



**CHURCH of CHRIST**  
— PASIR PANJANG —

**FOCUS**

9 February 2020

**2020 Year Theme:**

**Be Strong and Courageous! Joshua 1:9**

**Worship Theme: Joy is Our True Home!**

What A Joy! The Messiah was prophesied to come and will come again into this world to set free all people who had been enslaved by sin.

Today's scripture texts: Isaiah 61:1-11; 1 Thess 5:16-24 ; Psalm 126

The oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. Isaiah 61:3

"Mommy, my truck broke!" Little children instinctively run to their parents to have them fix the broken things in their lives. But as they grow older, they learn that Mommy cannot fix everything. She cannot make that girl you have your eye on, to like you in return. She cannot prevent the emotional scars that result from your being excluded from a social circle. She cannot protect you from all the consequences of your foolish choices. She cannot heal you from a life-threatening disease.

No other person can put everything right in our lives. But we know the God who will one day make all things right. Today and tomorrow we will get a glimpse of how God will finally restore our world, with its broken bodies and fractured relationships, and transform our mourning into joy.

This passage comes at the end of the book of Isaiah, an extended prophecy of the coming judgment on Judah. But destruction was not the end of Judah's story— it was a painful step along the journey, but the final destination was freedom and the Lord's favour. The ruined cities would be rebuilt (Isaiah 61:4). The land would again be fertile and productive (Isaiah 61:5, 11). Their descendants would have a future in this place promised by God (Isaiah 61:9).

In addition to the restoration of the land, God promises restored joy and a relationship with Him (Isaiah 61:6-7). This relationship is summed up in Isaiah 61:10: "I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness." *What a great comfort—someday our sovereign God will not only change our circumstances but also fill our hearts with delight in Him.*

APPLY THE WORD : What situations in your life do you long for God to change? Even though we might not see how God does it—and we might not even see when God does it—He promises that one day, He will fix all brokenness. While we wait, we have the comfort of knowing that God will keep His promise to bring full restoration.

**By TODAY IN THE WORD DEVOTIONAL**

**Our Vision**  
To Be A Vibrant, Growing Community Where Every Member Ministers to One Another



Equipped by Ministry Leaders

Supported by Mission Interest Groups & Partners

Reached out to by Care Teams

**Our Mission**  
We are Called Out To...



Worship God

Testify to the Nations the Gospel

Make Disciples



**This Week's Events**

**9 Feb (Sun)**  
8.00 am & 11.00 am  
Terry Wan  
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11  
6.00 pm  
Tony Zhang  
Galatians 5:22-23

**10 Feb (Mon)**  
7.30 pm  
Gladiolus Place  
Devotion  
Catherine Leow

**12 Feb (Wed)**  
7.30 pm  
Wed Bible Class  
Ecclesiastes  
Vincent Lim



## Harding Commencement Address (Part 1) by David Young

*Renew founder and board member, David Young, gave the 2019 commencement address to the graduating class at Harding School of Theology. The topic will interest Renew readers as it underlines our conviction that “Jesus’ final command must be our first priority.”*

Students, family members, faculty, staff: Thank you for the privilege of offering a few words at this time-honored ceremony observing graduation. Graduates, I join with others here in congratulating you on the completion of your degree at the Harding School of Theology.

As time goes by, I believe that many of you will come to regard your time at Harding as the most enjoyable educational experience of your life. I can certainly say that my time here was the high point of my education. I enjoyed my HST experience immensely, and my studies here helped to build a spiritual and theological foundation from which I have never departed.

And this is true, even if Harding has changed—and it has changed.

Last year one of our ministers at North Boulevard, Renee Spores, published a book on Gender. To write the book, she consulted heavily with none other than Professor Rick Oster. Now thirty-two years ago, I completed a degree here under Professor Oster, taking him for numerous classes and writing a 287-page thesis for him. Dr. Oster completely reshaped my theological life, but sometimes my experience under him was not totally unlike that of a gladiator choking on the words “we who are about to die salute you.”

And yet when I asked Renee how *her* time working with Dr. Oster had gone, she replied, and I’m not making this up, “Dr. Oster is such a sweet man.”

So, yeah, Harding School of Theology has changed.

Dr. Black asked me to speak on the subject of discipleship. He needn’t have, as this is the subject I would have chosen anyway. I have committed my life to making disciples of King Jesus. So talking about disciple-making is what I naturally do. It’s an honor to do it here.

There’s a wonderful phenomenon that occurs when musicians get it exactly right.

**It’s called a “ringing chord.”**

It works better with voices than with instruments, so simply put, the ringing chord occurs when the harmonics of several voices combine with each other to create a new frequency that literally sounds like additional voices. The ringing chord requires the right notes, and the overtones must be fairly strong. Above all, every voice must be pitch perfect, and the whole must be in seamless harmony. It is fairly easy to explain mathematically, but that does not diminish its beauty. And, if done well, the ringing chord is truly beautiful: it can make four voices sound like a room full of musicians. It will send shivers down your spine.

