



BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF W.A.

For the Testimony and Glory of Jesus Christ

Vol. 32 No. 48
December 13th, 2015

SUNDAY COMBINED WORSHIP SERVICE

1 Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father
And to the Son
And to the Holy Ghost,
As it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be,
World without end.
Amen. Amen.

Preparatory Hymn

Allan Ang

Prelude

Winnie Lim

Call to Worship

Dn Michael Lee/Kong Vui Yip

*Hymn

HOP 2 To God Be the Glory

*Invocation/Gloria Patri 1

Responsive Reading

Psalm 89:19-29

Hymn

HOP 404 O Jesus, I Have Promised

Presentation of Tithes & Offerings

*Doxology 2/Offertory Prayer

Scripture Reading

1 Corinthians 3:1-2

Hymn

HOP 123 Hover o'er Me, Holy Spirit

Pastoral Prayer/Message

Rev Joseph Poon/Yew Jinn Chieng

2 Doxology

Praise God from whom
all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures
here below;
Praise Him above,
ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son and
Holy Ghost, Amen.

3 The Lord Bless You and Keep You

The Lord bless you and
keep you, The Lord lift His
countenance upon you,
and give you peace,
And give you peace,
The Lord make His face to
shine upon you,
And be gracious unto you,
be gracious, the Lord be
gracious, gracious unto
you. Amen.

Are you Spiritual or Carnal?

*Hymn

HOP 252 Higher Ground

*Benediction/Threefold Amen

Announcements

*The Lord Bless You and Keep You 3

*Congregation Standing



Theme for 2015: "WALK WORTHY OF THE LORD UNTO ALL PLEASING" (Colossians 1:10)

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WORDS FROM OUR FOUNDING PASTOR

My dear readers,

(Excerpt from RPG “The Christmas Story” Oct – Dec 1997, Dec 2 / Dec 5 / Dec 6).

1. God moves in history

The prophets had declared: God’s Messiah would deliver Israel from oppression, His chosen people would be set free. Then the prophetic curtain descended: for 400 years Israel’s God was silent. The nation continued to languish under foreign domination. The people lived on in humdrum existence, their hopes kept alive by the flickering lamps burning in the temple, tended by priests appointed to the office.

Four hundred years passed without a word! Had the Lord forgotten or forsaken His own? Had the Covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob lapsed or lost its effect? Surely many such thoughts must have troubled the minds of the faithful, awaiting the coming of the long promised Messiah. But with the Lord a thousand years are as one day (2 Pet 3:8). If so, what are 400 years in His sight?

But silence with God must not be taken to mean inaction or forgetfulness. Did not His Word declares “... *he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them*” (Deut 4:31)? In the eternal counsels of the all-wise God, things were moving once again. The stage of history was set, the fulness of time had come. Messiah was about to step into the scene of human affairs to set in motion God’s salvation plan.

For Zacharias, one of the priestly band that serviced the temple lamps, it was another workaday duty. “*According to the custom of the priest’s office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord*” (Luke 1:9). But what happened on that day was not “*according to the custom*”. It must have been a dazzling and shattering sight when the angel Gabriel

suddenly appeared out of nowhere! How would you have reacted in the circumstances? Zacharias *“was troubled, and fear fell upon him”* (Luke 1:12).

At last, God was on the move. Malachi’s prophecy was being fulfilled.

2. We believe the virgin birth (Isa 7:14; 9:6-7)

The doctrine of the virgin birth is foundational to the Christian faith: remove this pillar and the house comes tumbling down. For if Christ were not virgin born, there is but one alternative: it was an illegitimate birth. Theologians of the so-called liberal school denied the virgin birth and spawned a variety of illegitimate and counterfeit “Christianity” which saves nobody, not even a fly! But it has given birth to Christ-denying ideologies, including the Marxist “liberation theology.”

But we who are saved believe the doctrine of the virgin birth with all our heart. You ask, how do you know? Simple! The Holy Spirit of God implanted faith in my heart. By faith I received Jesus as my Saviour and Lord; by faith I believe God’s Word. It tells of Christ’s virgin birth. The virgin birth is not a detached happening of uncertain or unreasonable origin, but it was in the counsels of the Almighty from the beginning. To deny it is to deny God; to destroy it is to destroy Christianity.

