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aWay*
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FACE TO FACE WITH GOD

City Harvest Church has entered into a season of seeking God and encountering His presence, and members of the church are responding by going deeper in their personal devotion.
By **DAWN SEOW & MICHELLE HENG**

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COVER STORY

Face To Face With God (cont'd from Page 1).



ters are an integral part of a Christian's walk with God," she explained as she shared her personal encounters with God in great detail, giving the congregation a glimpse of what it was like to feel God tangibly.

One such encounter took place at the Worship Night service that capped this year's Emerge Conference for the youth. As Ho led the youth deeper and deeper into worship, she felt a physical touch from God, like a "fire in her belly", so much that she staggered backwards from the impact, and she found herself weeping.

A few weeks later, while on a trip to America to preach at CHC US in Orange County, a church led by pastors Derek and Susan Dunn, Ho and members of her team paid a visit to Bethel Church in Redding, California. At that service, Ho found herself coming to God with expectancy in her heart once again. Since April 23 this year, when her husband Kong began serving his time following the CHC trial, Ho found herself unable to laugh. But that day, she had a deep



CN FILE PHOTOS

Youth at the Emerge Conference in July this year, worshipping God with all their hearts.

Songs of Solomon 2:10 says, "My beloved spoke, and said to me: 'Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.'" "Come Away" is the theme of City Harvest Church's 28th anniversary. Executive pastor Sun Ho explains that the theme represents the church's new focus on deepening its walk with God and encountering Jesus in His presence.

There was a prophecy given by an Indonesian prophet Abraham Joel to Ho and her husband, the church's senior pastor Kong Hee, which left a deep impact on them: *"I see a vision that in 2017, God wants you to be very close to Him. So close with Him that your forehead is touching His forehead. Forehead to forehead ... very close, very close. God wants your heart to be closer to Him more and more ... This church will become a mighty people—an army of worshippers. Your power is worship ..."*

"As we celebrate our 28th anniversary as a church," says Ho, "my prayer is that this prophecy would come to pass in CHC. I know we are inching closer to God, and as we come away to Him with a deeper hunger and renewed consecration, we will truly fulfil God's higher calling for us as a church, and see Him as He is."

To come away with God is a call that has been sounding from the pulpit increasingly over the course of this year. In her sermon on the weekend of Sep 9 and 10, Ho taught the church about having encounters with God. "Encoun-

"As we celebrate our 28th anniversary as a church, my prayer is that this prophecy would come to pass in CHC. I know we are inching closer to God, and as we come away to Him with a deeper hunger and renewed consecration, we will truly fulfil God's higher calling for us as a church, and see Him as He is." ~ Sun Ho

encounter with God as she experienced "moments of deep joy flowing out", laughing and crying at the same time.

JOURNEY TO THE HEART OF GOD

Going deep with God has permeated CHC's consciousness this entire year, through different preachers giving completely different sermons. In March, Kong declared a fourth element in CHC's mission statement following the Great Commandment, the Great Commission and the Cultural Mandate: Divine Priority.

He explained that God has given the earth to humanity as their inheritance; when Jesus came, He restored them to their original purpose. "In Christ Jesus today, once again the earth is part of our divine inheritance," Kong said.

A Christian's task is then to recognize that he is a citizen of the Kingdom and a child of the King. He is not to be ignorant of the authority given to him. Jesus taught His disciples the kingdom way of living in Matthew 6:33 "But seek first the

kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

The Divine Priority is to seek first the kingdom of God. "To seek is to pursue with fervency and determination," Kong said. "It means to not give up until you find it. We need to make seeking the King and His Kingdom our highest priority."

the widow to gather empty jars and fill them with oil. The oil did not stop flowing until the widow ran out of vessels.

"It matters that you stay pure," Wu reminded the young people. "Just as you will not pour fresh milk into a dirty bottle, God will not pour His fresh oil into us if we are not clean. In order to be filled by the Holy Spirit, we need to be clean, empty vessels. To do that, you need to take out the trash that is taking up space within you."

Wu closed with this: "The devil thought he had destroyed the vessel that was Jesus Christ, but now there are hundreds and thousands of vessels that God can fill. Now that Jesus has resurrected—you and I—we are the vessels to bring His miracles into this generation."

The three-day conference saw an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, not only on the youth, but also the adults who attended the weekend worship services. The conference culminated in the worship session on Jul 9, led by Ho.

At that session, Ho taught on the mindset of worship. "Until you have a *ginosko* (have intimate knowledge of) experience, no fear will be removed from your heart," she told the youth.

The presence of God filled the hall as the congregation went on their knees in worship. Each of the attendees encountered God for themselves that afternoon.

Mark Kwan, CHC's creative director was kneeling at the back of the hall during that worship session. "The presence of God was so tangible that it felt like the Holy Spirit was running into us, colliding into us!" he recalled. "It felt like He was claiming His people back—by force!"

"I was blown away by how powerfully God moved among us, and it created in me an even deeper desire to encounter Him—as the Bible puts it—to 'know Him and the power of His resurrection.'"

On the weekend of the Pentecost Sunday in June, executive pastor Bobby Chaw brought the church through the Old Testament and showed them that through the Holy Spirit, God keeps His promise that He will always be with them.

"The outpouring of the Holy Spirit has been mentioned all throughout the Old Testament and it is called the promise of the Father," Chaw taught. "The promise of the Father is His presence with His people."

After Jesus redeemed humanity with His death, the Holy Spirit could now live in His people. "We are now the carriers of God's presence," Chaw said. "God is with us wherever we go."

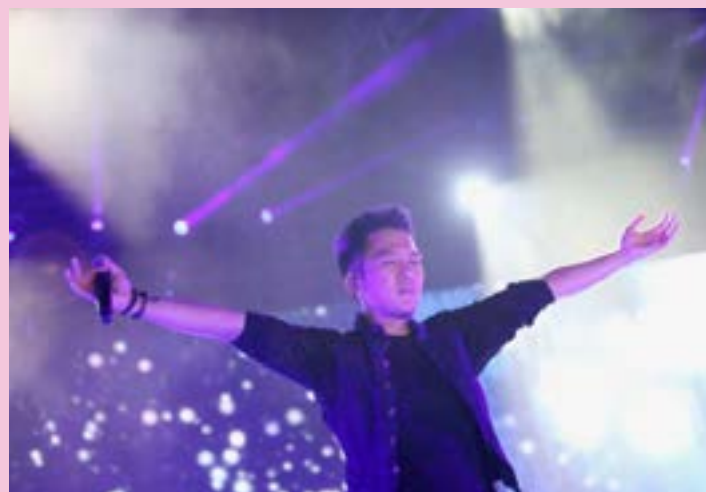
At the Emerge Conference on Jul 7, district pastor Wu Yuzhuang reminded the young people about the necessity of being God's vessel.

In his message, Wu taught the youth that to be carriers of the Holy Spirit, they first needed to be worthy vessels: clean and empty. He told them the story of the widow in 2 Kings 4, in which Elijah told

COVER STORY

Unusual Worship

Mark Kwan, 39, creative director of CityWorship



CN PHOTOS: JASON LEE

"The prophecy given to CHC that we would birth unusual worship has proven to be an amazingly accurate precursor of things to come in the year.

"In June, I was preparing my heart to lead worship on one of the weekends and I was scheduled to teach the song 'Amazed'. It was an important song to me because it had ministered to Pastor Kong in his private moments with the Lord during the trial, and I knew if it meant something to him, it would mean some-

thing to the church as well.

"As I was praying, God spoke into my heart and said, 'I will bring *tidal waves* of My presence.' That weekend, I sang those words out by faith without knowing exactly what God had in store for us.

"Less than a month later, the Emerge worship session proved to be the first encounter with the tsunami waves of God's presence and power—the flooding of His Spirit into His people.

"Following that session, I've felt God closer to me than ever before. It's a constant aware-

ness of His presence and purpose in my life and in the life of the church. On more than one occasion, I've sensed the Holy Spirit tell me that 'the floodgates have been opened' above our church and our lives. We have struggled through a long and arduous season of purification. I feel as if that season is now turning, and from purification, we are now finding ourselves in a season of tenderness: we not only sense our Abba Father's tender heart towards us, but we are also being drawn to respond to Him in greater measures of tender adoration and worship.

"The most precious difference I have seen [since we started spending a longer time in worship] is the spiritual hunger manifesting within our church for a greater move of the Holy Spirit. I see how the people are much more engaged during our weekly moments of worship in service—how fully abandoned they are to worship their Lord and Savior—and that really encourages me. There is no greater honor as a worship leader than to see the people you are leading encounter the presence of God powerfully. That is the whole purpose of being a part of the worship team, to connect the hearts of man with that of our Father.

"What seems simple on-stage takes many hours of hard work, sweat and tears, and it is

no different for the CityWorship team. Both the staff and volunteers of CityWorship have put tons of effort into singing and playing their instruments better so that skill and talent do not hinder the move of the Holy Spirit. More than just exercising the talents that we have been given, our level of breakthrough depends on the level of our walk with Jesus.

"Being at Bethel with Sun and the team made me realize just how much the Holy Spirit wants to partner with us as we serve Him. Worship is not just singing a song, it is about making room for the Holy Spirit to move through that song. We saw the possibilities of how God can move in worship, and are inspired to apply that boldness and freedom in our unique style of worship at City Harvest.

"It has been a steep learning curve for the CityWorship team. When we first came back from Bethel Church and told the music directors we wanted to move into this 'new flow' of worship, there was an initial sense of hesitation and apprehension. Not because they were unwilling, but it was hard for them to understand the new direction without experiencing it for themselves.

"Our team has really come a long way over the past seven years. We have built up a

strong sense of synergy and trust among the team, so even though this is uncharted territory for many, they were willing to follow by faith. I believe God has honored this faith-filled obedience with more of His presence and glory!

"After last year's CityWorship album *Draw Me*, many of the more musically-inclined in CHC have been inspired to write new songs. As God touches His people, we become so full of His love and presence that we have to express it. Most of the Emerge youth camps this year had their own worship anthems. Following the Passion Pursuit Songwriting workshop, the participants submitted over 30 original compositions!

