

July 2022

Focus on

Missions



Sunday School Missionary Sunday: Faith Amidst Adversity

Why Sunday School Missionary Sunday?

Missionary Sunday is an important date in the Sunday School calendar. Typically held in June every year, Sunday School Missionary Sunday provides an excellent opportunity for students and church members alike to see the importance of evangelism and missions in the lives of the believer and the church. Evangelism is a core tenet of the Sunday School syllabus and no believer is exempt from the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, classes had periodically gone for day trips to serve at various mission stations. Many students were thus blessed with the privilege of participating in the work of evangelism in a foreign land.

Missionary Sunday brings together missionaries from our various mission stations to share on their calling, the work in the mission field and the Lord's hand in providing. In spite of the pandemic, the work of evangelism and missions went on by God's grace. Through the testimonies shared, it was encouraging to hear how the Lord kept the faith of the missionaries and the spirit of missions alive. With hearts stirred up and with love for those who are outside the kingdom of God, many Lifers are now able to pray more meaningfully for the work of missions in Life B-P Church. May the Lord send forth more labourers into His harvest field. To God be the glory!

The video recording of this year's Sunday School Missionary Sunday is available on the Life RTL portal for members to access (www.lifertl.com > Sunday School > Open Sunday > 2022 > Videos)

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Message by Dr David Cheong

Faith Amidst Adversity

The famous British writer C.S. Lewis, once said, “It is a good rule after reading a new book never to allow yourself another new book till you have read an old one in between”. He is recommending one old book for every contemporary book or two, so as to benefit from both old and new lessons.

If we were to consider these past two and a half years as a period of forced changes for the worldwide church – primarily in the way we worship and the way we evangelise - then we have much first-hand material for a new contemporary book.

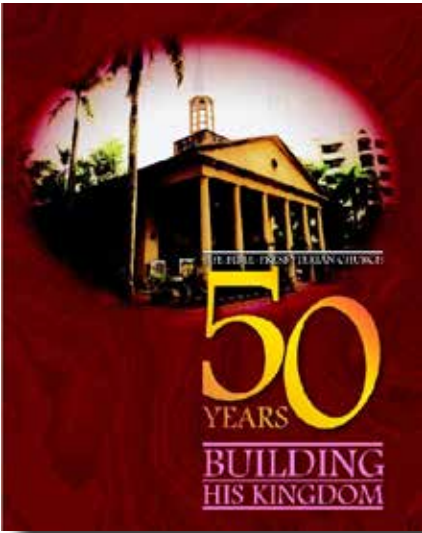
The foreword of such a new book, touching on the area of mission and evangelism, may read as “Overseas mission trips were halted abruptly as borders closed; our missionaries and mission stations had to rely solely on their national pastors and lay leaders. Creative outreaches and non-traditional methods were employed to care for the local congregations as the rules allowed. The training of workers for the mission field also slowed and the use of on-line lessons and teaching was crucial. Our foreign mission outreaches in several ASEAN countries, notably Indonesia, Cambodia and Thailand, have been closed to pastors’ in-person preaching and conducting Holy Communion, teaching programmes and Lifers’ visitations”.

A question we may ask in this new book “Is COVID-19 a Disruptor or a Driver for Evangelism and Missions?” It is a Disruptor in some ways but the church has been proactive rather than passive. Members who have more are driven to care for and give to those who have less, just as they are remembered by a just and merciful God. Our witness at home continues – Far Eastern Kindergarten, Girls’ Brigade, Life Children Club, Student Care Ministry, etc – albeit adapted. As a Driver, it has accelerated the use of digital technology to change the way we think, learn, and connect, giving all churches new opportunities to make a transformational impact. Whichever way you view it, the Good News cannot be masked nor quarantined. In evangelism - one on one, one to many, many to many – such opportunities have increased. People tend to be open to Christ during trouble and transition, and we can better initiate conversations and speak of the Christian’s worldview and things that truly matter.

Following C.S. Lewis’ suggestion then, let us take a look at an old book - the Life Bible-Presbyterian Church’s Golden Jubilee Magazine 1950-2000 – a partial biography of our church. From this old publication we shall pick **three lessons on missions and evangelism**.

First – Evangelism can be done anywhere, whether we cross the street or cross the sea, alone or together. The first decision to serve God is from the heart. This first step is the most difficult. God requires a willing heart more than anything else. Consider the Good Samaritan who overcame disruptions to his schedule, did not deny his responsibility in helping another, and rose above discrimination as well as prejudice. He was willing to face dangers and difficulties, and financial costs, to minister in compassion to bring hope to a fellow human being. Don’t reject the Spirit’s prompting to love our neighbour. As foreigners become permanent residents, foreign students and





guest workers come to our shores, opportunities to connect, show kindness, start friendships abound and we can share our Biblical world-view and Christian beliefs. Do not hesitate but pray for a desire to serve God. He will honour and give each one a suitable place and role.

