

PALM SUNDAY
WORSHIP SERVICE
24 MARCH 2024

This is My Story

A new commandment I give to you,
that you love one another;
as I have loved you,
that you also love one another.

John 13:34



THIS IS MY STORY

TESTIMONIES OF BRETHREN WHO WILL BE
RECEIVED INTO CHURCH MEMBERSHIP
ON 24 MARCH 2024

Paedo-Baptism

Sim Rui Qi, Elena

(Daughter of Sherman & Zara)

To be baptized by:

Pastor Mark Tan

Baptism

1. Lum Chih Foong

2. Chong Yin (Mother of Chloe Liew)

3. Lim Ah Lan (Mother of Billy Wan)

4. Yeo Thiam Neo

(Mother of Chua Jen Chian)

To be baptized by:

Pastor Mark Tan

Pastor Moses Kwek

Pastor Moses Kwek

Pastor Moses Kwek

Reaffirmation

1. Ethan Tan

2. Joshua Tan

3. Ho Min En Jared

4. Tan Xiao Xuan, Asia

To be prayed for by:

Pastor Benjamin Chong

Pastor Benjamin Chong

Pastor Eugene Seow

Pastor Eugene Seow



FEARFULLY & WONDERFULLY MADE

SHERMAN AND ZARA SIM
(PARENTS OF ELENA SIM)

We became a family of four when our daughter was born on 10 January 2024.

We decided on her name quite early on in the pregnancy. Her English name, Elena (“shining light”), reflects our hope that she will be a light to those around her. Her Chinese name, 睿祈 (Rui Qi), reflects our intention for her to be guided in life by godly wisdom (睿) and prayer (祈).

It has only been two months since Elena was born, but as her parents, we have already had to lean into these very aspirations we have sought for her.

Unlike Zara’s earlier pregnancy, this pregnancy was smooth and uneventful. As second-time parents, we also went about our preparations with the expectation that our experience with Isaac would stand us in better stead to care for the baby when she arrived.

However, much of our expectations and preparations were turned on its head the day after Elena was born, when she was diagnosed with having a cleft palate (a split in the roof of the mouth, which prevents her from sucking and swallowing normally). We were told that she would require surgery at 9 to 10 months old to correct this defect, as well as potential longer-term medical care for hearing and speech complications. In the meantime, she is unable to nurse like a normal baby, and requires special bottles and care to be taken for feeding.

As parents, we were naturally filled with pain and worry upon receiving the news. How would she cope with a 2+ hour long surgery at such a young age? What if there are indeed long-term side effects that would materially affect her quality of life in the future?

During those early days, our chief comfort came from God's Word. Psalm 139:13-14 reminded us that Elena was fearfully and wonderfully made by God. Her condition may be defined as a "defect" in medical terms, but there is nothing defective about her – she was made perfectly by God in accordance with His plan, and we can rest in the knowledge that He is sovereign and in control of all that she would face in life. We also thank God that we have the privilege of prayer, through which we can continually seek strength, wisdom and comfort from Him as we navigate Elena's condition.

As such, despite these early challenges, our hearts are filled with thankfulness and praise as we commit Elena to God in baptism. And there is indeed much to be thankful for – the provision of good doctors that led to early detection and intervention, and the immense care and support we have received from loved ones (including our dear Bethany family). There is also the blessing of Elena herself; who has been an immense source of joy to the family (especially Isaac!) and thus far lived up to her name as a bright spark in our lives. Above all, we are thankful for this faith that can carry us through as we face whatever the future holds for us, and for Elena. Our prayer is therefore that she too will come to know Him personally one day - the God that has seen her through her life's earliest challenges - and be a shining light for Him to those around her.



RETURN TO THE LORD MY GOD

LUM CHIH FOONG

Early years

I received Christ in 2000, if the definition of it is saying the Sinner's Prayer.

The first two churches I attended were Charismatic. I was often in the midst of people speaking in tongues. I felt uncomfortable, out of place, and had doubts about myself, thinking I had been "left out" by the Holy Spirit.

The messages in the sermons often did not speak to me. The rock music-style worship got me a little "high", but the uplift was temporal and fizzled out as fast as it came about.

Soon I lost interest, and ultimately stopped attending church altogether.

Years away from church

I was in "spiritual wilderness" for 15 years. I didn't read the Bible much during the early church-going years, and more so during the years away from church. Deep down I wasn't even sure if I'll step into a church again.

However God has His plan to give us a future and a hope (Jeremiah 29:11).

Back to His Word

In 2022, my parents moved to stay with us. To my surprise, despite being away from church for such a long time, I felt an urge to share the Gospel with my parents.

"Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming."

——Matthew 25:13

There was real urgency to have my parents know of the Lord. To share the Gospel, I found myself picking up the Bible again.

Through my parents, God has drawn me back to Him, which was truly amazing.

We attended a Hakka language church, hoping that the familiarity of the language would help in my parents' understanding of the Gospel. As a result, my wife and our children who do not understand the Hakka language, also attended the Hakka service.