"It does take a lot of effort for us work on the songs before they can be introduced in church, but I'm excited in my spirit because these songs represent the voice of City Harvest Church—the voice of this generation of believers who have been called to take the nations by storm. Moreover, I believe that the more we write our story out in song, the more our testimony for Jesus will be heard and celebrated around the world."

Coming Away

Lester Chee, 28, first-time father

"I think to 'come away' is to really to know God more. In this season of my life, I've been reflecting about the nature of God. We all love to see the works of God, but we sometimes forget about getting to know God for who He is. One of my recent revelations is in Zephaniah 3:17 (AMP), that "God will rejoice over you with joy;

He will be quiet in His love [making no mention of your past sins], He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy." This is such an extravagant display of His love—He desires for us to come away with Him!

"I am in a transitional phase of my life: being a new father, looking for a new career direction. Forty days often marks a watershed in

the Bible and I felt this would be my turning point, doing something consistent. I had long heard of Rick Warren's book *A Purpose-Driven Life* and thought it would be a great material to have in this 40-day devotional journey that I started on Sep 11. I had a desire to fast, so I fasted for the first seven days of this journey. I also penned down my thoughts on Instagram (@l40d)—where I'm also accountable to share my daily takeaways."



The Heart Of Worship



Joann Leong, early 30s, compliance officer

"The recent style of praise and worship in the church is amazing. I'm always tearing by the end of it. I remember at one of the services, after we sat down, I

looked at my phone and saw it was 10.57am. I thought to myself, 'Did one hour just pass by? I felt like it could go on forever.'

"It felt like I was in another dimension; just simply wanting to stay close to God and hear from Him. It is a very tangible feeling, the

whole atmosphere is changing and it is something I would not want to let go of. It helps me especially in the workplace. In the midst of the busyness, I find myself stopping to think through my next steps, asking God to lead the way, and sometimes humming worship songs."

COVER STORY

My Cup Runs Over

Esther Tan, in her 30s, restaurant worker

"I work as a server in a cafe. My colleagues—the dining managers, waiters, chefs and the dishwashers—they do a lot of hard manual labor every day. As God has gifted me with a strong voice and I can sing *a cappella*, so I thought I could spice up the atmosphere with my voice. I was inspired by how Sun held concerts overseas during the Crossover. I decided to use the similar approach to bring the presence of God to those who have little chance to step into a church.

"Most people working in the Food and Beverage industry have to work during the weekends so they cannot attend church services. I de-

cided to 'bring the church' to them.

"I would usually sing a pop song, followed by a Christian song for my colleagues. Each time I do that before the cafe opens, the business would be extremely good for the day. There would be so many customers flooding in. Something special that happens almost every time after I've sung is that birds would appear in front of the cafe. Even animals are attracted to God's presence! When children pass by the cafe, they look inside with curiosity and have an urge to come in. Recently two of my colleagues received salvation, and it all started with my worship unto God!

"The presence of God has become more tangible when there is only worship during service. Praise and worship changes the atmosphere. When I brought praise and worship into my workplace, it broke barriers of misunderstanding and created peace and harmony.

"Bringing Christ into the marketplace prospers the business. When we put our heart and soul into even the most menial of jobs, like serving food and clearing dishes, God is magnified. If God has given you the gift of serving and you feel happy doing so, you are glorifying God in your own special way. Do not despise small beginnings—your faithfulness in the little can propel you to managing greater things in future."



A Faith Encounter

Althea Tan, 13, student



"I encountered God during Limitless camp, organized by Pastor Tan Yah Lan's zone, in June this year. I had just graduated from Harvest Kidz and this was the first time I was worshiping God in a youth meeting with many others who were very passionate about God.

"There was one session where the camp leaders encouraged us to step out in faith to sing in tongues. I can speak in tongues but had never sung before. At first, I was very nervous, but after one of the camp leaders came to lay her hands on me, I really felt the presence of God and I was able to sing in tongues.

"After the camp, I decided to put aside more time to read the Bible and pray, even though there

seems to be a lot of schoolwork. My mother also encouraged me with Colossians 3:23, which says that we are putting in efforts for God and not for anything or anyone else.

"Recently, the style of worship has helped me feel closer to God. Some of the newer songs like 'Pure As Gold' and 'Jesus I Live to Sing' really bless me. I am reminded that God loves me and has not forgotten me. When I study in my room, I play worship songs in the background and I feel His peace.

"Knowing and feeling God is very special to me, because I know there is Someone who really loves me no matter what, and that Someone will always be there for me. I want my friends to experience that too. If they get to know God, we can grow together."

God Loves Us As His Children

Mabel Lee, in her 20s, mother of two

"When I became a mother for the first time, the parenting journey took me by surprise. It was not as straightforward as I had imagined it to be. Often, I struggled with conflicting feelings. My heart desired to fully worship the Lord and serve Him in the capacity I used to, but physically, I was drained. I was torn between my responsibilities as a mother and a Christian.

"I often felt discouraged and attending church

became a routine, not an enjoyment. I entered a season where I felt spiritually dry and distant from the Lord. Even though I still attended service regularly, it was nearly impossible to concentrate while attending to my child at the same time in nursery.

"However, deep down inside, I always knew that God was with me. During a recent service where Sun preached on encounters with God, I felt the tangible presence of the Holy Spirit in a way I had not felt in a long time. God be-

gan to show me that just as I love and cherish my child, He loves and cherishes me deeply too. I began to realize that I had unconsciously been trying to walk the motherhood journey on my own. God reminded me of 2 Corinthians 12:9, which says that God's grace is sufficient for me, and His strength is made perfect in my weakness. During that moment, I truly felt how deeply God loves and cares for me, and in my season of faithlessness, He has always remained faithful.

"From then on, I began to consciously partner with the Holy Spirit, praying often for myself and my children.

Through my own parenting journey, I began to understand how our Heavenly Father must feel towards His children—His desire to love, protect, and be close to them, to strengthen and to guide them on the right path of life. Parenting started to become more of a partnership with God, rather than a separate way of life. Truly, it is through encounters with God that we can find success in our many different seasons of life."



COVER STORY

Dancing Before His Throne

Khye Loh, 29, dance instructor

“As dancers, we are naturally drawn to music, so praise and worship is really the best way for us to encounter God. I really love how the church is taking time to tarry in His presence. I find that God speaks to me the most during worship; it is always then that I receive a word or a vision, and God just ‘downloads’ into my system.

“Personally, 2017 didn’t start out easy for me, especially in the area of my business. When I was going through some challenges, I felt that God was silent most of the time. I was busy dealing with issues and didn’t have time to dig deeper into His presences and seek my breakthrough.

“At a recent worship night for leaders, I decided to let go of my doubts and worries, and spent time to pray and seek God. That was when God spoke so plainly to me, encouraging me to trust Him. I asked God for a clear direction and specific instructions on what to do.

"A few days later, the dance ministry had a leaders' meeting with Pastor Gary Heyes, a prophet from Canada. He prophesied over me in the exact things I had asked God for, giving me new vision and specific steps to take for my business.

“In the dance ministry, other than the performances and competitions we take part in, we are also involved in missions. Dancers are like an army pulling down strongholds. When we dance in the mission field, heavens are open and people are set free. The people we minister to feel very liberated. Some of them have even requested us to go back and teach them the ropes.



“During one of our practice sessions, I paired them up and as one party danced, the other was to observe and discern what their partner was going through, and then pray for each other. This is something I want to bring in as much as I can into our sessions. Last year at our dance camp, we involved dance ministries from overseas churches. We shared a worship dance for about two hours, taking the participants through a time when they were ministered by the dance, and felt like they were dancing with God.

"For me, to 'come away with God' really means putting aside everything and just being with God. God will multiply what we have in that time with Him."

To Tell The World Of Jesus

Tricia Tan, 13, student



"I feel that the praise and worship songs impact me a lot, especially the song 'Glory To Glory'. As the song goes, 'We will tell the world about Your story'—it makes me want to tell God's story to others. It also makes me want to invite my friends to church so that they will be able to be touched by God and experience His love and goodness. I'm inspired to think about how I should use my talents to serve Him and help other people to know Him better."

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CHURCH & MISSIONS

Record Attendance Is Music To Their Ears



The CHC Dialect Service saw its largest-ever turnout at its recent Oldies Concert—abundantly above what pastor Maria Tok imagined.

By **DAWN SEOW**

City Harvest Church's Dialect Service is a marvel to behold. Each week, hundreds of dialect-speaking individuals—mostly elderly persons—gather to worship God in Hokkien and Cantonese, and to hear the Word of God preached by an animated Maria Tok, the pastor in charge of the service.

Once a year, Dialect Service conducts its main outreach event, a big blowout concert featuring dancers and singers who perform classic songs in Mandarin and various dialects, dressed to the nines. Oldies Concert has become something of an institution, an annual treat that both audience and volunteers look forward to.

Rehearsals for the ninth Oldies Concert began three months before the actual performance, which happened at the church's Jurong West auditorium on Sep 10. "What's most impressive is that all the participants putting together the concert were volunteers," said Mervyn Lim, the CityWorship staffer who oversees the Dialect Service music team.

Indeed, Dialect Service only has a staff of three. Its weekly services are run by volunteers. This year's Oldies Concert saw seven dancers, 14 singers, 14 band members, and eight makeup artists putting the show together.

"I've been serving in Dialect Service as



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CITY HARVEST CHURCH
(Above) Maria Tok illustrating the "light of Christ" with colorful lanterns.

a musician for five years now," says Mike Ye, the guitarist of the band. "To me, it's my calling from God to lead people to the holy place with praise and worship."

"At first, I thought the concert was a showcase of talents at an evangelistic event. However, given that this year's theme was 'Love', I could sense God's

presence even before the concert began. I saw God starting to heal people's hearts once the concert started. What impacted me the most was how God showed us His love in so many different ways—His love is great and unwavering without doubt for those believed in him."

Bassist Colin Chee started serving in Dialect Service because he knew that God would touch the hearts of many through the stories behind each song.