Second - Missions requires diligence and patience. It is hard work akin to labouring to the point of exhaustion. A comparison to farming and construction is found in 1 Cor 3:6-12. Farmers have to exercise great discipline and diligence in waking up early every day to tend to their crops and farm their animals. Farmers must also be patient. Crops do not grow overnight. Missions is putting down roots that can take years to bear fruits. 2 Tim 2:6 says that the hard-working farmer ought to be the first to receive his share of the crops, and so it is that the joy of harvest is often to the one who is diligent and patient. This joy of harvest continues on in Myanmar, Cambodia, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia and elsewhere for Life Church and our partners in missions. But planting, watering, tending to, and labouring continues on until Christ returns.

Third – A three-fold cord is not quickly broken (Ecclesiastes 4:12). God opens up the mission field, the church leadership discerns and sets the vision, and members execute and maintain. Indeed, a cord of three strands is not quickly broken but we need to guard against pride. Hebrews 13:7 from the Amplified Bible says 'Remember your leaders who brought you the word of God; and consider the result of their conduct (the outcome of their godly lives), and imitate their faith.' We are not asked to imitate our leaders' achievements, not even their

conduct but to remember their faith. Life B-P Church's biography of the past 70 years (1950-2020) is filled with successes and many more failures - failures which God allowed. Through failures, more than successes, God as our loving heavenly Father is disciplining us, testing our resolve and trust in Him, and bringing us to holiness. Together, let us press on humbly and faithfully.

In closing, the following phrase aptly sums up our need to use both old and new lessons - "**Bits and Bytes of Salt and Light**". Bits and grains of salt are all we need to make a disproportionate positive difference and bytes and light speaks of speed and illumination.

Let us **recall and remember the bits of lessons** we have learned from our church's past seven decades – (1) start right where you are, (2) be diligent, patient and always resolute in your faith, (3) called to be God's co-workers, submit yourselves to godly leaders who watch for your souls as those who must give account (Hebrews 13:17).

Let us also **continue to add more bytes** to our attempts to share the Gospel, capitalising on the digital platforms that the Lord has graciously provided, so that we may shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life (Phil 2:15,16).

May the LORD help us to be faithful because the world we live in today, with or without COVID and other adversities, is still the same world that rejected Christ!

Message by Rev Nirand Tamee and Sis Jess Tamee

Faith amidst Adversity

Mission Field in North Thailand



1. Lockdown!

Borders were closed within the whole kingdom of Thailand! All quiet from the city church to the mountain churches. See, Satan tried to shut the churches during the pandemic.





ELC ChiangMai



BanLong



PangMaYau



ChiangRai: LiWu



BoRae



PongMai



YaNam



HuiKiLekMai



SanNgam



But Pastor Polu went on to livestream ELC Worship of GOD Almighty through the megaphone from the back of the truck, to all tribal villages over the range of mountains beyond the sunset!