Interestingly it was someone there who recommended Bethany to me. He reminded me not to neglect the spiritual walk of my wife and children.

Drawn to Bethany

On our first visit to Bethany, what struck me was the warmth of the brethren. Not just a few, but friendly greetings came from all around!

And I was amazed at how EVERYTHING, from the breakfast and fellowship lunch, to the cleaning up after the fellowship, was by our brethren. It reminded me of the early church of Jerusalem in Acts.

Special Needs Ministry

For our boy Howe Ten, I can't express enough of my appreciation to the Special Needs Ministry, who put in so much heart and creativity into the lessons.

So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

---Genesis 1:27

No one should be deprived of the good news of salvation, and the Special Needs Ministry's efforts towards this cause touch my heart immensely.

Since attending Sunday School in Bethany, Howe Ten would request to read a chapter of the Bible nightly, and this routine has greatly improved his reading ability, something which years of speech therapy wasn't able to achieve!

We thank God for gifting us with Howe Ten. Through Howe Ten, God has also nurtured a wonderfully caring sister in E-Xuan.

Through all these, we see how the works of God were revealed in Howe Ten (John 9:3).

Daily Devotionals

Previously I do not see much relevance of the Old Testament to my life, but Pastor Charlie's Daily Devotionals have drawn clear parallels for me to see:

Indeed He says,
'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant
To raise up the tribes of Jacob,
And to restore the preserved ones of Israel;
I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles,
That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.'
——Isaiah 49:6

The Daily Devotionals drew my attention to the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament, reminding me of God's unfailing love in sending His Servant to give us light and salvation.

Once slaves to sin, we were redeemed by Our Heavenly Father through Christ Jesus. This deeper appreciation of God's abundant grace has brought me much more peace and joy than before.

Sunday School

Sunday School with Pastor Mark, where we study Romans, has given me greater understanding of the strategy to deal with our daily struggle with sin, and what it means to be "alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:11).

His advice to "anticipate situations" has helped me greatly in averting potential conflicts in daily life, as it allowed me to turn to the Bible verses in my heart before my emotions could run riot.

Through Sunday School, I learned that to be baptised is to identify with

Christ our Lord and to walk in the newness of life that He has gifted me. This is my motivation to seek baptism.

The two December evenings

Last December, my family attended the memorial service and funeral of the late Mr Lam, conducted by Bethany's pastoral team. Mr Lam was my father's cousin.

Throughout the two evenings, I witnessed how our pastors were dedicated in serving our Lord, even into the late hours. I see youths like Jerome Lai sacrificing their time for the AV team. They all exemplified what it means to "serve the Lord with gladness" (Psalm 100:2).

I was deeply moved to learn that all these were done pro bono.

I have seen enough in the two evenings to tell myself: yes, Bethany is the church where I want to be a part of and to serve.



I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

CHONG YIN
(MOTHER OF CHLOE LIEW)

Hello Bethany! I'm Chong Yin, also known as Ah Yin, and I'm 75 years old. I grew up in a family that followed traditional Taoism in a small town where everyone shared the same beliefs. I wasn't exposed to Christianity until my elder daughter (Chloe Liew) introduced me to her then-boyfriend, now husband (Timothy Leong), who is a Christian.

Even though my daughter and son-in-law invited me to Bethany Church on Sundays for some years now, I didn't join them. But I would come occasionally for special events, and that's how I first got introduced to Bethany.

After the Covid pandemic, when my daughter and her family started going back to church, they invited me again. This time, for some reason, I agreed. Looking back, it seems like this might have been what God has planned for me.

I settled down in Bethany pretty quickly, thanks to the friendliness and kindness of Mary and the wonderful friends I made here. They are very patient and nice, helping me feel at ease in Bethany.

From knowing nothing about the Bible, I started learning from teacher Mary during Sunday School class. I learned more about God's word from Pastor Moses during Chinese Worship and SSP. Friends from SSP always shared their beliefs with me. Through Joanna, I understood further how Jesus' sacrifice means eternal life to those who accept Him as their personal Saviour. I used to be quite anxious about life, but understanding more about God has brought a sense of peace and calmness to my heart. The words from Jesus in John 11:25, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live," always linger in my mind.

Ever since I believed in Jesus, I have stopped the practices I used to follow, that is, I no longer worship idols. In November 2023, my brother-in-law passed away. I respectfully informed my sister and relatives about my new religion, and I did not burn incense sticks anymore as I paid my last respect to the deceased.

In December 2023, I arrived at Changi Airport after a long flight from New Zealand. I nearly fell off and rolled down from the top of an escalator. I vaguely remember that when I lost my step and about to fall, the escalator seemed to have slowed down and stopped for a very brief moment. Because of that, the passengers who were in front of me, and my daughter who was behind me could quickly pulled me back to safety, thus prevented me from falling. After the incident, my daughter confirmed that the escalator did not stop at all. I believed that it was God who kept me safe, sending people to help me at that moment. I thanked God for that.