"I am moved when the elderly recall fond memories of their younger days through these songs. They clap along, dance, laugh, shed tears and sing along."

The crew, though working with a tight budget, lacked no imagination. Two stage designers turned hundreds of empty plastic bottles into beautiful "lamps" with the use of light bulbs. These played a part in Tok's message that day.

"Psalm 27:1 says, 'The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid? I want these pieces to remind the seniors that even though they feel useless, when they have Jesus on the inside, He will bring light into their world,' said Tok, her point enhanced by the "lamps".

GO TO THE HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

The most important aspect of the preparation work was the outreach. Dialect Service volunteers knocked on doors in estates like Dakota to invite dialect-speaking elderly people to the concert.

"They weren't so interested in our flyer, but when I showed them the trailer that we did, that got them interested," said Emily Loo, a pastoral supervisor in Dialect Service.

The trailer was a short promotional video put together by a team led by Lucas Chia, a creative production associate with City Harvest Church. Upon hearing what Tok had in mind, Chia quickly pulled together Mark Kwan, the church's creative director and Melvin Lee, a media editor to produce a charming short video featuring two Dialect Service singers as a loving elderly couple who planned a date to the Oldies' Concert.

The video, which was shared via social media and played at CHC's services, was instrumental in drawing many to the concert.

All things work together for good to those who love God—a verse that came to pass when a volunteer was blessed with a \$25,000 commission and decided to use it to sponsor a buffet for all the concert goers!

The fruit of all the labor of the staff and volunteers was great: 1,334 people came for the concert and 74 of them gave their hearts to Jesus—a groundbreaking number for Dialect Service.

CHURCH & MISSIONS



The Oldies Concert was filled with singing, dancing, colorful costumes and props. Maria Tok delivered an encouraging message.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CITY HARVEST CHURCH

“Doubting God Is A Dumb Thing To Do!”

Early this year, pastor of Dialect Service, Maria Tok was feeling discouraged. Despite all the hard work of her team and volunteers, the service had not seen a breakthrough in attendance for a long time.

Then she read the story of Elizabeth and Zechariah in Luke 1 while preparing for devotion for her staff. Zechariah the priest and his wife Elizabeth were “both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren”.

Tok realized that Elizabeth’s barrenness was not a punishment from God. The Bible called them “righteous”; God had a bigger plan for the couple: when Zechariah’s lot fell to burn incense (a rare opportunity) an angel told him that Elizabeth would be pregnant with a baby and they were to call the baby John.

Likewise, Tok believed that God had a bigger plan for Dialect Service. She held on to Luke 1:25, where Elizabeth said, “Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me, to take away my reproach among people.” God, said Tok, is the ultimate promise keeper.

With that in mind, Tok went knocking on the doors of the elderly with her volunteers, believing for 1,000 seniors for her annual evangelistic meeting, the Oldies Concert. In one night, they knocked on almost 900 doors. Still, Tok doubted that more than 900 would turn up on the actual day.

“But who agrees with me that doubting God is a dumb thing to do?” she said with a smile.

On the day of the concert, the buses which were sent to bring the people to Jurong West were filled to overflowing and volunteers had to bring seniors to church in taxis—Dialect Service saw its biggest ever attendance that day: 1,334.



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CHURCH & MISSIONS

School of Theology 2017: Living The Family Legacy

What is it like growing up in a family of spiritual leaders? *City News Weekly* finds out from four SOT graduates.

By **DEBORAH LIM AND JARETH TAN**



CN PHOTO: DANIEL POH

(From left) Yoel Adino Octafian Sianto, Cindy Olivia, Hatsuho Nakamura and Kenneth Handojo are graduating from SOT this weekend.

On Sep 23 and 24, City Harvest Church's School of Theology graduated its 23rd intake. Among them was a group who grew up as children or grandchildren of pastors.

City News Weekly spoke to these international students to find out what it was like being raised in a spiritually-saturated environment. The students candidly shared their struggles as Christians and explained how an intimate relationship with God remains a personal conviction and commitment.

HATSUHO NAKAMURA: TEARING DOWN THE WALLS OF THE HEART

The oldest daughter of Yoji Nakamura, founder and senior pastor of Kumamoto Harvest Church in Kumamoto, Japan, grew up in a household centered around God and the teachings of the Scripture.

"When I was 7, my father started the church," says Nakamura, 22. "The first service we had was held in my house. In the morning, we moved all the chairs and the tables from the living room to outside the house for our church meeting."

Nakamura fondly recounts how she used to help her father

conduct and organize various church meetings from a very young age.

Living in a home that was the location for church services, Bible study sessions and prayer meetings, serving and helping out in ministry were part of Nakamura's life.

Despite this, she failed to develop a personal relationship with God. That caused her to question her beliefs and childhood faith during her teenage years. In those times, her past encounters in the tangible presence of God kept drawing her back to Him.

However, upon graduation from university, Nakamura moved away from home, her main source of spiritual support. She went through a season of spiritual dryness and that spurred her to enrol into SOT. She wanted to develop an intimate, personal relationship with God as well as to grow in her understanding and knowledge of Scripture.

Nakamura found what she came for. At SOT for the past seven months, she experienced a personal breakthrough not just in her walk with God but also her relationship with others.

"I used to be an introvert," she admitted. "I didn't want to spend time with my friends as I found it

troublesome. But in SOT, I tried to be close to my friends and I learned how to be more sociable. During my mission trip, I experienced holy laughter for the first time, which started my emotional deliverance!"

YOEL ADINO OCTAFIAN SIANO: OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S CALLING

Yoel Adino Octafian Sianto, 21, serves actively in Bethany Malang Church in Malang, Indonesia as a youth pastor. Fuelled by his passion for Christ and his heart for the youths in his church, Sianto regularly preaches in the church founded by his father Samuel Sianto.

"I have known Jesus Christ since I was born and I was really influenced by my father's life, his faith and what he is doing in his journey with God," Sianto said.

Since he was young, it has always been Sianto's desire to chase after God's calling for his life. This led him to enroll into SOT.

The decision to pursue God's calling did not come without a price. Sianto had to give up pursuing his dream of becoming an actor to serve God and build His church. God is not one to short-change His people. When Sianto chose to sacrifice his personal

dreams and ambitions, God gave him newfound passion and vision for the furthering of His kingdom in Indonesia.

"I had a vision of Gideon," says Sianto. "But this is the reverse of that story. The first thing that God wants me to do is to find the 300 warriors, to take back the other 9,700 warriors. I have to find that small group of people to help me and work together with me to win others to God."

KENNETH IMANUEL HANDOJO: REBEL NO MORE

Life as a pastor's kid was not always glamorous for Kenneth Imanuel Handojo, 23. "People tend to place expectations and pressures on you, forgetting that you are a normal human being, who just happens to have pastors as family members."

Handojo grew up in a family of pastors. His grandfather Yahya Handojo was the founder of GBI Filadelfia Blessing Family in Makassar, Indonesia. His father Dr Jusak Handojo now serves as the senior pastor of the church.

In his youth, Handojo had many vices but God did not give up on him. He received a touch from God on a plane that propelled him to turn back to the Lord and go into full-time ministry.

On that fateful trip, the plane Handojo was in was hit with severe turbulence suddenly. "During that time in the air, God revealed Himself to me and I found myself speaking in new tongues," he testifies. Looking back, he wishes that he had been a better role model for his peers.

Today, Handojo has the vision to reach out to youths in different parts of Indonesia. He wants to build a generation of young Christian believers who live an authentic Christian lifestyle. Handojo feels that the SOT experience has fully prepared him for practical ministry.

Handojo says that the thing that drew him to SOT was CHC's values, which closely reflect the values held dear by his church and his family. The graduate is going home with much more than he had expected. "I learned to be responsible and accountable, to lead a more authentic Christian lifestyle like so many in CHC," says Handojo. "This is beyond my expectations of learning the skills and knowledge to be a good preacher."

CINDY OLIVIA: REST AND RESET

Cindy Olivia did not grow up re-

lated to a pastor; she married one.

The 39-year-old property executive received the calling to enroll into SOT in 2008 during the inaugural Asia Conference organized by CHC. She recalls watching the SOT promotional video and standing in front of the screen pretending to receive the graduation certificate.

God spoke to Olivia during the conference and asked her to stop running wild so that she can run the course He had set for her. She started to do her research on the SOT course, arranging for an information session with a former graduate of the school.

"I wanted to graduate with a SOT certificate but I ended up getting a marriage certificate first," she jokes.

Olivia's journey to SOT took an unexpected detour when she met and married Raymond Fernando Arijanto, founder and senior pastor of GPdI Pillars in Christ in Jakarta, Indonesia. With their plan to start a new life together and heeding God's call to set up the church together, her SOT plan was shelved. She found herself juggling church ministries, growing her career in property development and being a good wife—there simply was no time for SOT. However, this year, she made the decision to leave her job and enrol into SOT.

"The SOT experience is really like a spiritual screening, learning the doctrine and theology of the cross and bearing it every day to lead truly victorious lives," Olivia says of her time in the course.

She adds, "I discovered my passion to build lives." The impartation of faith and skills, as well as interaction and fellowship with other students, formed a purification process that brought her back to her early relationship with God. She rediscovered child-like faith in the Lord, one devoid of fleshly intentions and motives.

Matthew 6:33 reads, "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." Olivia is thankful that she obeyed God and ran His course. By doing so, she is coming out of SOT hungrier for the works of God.

Olivia sees a need in the area of education and hopes to put what she has learned to good use by developing the children's ministry and other education-related works back in her home church.



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CN PHOTO: DANIEL POH

What It Means To Be Prophetic

Prophetic minister Gary Heyes on the dos, the don'ts and the purpose of prophecy to encourage and edify other believers.

By YONG YUNG SHIN

It was through mutual contacts in Fukuoka, Japan that Canadian minister Gary Heyes connected with City Harvest Church and its leaders, including senior pastor Kong Hee, in late 2016. Since the beginning of 2017, Heyes has visited City Harvest Church numerous times to minister prophetically to various groups of members, cell groups and zones, releasing powerful words which have brought about deliverance, healing, and provision.

