowship)

Peter Lim
filipino@dumc.my

YOUTH

CHILDREN’S CHURCH

Pr Jonathan Yeoh
children@dumc.my

NEXTGEN

Pr Terry Yeow (Teens)
nextgen@dumc.my

Pr Sara Leong (Campus)
nextgen@dumc.my

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS MINISTRY

Thomas & Cynthia Lim
ism@dumc.my

ADULTS

MEN ALIVE!

Fong Siew Keong
men.alive@dumc.my

WOMEN2WOMEN

Stella Hoh
w2w@dumc.my

COMMUNITY

BREAKTHROUGH DRUG REHABILITATION CENTRE

Pr Samuel Krishnan
breakthrough.rehab@dumc.my

CITIZENS NETWORK FOR A BETTER MALAYSIA

cnbm@ces.org.my

EXCEL TUITION CLUB

Yuen Ting Ai
excel.tuition@ces.org.my

GOLDEN CLUB

Rupert Ling
general@ces.org.my

FOODBANK

Tan Hong Looi
foodbank@ces.org.my

S.T.A.R YOUTH (Ministry for Intellectually - Challenged Youth)

Tracey Chan
micy@ces.org.my

STREET MINISTRY (Ministry to the Homeless)

Jerry Teo
street.ministry@ces.org.my

URBAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Sophy Lim
urban.community@ces.org.my

YOUTH EXCEL SERVICES (Football Coaching)

Pr Samuel Krishnan
yes@ces.org.my

FIRST TOUCH

CONNECTORS

Pr Alex Tan
connectors@dumc.my

SECURITY

Pr Adrian Chong
security@dumc.my

USHERS

Pr Alex Tan
ushers@dumc.my

MISSIONS

CROSSFIELDS

Pr Kelvin Yong
missions@dumc.my

FAMILY

FAMILY LIFE MINISTRY

T C & Jean Lau
family.life@dumc.my

PREMARITAL COUNSELLING

Bob & Ruby Chee
pmc@dumc.my

MARRIAGE

Adrian Chen & Susan
marriage.course@dumc.my

PARENTING (Children)

Ronnie & Ivy Khoo
Dennis Ngai & Joo Wei
parenting.children@dumc.my

PARENTING (Teens)

Vincent & Lily Wong
parenting.teens@dumc.my

WEDDING PLANNING

Elizabeth Lee
weddings@dumc.my

COMMUNICATIONS & MEDIA

DEW CREW

Huong Yew Yi
dew.crew@dumc.my

FLOODGATES (Church Magazine)

Petulia Lun
floodgates@dumc.my

CREATIVE ARTS

Darren Ong
creative.arts@dumc.my

RESONATE (Worship ministry)

Pr Gilbert Tan
resonate@dumc.my

OTHERS

FORERUNNERS

(Intercessory Prayer Ministry)
Pr Chris Manivannan
forerunners@dumc.my

TADIKA JUARA CERDIK

Lily Tan
general@dreamacademy.edu.my

**LOVE GOD.
SERVE PEOPLE.
MAKE DISCIPLES.**

We are DUMC.

A church for all generations
—an exciting community
of families, senior citizens,
young adults, teenagers,
and young children, doing
life together.

Our primary purpose is not
to make nice religious Christians.
Our purpose is to build passionate
disciples of Jesus Christ.