I would like to take this step of faith to be baptized, because I have come to realize that how great God is and how He has been good to me. I no longer carry the same anxieties and worries, because I have found salvation through Jesus.



I FOUND FAITH IN MY GOLDEN YEARS OF LIFE

LIM AH LAN
(MOTHER OF BILLY WAN)

My name is Lim Ah Lan. I am eighty-one years old. I have two sons and four grand-children. My parents did not have any religious beliefs, Therefore I grew up as a free thinker and I thought that all gods are the same and will teach me to be a good person. My husband's family worships idols and ancestors. As the eldest daughter-in-law, I too worshipped with my husband's family.

My son and his family have been worshipping at Bethany IPC Church for 26 years since his daughter was born. They invited me to attend the various church celebrations, and it is at these events that I was introduced to Christianity.

From 2022, I have been attending church with my family and worship at the Chinese Worship Service led by Pastor Moses. In the beginning, I was unfamiliar with the Scriptures and do not fully understand the Bible. Thankfully, the Pastors and my Sunday School teachers took time to explain the verses from the Bible patiently to me. Whenever I hear the Lord's Word, it brings comfort to my heart and I felt at peace.

In January 2023, I had to go for a minor surgery to remove the gallbladder due to some pain caused by gallstones. I prayed to our Heavenly Father, asking Him to calm my fears and relieve my pain. After praying, I was no longer afraid because I know that the Lord will be by my side and watching over me.

Because of the sins I've committed, Jesus died on the cross for me and He pardoned my sins. I prayed to Him to enter my heart and stay there forever to be my personal Saviour. I chose to believe in Jesus because He gave me a sense of hope, a steadfast faith and a heart filled with thankfulness.

When I learnt of God's truth, my perspective towards life changed. I no longer seek worldly things because I know the Lord will watch over me. Now, I pray every day and thanking Him for giving me peace, confidence, and courage. Because of this confidence, I decided to choose baptism!

I will continue to learn from the Scriptures and lean on Him as His grace is sufficient for me. I felt the warmth fellowship and sincere love from the church brethren whenever I came to Bethany. I too want to be a part of Bethany IPC Church and hope to share the Gospel with my friends who have yet to come to know our Lord.



THE JOY OF ACCEPTING CHRIST INTO MY LIFE

YEO THIAM NEO
(MOTHER OF CHUA JEN CHIAN)

Hi, my name is Yeo Thiam Neo. (杨天娘). I was born on 6 March 1944 and I just celebrated my 80th birthday. It is my desire to be baptised when I reach 80 years old, and today, it is with great joy that I seek to be baptised, to identify with the Lord Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour.

Little joy in my early difficult years

I was born in Singapore and grew up in a large family with 5 brothers and 5 sisters. Life was hard as my father had to support a large family during the Japanese Occupation. As the 2nd eldest sister of the family, and when finances were tight, I was only educated until Primary 3, hence my limited knowledge of English. I had to take care of my younger siblings and only my younger sisters and youngest brother received full education till secondary school and university. My father passed away when he was 57 years old and my mum has to single-handedly raise our large family, with the help of the elder children. My mum was fortunate to live to a ripe old age of 92 years old.

I married at the age of 25 and had 3 sons (Jen Chung, Jen Cheang and Jen Chian). I was a homemaker and raising a growing family on the salary of my husband as a bank officer was tough. When the children were schooling, I had to take on various humble jobs such as being an office cleaner and a cai fan (economy rice) stall assistant just to supplement my husband's income and support the family. Working as an office cleaner in a Japanese company was not easy as I had to haul rubbish through multiple levels, cleaned all the washrooms and sometimes suffered condescending remarks and humiliating behaviour from unkind Japanese staff.

Finding joy in Christ

I grew up with ancestral and Buddhist worship as that was passed down to me as traditions. I did not really understand what I was worshipping and just

participated during those festivals. When my second son and my youngest son Jen Chian went to church during their teenage years, I nagged but didn't stop them. Over the years, they tried to share their Christian faith with me but I didn't really pay attention. It was great to see that my late husband accepted Christ on his hospital bed as my second son's church friends (especially Jessica) shared the Gospel and prayed for him, just before he passed away.

As I got on in years, I was warded in hospital multiple times for various conditions. During those hospital stays, I had visits from my second son's church friends as well as friends from Bethany. I remember fondly the visits by Pastor Charlie, Auntie Sally, Deonna, Joanna, Patricia and a few others whom I cannot recall. Little did I realise that all those visits let me have a chance to catch a glimpse of this Christian faith and got to know a little more about the personal Saviour Jesus Christ whom they were sharing about.

Over the years, Jen Chian and Kelley invited me to Bethany to attend the Bilingual Worship as well as the church celebrations at Shangri-la which I enjoyed. Although I did not know many people in church, I was always greeted with warm smiles and greetings by the people I met. I also enjoyed the lunch very much whenever I come to church. I felt the warmth of God's love right here at Bethany. I also made friends with Dr Victor and Lay See who kindly visited me at home and also treated me to lunch and shared the Gospel with me.