The Canadian minister went through a turbulent lifestyle involving drugs and alcoholism in his youth before an encounter with God altered his life forever. Even as a young believer, Heyes embraced the promise and manifestation of spiritual gifts as written in 1 Corinthians 12:1-12. Today, he travels around the world to minister in the prophetic office and release others to activate their spiritual gifts in a relevant way.

Why do some people receive many prophecies and some none at all?

If you don't get something, maybe you don't need it at that moment, or maybe it's because you're already hearing from God; He's already speaking to you on a regular basis.

I've had times where I hung out with amazing prophets and I badgered them but they gave me nothing—and then God speaks to me, "You don't need it, you've got Me." Some seasons, all you get are prophecies, and it's because God knows you are at the point where you can steward the words you get. Need could be one reason, maturity is another. The people who got the most prophetic words were the ones who stewarded the prophetic.

What does it mean to "steward the prophetic"?

For me, stewarding the prophetic is to do the practical things. I have had many proph-

ecies spoken over me in the last 32 years. I would write them out into three areas: one, "What does God say He's going to do?" I remind Him of His promises.

"Sometimes people make the prophetic much more complicated than what it is. In the New Testament, it is all about encouraging, building up, edifying people. Anybody can do that, but what a prophetic person does is that they intentionally do it. They are always looking around at the countenance of others: "Who can I bless, who can I minister to?" Because it's never about us. It's about God, and who He wants to bless."

Two, "What does God say I need to do?" These may be simple things like, obey, seek His face, fast and pray, change an at-

titude, etc. Three, "What does God say about me?" This has to do with my identity—who I am or who I am to be, be it a prophet of hope, a father, a son or daughter. These are what I remind the enemy of as he tries to condemn and criticize me. Keep the words in your spirit at all times, keep your heart open.

What if the prophecy I received doesn't really resonate with me?

It's okay, because you still have God's Word, you still go to church. The main thing is that you are reading your Bible and hearing from God on a daily basis. What has happened a lot is that we focus so much on the taught word that we miss the activity of the Holy Spirit and His gifts; we diminish them because we focus too much on the teaching as opposed to the demonstration and manifestation of the Spirit. Counselling, Bible study, all these are great, but there is no substitute for you reading the Bible every day and getting alone with God.

It's also important that you don't let prophecy be the foundation of a decision—it's a supplement. The Bible says prophecy is for edification, exhortation and comfort. It doesn't say direction. You have to know in your heart what God has been speaking to you directly.

So, as you mature in your walk with God, He will get a word to you. The Bible says, "You will hear a voice behind you saying, 'This is the way. Follow it, whether it turns to

How do you deal when your friend gets this great word of prophecy and you don't get anything and you're feeling bad for yourself?

Well, that says something about your walk with God, doesn't it? Where do you need to let God work in your life? Maybe you need to let the "seasoned word"—God's words from the Bible—season your heart and keep working in your heart before you get the word in season. Again, prophecy is supplemental. It's not the main thing. I have to trust that if I don't get a word, maybe I don't need it, or maybe God needs to work in my heart more.

What are some general guidelines to prophesying for others?

Scripture gives us boundaries: 1 Cor. 14:3 says, "But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men." Everything you do has to be done through love for the people you're prophesying to.

You also don't want to get so dogmatic and preface everything with "Thus sayeth the Lord". What happens if you don't get it right? You can say, "I sense" or "I feel". This way, you give the person the option to tell you if what you said makes sense to him or not. You have to put yourself in the position to prophesy. Faith is a muscle—it stretches by reason of use. It's good to practice on your friends!

Sometimes people make the prophetic much more complicated than what it is. In the New Testament it is all about encouraging, building up, edifying people. Anybody can do that, but what a prophetic person does is that they intentionally do it. They are always looking around at the countenance of others: "Who can I bless, who can I minister to?" Because it's never about us; it's about God, and who He wants to bless.

What if I believe I have a word for someone that may be a little harsh?

Again, it's important to remember that we prophesy to encourage, build up and edify. It doesn't say direction, and it doesn't say correction. These are for people who carry the office of the Prophet. There's the spirit of prophecy—which is for believers generally, then there the gift of prophecy for

the right or to the left." (Isaiah 30:21) The Holy Spirit is the greatest teacher and lover of our souls.

CHURCH & MISSIONS

those who are particularly gifted in this area, and then there is the office of a prophet. But it also depends on the context and your relationship with the person—nobody loves correction but people will give you more latitude if they feel you value and love them. Always speak out of love.

How do we become more sensitive to giving accurate prophecies?

There are two things here—sensitivity and accuracy. To cultivate sensitivity to God, you have to wait on Him, letting Him work in your life and letting your heart be changed. Sometimes, this is how it works—the more difficulty you have in your life, the more sensitive you become, because your heart has been broken, because how do you understand the heart of man if you haven't gone through what the heart of man has gone through?

On accuracy, Scripture talks about “by reason of use”, which is exercising. I wasn't doing this five years ago. The more I got in situations where there was a demand put on my life to prophesy, the more I exercised the gift and got better. You have to be willing to fail, you have to be okay with making mistakes. Paul said to Timothy to “stir up the gift”, that means, be intentional about it! Your gift will not operate unless you activate it.

How do we stir it up?

Read books about the prophetic, read the Bible—it's the foundation for everything we do. You can't prophesy if you've got nothing in you, so you have to get God's Word in your heart. And pray in tongues—the Spirit activates the Word in your heart so that you can minister prophetically.

How would you sum up what it means to be prophetic?

The prophetic lifestyle is the pursuit of the supernatural, the belief that God is always speaking, that He's a good God, and that He has a good future for us. As David says in the Psalms, “How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! If I would count them, they are more than the sand.” Ultimately, we're not just human, we're spirit. Deep calls to the deep and spirit unto spirit. 1 Cor. 2:9-10 says: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him. But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit.” So it is possible for us to hear God speaking, for us to tap into His thoughts and speak them out.

Gary Heyes is married to Sheila, and they have a son Joshua, who is married to Melissa. Visit speaklifecanada.com for more information on Heyes' ministry, Speak Life Canada.

He's Got A New Heart

Kevin Wong's six-year wait for a healthy heart has finally come to a happy end.

By **INESSABELLE LEE**

In Ezekiel 36:26, the Lord said to Israel, “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.”

This verse quite literally came to pass for Kevin Wong, 27, a service engineer who suffered a life-threatening heart condition called dilated cardiomyopathy. In the early hours of Jun 26 this year, he received a call that a new heart was waiting for him.

Dilated cardiomyopathy often starts in the left ventricle of the heart that operates as the main pumping chamber. The heart muscle begins to dilate and causes the inside of the chamber to enlarge. Eventually, the heart muscle cannot contract normally to pump the blood well, resulting in a weakened heart or fatal heart failure.

In 2012, Wong, then a tertiary student, had a near-death experience after a steamboat dinner. Upon experiencing extreme stomach pains, he was rushed to the hospital where doctors discovered his heart was only functioning at 25 percent. He had an operation right away to have a pacemaker fitted, but the pacemaker did not help—Wong fell into a coma. His doctors then implanted a mechanical heart device, the Heartmate II, to help his heart pump more efficiently. Wong regained consciousness, and eventually was able to go back to some semblance of a normal life—he could go to school, but he was forced to give up basketball, a sport for which he lived.

The average waiting period for a heart transplant is 18 months. But due to the large size of Wong's heart and the difficulty involved in finding a suitable heart for him, his wait has been four times as long. On top of that, Wong experienced some medical complications beyond his heart failure that affected his functioning, including a burst brain vessel last year.

It has been a most challenging journey for the young man, but through it all, he kept his faith. Despite his physical limitation, the City Harvest Church member is also a member of the Drama Ministry backstage crew and is always happy to serve. He also occasionally volunteers with CHC's service for the intellectually-disabled, Jesus for All Minds (JAMs).

When *City News Weekly* interviewed Wong last year, he boldly declared “Jesus died to save us and by His stripes, we are healed.” His faith has made him well.

THE MIDNIGHT CALL

On Jun 26, a nurse from Singapore Gen-



CN PHOTO: GARETH GAY

eral Hospital called him in the middle of the night to inform that they might have found a suitable heart for him. Sleepy and disoriented though he was, Wong was exhilarated at receiving the call despite waking up from his sleep halfway. But he was also cautious—he had received a similar call a week before and it turned out to be a false alarm, which was bitterly disappointing for Wong.

This time, however, things moved fast. Following the call, Wong was immediately admitted to the hospital for a health check, and right into a heart transplant procedure. The medical staff told him this time that the surgery would have a 90 percent success rate. Ten hours later, Wong had a new heart.

It was the beginning of a brand new existence for Wong. “After the surgery, I was hospitalized for another 10 days. During this period many nice nurses fed me snacks, such as ice cream and chocolates, which were not to be found in my past dietary plan,” he smiles. “I gained weight—seven kilograms just in those 10 days!”

Previous to his transplant, Wong had to carry a two-kilogram, battery-operated controller all the time to ensure that his Heartmate II continually pumped blood throughout his body. It was with great relief that Wong's new heart took well, and was found to have a regular heartbeat, so Wong no longer needs the Heartmate II device or the heavy controller. He admits, “I still forget occasionally that the controller is not by my side anymore.”

Having a new heart, Wong has had to make some adjustments in his daily lifestyle. A total of 10 to 14 different types of immunosuppressant drugs are to be administered daily for a period of six months to prevent his body from reject-

ing the new heart. He will have to take some of these drugs his entire life.

Since his transplant, Wong has also been obediently following his cardiologist's instructions to attend physiotherapy sessions and wear a face mask in public and avoid large crowds in case he catches any infections.

There are some restrictions following his transplant but a new heart has brought great hope to Wong. He is eagerly looking forward to basketball, picking up cycling and even going for a vacation with a few of his friends from church. His boss at work—Wong works for the company that produces the Heartmate, the device that kept him alive—has a pending date with him to go jogging after work.