God had a “Master Plan” for man’s salvation. He conceived of it before the Fall; He announced it in the Garden: the seed of woman would bruise the serpent’s head (Gen 3:15). Then God announced it again: *“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel”* (Isa 7:14), which being interpreted

is “*God with us*” (Matt 1:23). Inject the idea of a human father and Jesus becomes a mere man, no more “*Immanuel*”. Then Christianity is reduced to one religion among many, no longer unique.

Finally we have the evidence of the Gospel accounts. Both Matthew and Luke record the virginity of Mary. An angel in a dream confirmed it to Joseph (Matt 1:12). So did Gabriel (by implication) in his words to Mary (Luke 1:35). But most important was Mary’s own confession: “*How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?*” (Luke 1:34). By the law of evidence, the case for the virgin birth is impregnable. Those who think to destroy it simply destroy themselves.

But persuasion comes by God’s Spirit within your heart.

3. With God nothing is impossible (Isa 40:12-16)

“Good things come in pairs,” so the saying goes. Having disclosed to Mary the supernatural conception coming upon her, the angel Gabriel revealed a second supernatural conception: “... *thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age.... who was called barren*” (Luke 1:36). Startling happenings were heralding the beginning of a new age of wonders: God was intervening in the affairs of man to execute the final Act in His great Drama of man’s Redemption.

To Mary, the angel’s disclosure of Elisabeth’s conception was meant for an encouragement as well as a confirmation of her faith. If God can work the unique miracle of the virgin conception, can He not do the lesser work of allowing conception in old age? Both events are against nature, but both are not against the nature and character of God. For God is the Lord of “nature.” He is above all, our all in all (1 Cor 15:28). He can do all things. For with God nothing shall be impossible!

Elisabeth’s conception, unlike Mary’s, was not unique. There were Old Testament precedents. We recall how God visited Sarah and Hannah, both childless for years, and gave them each a son. Like Elisabeth, Sarah was also well stricken in years, and she too was visited by an angel. In each of these,

God was fulfilling a long-standing promise. In Isaac was the seed of promise with whom God's covenant would be established (Gen 17:19). In John was the messenger and forerunner of our Lord promised through Malachi 400 years earlier (Mal 3:1). What God had promised, no matter how difficult, He was also able to do. With Him, nothing shall be impossible. God is omnipotent.

But having said this, let us pause a while and consider: that while God is omnipotent, it does not mean that He can do everything. There are certain things which God cannot do, things which are against the very essence of His character and attributes. Therefore God cannot do wrong! He cannot fail, He cannot lie or sin, or deny Himself (Num 23:19, 2 Tim 2:13; Heb 6:18; James 1:13, 17).

God bless all readers.

Yours faithfully in the Saviour's Service,
Dr SH Tow

ANNOUNCEMENTS, PRAISE & PETITION

- 1. Christmas Gospel Meeting:** will be held this Friday the 18th December at church. The program starts at 7.30pm. We encourage all to invite your unsaved loved ones and friends to hear the Gospel during this Christmas season. Rev. Joseph Poon will be speaking on the theme "What Child is this?", with Mandarin interpretation. Invitation leaflets are made available at the foyer.
- 2. Christmas Day Worship Service:** on the 25th December. The Worship Service will start at 10am. A Christmas lunch will be provided by the church. Please do invite relatives and friends to hear God's Word and celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ with us.
- 3. Fellowship Meeting on Friday 25/12:** All fellowship groups will be in recess for Christmas day.

4. FEBC online courses: for next semester are: Revelation (Rev Quek); Ezekiel 2 (Rev Koshy) and Westminster Confession (Rev Khoo). Each are 2 units. The registration forms are now available in the foyer. Please do prayerfully consider taking these courses, which are \$80 each. Please pass the registration forms with money to Mark Heath.

5. Thanksgiving and Prayer Items:

- Thank God for His protection during the Christmas Gospel door knocking outreach yesterday morning.
- Thank God for the forthcoming Christmas Gospel meeting, Christmas Day and Watchnight Worship Services. May all the non-believers who hear the gospel come to know the saving grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Please uphold all these services in prayer.
- Thank God for the provision of preachers to the pulpit ministry throughout the year, worship leaders, interpreters, preparatory hymn leaders, and the worship service pianists. May they continue to be faithful in their service into the new year.
- Pray for wisdom for the camp committee members in planning and preparing for the Church Mandarin Family Camp (Dates: 28-31 March 2016). Pray for the camp speaker Rev James Sun, and worshippers willing and preparing their hearts to attend the camp.
- Pray for the many brethren who are suffering from physical infirmities. May God be gracious and merciful to them. May His strength be upon them.
- God's guidance and wisdom in the redevelopment of Nehemiah Place.
- God's will and leading on restarting the Mandarin Sunday Worship Service.
- Pray for those who are seeking for employment, safety and God's protection to those working away from home, students, brethren who have returned to their hometowns and families travelling during the holiday season.
- Pray for protection in and around the church and homes of worshippers.

