



CHURCH of CHRIST
— PASIR PANJANG —



17 May 2020

2020 Year Theme:
Be Strong and Courageous! Joshua 1:9

Worship Theme:

Hallelujah Anyhow (Martyrdom)

Today's scripture texts: Acts 7:55-60; 1 Peter 2:2-10; Psalm 31:1-5

If following Christ is seen as a way to avoid suffering and struggle, we will be deeply disappointed by the message of this week's Scripture readings. The reality was that Jesus, and those who followed him, faced persecution, accusation and suffering. They were not exempted from life's troubles, and sometimes their faith even brought suffering on them. In Acts, we read of Stephen who is stoned for his witness to Christ, but who entrusts himself to God. In Peter's letter, he tells of how Christ was rejected, but God honored him and built a community of light with Christ as the foundation. Finally, We read the words of the Psalmist who, facing persecution and attack, commits himself to God's care and protection.

The gift of this week is the assurance that, even as we face suffering, our lives are in God's hands, and, if we will entrust ourselves to God's care, we will find peace and will be partners in God's work in our world. This is not the message of ease and of guarantees of the "good life" that we might hope for. But it is something much better. It is an assurance that as we live in this world and experience its pain, along with others who follow Christ, we are partners with God, and we have the confidence that our lives and our ultimate destiny are in God's hands.

Questions to Wrestle With

1. The apostles' response to the inequitable distribution of food to the Hellenistic widows was the creation of a new class of ministers called deacons. Did their response fully address the underlying issue of nepotism and favoritism apparently practiced by the Aramaic-speaking Christians?
2. Was Stephen in a lose-lose situation? If so, what possible options beyond direct rebuttal could he have chosen?
3. Some commentators say martyrdom is a spiritual gift in which a person no longer fears death. What can we learn from the way Stephen approached martyrdom? When might we choose to bear witness for God by speaking prophetically, even at the risk of personal safety? How gracious are we in the face of accusation?
4. Stephen's response to his accusers was to attack their hypocrisy and forgive them for their ignorance. How should we stand up for our faith today?

EVENTS

Online Bible Class & Worship

17 May

9.30 am Bible Class
The Parable of the Tenants
Lee Hock

11.00 am Worship

Hallelujah Anyhow
(Martyrdom)
Terry Harrison

Wed Online Bible Class

20 May

7.30 pm
Study on the book of Daniel
Lim Lian Chye

Zoom Prayer Warriors

Every 2nd & 4th Tue
Lim Lian Chye

5 Jul Youth for Christ (Youth Day)



Use this QR code to access
Online Worship



CIRCUIT BREAKER TO MINIMISE FURTHER SPREAD OF COVID-19

The Circuit Breaker measures have been in place since 7 April 2020 and will be extended by another 4 weeks until June 1 (inclusive).

YOU can join us in worship by going to www.ppcoc.org and click on our Online Worship under Resources tab or Quick Links. You can also check the Donate tab on how to make bank transfers to the church for tithes and offerings.



Tis the Season for Praying Together by John Lim

On 1 May, our elders held a special church-wide prayer meeting via Zoom. As one family in Christ, we prayed for specific concerns under the COVID-19 umbrella. We prayed for the global community, family concerns, world leaders and our missions partners. Each prayer was beautifully and powerfully worded, and a hearty "Amen" from all participants echoed through cyberspace when we concluded. Surely the devil trembled violently at the sound of God's people praying together.

Then I began to wonder: why not do this more often? Albert Lemmons, a Church of Christ preacher and prayer warrior, put it this way: "To pray is to believe in the supernatural." When we pray, we proclaim God's indescribable power and we believe that he can and will work in our lives today. The early church prayed when they faced their greatest opponents, and their prayers literally shook the earth (Acts 4:31). In other words, prayer works.

A Closer Look at the Early Church

We can learn at least two things from the early church about prayer. Firstly, they prayed together. When Paul exhorted the early church to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17), he meant more than individuals praying a lot by themselves. He was talking to a group of people - the family of God. Yes, our individual prayers work. But it is when we pray together that its power multiplies.

Secondly, the early church prayed frequently. They met together daily for fellowship, instruction and prayer (Acts 2:42, 46). That's right - daily. Prayer was not something the early church did only on special occasions. Prayer was not just a luxury that was nice to have, but that they could make do without.

Prayer was - and still is - the oxygen of God's people. Prayer is essential to our thriving and survival, to our identity and our calling. The church that does not pray is not just a weakened church; it simply stops being the church.

What I'm saying is simply this: let's pray more, together.

Renewing Our Prayer Efforts

During this season, I sense that many of us feel cooped up in our homes with nothing to do in our free time. Some of us may know in our heads that we should use this time to draw closer to God. Our consciences tell us that "it's the right thing to do."

But maybe we don't know how, or maybe we don't really want to do it. Not all of us are good at praying in public, or we're not sure how to conduct a prayer meeting. Given the difficulty, it can feel much easier to lie across our sofas and binge social media or television.

Yet it is precisely at this time that we should be praying most. Let us be willing to get uncomfortable, get a few friends together and dedicate some time each week to prayer. So start asking around - I believe that everyone would be more than willing to unleash the power of prayer during a time like this.

Suggestions

1) Join PP's existing prayer group. PP already has a prayer group led by brother Lian Chye every other Tuesday night. This group meets from 8pm to 9pm, including a devotional and prayer on specific topics including COVID-19, SIBI, Bible class teachers and family concerns.

2) Start your own prayer group with your friends and family. Perhaps you find a different time more convenient, or maybe once every two weeks is not enough. The more people praying, the better! Zoom, Skype, Facebook Messenger video chat, or WhatsApp video call are just some of the many options.