“There is hope for patients like me to receive a new heart. If you are facing the same situation as I was in, please do not give up yet!” Wong says encouragingly. “I realized since my transplant that I have become happier and do not feel as uncomfortable physically as before.”

Wong is filled with gratitude towards God and all family and friends who have stood by him and helped him all these years. “I'm grateful to my parents, my friend from the medical support group, and my cell group E448 for supporting and taking care of me during this period. And thanks also to many others out there who have been praying for me.”

Though time is still needed for his complete recovery, Wong is optimistic that he will soon be able to lead a normal or rather, an extraordinary life for the God who gave him a new heart.

COMMUNITY

The Called-Out One

From the time he was newly born-again, Kenny Low was called by God into a lifetime of service.

By **THERESA TAN**

Kenny Low is many things to many people. To the students of City College, he is Mr Kenny, school principal and, until recently, a teacher helping those who need a second chance at passing their 'O' Level exams. To the dancers of O School, he is the man who started it all, giving street kids a purpose and significance through dance. To the beneficiaries of CHCSA (City Harvest Community Services Association), he is the executive director who is leading the organization through a time of renewal. To his family, he is the steadfast husband of Serina Wee, who is currently serving time following the trial of City Harvest Church's pastors and leaders.

Low first came to CHC in 1995, when services were still being held at Westin Hotel. Although he never admitted it to anyone else, he had been seeking a God that was real. A tutor, Miss Yang, who taught him in his primary school days would share the Gospel with him and bring him to outreach meetings. "In Primary Five, I prayed to the Christian God because I wanted to be top three in my class," Low recounts. "It came to pass, and I thought 'I owe Him one.'"

When Low stepped into the Westin Hotel room for the first time, "the thing that struck me during praise and worship was that these people are singing to Someone. You felt they were inside this space and you were standing outside. This Christian God was very powerful—it was the first time I could feel something. I thought 'If You are the real one, there's no need to look further.' Then Serina Perera (then Wee's cell group leader) came to me and said 'How? Would you like to receive Christ?' and I said, 'I don't mind.' But she was not satisfied with my answer and she said, 'You will become a *Christian*.' I thought about it for two seconds, and I said yes.

"From the beginning, what was very clear to me was God's Lordship," says Low. "You become very eager to serve Him, but He is more interested that you get to know Him. He wants you to understand His values, His ways."

When God gave CHC's senior pastor Kong Hee the call for the Church Without Walls movement, Low found himself in deep. "That really spoke to me, bringing the Kingdom outside the four walls." At the 1996 Festival of Praise—Low had been in church about nine months—Kong preached about full-time ministry and gave an altar call. "I heard three words: 'Are you willing?'" recalls Low. "Time froze, and I had to make a choice." When he went down for that altar call, he heard another three



CN PHOTO: DANIEL POH

"No matter how much we tried to separate or identify ourselves as 'CHCSA' the community still saw us as 'City Harvest'. We *are* City Harvest. And if the community trusts us and is open for us to serve, we serve."

words from God: "I saw you." "That was it. I knew that it was a promise [I had made]. I didn't know what I was supposed to do; I just felt like I'd signed off on some title deed."

DIVINE ASSIGNMENTS

The first year Low was in university studying to be an accountant, he had an epiphany during a lecture and decided to change his course of study to Business and Applied Economics. He had much less studying to do, and could lead four cell groups during his undergraduate years. Plus, to this day, Low says he still applies what he learned in university.

Before he graduated, Low was offered a job by the church to run tuition classes. Part of the Church Without Walls movement included a tuition ministry where tutors coached young members of the church and helped them to excel in school. It was the start of Low's lifetime ministry of helping the needy, particularly youths.

One day, when he was walking home past Bedok Reservoir, where buildings were being constructed, Low asked God, "What do you want me to do?" The answer came, "Build me a school."

He obeyed. City Harvest Education Centre (CHEC) was registered with the Ministry of Education in 2002 and was

set up as a sub-department under CHCSA. It was also the first year of the Crossover Project in which Low was involved as a dancer. CHEC had 20 students in its first year and it flourished despite him being away most of that time.

Then Kong told him, "Plan me a concert." Low found himself producing Sun Ho's whole concert—the show that played across the Asian region and reaped a harvest of over 140,000 souls.

As the project grew, Low felt that it was good to have a Singaporean choreographer who could grow with them. Someone told him about Ryan Tan and Low attended one of Tan's classes, offered him the post of choreographer for the Crossover concerts, and that began a beautiful relationship that has created a ripple effect that resulted in O School being set up in 2006 and a dance movement happening in Singapore. O School birthed competitions like the Singapore Dance Delight and the popular Super 24, as well as the lauded Asian urban dance competition The Big Groove.

In 2016, CHCSA found itself in a season of change, and Low found himself returning to the organization where he began—this time as its executive director. The organization had been through a lot, particularly in the years of the CHC trial; it had seen a decline not only

in works and donations but also in volunteer numbers.

"The first thing I tried to do was connect CHCSA back to the church," says Low.

"CHCSA was birthed to carry out the Church Without Walls vision, bringing the goodness of the Gospel beyond the four walls of the church. To enter into the social service space, we thought that putting aside our Christian identity and association with the church would help us to be more 'considerate' of the multi-religious landscape. However, no matter how much we tried to separate or identify ourselves as 'CHCSA' the community still saw us as 'City Harvest'. To them, these two are one entity.

"So let's embrace it. We *are* City Harvest. And if the community trusts us and is open for us to serve, we serve. If they are apprehensive, we respect their decision."

CHC and CHCSA are interdependent, says Low. "We are the social service arm of the church, an extension of CHC in a non-religious landscape. We carry the values of the church, we are resourced by the church; but for CHCSA, the harvest is not souls, but Kingdom values."

Low took on the role and began to pare down and build up again. He started by making sure that the organization was able to operate on a balanced budget. Next he strengthened the team, which had endured a number of departures. The current team is smaller, but well-focused. Low also began building bridges with the community and grassroots leaders such as the Member of Parliament over Pine Close, where CHCSA's House of JOY is now located.

The return to the heart of Church Without Walls saw church staff and members volunteering for various activities, from English classes to excursions and festival activities. With clarity in its mission statement and a more involved Board, Low feels CHCSA is now positioned to grow by doing better.

"When people talk about what CHCSA should be doing, I ask, 'What is the pain you feel? How would you like to serve? What is stopping you from serving?'" he says. "Every work [CHCSA does] has its genesis at Church Without Walls: it starts with one person helping one, just as Jesus reached out to people, one by one."

Low says concerned friends and family members have asked if he is okay and if Wee is okay. "Honestly the answer is more complex than yes or no. I miss her. The kids miss her. Her parents miss her. But we also know that she wants us to be well, and she will do her best to be well too, and to walk towards the day we can be together again."

He adds, "You cannot measure the Christian life by what happens to you. The core thing is, He is the King, and you are the subject."

MARKETPLACE



Glorifying God Through Squash

Multiplying one's talent requires dedication and sacrifice. Pamela Chua, a Silver medallist at the recent SEA Games shares her journey through competitive squash.

By **THERESA TAN**

When Pamela Chua was just 9, she picked up squash as a sport and discovered she had a knack for it. "I first started competing when I was 10," she says. "It was a mixed category match in the Under-11 junior tournament and I remember losing to one of the boys quite easily!"

But that didn't deter her. She says, "I started representing Singapore in some regional tournaments around age 12. I would train three to four times a week after school. Sometimes training would be from 7 to 10pm. Trying to juggle between studies and squash was a challenge but it definitely helped me to build my character and determination, as well as time management skills!"

Chua, now 27, has come a very long way since. She was one in a team of four national squash players to compete at the 2017 SEA (Southeast Asian) Games in

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia this past August. The women's team took the Silver—a nice addition to the first Gold that the men's team had won in 22 years.

Chua faithfully built on her talent: she was part of the Raffles Girls Secondary School squash team, and continued to be in the school teams when she entered Raffles Junior School and later, Stanford University.

The support and sacrifice of her family kept her going. "My parents were very supportive and encouraging of my passion," says Chua. "Given that I spend a lot of time training and competing, I had to prioritize and give up some of the other things in my social life. My parents also had to sacrifice and take time to accompany me on my squash trips."

Her hard work paid off. Chua's team came in fifth at the 2009 Asian Junior Squash Championships, and she was in the Top 8 of US College Squash in 2011-2012. She also won the Richey Award in 2013, which is awarded to the Stanford women's college squash player who best exemplifies the ideals of squash. That same year, she was presented the Dick and Anne Gould Captain's Award in 2013—this award is presented to the senior captain who has exhibited

uncommon leadership.

This year's SEA Games was Chua's return to the sport after she started working a few years ago. "Coming back to compete again this time for the Games, I had to figure a way to juggle both full-time work as well as training. I basically spent all my time purely on work and squash for the months leading up to the competition," she says.

The 2017 SEA Games was special to Chua. "It was the first multi-sport event that I was a part of. It was one of the most memorable ones because the atmosphere was great as we cheered on our fellow Singapore athletes in the other sports as well," she says.

The Silver the women's squash team won was a great achievement. "We were very happy about the win as it was an improvement in our standing, compared to the SEA Games two years ago," says Chua. "Our match in the finals was also pretty tight, so overall we were satisfied with our performance."

"I want to give a shout-out to our family, friends and colleagues—we couldn't have done it without their support and encouragement!"

THE MIRACLES OF GOD IN HER LIFE

Chua first came to City Harvest Church at the age of 12, when her sister, a member, brought her and her parents to church.

"I grew up in Sunday school and knew the Gospel from a young age, but I only really grew in my faith when I was a bit



CN PHOTO (LEFT): MICHAEL CHAN. (ABOVE) PHOTO: PAMELA CHUA

Pamela Chua (extreme right) with her SEA Games squash teammates (from left) Wai Yhann Au Yeong, Shihui Mao and Sneha Sivakumar.

older when I experienced firsthand the miracles that God has done in my life," says Chua.

Over the years, Chua has witnessed God healing her mother of a number of health problems, even one that was very serious. Chua herself had to go through knee surgery when she tore her ligament at age 17. "I thought that it would be hard to compete at a high level again but I came back even stronger and played at the top position in Stanford squash," she testifies.