| SERVICE DUTY | 13/12 COMBINED | 20/12 COMBINED |
|--|---|---|
| Speaker/Interpreter | Rev Joseph Poon/Yew Jinn Chieng | Rev Joseph Poon/Kong Vui Yip |
| Worship Leader/Interpreter | Dn Michael Lee/Kong Vui Yip | Elder James Wong/Yew Jinn Chieng |
| Prep Hymns | Allan Ang | Kenny Tan |
| Musician(s) | Winnie Lim | Sharon Poon |
| Welcomers | Eddie Foo, Carol Wee, Albert Ho | Terry Chong, Lydia Chong, Lily Liow |
| Offering Stewards *To Help Count Offering | *Eddie Foo, *Albert Ho, Allan Ang, Adrian Ng, Dn Stephen Chia | *Alex Luu, *Terry Chong, Kenny Tan, Eugene Leong, Edward Ee |
| Ushers | Adrian Ng, Li Xin Cheo, Ruth Wong | Edward Ee, Yi Jye Chieng, Yi Mey Tan |
| P.A. System | Caleb Cheng | Albert Ho |
| Kitchen Duties | Lilian Yong, Victoria Lew, Yung Tsing Mew, Julia Sun | Yi San Chieng, Margaret Ng, Christine Chia, Ming Ming Th'ng |
| JSS Singspiration | Karen Ee/Yi Jye Chieng | Yung Tsing Mew/Rowena Cheng |
| Toddler Class Assistant | Yi Jye Chieng/Lee Chin Yong | Victoria Lew/Ka Yii Yip |
| Transport | Eugene Leong (0401 155 386) / Allan Ang (0433 032 709) | |

Old Folks' Home Ministry

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|-------------|--|---|
| Subiaco | Rev Joseph Poon (Sharon Poon) | Edward Ee (Karen Ee) |
| South Perth | Hall A: Allan Ang Hall B: Caleb Cheng | Hall A: Yew Jinn Chieng Hall B: Mark Heath |
| Bayswater | Caleb Cheng | Mark Heath |
| Berrington | Yew Jinn Chieng | Edward Ee |

APPOINTMENTS OF THE WEEK

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| Tuesday | 15/12 | 10:00am | Mandarin Bible Study |
| | | 7:30pm | Prayer Meeting: Rev Joseph Poon/Yew Jinn Chieng, Mark Heath, Sharon Poon |
| Wednesday | 16/12 | 7:30pm | FEBC Inter Semester Course: Leviticus |
| Friday | 18/12 | 7:30pm | Christmas Gospel Meeting |
| Sunday | 20/12 | 8:30am | Pre-Service Prayer Meeting |
| | | 9:00am | English & Mandarin Sunday School/English Basic Bible Knowledge Class |
| | | 10:00am | Sunday Combined Worship Service |
| | | 12:15pm | Church Van Depart |
| | | 2:00pm | Nursing Home: Concorde – 25 Anstey Street, South Perth Onslow Gardens – 39 Hamersley Road, Subiaco |
| | | 3:30pm | Nursing Home: Ben Ritcher Lodge – 480 Guildford Road, Bayswater Berrington, Subiaco – 45 Bishop St, Jolimont |

ATTENDANCE & OFFERINGS (6/12)

Attendance: 176 (Combined-146; JSS-30); Prayer Meeting: 66
Offerings in Total: \$7166.35; General Fund: \$5829.70 (#3960-\$22.30; #3961-\$245; #3964-\$136; #3965-261);
Mission Fund: \$1336.65 (#3962-\$443.25; #3963-\$893.40)

SHORTER CATECHISM: What do we pray for in the second petition? In the second petition, which is, *Thy kingdom come*, we pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed (Matt 12:25-28; Romans 16:20; 1 John 3:8); and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced (Ps 72:8-11; Matt 24:14; 1 Cor 15:24-25), ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it (Ps 119:5; Luke 22:32; 2 Thess 3:1-5); and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened (Rev 22:20).