God reached out to me in the evening years of my life. Slowly but surely, He opened up my heart to accepting His Son Jesus as my Lord and personal Saviour! When Jen Chian shared with me the story of how the Son of God, Jesus Christ, came down to earth to die for our sins, I was very moved because how can someone love me so much that He will die and hang on the cross for my sins? During the Christmas luncheon at Shangri-la last year, I shared openly with those at my table that I am very happy to believe in Jesus and I want to be baptised when I turn 80!

Treasuring this new-found joy in my life

Now that I have discovered this faith and found this joy in the Lord, I want to treasure Him! I look forward to coming to Bethany for Chinese Worship

every Sunday and listen to the messages and meeting new friends. During the week, I will read the Bible whenever I can. I was told that the Bible is the Word of God and how special it is that a God who loves me wants to speak to me through His Bible!

I have recently celebrated my 80th birthday and it is my heart's desire to be baptized today because I have found God real in my life as my Lord and Saviour. Thank God for His salvation and for this joy I have discovered through the Lord Jesus Christ!



Morning all, I am Ethan, turning 22 this year and currently a first-year business student at SMU.

Growing up and barriers to faith

For many years, I felt the love of God through learning about Him at many Family Camps and Youth Conferences, as well as through my family and other teachers in Bethany while interacting with them.

At the same time, I felt that I was not remorseful enough of my sins to accept Christianity like the Pastors, teachers, and adults have. I felt that my teachers were superior in some way because they were baptised, showed knowledge and eagerness for the Word, and expressed love for others unreservedly. It was difficult for me to overcome this doubt, but I accepted that faith and grace was wholly not about what I had done, but the Lord Jesus' actions instead. I can only love God, and Christ, because He first showed me love and invited me to follow Him.

"We love Him because He first loved us."

1 John 4:19

Meaning

Besides inconsistencies in seeking God through the Word and in prayer, my experiences of mistakes in school have shown me how weak I am individually. It is not easy to be responsible in most school or work assignments, and I inevitably fall short on many occasions. However, this is also one way I can see that my efforts are futile without God and His guidance. Complacency and pride in my own abilities is a sin that has led to failure and disappointment.

It may not be possible to address every doubt I have, but it sometimes takes a leap of faith to determine that what I have seen regarding faith is sufficient for me to choose it as the path I want to pursue. One of the strongest appeals for faith comes during times when I contemplate why I do what I do after experiencing a tough situation in school and NS, or thinking what comes after living our life (the existential crisis).

God's Word seems to offer the only satisfactory answer, in that I live to follow Christ, and there is no alternative to find our fundamental reason to live. I am glad and comforted that the written word provides answers to existential questions such as these.

"Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."
John 14:6

I am deeply grateful to my Sunday School Teachers and Pastors, having now understood some of the love of God they were trying to convey to all the young people in Bethany. This Easter, I understand that I can approach God in faith due to the grace He granted by sending the Lord Jesus to bear our sins. I seek to identify with Him to affirm my desire to live for Him, according to His teachings.



GOD'S PLAN

JOSHUA TAN

My name is Joshua and I'll be turning 25 this year. I graduated from university last year and began my first job at the end of last year. My parents, Peng Hui and Li Hong have raised me in Bethany, along with my brothers Caleb and Ethan. This upbringing has given me the privilege of learning from and getting to know many God-fearing and faithful individuals.

I've always appreciated this religious upbringing because it provided me with a moral compass that kept me out of trouble, and introduced me to a God that I could turn to in times of need. I understood the lessons taught at Sunday School and the sermons delivered during morning worship. I recognized the existence of God as my Creator and Jesus as the Saviour who died for my sins. Although I understood this, my personal faith felt weaker in comparison to others in my community.

As I matured, I felt that despite being immersed in a religious environment and consistently attending church, I didn't have a deep relationship and faith in the Lord. This was something that greatly frustrated me because I found it difficult to feel God's presence and felt distant from Him.

In Junior College, I began to place a greater emphasis on my academic results and professional aspirations. This brought upon a competitive mindset that helped me to stay focused but it was accompanied by a great deal of stress and anxiety. I also developed a bout of insomnia, which greatly affected my school performance and compounded my worries. I constantly felt that my results did not accurately reflect the amount of effort I was putting into my studies, and it was extremely discouraging when others would outperform me despite not studying as hard.

I learned to look towards the Lord for peace and comfort. One passage that my Mom would frequently remind me of was Joshua 1:9, which resonated deeply with me due to the book being my namesake. It reads "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be

discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.” These words offered fleeting moments of peace amidst my struggles with feelings of inadequacy and concern for what the future held. Another verse that I would constantly remind myself of was Isaiah 55:8-9 which reads “‘For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,’ says the Lord.” This passage reminded me that God had a plan for me that was not yet revealed and I should have faith in His perfect wisdom. Despite understanding this, a part of me struggled to completely relinquish my worries, and I could not place my full trust in the Lord.