She adds, "It was through these difficult moments that made me realize how real God is and that He is indeed our Healer and Redeemer in every situation that we face. That has made me bolder even as I constantly face challenges and obstacles in life and at work."

"I always felt that sports was one of the ways I could glorify God and that was very important to me. When I get nervous before a match I would always say a prayer before going into the court, knowing that God was in control. Even when there were disappointing moments and unexpected injuries, being a Christian and knowing His Word was my pillar of strength and God's grace was always sufficient to lead me through all the difficult moments."

After junior college, Chua was awarded a full scholarship to Stanford University in the US. "This was a miracle as it was in 2009 while the economy was still going through the financial crisis and there weren't many organizations that wanted to give out scholarships. My undergraduate degree was Mathematical and Computational Science and Masters in Financial Mathematics." Chua was keen

on Stanford because "it was a place where I could play squash at a relatively high level and also get a great education—not to mention the amazing weather and campus in Stanford!"

Today, Chua works in an investment bank in global markets as a structurer, delivering customized products and solutions. The decision to return to training for the SEA Games was not an easy one.

"I had to overcome self-doubts, injuries and disappointing losses in tournaments," says Chua. "There were times when I lost the motivation to train but I would always be so encouraged when I meditate on His Word and listen to the sermons during church every week. I knew that I had to submit all my anxieties and worries into His hand and His grace will be sufficient for me. Having the full assurance that God knew exactly how I felt and that He cares for me like a loving Father was what really carried me through the challenging moments."

Chua also had the support of her cell group, led by pastor Aries Zulkarnain. "Pastor Aries was very encouraging and also prayed for me before I went to the Games. Other members sent me encouraging text messages as well. [Harvest Kidz] Pastor Eileen was also upholding me in prayer during the games," she said.

In sharing her story, Chua hopes "to inspire the next generation to keep believing in themselves and that all things are possible with God. We should never set limits on what we can achieve because our God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think."

MARKETPLACE



Daniel Teh, owner of Pope Jai Thai, which employs workers with special needs.

CN PHOTO: MICHAEL CHAN

From Gang Member To Social Entrepreneur

Daniel Teh was once a troubled teen. But coming to City Harvest Church transformed him into a social entrepreneur who employs the disabled to run his restaurant Pope Jai Thai.

By **THERESA TAN**

"I believe I made it because of Pastor Kong Hee's teaching. When he preached that we must 'find a hurt and heal it, find a need and meet it', it went into my heart."

Daniel Teh, 29, is unabashed about his faith and his church. "My roots are in City Harvest, these are my fruits," he says of his work. "I'm not afraid of saying I am from CHC." He acknowledges that, sometimes, the reactions to that fact are less than favorable.

Teh runs a Thai restaurant at Scape called Pope Jai Thai. The name means "comfort heart" in Thai, and the business' tagline is "From the heart, for a cause". That's his interpretation of "find a need and meet it". Pope Jai Thai currently has a staff strength of 30, 90 percent of which are people with disabilities.

Coming from a troubled background where he had to fend for himself from a young

age, Teh experienced a transformation at CHC. "I always anticipated going to service—I never forgot to attend service at Jurong West," he recalls. "It was at CHC that I was first mentored, by my cell group leader Marlin Xu. She believed in me."

The former gang member first came to City Harvest Church in 2000, when he was 13, a Normal Technical student at Montfort Secondary School. He left school after his 'N' Levels—he had already been working at Kentucky Fried Chicken while studying, and was even made manager.

"Someone told me to go and further my studies, that KFC was a stepping stone," he says. He heeded that advice, and enrolled into SHATEC (Singapore Hotel and Tourism Education Centre) after national service, where he enhanced his culinary and food business management skills. He then joined the St Regis Singapore as a commis chef, finetuning

his expertise. Teh became a chef at Mandarin Orchard hotel for two years following that, before leaving the hotel industry to work for Thai Express as a customer manager. "I was promoted to area manager in less than a year," he remembers. "I was 23 and making a reasonable income every month."

While others might have been content to stay in that comfortable position, Teh wanted to do more. "I looked for Elim Chew when I was studying at SHATEC," he recalls. "I wanted to find out more about running my own business. At the time, Elim was a board member of ACE (Action Community for Entrepreneurs) and she encouraged me to sign up for ACE." That one meeting with Chew springboarded Teh into business ownership.

In 2010, with two partners, Teh set up his first restaurant a Thai restaurant in Kim Tian Road. The restaurant flour-

ished, winning fans among food reviewers. But less than a year later, his partners decided to part ways with him as they disagreed with his idea of running a social enterprise instead of a profit-only business.

Undeterred, Teh started Pope Jai Thai by himself in 2012. His first location was at Pearl Centre—but high rentals drove him to look elsewhere. "I tried Jurong West, but that failed," he says. "I didn't study the market well."

Finally, Teh was offered a location at Serangoon Avenue 3 in early 2014. "The rental was not cheap, though it was a dead town," he says with a wry smile. His entrepreneurial spirit could not be quenched: Teh and his staff—he had begun hiring the intellectually-disabled and the deaf by then—built up the restaurant over the years, growing a loyal customer base by extending delivery services to nearby offices. The quality of the food at Pope Jai Thai was a definite factor in its success.

But as it panned out, Pope Jai Thai's location at Serangoon had to be vacated this year due to a hike in rental. For the second time in his life, Teh called Elim Chew. Though the two had met just once before, Chew saw that Teh was an entrepreneur who made full use of the advice he received. With her help, Teh secured a space at Scape—right across from Chew's family res-

taurant I M Kim Junior.

A KITCHEN FIT FOR THEM

Commercial kitchens have one common factor: they're small and maximize use of space. In some, there is barely space to stand. Pope Jai Thai has the complete opposite: its kitchen is spacious, the walkways wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair. Stations are spaced out, each clearly labelled. The refrigerator is filled with clear boxes containing meats, seafood, vegetables, condiments, each one labelled. Printed instructions—in large print—with diagrams or photos are placed at eye level. The whole place is spotless.

Teh proudly shows off the extra-large, low sink with an extendable faucet on the left. It was custom-built for Uncle Poon, Pope Jai Thai's left-handed dishwasher-cum-deliveryman who goes everywhere—even into MRT stations and to office buildings many kilometres away from Scape—on his mobility vehicle.

We meet Tay Ann Shun, who is intellectually disabled. Teh has customized kitchen tools for Tay, including a unique "chopping board" with nails set at equal intervals to enable Tay to cut long beans to equal lengths—a task he performs with relish.

The kitchen and the restaurant was fitted and furnished with the staff in mind. Teh also has a deaf server who doubles up as cashier. To facilitate customer-staff communication, placards are placed at the tables with diagrammatized instructions on how to order "chicken", "pork" and other food items using simple sign language.

Pope Jai Thai succeeds in enabling these staffers and according them dignity. Interactions between Teh and his crew are filled with mutual care and concern.

Currently, Teh hires across eight groups of beneficiaries: those with intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities, mental health issues, the deaf, the visually-impaired, youth-at-risk, the disadvantaged and the vulnerable. Many are referred to Pope Jai Thai by Touch Community Services, Society for the Physically Disabled, Project Dignity and SG Enable, a government agency that enables people with disabilities to function independently. Pope Jai Thai is creating social impact by offering employment and training opportu-

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nities to those with special needs. “I am their boss, their trainer, their counselor,” smiles Teh.

He adds, “We work very closely with their families to do three things for them: one, equip them with life skills and build their confidence; two, teach them to be independent and self-sustaining; and three, we empower our beneficiaries. Our next phase will be community building—it’s through interaction that barriers are removed. We want to challenge society’s mindset by making sure the food is good, and it’s made by the disabled.”

Teh is quick to say that he has not come to this point alone. One wall at Pope Jai Thai bears the logos of sponsors and partners who have supported Teh’s endeavors. He credits Chew for her business mentorship and Koh Seng Choon, the founder of Dignity Kitchen, for his setting the standard when it comes to enabling the disabled.

Running Pope Jai Thai has not been devoid of challenges, despite Teh’s effervescent countenance. The business is a 24/7 endeavor, so he has scarce free time for himself and his family. He has no partner in this business, and so he constantly has to be aware of maintaining a business mindset. He is also searching for skilled workers like managers and marketing staff so he doesn’t have to do everything himself. Yet, he has to watch his costs because he doesn’t have much financial support although his family has



CN PHOTOS: MICHAEL CHAN

Clockwise from top: Teh with some of his kitchen crew; Tay Ann Shun cutting long beans using a customised board; a deaf waiter provides good service.

been helpful. And naturally, working with the disabled is difficult—they are prone to meltdowns. The week that the City News

team met Teh, he had just lost one of his kitchen helpers to suicide. She suffered from a mental illness.

“The majority of the staff have multiple issues,” Teh admits. “We take in people other organizations won’t. I know we cannot get overly emotional when something like that [suicide] happens. We have to keep going. When I’m tired, I look at Ann Shun: he’s so joyful, he keeps me going.”

Teh shares a testimony from a group of at-risk youths he engaged. “There were three of them who came to work part time for me half a year ago. I had another kid from the same secondary school working for me, Zach (not his real name) who has intellectual disabilities, and he was always being bullied by them. One time, during peak hour, Zach came to help them clean the table. He said, ‘Come, I help you, you go and take a smoke break.’ When they saw that, they started to understand him better. Now they are good friends; they are so protective of him.”

Indeed, the fruits of his labor are many and varied, and they have not gone unnoticed: Pope Jai Thai has been nominated for the 2017 President’s Challenge Social Enterprise Awards.

Pope Jai Thai is located at #03-03, Scape, 2 Orchard Link. The team also conducts Simulation With Disabilities workshops to raise awareness and teach people how to be effectively inclusive. Workshops are priced at \$45 (with lunch) and \$38 (without lunch). Email admin@popoejai.com or call +65 6634 1238 to book.

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Photos courtesy from Constance Maldives

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What Is Your SQ?