2. Faith with Worship

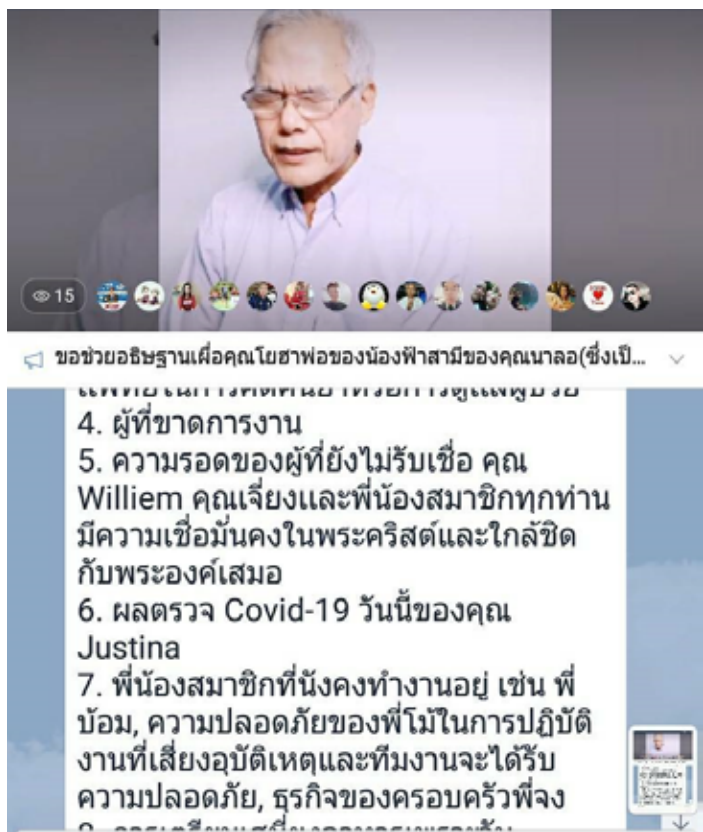
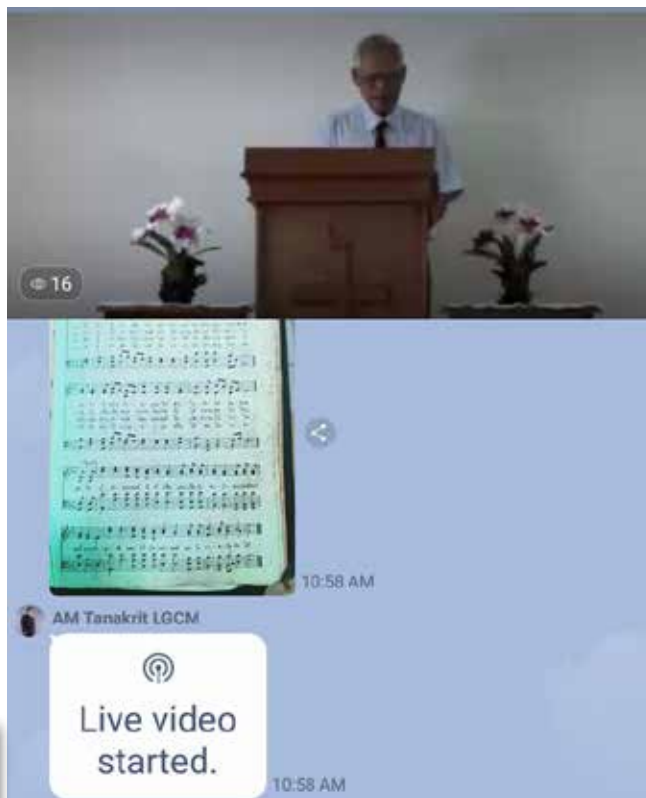
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Let us worship God

Faith comes with worship! But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. (John 4:23).

3. Faith with Prayer

Faith not only comes with worship; but **faith comes with prayer too**. Besides worship service every LORD's Day but prayer meeting was conducted every Tuesday as well. Pray without ceasing. (1 Thess 5:17)



Prayer Meeting during 2020 Pandemic

Prayer Items:

4. Those who lost their jobs
5. Salvation for the yet-to-be-saved, such as Williem and Jiang, and strong faith for the saved brethren to always walk closely with our LORD
6. Covid test result of Justina
7. Working members like Pom, and safety for Mo & team in their risky jobs (with Covid contacts), and the business of Jong's family

4. Faith with Action

Yet faith not only comes with prayer; but faith comes with action too! For as James has said: If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; What doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. (James 2:15-17)

So, besides prayers, there were actual food distributions with love gifts from Mother Life to the brethren in the provinces of Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai.



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Finally, there were not only jobs lost; but loss of lives too.

1. Mdm Pranee, who opened her home for ELC PangMaYau Worship Service.
2. Mdm Jandee, a stalwart of ELC BanLong whose baptism caused a threat from the villagers to boycott her funeral but she said not to worry because it would be a Christian funeral and it would be held in ELC ChiangMai.
3. Mdm Namer, early ELC ChiangMai member who offered flowers once a month without fail.
4. Mdm Kaew, brought to Christ by her son Mr Rung, a senior church member and also the village chief of ELC BanLong.



And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? (John 11:26)

5. Faith unto Eternity

Yes! We as the people of God continue to worship God Almighty before, during & after lockdown for when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth? (Luke 18:8b). It's not faith to the end; but faith unto eternity!



ELC ChiangMai



PangMaYau



ChiangRai: LiWu



BoRae



YaNam



HuiKiLekMai

Yes, dear brothers and sisters, **this is what Faith amidst Adversity is about!** Thank you and God bless!

Message by Bro Efendi Ginting

A Glimpse of God's Ministries in the Three Churches in Batam Island, Indonesia

I would like to share about the ministries in Batam during the Pandemic 2020-2022. Thank God for giving me the privilege to live in the midst of Covid-19. This is a second chance for me to serve God better.