Of course we’ve all experienced similar phenomena—things that equal far more than the sum of their parts. There is nothing in oxygen or hydrogen that would predict that, when combined, they would create ocean waves, waterfalls, and coffee. There is certainly no way to look at the lump of matter we call a brain and predict that it would produce the human mind—complete with its ethical, aesthetic, rational and speculative capacities.

In the same way, every element of the Gospel has its beauty; but when all the elements of the Gospel are combined just right, the universe rings out in full chorus. “The sun lifts up his glorious voice, and moon and stars reply; all in one concert sweet, one lofty strain combine!”

On this far-reaching day, I want to challenge you to aim for the fullness of the Kingdom of God—regardless of what your major has been. Theology is delicious, but don’t settle for merely *telling* people what the Kingdom of God is like, when you can actually empower them to experience it. Building up a church matters, but why study Greek if you are merely going to spend the rest of your life in one long committee meeting? Preaching and counselling and social activism—they all have important places in the Kingdom of God. But they are mere riffs and half-tones. They do not make up the full concert that is God’s Kingdom.

No, when Jesus came announcing that the Kingdom of God is at hand, Matthew 4 tells us, the very next thing he did was to call a group of disciples. The grammar of the text here is important. Matthew says that Jesus “began” to announce the Kingdom and the next thing we read, he is calling disciples. This means that disciple-making is, grammatically, the first act of announcing the Kingdom.

If you want the full symphony of the Kingdom of God—both in your life and in the world—make disciples of Jesus Christ. This will bring together theology, textual studies, counselling, history, ministry, activism—all the voices—into one grand concert. Jesus made disciples. And so should we.

This is worth pondering for a moment. Jesus could have advanced his Kingdom any way he wanted. He is, after all, King of the Universe. He could have commandeered the spacious theater in Caesarea (which still holds 25,000 people), called in his friend Billy Graham, and preached the world’s first crusade. He could have hopped across the continents on the wings of an angel speaking to far-flung tribes in their very own fricatives and plosives. He could literally have snapped his fingers and changed the hearts of the world.

He didn’t.

Instead, Jesus made disciples. He lovingly entered into the lives of twelve ordinary men and cultivated their hearts and minds until they became like He is. He lived with them. He met them at their work. He joined them for dinner. He called them his family. He empowered them to preach, to heal, and to drive out demons. He led them to do ministry. He connected them to one another in loving relationships. He privately explained to them the meaning of his public preaching. In short, he shared his life with them. Then he sent them out to do the same among all the nations. And by doing this, Jesus changed the world. So much so that the names of Jesus’ disciples are inscribed, the book of Revelation tells us, on the very foundations of New Jerusalem.

If you want your time here at Harding to ring out in the greatest chorus ever sung in the Kingdom, apply your training to making disciples. It is, after all, Jesus’ final command: “Go make disciples of all nations.” And Jesus’ final command must be our first priority.

**We make disciples. Or we’re only singing half-tones. It really is that simple.**



9 February 2020

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**SING** is held every Saturday afternoon from 2pm to 4pm at the church auditorium. Contact: Terilee or Dennis Law.

**Prayer Warriors (PW)** is held every 2nd & 4th Monday of each month. Contact: Lim Lian Chye.

**23 Feb (Sun)**  
**GEMS Club**  
**Collection of Sermon Notes Document Box**  
**7.45 - 8 am**  
**10.30 - 11 am**

**29 Mar (Sun)**  
**Ladies Day**  
**12 noon Lunch**  
**1 pm Program Starts**

**10 Apr (Fri)**  
**Annual Advance**  
**9 am - 12 pm**  
**Breakfast starts from 8am onwards**

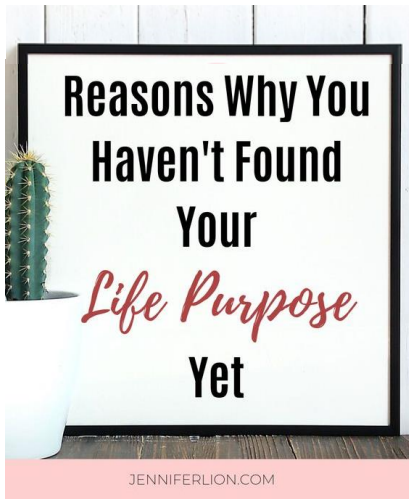
**11 Apr (Sat)**  
**Cook for Fund**  
**9 am - 12 pm**  
**Cooking Studio (tbc)**

**12 Apr (Sun)**  
**GEMS Hour**  
**10.45 am - 12.15 pm**  
**Have you heard the Good News?**

FEEDBACK on Church Matters



<http://bit.ly/38KH8wK>



## Life's Purpose

To what is life's good purpose, if we live just for one's self -  
If someone else is going to lose whilst we gain worldly wealth? -  
What satisfaction in success although it be immense?  
If we climb fame's high ladder, at some other chap's expense....Far better if by losing just a little in the end - We've made a fairer, squarer deal with neighbour or with friend -  
For life is not a game of chess, to beat those whom we can -  
A world of selfishness and greed was not the Master's plan.