Everything social entrepreneur Elim Chew has done can be traced back to her high SQ or “sensitivity quotient”. She shares about this concept that she presented last week at TEDxNTU.



PHOTO: SANAM@TEDXNTU

Elim Chew spreading the idea of developing one's Sensitivity Quotient at TEDxNTU on Oct 7, 2017.

“I had a staff member at 77th Street who used to be in construction. One day we needed a Gothic-style table for our brand, Gothic Princess. We couldn't find it in any store, so he hand-made it. For my sister's birthday, he built a mobile bar counter that we could mix drinks anywhere in the office. I have many jackets, so he built me a coat stand. We never asked him to do any of this—he was just sensitive and found solutions for these needs. And he didn't just do it, he did it very well. He came along on one of our buying trips and ended up being our menswear buyer. When we got back, he became our visual merchandiser and handled our displays. Today, he runs his own business back in China.

“So, when you exercise sensitivity and work with excellence, take action and deliver your best work, you will eventually be successful in life, whether you become an entrepreneur or a leader in your company.

“People say ‘That's not my job scope.’ Early this year, there was a report about an Alaskan Airlines stewardess who noticed a well-dressed man sitting with a disheveled teenage girl and felt something was not right. She signaled to the girl to go to the toilet, where the

girl left her a note saying ‘Help me’. The stewardess alerted the pilot who contacted the police. The man was arrested when the plane landed—the girl was saved from being trafficked. What the stewardess did was beyond her job scope, and it saved a life.

“People say ‘I'm not paid to do that.’ That's going about it backwards. It's when you go beyond what you are paid to do, that's when you will get paid more.

“These days, when we see something happening, our immediate response is not to help but to take photos or videos. Last year, a 12-year-old boy was the only person to go to the aid of victims of a car accident, because the other passersby were too busy taking pictures. The people who take action are the ones with high sensitivity quotient.

“We're fostering a culture of insensitivity with our phones. People say, ‘I'm going home to spend time with my family’ but every family member is on his

or her mobile phone! I watch how kids are just glued to their iPhones or iPads, with the maid feeding them. They are not experiencing the food, they are not engaged, they are totally

These days, when we see something happening, our immediate response is not to help but to take photos or videos. Last year, a 12-year-old boy was the only person to go to the aid of victims of a car accident, because the other passersby were too busy taking pictures. The people who take action are the ones with high sensitivity quotient.

unaware of their surroundings. In contrast, I recently saw a 2-year-old boy eating broccoli in my restaurant, eating with his fingers, feeding his mother. He was present and enjoying his food. That's what I miss. When we become unaware of what's happening around us, we lose communication.

“I have found that the Internet generation tends not to put their hearts into what they do. But I'm also surprised when I meet people like the young TEDxNTU volunteers who worked so hard the last

eight months to deliver the annual talk on such a professional level. I see this also in the volunteers in [City Harvest] church—everything is delivered with excellence.

“So how do we build up our SQ? It starts with being aware of people around us, being sensitive to what is going on. By doing that we become less selfish. We see this trait in volunteers, social entrepreneurs, changemakers. If we can bring this mindset to what we do every day, we will excel and other rewards will come.

“The person who taught me to be sensitive was my teacher at Fairfield Methodist Girls School, Miss Yee. She went beyond her job scope. I was 13 when she asked me what I wanted to be. I told her I wanted to start a business by 21, be a millionaire by 25 and retire by 45. Every year after I left school she would meet up with me and buy me my favorite chicken rice, and she would always ask me if I had achieved my dreams. Sadly, she died in the 1997 Silk Air crash.

“Because of that spirit that she planted in me, I continue to mentor as many people as I can. Once, I met a young man at an F1 event. I asked him, ‘What do you do?’ and he replied that he was a part time waiter. I asked him what Miss Yee asked me,

can create a change for someone. I'm starting a movement —#15MinutesChange—to get people to take 15 minutes once a day, week, month, to step out of comfort zone to talk to people around them, to help anyone who needs help. That will build up your SQ.

“I set up FastFast Delivery in mid-2015 with three other co-founders. We saw a need in the SME (small and medium enterprise) market because we don't have our own drivers anymore. I sit on the board of an organization and they would send a staffer to me with documents to be signed. I calculated the money spent on cabs, plus her salary for those few hours, and it amounted to quite a lot. I also noticed that in the last few years, there are many people who cannot find work or cannot work full time. So, I went to Adrian Ng, who runs Codigo, and asked, ‘Is there a way to match drivers to the need?’ and he replied, ‘It's very easy.’

“Today we have 3,000 on-demand crowd-sourced drivers, making 3,000 deliveries a month. Of what FastFast makes, 90 percent goes back to the drivers. We keep 10 percent to maintain one admin staffer who also teaches the drivers how to use the app. She is a single mother with three sons.

“One professional wrote to us recently that he had lost his job, and FastFast helped supply him an income till he found a job. It's little moments like these that make me feel encouraged.

“At my family business—we own GoroGoro Steamboat, I M Kim Korean BBQ, I M Kim Junior—we take in the hearing-impaired, the elderly and high-functioning people with special needs to work alongside the able-bodied staff. All our staff are trained to be sensitive to customers' needs.

“I started ElimChewTV in September 2016. Our program Changemakers features people who see a problem, find a solution, take action and implement the solution.

“Our second program, which is scheduled for the early part of 2018, is Pitch For Change. It's a reality show across Asia that encourages people to start social enterprises. You have an idea, you pitch for funding. We want real solutions to problems.

“We plant to seed a thousand seeds. We want to raise a generation of young people who will pitch for change.”

EYE ON SOCIETY

Out Of The Ashes, Japanese Churches Unite

In the aftermath of the worst earthquake to hit the island of Kyushu last year, senior pastor of Kumamoto Harvest Church Yoji Nakamura found collaborations forged and doors opened up to him and his partners to be a blessing.

By YONG YUNG SHIN



CN PHOTO: MICHAEL CHAN

During the School of Theology graduation ceremony last month, Yoji Nakamura, founder and senior pastor of Kumamoto Harvest Church in Kumamoto, Japan, came to City Harvest Church to celebrate the graduation of his oldest daughter, Hatsuho. What

are his expectations of her now that she has been trained? "I just want to support her in her visions and dreams!" he replied with a laugh.

Nakamura talked about the rebuilding works in his town, Mashiki, in Kumamoto, in the aftermath of the April 2016 earthquake. One of the worst-hit areas had been that town where Kumamoto Harvest Church, a City Harvest affiliate church, is located.

In January this year, Nakamura, along with several other pastors, set up an evangelistic network in Kumamoto involving some 20 churches in Kumamoto, to collaborate on future outreaches and consolidate relief aid. "Before this (earthquake), there was no collaboration between the churches in Kuma-

moto; now, we gather monthly to pray," said Nakamura. The network has already received positive response for support from missionaries from the US, China and Korea, who will help in the crucial work of church planting work in Japan.

In addition, Nakamura has collaborated with other community and church leaders to set up a non-profit organization, Kyushu Christ Disaster Assistance Center as a platform to coordinate more concerted relief efforts in the local communities. Most recently, the group has been entrusted by the Japanese government to assist with rebuilding works in Kyushu and Fukuoka after serious floods this past July caused more than 500,000 residents to be evacuated.

With the forging of new partnerships and newly opened doors to serve, Nakamura recalls the test of faith he had faced just a year ago, and how far God has carried

him since. Shortly after the earthquake last year, Nakamura's father died tragically in a fire accident at home. The pastor questioned God and asked why all these bad things were happening all at once. God then spoke to him through Ecclesiastes 3:11, "He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end."

God also sent him encouragement in the form of a village head and his daughter from Sendai, whom Nakamura had helped during the 2011 Tohoku earthquake. Nakamura had brought 100 bicycles donated by CHC to aid with relief work. The village head and his daughter had received salvation when Nakamura witnessed to them.

The duo paid Nakamura a visit after the 2016 earthquake, bringing 10 kilograms of oysters

from their farm and cooking for Nakamura and his team.

"Most of the time, especially when hardships come, we look at things in the present, but we have to commit to the eternity of God," Nakamura said. "That is how we have hope to overcome the challenges that are right in front of us."

Nakamura also shared that the CHC song "Miracle", which was translated into Japanese in a music album collaboration between CHC and Fukuoka Harvest Church last year inspired a Japanese Christian songwriter to produce an album with other artists, which was later distributed to various local churches to drive fundraising efforts for ongoing rebuilding works.

Out of much loss and heartache, God's people in Japan are coming together in unity and faith, meeting needs and bringing the good news of salvation in Christ—slowly, but surely.

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I am truly thrilled and blessed to be able to use the baking talents that God has given to me for all the people around me, and best of all, for my church! Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! Happy Birthday City Harvest Church!

Zach Leong
Founder of Baker's Heart

LIFESTYLE

CHC Singers Debut Singles



CN PHOTO: MICHAEL CHAN

Maximilian Low performing his single "Lenses".

You've seen them lead worship. Now you can hear them on iTunes and Spotify too. Meet CHC backup vocalists Maximilian Low and Carmen Ang, who have each launched their own singles.

By **SERINA PERERA**

For as long as he can remember, music has always been a part of Maximilian Low's life. The 27-year-old, whose stage name is Max Low, fondly recalls a time when he was only 6, lugging around a mini amplifier and belting out tunes from *The Lion King*. By the time he reached his teens, Low was very confident that he was going down the path of a music career. He has met with many comments and criticism along the way—all of which he takes in his stride.

Low's musical talent has blessed City Harvest Church: he is the writer of "Greater Are You", "Generation" and "Rejoice", three songs that are often sung during church services. It seems only natural, then, that he would write a song like "Lenses", which he debuted on Sep 29 this year.

Writing songs is a natural fruit of his passion and discipline. "I would say that songwriting is more of a skill and a habit than it is a talent. When I sit down to write a song, I often need to be quiet, away from the noise, and allow the Holy Spirit to speak," says Low, who draws

inspiration from his mentors in CityWorship as well as pop favorites like Bruno Mars, Ed Sheeran and Jason Mraz.