At the beginning of the pandemic, the local government restricted church activities and worship in person. So I had to provide live streaming for worship services. The sanctuary must be cleaned thoroughly, and temperature-taking was mandatory.

Despite the pandemic, the ministry must continue to be carried out. We visited the sick and shared love gifts with those who were facing difficulties.

The pandemic brought about big changes but from the beginning of Covid-19, I kept the church open for worship and we gathered together behind closed doors. I saw that faithful men were not afraid; their faith grew in this difficult situation.

But alas, for the lazy, this pandemic became a time of pleasure for them to enjoy. They saw no need to be busy with church activities and even slept during Sunday school. Some of the children preferred to play games on their gadgets. As a result, their spiritual lives were barren.

Below are the church activities during the pandemic in 2020-2022



The police put up government rules prohibiting worship in large groups



Disinfecting the sanctuary, and using temperature scanner and hand sanitiser



Live streaming service during the Pandemic



Visiting and sharing love gifts with those in need

Help from Life BPC Singapore

We are very grateful for Life BPC Singapore's help in the midst of pandemic. We received help four times to buy basic necessities, such as rice, sugar, eggs, soap and detergent. We are glad for the gifts and hope that we will be healthy and our faith will grow. May Christ Jesus bless Life BPC in Singapore.



I distributed all the help to the congregation at Tanjung Piayu BPC, Sagulung Baru BPC, Batu Aji BPC, Petra BPC, even to the teachers at the New Life school.

Now things are getting better, and we are starting to go back into the house of God. But we and some churches are facing difficulties. Many have slept; they enjoy staying at home. It takes hard work to wake them up. I have to visit, pray for them, and prepare interesting activities to bring them together in the house of the Lord. We conducted our worship outside on Easter, and shared a fellowship meal after the service. My sermon was focused on “Come to God’s House for Worship and Come to Serve the Lord”. I told them that those who are healthy must come to God’s house.

I am teaching them God’s word, and hope that God will bring people to His house. I am so blessed with this Sunday School song based on the Gospel of John 3:30: “He must increase, but I must decrease.” The lyrics are: When the Lord Jesus is exalted, and the cross we proclaim, then Jesus Himself will draw people to come to Christ.

Lastly, we each have different gifts: some are supporters, some are in the prayer team, and some are working in the field. This is our second chance after surviving the attack of Covid-19. Do your part to serve Christ. I am working in the field, and what is your part? Let us unite to serve the Lord, pray for one another, help one another, then more people will hear the Gospel of Christ. May Christ bless us. Amen.

Tanjung Piayu BPC (Ministry by Pr. Efendi Ginting)



Batu Aji BPC (Ministry by Sis Paola)



Sagulung Baru BPC
(Ministry by Bro Mikdal)



My Retirement by Sister Chan Pui Meng

“To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.” (Eccl. 3:1)

God had been very gracious in enabling me to serve Him in the mission field in 2001 to Kenya as a missionary nurse. Since then, I have never looked back; only filled with gratefulness to the Lord for using such an unworthy child of His for His work. He had given me nine wonderful years in the Maasailand, Kenya, with many unforgettable experiences as a missionary nurse. In 2010, I returned to Singapore.



Mobile Clinic

During those years in Kenya, the Lord gave me a desire to pursue theological studies. Thus, He prepared the way for me to study at Western Reformed Seminary (<https://www.wrs.edu/>) in the United States for 3 ½ years.

In June 2015, the Lord gave me another opportunity to serve Him in a foreign land at Le Village, Ratanakiri, north-east of Cambodia. Then, I asked the Lord, “How could I serve His people in Cambodia?” He gave me Romans 12:9a “Let love be without dissimulation (pretense).” Thus, I sought His help to grant me a love for the people in Cambodia, especially the Jarai.



Le Village Church



Bro Samnang's family and me

The Jarai have shown remarkable resilience in enduring hardship. It was a pleasure to work among the children and teens of Le Village Church. We spent many wonderful times together learning the Word of God, creating new craftworks, experimenting recipes such as meat pao, curry puff, tapioca fritters, and others.



Students' creation



Students' craft work



Outing with the students

They showed great interest and excitement in learning new things. The Jarai ladies had also taught me many things about the Jarai culture. They had given me much joy in serving. The Jarai in the village are hard to reach, as they are very entrenched in animism. We pray that the day of salvation may come upon the villagers through the working of the Holy Spirit.