Fred Taylor. Wigan.

Dear Members,  
If you have interesting and inspiring articles for Focus (whether written personally or adapted with credits given) please send them to our Ministers for their consideration. Thank you.

## Finding Yourself

how to get unstuck, deal with uncertainty, feel in control and become the person you want to be



[www.mintedcreative.com](http://www.mintedcreative.com)

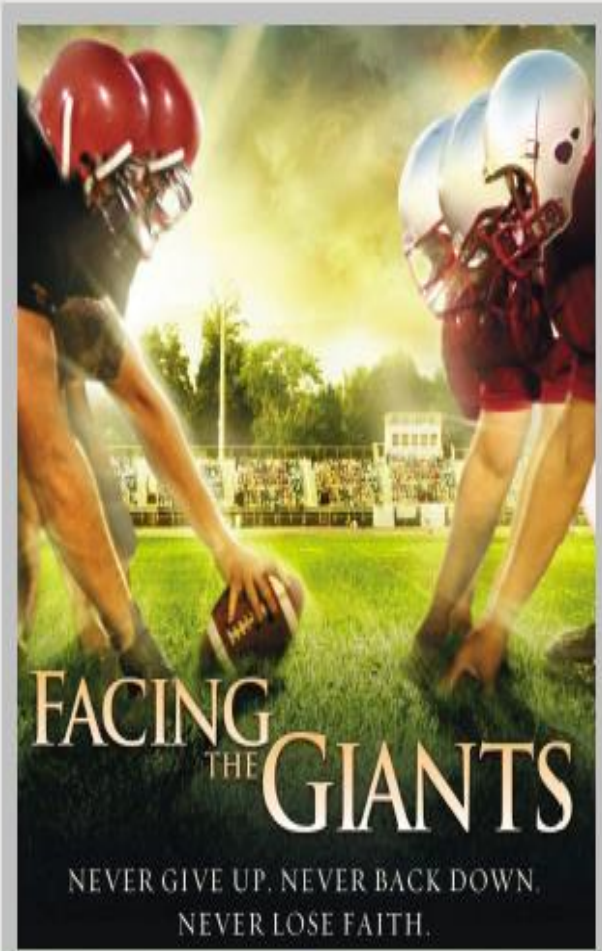
# ANNUAL ADVANCE

## FAMILY NEWS & CONCERNS



**Margaret Slorach** – Pray for travel mercy and give thanks to the Lord for all blessings.

**Patrick** – In Psalm 91, we are reminded that despite danger or disease, we can rest fearlessly in the refuge and embrace of our Heavenly Father. He alone can protect us and provide for all our needs, even as we take responsible precautions. So let us spur one another to do our part and to offer up united prayers of faith to our ever faithful God Almighty – on behalf of the nations, our government, colleagues, families and ourselves.



### LAST SUNDAY



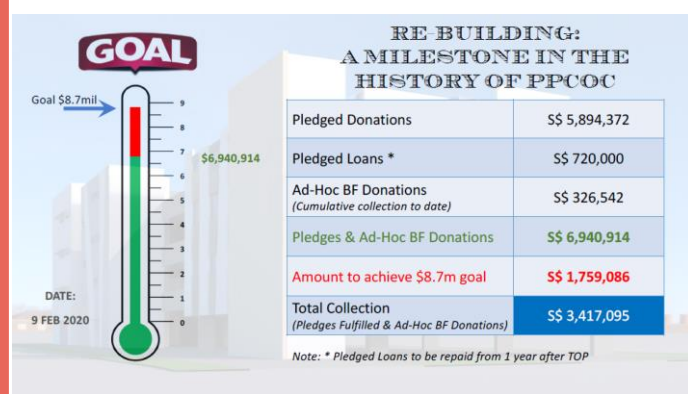
#### FACTS FIGURES

8AM	9.30AM	11AM	6PM
110	169	131	27

<b>GF</b>	<b>\$ 7,901</b>
<b>MF YTD</b>	<b>\$ 117,899</b>

MARK THE DATE NOW!  
**10 APRIL (FRIDAY)**  
 9.00 AM - 12 NOON  
 COME AND ENJOY THE BREAKFAST FELLOWSHIP FROM 8.00 AM

Reinforcing PPCOC's Theme for 2020 "Be Strong and Courageous", this year's Annual Advance will look at what it means to Never Give Up, Never Back Down and Never Lose Faith in our spiritual journey and service to God. Come, bring or encourage another to join the church for a time of refreshing and learning to be recharged and advance for God!



Send this FOCUS QR Code to an absent member



<https://bit.ly/2rxopUz>

**Pledge & Building Fund Committee**  
 Peter Lim  
 Jim Kawi  
 Grace Mariaraja

**Elders**  
 Simon Goh  
 Peter Lim  
 Lim Swee Aun  
 Ooi Boo Chye  
 Terry Wan

**Deacons**  
 Dennis Law  
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Go to Internet browser link <http://welcome.ppcoc.org> via the Church WIFI to record your attendance