"Lenses" speaks of how people's views of life are colored by different perspectives and ideals. "We see it happening on a daily basis: people judge others through the lenses they themselves wear," he explains. "This song speaks about the courage to overcome the negativity that comes our way; to be bold and to step out in faith to do what you are meant to do."

He could well be singing to himself. Many have warned him that a musical career is "unsustainable" and that it is not considered a "real job" in Singapore. Low appreciates these people mean well, but "what counts is the lens I am wearing. Belief and determination versus worry and doubt? That's up to us."

His parents, fortunately, are "very giving and willing to let me make a path for myself, and they're ready to catch me if I fall," says the only child, adding that his mother even promotes his YouTube videos to

her friends.

Low first came to CHC at the age of 14, when a friend invited him to an evangelistic service at the Singapore Indoor Stadium. At the age of 15, he wrote his first song, about coming to a crossroads in life and overcoming difficulties. The guitarist shares that the inspiration for "Lenses" came from a February 2015 sermon preached by Dr AR Bernard at CHC.

The single was written over three sessions before Low brought it to United Records. Producers Eric Wong and Carreen Tham fell in love with the song and the trio worked for six months to arrive at the finished product last month. "I'm very grateful to United Records for believing in my song and my vision. They've labored with me through late nights and early mornings to bring this dream to pass," says Low.

His dream is to break into the international music scene, as a singer and a songwriter. He says, "I really hope to contribute to the music scene in Singapore and put Singapore music on the world stage."

A MESSAGE OF EMPOWERMENT

Music has the ability to motivate and encourage the soul. Carmen Ang wrote "Stand Tall", her first single, as a reminder to herself to lift up her eyes when she was going through a tough time.

The petite 23-year-old, who is a deejay at radio station Power 98, recalls, "Once I started writing, it developed into a song that I wanted to sing, not only for myself, but for anyone who needs to know that they are truly not alone; that through difficult times, it's okay to take time to encourage and empower yourself."

Ang was only 15 when she lost her mother to cancer. Her mother, Nicole Lai, was a vocal coach and the one who taught Ang to sing, ushering her into the world of music. "Being able to create music and express myself through it, is the gift my mother gave me," says Ang. "It makes me feel like she's never too far away."

Earlier this year, Ang performed with Stefanie Sun at Shenzhen's New Year's Eve Countdown (2016/2017), which was broadcasted on Zhejiang TV. More recently, she was a back-up vocalist for

the Sian Chay Charity Event in Singapore supporting artists like Vivian Hsu, Samuel Tai and Stefanie Sun.

"Stand Tall" grew wings when Ang shared it with a close friend in the music industry, Ruth Ling, who then connected her to Shao Jean, a Singaporean who resides in Los Angeles and is a talented producer and songwriter. Ang and Shao worked on the song over Skype, before it was finally recorded at Red Roof Studio in Singapore, and released on Jun 23 this year.

Ang has performed "Stand Tall" live on Power 98. The single enjoyed priority airplay and was on the airwaves for about two months.

The singer-deejay isn't stopping here. "I do plan to come up with another single in the near future, exploring themes of empowerment and just having fun," she says. "I believe that collaborating with other local producers and singers will help me improve on my songwriting journey as an artist."

Max Low's "Lenses" and Carmen Ang's "Stand Tall" are available on iTunes for S\$1.48 each. Support them by subscribing to their YouTube channels.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CARMEN ANG

Ang's "Stand Tall" was written during a tough season.

中文报道

《抉择》 —华文聚会学会拍摄微电影

城市丰收华文聚会成立影视制作事工，第一部微电影《抉择》迎来了1061会友和新朋友。

萧洁盈 报道



城市丰收提供

《抉择》演绎一名非法居留者认识耶稣的故事。

一个女孩，漂洋过海来到新加坡，一心想要为生病的家人赚医药费。她没有工作准证，也没有居留权，在法律眼中，她是一名非法居留者。

这位女生就是微电影《抉择》的女主角，美嫻。改编于真人真事，《抉择》演绎的是她在新加坡的生活——她怎么样认识耶稣和祂的真理，最后又如何在对错之间做出抉择。

这是城市丰收华文聚会影视制作事工的第一部微电影，在10月8日的布道会上首映，迎来了1061会友和他们的朋友。那天，39人将心交给了耶稣。

影视制作事工是华文聚会最新的服侍团队。成立微电影事工团的主要目的是要发掘有才华但却没有机会发挥的会友，并且培训他们，让他们有机会运用他们的才华来事奉主。

该事工负责人江采娟说：“有一些人可能很有潜能但都没有机会发挥。这个制作需要很多人力。你可能不会演戏可是你会拍摄，那你也能够参与制作。”

江采娟也是《抉择》制片人。她透露制作微电影是梁志强导演的提议。她说：“有一次梁导来参加我们母亲节特会的戏剧彩排，发现我们的

演员需要培训，就想要帮助我们。他在华文教会也有一段时间了，所以他也想参加事工。他提议开办电影制作事工，教我们拍微电影，作为他的服侍。”

梁志强是新加坡的知名导演，曾经拍过不少卖座电影。他提议开办影视制作事工是因为他想把我的专业奉献出来。

梁志强说：“反正我们的才华也是上帝赐给我们的。我觉得用我的才华为华文聚会奉献，为主建立他的国度，是我应该做的事。”

《抉择》这部微电影是一部很有“梁导味”的戏，就是在笑声中传达信息。“正如我的电影一样，有教育也有娱乐。我认为把娱乐加入主耶稣的信息里是两全其美的办法。”

梁志强认为想要继续拍微电影是需要人力和物力的。“这份工作需要很多人的参与，我只能够监督这个过程，不过要越来越多人参加才会好玩，不只是好玩，还要更专业。”

影视制作事工是由戏剧组延伸出来的，所以开拓事工的人也是戏剧组的组员，杨臻就是其中一位。杨臻在2007年加入了戏剧组，在华文教会的戏剧中扮演了不少角色，到了电影制作组就接过了制作人的工作，负责写

稿和策划。

江采娟说杨臻在这次制作的功劳不小。她说：“从联络演员，到拍摄行程、服装、道具、和各部门培训班都是她在安排。”

2015年年底，杨臻和其他两名组员开始写《抉择》的剧本。2016年2月份，杨臻等人和梁志强开始讨论剧本，总共花了一年时间筹备剧本。这一年里，杨臻从梁志强那里学习很多。“他让我们认识写剧本的正确规格，以前我们戏剧组的剧本都没有什么规格，现在我们可以写得更专业。”

对杨臻来说，第一次负责这么大的工程，是有一定的压力，但她从错误中学习，尤其在压力中学会忍耐。“我学到很多，尤其是如何为这么大型的制作做协调，也从错误中学习下次要怎么安排得更好。另外，我也学会了如何在很累的时候控制自己的脾气，当另一方的态度不是太好的时候，我也不可以发脾气。”

今年年初，故事终于敲定了，影视制作事工就开始“招兵买马”，他们在华文教会办招募活动，找来了演员、摄影人员、幕后工作人员，组成了影视制作事工。华文聚会也找来了United Records的创办人盈盈和毅力来当导演及摄影。《抉择》总共花了3天的时间拍摄。

杨雪英，65，是其中一名演员，饰演一位向女主角传福音的阿嬷。这是杨雪英第一次尝试演戏，但除了觉得台词很难背之外，就没有遇到别的困难了。她说：“因为梁导说不用刻意演，自然就好，所以就当作是和朋

地是关键之一，所以负责找场地的人责任重大。导演对场地非常讲究，要考虑到地点方不方便、灯光是否足够，要找十几个拍摄地点不是件容易的事。张美贞，47，就是场地负责人，她说能找到好的场地都是神的恩典。

“当他们敲定剧本以后，我就跟着剧本的需要和导演的要求来找场地。去到觉得适合的地点，我就会拍下照片，让导演选，没想到的是每一个提议都可以用。感谢主！”

张美贞花了两三个星期的时间找地点。拍摄场地包括住家，工厂及咖啡店，其中找咖啡店的挑战比较大。“我们没有认识的咖啡店老板，所以比较难。导演看中一间咖啡店，我就去问老板。感谢主，老板很爽快的答应了。至于其他的场地，不管是住家还是工厂的主人都没有拒绝我，这是神的恩典。”

33岁的傅继樑从学生时期就喜欢拍摄，但一直没有机会接受培训，这次可以参与制作对他来说是很宝贵的经验。

“我负责用第二架摄影机拍摄。我以前自己拍摄的时候都只拍一个角度，但这次我需要和主机配合，用不同的角度和不同的镜片拍摄，非常有挑战性，让我学到很多。”

摄影机是影视制作事工租来的。在开拍之前，毅力为傅继樑和其他负责摄影的人上课，教他们一些技巧，也让他们尝试用专业摄影机拍摄。傅继樑是第一次用这样专业的摄像机，他认为最难的是要费很多精力来集中精神。“我们拍摄的房间空间很小，



詹前富摄

影视制作事工是华文聚会最新的服侍团队，一共有70人参与了制作。

友聊天一样。”虽然杨雪英在拍戏前并不认识女主角穆青，但性格直爽开朗的她很快就和穆青培养出了默契。

“我平时和不认识的陌生人也可以聊天，所以这个角色不难演。在加上平时有在小组讲道，也有和周遭的朋友传福音，所以台词就当讲章来背。”

拍一部电影，要找到好的拍摄场

所以要找位置不容易。”

三天的拍摄虽然非常累人，但也让事工团队觉得很有成就感。杨臻说：“我们享受的是过程，因为很少有机会和其他会友在一起这么长时间。那三天从早一直待到晚上，一起吃饭一起团契。认识很多不同小组的朋友。”

CITY HARVEST CHURCH

LET US MAKE ROOM FOR
THE HOLY SPIRIT AND
MAY WE CONTINUE IN HIS
KINGDOM PURPOSE FROM
STRENGTH TO STRENGTH,
FROM GLORY TO GLORY.

HAPPY 28TH
ANNIVERSARY CHC!

*Come
aWay*
28th ANNIVERSARY