If you are just starting out, you may want to start small and gradually grow it. Meet with two or three to pray for at least 15 minutes. It's easy to enjoy talking and catching up, realize you forgot to pray and then hurriedly pray for the last 5 minutes (I speak from experience). But the point of a prayer meeting is, of course, to pray to God. So guard that 15 minutes (or however long you choose) and dedicate it to God.

3) Come prepared to pray. Before you gather with your prayer partners, think of some things to pray for, e.g. family concerns, healthcare workers, foreign workers, national and international leaders. Naming specific requests makes your prayer time more meaningful.

I leave you with the words of our Lord: "Come away by yourselves and rest for a little while (Mark 6:31)." May prayer be a place of divine rest, healing and communion for you and your prayer warriors. Shalom.

Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

- Matt 26:26-28



How to make fruit of the vine? By Chen Yi

I read Aunty Lai Fun's sharing about how to make your own unleavened bread in the Focus last Sunday and I'm inspired to share about how Eunice and I also make our own fruit of the vine (grape juice) at home.

Equipment needed: Blender sieve or coffee filter with filter paper

Ingredients: Seedless red grapes (about 10 to 15 grapes for two people) and water (optional)

Directions:

1. Add grapes to blender, with equal volume of water (optional) and blend until smooth. The water helps to lighten the sweetness of the grape juice and make it easier to strain but it is optional.
2. Pass the blended mixture through a sieve or coffee filter with filter paper and voila! You have homemade fruit of the vine.

Nuggets for our Soul by Lee Hock

In our present world, many of our daily routines are falling apart.

In God's spiritual realm many things are working towards drawing us nearer to God.

Christ, our Lord holds all things together: "He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together" (Col 1:17).

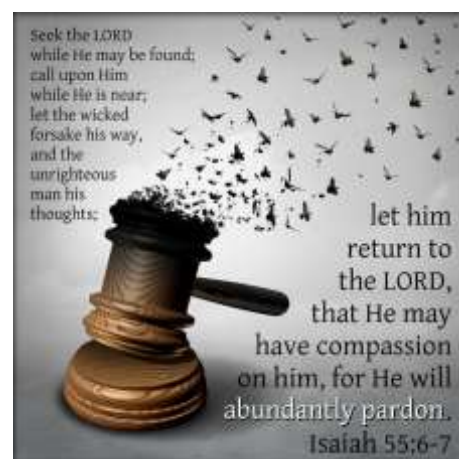
So what is our response? Isaiah saw the northern kingdom of Israel totally destroyed, as well as 46 cities in the land of Judah. His advice is appropriate for our own time too.

"Seek the LORD while you can find him. Call on him now while he is near." Isa 55:6.

Why is it that we humans look up to God when we are in dire situations of needs and desperation?

Perhaps it is time for all humankind to truly reverend Almighty God, even in the good times.

For who He truly IS, the Great I Am.



12th May Tuesday was International Nurses' Day. It could not have come at a more appropriate time as the world battles coronavirus. Our heartfelt thanks to all PP sisters who are in the nursing profession.

Loy Hwee Sieu suffered another stroke. Pearly and her care team raised money to help fund Loy's new air mattress. Praise God for PPCOC Care team's generosity to help Loy. Uphold Loy in your prayer for God's favour and healing.

Watch Edwin Choy online as he shares on "Fathering: Raising Resilient Children."

<https://www.facebook.com/familieforlife.sg/videos/239312707139419/?vh=e&d=n>



Introducing Chen Yi and Eunice's first born, Hosanna Chen who was born on 14 April

<https://bit.ly/3fGtSNT>



Food Aid Update

After last week's appeal for funds to help in purchasing food for our overseas mission partners and churches in India and Philippines, our brethren from Indonesia and Myanmar also requested for financial help for similar needs.

As such, the leaders have decided to extend till **20 May** for members to contribute towards this effort. The collection will be pooled together and distributed to all the 4 countries mentioned.

Please send your contributions to bro. Peter Lim through PayLah or PayNow (mobile no: 92745457) and indicate "Food Aid" in the remarks section.

We thank everyone for showing their love and care in giving generously to help the needy in these countries during this difficult period.

TWO SUNDAY GIVING

FACTS  FIGURES

3 May - \$9,813.25

10 May - \$13,648.00

WAYS TO GIVE

(A) CHEQUE

- Please address the cheque to "Church of Christ, Pasir Panjang"
- Please write the following at the back of the cheque
 - Account number you wish to give to
 - Your name, contact number and address
- Please deposit your cheques at POSB or DBS branches. Please do not mail the cheques to the church office as our staff are working from home.

(B) Donate via BANK TRANSFER

ACCOUNT NUMBERS

1. General Fund bank account number: 063-001497-4
 - No further action is required
2. Mission Fund bank account number: 063-001495-8
 - Please inform Sis Annie (receipt given)
3. Building Fund bank account number: 063-007311-3
 - Please inform Pledge/BF Committee (Peter, Jim or Grace) (receipt given)

(C) Donate via PayNow (QRCode)

1. Scan the QR code using your mobile banking app
2. Verify that it shows: Church of Christ PPG, S76SS0008AGFD
3. Indicate your name in the "Reference No." (optional)
4. Enter the amount you wish to contribute
5. Click next, verify the details and confirm.



General Fund
LID: 576SS0008AGFD



Mission Fund
LID: 576SS0008AGFD



Building Fund
LID: 576SS0008AGFD

FEEDBACK on Church Matters



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
Lim Kok Hin
Vincent Lim

Ministers
Patrick Ong 82005250
eMail: patrickong@ppcoc.org
Beng Chuan 96393008
eMail: tanbengchuan@ppcoc.org