Even after my A’ levels, my worrisome nature followed me into the army. I dealt with even more uncertainty about the future, especially thoughts about university admissions and my future career path. It was during this period of time that I desired a closer relationship with the Lord and I began cultivating a more deliberate prayer life.

Enforced lights out timings in the army coupled with my insomnia provided me with dedicated prayer time. I would pour out my heart to the Lord, sharing every concern and the various thoughts that often kept me awake. This dedicated time for prayer not only soothed my restless mind but also nurtured a deeper faith within me. Gradually, I learned to be more comfortable placing my trust in God, shifting my prayers from seeking specific outcomes to asking for the strength and faith to accept whatever path He had set for me.

As it reads in Matthew 7:7, “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you”. In my younger days, I expected a deep relationship and faith by simply showing up at church and knowing Bible verses, to no avail. Only through a deliberate, purposeful effort to understand the Lord did His presence become clear to me.

I also thank God for the support from the community in Bethany. During that time, there were countless individuals who provided invaluable spiritual support, many of whom still do to this day. One such individual is Pastor Ben Quah, who was still a student/intern pastor at that time. While I was in the army, he graciously gifted me a book from the Bethany bookstore which contained a collection of short devotionals. One of the first devotionals that

I read from this book drew inspiration from Hebrews 11:8, which speaks of how Abraham was called to go to a place to receive his inheritance, and he went out, not knowing where he was going. The author even wrote "Have you been asking God what He is going to do? He will never tell you... He reveals to you who He is." The devotional perfectly captured my feelings at that time and addressed it through scripture.

In that moment, I felt as though God was speaking directly to me, commanding me to trust more and worry less. I began to shift my focus towards appreciating the blessings and protection that I've been granted.

I continued to experience tough situations and uncertainty in University, internships and work, but they never affected me as much as they used to. This was because I could look back and trace God's guiding hand through previous challenges, and recognize the countless and undeserved blessings He has granted me. Reflecting on those experiences has profoundly strengthened my faith in God. Psalm 116:1-2 encapsulates the attitude that I seek to have. It reads, "I love the Lord, because He has heard my voice and my supplications. Because He has inclined His ear to me, Therefore I will call upon Him as long as I live."

Having seen what God has done for me, seeking reaffirmation is my chosen response. I seek to be identified with Him and the Lord Jesus Christ. It also represents my commitment to walk in faith and live the new life that He has given me.



GOD'S GRACE, GREATER THAN MY GUILT

HO MIN EN JARED

Introduction

Hi everyone, my name is Jared and I am 18 years old this year. Growing up, I have had the privilege of being a part of Bethany and I can gladly say that my fondest memories have been made in Bethany with God's people. Today, it is my great joy to share with you how I came to faith in the Lord Jesus and about how good God has been to me all my life.

A Theoretical Faith

My faith journey begins from my childhood, in which I was constantly showered with knowledge of God and my salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. I listened to countless stories from the Bible, so much so that I knew them like the back of my hand. I attended Sunday School and Worship services every week, answering all the questions I could, I prayed every day, and I even sought to live my life well, according to the Bible. On the outside, it seemed like I was the model Christian, yet on the inside I did not understand faith at all.

I knew that the Lord Jesus Christ came down to save me from my sins. Yet when I was posed the question, "are you certain you can go to heaven?" I was stumped. I thought to myself, "faith is what I need to get to heaven, but how do I quantify faith?" All throughout my childhood, I struggled with this question and I wondered what I could do to achieve a faith that was "Heaven worthy" in my mind. As I grew up, I sought to live a life that was "upright", I listened to my parent's instructions, obeyed what my teachers said, worked hard in everything I did and even sought to serve in Church in any capacity I could. For the most part, I was successful in living a 'righteous' life, yet as I grew up, temptations grew stronger and I found myself incredibly weak in the face of these temptations. As I struggled with sin, my world fell apart as I was no longer able to maintain this "Heaven worthy" life anymore. Every day, I felt like a tremendous weight was on my back and I fell into a depressive state for I felt like I was in danger of

imminent judgment. No longer was I able to freely relate to God and instead I found myself cowering in fear of His judgment that I knew I so rightly deserved. This was a tremendous struggle for me and I sought to find an answer as to how to be saved from this immense weight of sin.

Salvation Made Real

As I sought counsel from my parents, whom I am very grateful for their guidance, I was brought back to the Lord Jesus Christ. I vividly recall my father's words to me when I confided in him. He said "answer me this, do you truly believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross to save you from your sins?" This was a simple question that I would usually have been able to answer in a heartbeat if asked in JSS. Yet I struggled to say yes for I realised that all this while, I had been trying to save myself by being "perfect". However the fact is, I can never be perfect so long as I am on this earth. Nevertheless, I gained a newfound appreciation for the One, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is perfect and had chosen to sacrifice His life for me. After I committed myself to the Lord that night, I found that while I still struggled with sin from time to time, I was no longer under pressure of the guilt of sin. I was able to rejoice in my salvation and relate to God in a much more personal way. Now, I can truly say, with much conviction, that I am saved by the Lord Jesus Christ and that I am certain that I can go to heaven.