Jarai costume for ladies



Student sharing the gospel

My Retirement

The six years of serving in Le Village Church had taught me many precious lessons and revealed many rough edges and flaws in my life. The challenges in mission work made me realise, "How helpless I am!" The apostle Paul urged the Roman Christians, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Rom 12:1,2)



Chengko Church

In August 2021, I left Le Village for Chengko Village in Silhanoukville. It was a difficult decision for me as I had learned to love and accept the people. The terrain to Le Village is rough and bad for my back. By God's grace and mercy, He has sustained and helped me bear the left sciatic pain and weakness in my left leg since 2021. After prayerful consideration, I decided to make a move to Chengko Village. It may seem hasty to some but I had contemplated it for some time already.



Road to my house in blue

A resident selling meat and vegetables



In Chengko Village, the Lord had provided with me a house close to the church and local amenities such as laundry services and marketing. The condition of the roads in Chengko are better than that in Le Village. Despite a better living environment in Chengko Village, the pain and numbness of my back and weakness of my left leg had not improved. It prompted me to consider retiring from Life Church as a missionary. There are three areas that have brought me to this decision:

1. Prayer

I have sought the Lord and the advice of God's people and friends. He has given me peace of heart on this issue. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." (Prov 3:5,6)

2. My limitation

Since my spinal surgery for the past twelve years, the Lord has kept me from any injury or back pain. In December 2019, I had the first episode of severe back pain with numbness and left leg weakness since the surgery. Thank God for restoring me after a period of rest and exercise. Last June, a second episode of the similar symptoms recurred due to traveling on bad roads – to and fro between Le Village and Ouyadav town. These symptoms persisted while I was at Chengko Village.

When I was back in Singapore for a Chinese New Year break, I was found to have a gut infection caused by consuming contaminated water. Now I come to a point where I am faced with increasing health challenges and age that hinder my mobility and effectiveness in the Lord's work.

3. My desire

If God wills, I hope to keep in touch with the Le Village students in Ban Lung. I would love to continue to reach out to them, if God opens the door. At the same time, there is also a need to strengthen and build up my spine and back muscles. Thus, I may be doing things at a much slower pace and trusting the Lord to lead me into the next phase of my life.



Le Village students studying in Ban Lung

Retirement had never been in my thoughts until I was in Chengko Village. I was constantly experiencing pain and numbness in my back and weakness in my left leg. I was not listening to my body even though my mobility was limited. It was by God's grace and mercy that He has sustained me. God has His way of demonstrating His love and care to His children (Rom. 8:28). The decision to retire is purely a medical reason just as I left Le Village.

I am very grateful to the Lord for giving me a part in His work in Cambodia. I am also thankful to all of you, Lifers, for the opportunity to co-labour with you in the Lord's work for six years and eleven months in Cambodia. It is a short period to be able to establish any work here. But you have given your support, love, and care by sending mission teams to encourage, teach and train God's people.



Life Mission Team in 2019

Finally, I would like to challenge the young people to step forward to fulfil the Great Commission “as ye see the day approaching” (Heb. 10:25).

Are you not constrained by the love of Christ to answer His call?

It was Christ's love for sinners like you and me that He bears the wrath of God upon Himself to reconcile us to God. Let your life be for Christ and not for oneself!

“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.” (2 Cor 5:14, 15)

A postscript from Rev Charles Seet, our Pastor and Chairman of Missions Committee: In the history of Christian Missions, single women have been among the finest missionaries in the world. In fact, much pioneer work has been done by single women whose dedication to do the Lord's work has led them to serve Him in places where both life and work are the hardest. Sister Chan Pui Meng is a fine example, having served with distinction in two mission fields that are culturally very different – the Maasai tribe in Kenya and the Jarai tribe in Cambodia. We thank God for using her to bless many lives, and we pray that her testimony will inspire many to give their lives for missionary service. May the Lord bless sister Chan Pui Meng with a good retirement!

Announcement on Designated Offering for Missions

We thank God that Lifers are very generous in their offerings towards missions. In terms of support, the church gives priority to our fully-supported missionaries and we would like you to be aligned with the church's position when giving towards missions. Rather than giving offerings that are designated to specific individuals or mission stations, you are encouraged to give to the Missions Fund and let the Missions Committee disburse them as it sees fit. Your understanding on this will facilitate an informed stewardship of resources for the Lord's work in missions. If you wish to contribute financially to missionaries, please indicate “DO Missions” in the reference field in your e-Offering via the Life Church PayNow QR Code or **UEN S86SS0056D**. May the Lord bless your cheerful giving.



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