God's Continued Guidance in My Life

My journey of faith has by no means ended, in fact it has just begun. While my newfound salvation was the ignition for my faith journey, I still struggled with doubts and fears. Nevertheless, I found that being grounded on my salvation, all these doubts were able to be addressed. I am grateful to God for placing so many people in my life who are ever ready to guide and correct me in my journey of faith. I am also especially grateful for God's presence in my life, strengthening, teaching and guiding me each and every step of the way.

My Response

Seeing how much God has done for me in my life, I recognise that the least I can do is to give my life to Him and seek to live for Him, not because I am trying to earn my salvation, but because I am so grateful to Him for all that He has done for me. Today, I seek to be reaffirmed to

cement my commitment to the Lord Jesus and declare to all that I have found a true and genuine faith in a most wonderful and loving God that has saved me from sin and given me eternal life!



DISCOVERING THE LORD'S EVERLASTING GOODNESS

TAN XIAO XUAN, ASIA

Hello everyone! My name is Asia Tan and I am turning 20 this year. It is with great joy and privilege that I share my reaffirmation testimony with you all today.

I thank God for a loving and God-fearing family who have faithfully brought me to Bethany since I was born. Growing up, I attended Creche, Sunday School, Children's Worship, and many of Bethany's programs, and was constantly fed the Word of God from a young age.

However, I struggled with comprehending the reality of God on a deeper level, given that my faith was largely a theoretical one that revolved around Biblical stories and characters. It always seemed like the Lord was a faraway higher being that I had difficulty "accessing", and it was challenging for me to understand that my relationship with Him was meant to be a personal one, where He could be directly involved in my life. When sharing about my struggles, I remember being encouraged by Matthew 7:7 which reads, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you". I prayed that the Lord would gradually reveal Himself to me as I continued to pursue my walk of faith.

Sure enough, the Lord did exactly that as I encountered many of life's obstacles in my growing-up years. The first occurred at age 13 when I was diagnosed with pre-puberty scoliosis. As a ballerina, this news took a big hit on me as the deterioration of my condition would entail major surgery and the potential loss of my entire dance career. I remember vividly many nights of tears, and praying for Him to have mercy on me, and strength to endure the painful brace-wearing process for almost 1.5 years. Fast forward to my

post-puberty checkup, my condition had not deteriorated one bit! I cannot but attribute this miracle to His matchless grace for seeing me through, and I am a living testimony of God's deliverance through tumultuous times.

The next would be a common challenge that many Singaporean teenagers face - the terrifying A levels, and even more scarily, what happens after. 2022-2023 were daunting years for me as I sat through the A levels, received my results, and had to make important decisions on which University to go to to chart the next stage of my life. During this time, I prayed for the Lord's wisdom and strength to guide and preserve me, and my encouragement was found in 2 Timothy 1:7 "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." Even on days when I felt lost, The Lord provided His wisdom and help through my family who always gave me the best advice, my friends who were my source of emotional support, and the Bethany family who voluntarily kept me in prayer. Abiding in the Lord also brought a special sense of peace, as I knew that as long as I put my best foot forward, I could trust that the Lord had a greater purpose and plan for me. Now, looking back, I can testify of His hand and provision every step of the way, and speak of God's goodness and faithfulness in guiding and leading me through uncertain times.

Through my past 20 years of life, I can only look back in awe of the blessings and the goodness the Lord has so graciously extended to me. Today, I seek reaffirmation knowing that I have found a loving God to be my personal Saviour and Father, and my response is to want to stand firm in the faith and dedicate my life to Him. I will seek to be a living testimony of His love as I strive to use this little life of mine to bring glory to His wondrous name.

BETHANY

INDEPENDENT-
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

God's Kind of Church...

Where God is touching lives...

And people care for people.

Bethany IV ... 24 March 2024 ... Palm Sunday Baptismal Service

MEDITATION

REV DR CHARLES TAN

Text: Hosea 11

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WITH BANDS OF LOVE

GOD'S LOVE FOR ISRAEL REMEMBERED

Tenderly, the Love of the LORD was remembered. How gracious the LORD had been to His people from the very beginning!

¹ "When Israel was a child, I loved him,
And out of Egypt I called My son.

MEDITATION

³ "I taught Ephraim to walk,
Taking them by their arms;
But they did not know that I healed them.

⁴ I drew them with gentle cords,
With bands of love,
And I was to them as those who take the yoke from their neck.
I stooped *and* fed them.

Hosea 11:1, 3-5

1. A long history of love

- a) From early childhood, God loved Israel
- b) From the days in Egypt, God calls Israel, His son

2. Earlier years

- a) When Israel (Ephraim) learned to walk
- b) God was there
 - i) To teach him how to walk
 - ii) The first steps were taken in the presence of God

3. With deep love

- a) God was there to heal when Israel was sick
- b) He was there undergirding the nation
- c) He drew the nation to Himself with bands of love
- d) God freed Israel from his yoke of bondage

MEDITATION

APPROPRIATE RESPONSE

What was the least that Israel should have done? Three basic things may be considered:

1. To love the LORD
2. To be grateful
3. To be faithful

Write to me at: charlestan@bethanyipc.sg

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME TO BETHANY

We are glad you have chosen to worship the Lord Jesus with us today.
May your heart be uplifted through worship and fellowship!



EASTER 2024

1. Palm Sunday

24 March 2024 | Baptismal Service

2. Maundy Thursday

28 March 2024 | 8.00pm | Holy Communion

3. Easter Sunday

31 March 2024 | Shangri La



ANNOUNCEMENTS

EASTER BAPTISMAL SERVICE

LIST OF BAPTISMAL CANDIDATES

Paedo-Baptism

1. Aiden Muki Tan (Son of Anthony & Evelyn)
2. Evan Tan Wen Kai (Son of Jason & Joanne)
3. Hannah Leong Hui Qi (Daughter of Will & Joanne)
4. Sim Rui Qi, Elena (Daughter of Sherman & Zara)

Baptism

1. Chong Yin
2. Jayden Poh Qun Tze
3. Lum Chih Foong
4. Lim Ah Lan
5. Lim Chin Hu
6. Nigel Tan Chongkai
7. Yeo Thiam Neo

Reaffirmation

1. Tan Xiao Xuan, Asia
2. Ethan Tan
3. Jared Ho Min En
4. Joshua Tan

Transference

Dennis Ong



ANNOUNCEMENTS

EASTER AT SHANGRI LA

1. Let us regard Easter as a holy season
2. Let us honour the Lord as we celebrate Easter
3. Let us share our faith in the Risen Saviour

Book your table today!
You may sign up using the QR code below.



THIS WEEK IN BETHANY

1. **Seniors Program**
Tuesday, 26 March 2024
9.30-11.30am
Combined Seniors Program
Followed by Fellowship Lunch
2. **Thursday, 28 March 2024**
Maundy Thursday Service
8.00pm
Followed by Fellowship Supper

ANNOUNCEMENTS

3. Saturday, 30 March 2024

a) No YAG/YPG

b) No Youth Worship

4. Sunday, 31 March 2024

Easter Worship Service at Shangri La

10.30am

Followed by Easter Lunch



GIVING OF FELLOWSHIP MEALS

BREAKFAST: GABRIELLE WAN; EDWARD KOH

LUNCH: EDMOND & LING LING; CHIAM DAOHUA, SHIYUN & CHRISTABEL



WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH

Psalm 144:1-2

¹ Blessed *be* the LORD my Rock,
Who trains my hands for war,
And my fingers for battle—

² My lovingkindness and my fortress,
My high tower and my deliverer,
My shield and *the One* in whom I take refuge,
Who subdues my people under me.

1. Blessing the LORD

- a) This is good and right
- b) Many reasons to bless the LORD may be listed

2. Special Reasons highlighted:

- a) God is our Shield and Defender
- b) He is also our Refuge and Deliverer

BIBLE MEMORY WORK

TODAY: 24 March 2024

Text: “He loved them to the end” John 13:1

Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

John 13:1

1. The love of the Lord Jesus was extraordinary
2. He loved His own most profoundly
3. There isn't anyone else who can love as the Lord Jesus has loved His own

NEXT SUNDAY: 31 March 2024

Text: “Love one another” John 13:34

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

John 13:34

POETRY CORNER

1

BANDS OF LOVE

The Love of God is tender and pure;
It is a love so deep; it truly endures.
God remembered how He loved Israel;
Though enslaved, He called them His people.

God called Israel out of bondage;
Israel was slowly coming of age.
It was ready to become a nation;
God gave Israel His deep affection.

It was God who taught Israel how to walk;
He was always faithful, though Israel balked.
He drew Israel back with bands of love;
He tenderly spoke from Heaven above.

How should Israel respond to God?
No other nation was chosen by the LORD.
Should Israel not respond with faithfulness?
The LORD had shown so much kindness!

Charles Tan
Inspiration: Hosea 11:1-5

POETRY CORNER

2

HE LOVED THEM TO THE END

Remember how the Lord Jesus loved the people;
He called not the rich nor learned, but the humblest to be His disciples.
With compassion, He proceeded to teach and corrected their wrongs;
He did so with great patience for their faiths were not strong.

There is reverence felt when we see the love of the Lord Jesus;
When He humbled Himself to wash the feet of the disciples.
He had served as a servant would, more than a teacher or a friend;
Having loved His own, He loved them to the end.

Yet, the Lord was ultimately betrayed and crucified;
For God's salvation plan for man, He would never have defied.
Having undeservingly received His love despite our sinful lives;
Would not a sense of revival be kindled by this inspirational love of Christ?

So do the commandment the Lord has given to us;
That we love one another as He has loved us.
A tall order indeed, for us as ordinary man;
But the Lord has shown us how having loved, He loved them to the end.

Dr. Sng Li Wah
Inspiration: John 13:1-17

POETRY CORNER

3

“HE KNELT”

The Man who quieted the storm with a word,
Who sat at the right hand of the Father before time emerged,
The Man who was robed in majesty and beheld untold glories,
Who commands hosts of angelic armies—
I see His hair drop and cover His face as He kneels down before me,
Not as heaven and earth’s Maker, but as Teacher.

“You shall never wash my feet!”
I hear my mouth and heart protest.

This Man who is King, Master and Lord—
I can’t bear to see His noble hands touch my filthy feet!

My eyes lift in astonishment, hesitatingly,
To meet those searching eyes of His.
Oh, how deep and endless a single look could be,
When oceans breathe and heave with love
Wide and deep enough to contain my sinful seas!

How loveless and faithless I am, He must have seen,
Yet love carried my blackened heart and muddied feet, the whole,
To His own hands and His own heart
Where the water and the crimson flow.

When I emerged from the water and gazed
Once more into those oceanic eyes,
A command as beautiful as a consuming blaze
In my heart summoned a brand new life:

“Love one another as I have loved you always.”

David Cai
Inspiration: John 13

POETRY CORNER

4

GOD'S LOVE TO THE END

The love of Jesus for His disciples has no limits
It goes beyond His earthly life showing its full extent
Revealed by His sacrifice to give up His life on the cross
The profound nature of the love of Jesus is powerful and overwhelms

Despite knowledge of His imminent death He continues to manifest His love
Washing the feet of His disciples including those of Judas
Teaching how to humbly serve one another out of care and love
A symbolic reminder of His love to redeem and cleanse all sinners

The love of Jesus is centred in giving not getting
God the Father gave His only begotten Son so that we do not perish
His love demonstrates real love which is compelling
Let us learn from this example on how to love and cherish

If we love Jesus we must reverently obey His commandments
Just as He expressed His willingness to obey His Father in the Garden of
Gethsemane

May we be able to do what God the Father requires of us
Pray for grace and mercy to be His faithful servant on bended knee

Jessie Quek
Inspiration: John 13:1-7

ORDER OF WORSHIP



PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

Mr. Timon Chiong

PRAYER

HYMNS

CP 70 | I Will Sing Of The Mercies

CP 389 | He Leadeth Me

BAPTISMAL SERVICE

MESSAGE

“Love one another as I have loved you ” | Text: John 13

Rev. Dr. Charles Tan

CLOSING HYMN

HWC 67 | The Love Of God

BENEDICTION

OFFERING

POSTLUDE



HYMNS

CP 70 I WILL SING OF THE MERCIES

JAMES FILLMORE AND MARIE J. POST

1. I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever,
I will sing, I will sing.

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever,
I will sing of the mercies of the Lord.

With my mouth will I make known
Your faithfulness, Your faithfulness;
With my mouth will I make known
Your faithfulness to all generations.

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever,
I will sing of the mercies of the Lord.

2. All the hosts of the angels sing God's praise forever
For the things He has done.

All the hosts of the angels sing God's praise forever,
All the hosts of the angels sing God's praise.

Who can be compared to God
In faithfulness, in faithfulness?
Who can be compared to God
In faithfulness to all generations?

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever,
I will sing of the mercies of the Lord.



HYMNS

CP 389 HE LEADETH ME

JOSEPH H. GILMORE

1. He leadeth me! O blessed thought!
O words with heav'nly comfort fraught!
Whate'er I do, where'er I be,
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me!

Refrain

He leadeth me, He leadeth me,
By His own hand He leadeth me:
His faithful follow'r I would be,
For by His hand He leadeth me.

2. Sometimes 'mid scenes of deepest gloom,
Sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom,
By waters still, o'er troubled sea,
Still 'tis His hand that leadeth me!

Refrain

3. Lord, I would clasp Thy hand in mine,
Nor ever murmur nor repine,
Content, whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis Thy hand that leadeth me!

Refrain

4. And when my task on earth is done,
When by Thy grace the vict'ry's won,
E'en death's cold wave I will not flee,
Still God through Jordan leadeth me!

Refrain



HYMNS

HWC 67 THE LOVE OF GOD

FREDERICK M. LEHMAN

1. The love of God is greater far
Than tongue or pen can ever tell;
It goes beyond the highest star,
And reaches to the lowest hell.
The guilty pair, bowed down with care,
God gave His Son to win;
His erring child He reconciled,
And pardoned from his sin.

Refrain

O love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong!
It shall forever more endure, the saints' and angels' song.

2. When years of time shall pass away,
And earthly thrones and kingdoms fall;
When men who here refuse to pray,
On rocks and hills and mountains call;
God's love, so sure, shall still endure,
All measureless and strong;
Redeeming grace to Adam's race
The saints' and angels' song.

Refrain

3. Could we with ink the ocean fill,
And were the skies of parchment made;
Were ev'ry stalk on earth a quill,
And ev'ry man a scribe by trade;
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky.

Refrain



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