Thoughts on the Church Elections

Deaconess Lydia Chan, Elgin

The members of the 2011–2013 Elgin Church Board were elected smoothly at the annual general meeting on 31st October 2010. Thereafter, two church delegates were elected to attend the Church Delegates Conference and to share in the works of the UKGA.

On that day, the meeting lasted for three and a half hours. All brethren, attended adults and children, harmoniously participated in the whole proceedings and listened attentively to the reports delivered by the three departmental officers. Everyone showed concern about the affairs of the church by expressing his or her valuable opinions and raising questions, to which the officers were prompt to reply. The meeting was like a family gathering, with children like olives plants around the table (Ps 128:1–5).

With reference to the election of the apostolic church, we elected by ballot seven church board members to deal with the various affairs of the church (Acts 6:2–4).

Furthermore, the purple flower arrangement, specially designed by Sister May Ho, leader of the Flower Arrangement Team, was definitely a focal point in the venue of the meeting. Coincidentally, Deacon Silas Chan, the chairman of the meeting, and Brother John Leung, the interpreter, had both dressed in purple ties and shirts. When looking at the pulpit, these elements formed an elegant and beautiful picture.

Purple is muted and not eye-catching. It can be seen as an emblem of the elevated essence of dignity, beauty and glory, which makes it an extraordinary colour. Purple is a mixture of blue and red, and it associate the colour purple with the Lord Jesus Christ, who has redeemed us at a price, with His precious blood (1 Cor 6:20; Acts 20:28). As the righteous Job said, “What is man, that You should exalt him, that You should set Your heart on him?” (Job 7:17).

Accordingly, we have to live as Christ did and let Christ live in us (Gal 2:20). Whatever we do in service, in speech and in conduct, Christ will always be exalted in our bodies, whether by life or by death.

Give of your best to the Master, give of the strength of your youth. Clad in salvation’s purple colour, join in the battle for truth.

An Ordination’s Message

Preacher FF Cheng, London

The atmosphere in the fully packed chapel of the True Jesus Church in Newcastle on 25th November 2010 was one of great joy. There were many greetings andindoceremonies amongst the brethren in Christ prior to the commencement of the service to witness the ordination of Brother Johnny Liu. Yet, the atmosphere was one of solemnity as well.

Christ is exalted upon the altar of the Lord as a worker requires great resolve and complete dedication. It is a decision worthy of utmost commendation and respect. However, the journey ahead after such a decision could never be more challenging; either embraces or disintegrates one’s faith.

To self-demand: A full-time or busy holy worker is often inundated with matters of the faith community and is consigned to follow a tight schedule of holy work. Therefore, it has often proved too huge a task for the same worker to also be involved searching, and traffic in his self-assessment. But serving God is not just about doing what is entrusted. Rather it is about being the image of God in the course of living (1 Thess 2:4) with faithfulness. For He is always there to lead the heart, looking for a pure motive and desiring His work to exhibit His virtues in their service to Him.

If one endeavours to figure out the will of God about engaging on divine work for the church, this self-demand guides the heart in a spiritual direction. The effect of such a self-imposition cannot be more pleasing to God as one becomes an example in service, being witnessed by the church as a whole. Devotedly serving the church becomes easily recognised by the community (1 Thess 2:2). When the heart is in the right place, work is obviously done in purity and righteousness; only then is one blameless before God.

To humble: To serve well, one has to follow Christ’s example in His work on earth. The great strength of Christ lies with His humility. He was not the image of a servant and suffer a sacrificial death (Phil 2:5ff). His ability to submit to the divine plan causes the Father to love Him still more (Jn 10:17). Christ was ostencted and considered to be the greatest criminal ever by the Jewish society of His time; in the eyes of the world, He deserved to be put to death. However, Christ’s death is the greatest piece of work God has ever achieved through Him, as it has accomplished His plan to save.

In most cases, one can easily become the centre of attention when doing God’s work. This is more so when charisma has shone forth in one’s work. Inevitably, desiring constant rounds of applause tends to fuse inextricably into one’s emotional make-up, making the heart swell up out of proportion. What was once sincerity and faithfulness is supplanted with the will to impress above all else. Being unable to see what is good for the church, work is rendered with partiality, discrimination and pride. This is utterly detrimental to the growth of the church.

To listen to others: The danger cannot be greater than when pride rules the heart. The natural consequence is to put oneself above all others, especially after years of serving God. The “Elijah- involved” syndrome constitutes the danger where one fails to see that God is using others as much as or even more than oneself. If this attitude remains unchecked, it can eventually lead to one being deceived into believing that one is the only worker of the church, or the only chosen of God to completely overhaul the existing ecclesiastical setup. With such a frame of mind, one does not and indeed cannot bring oneself to appreciate any excellence in service from others, turning a deaf ear to every sound advice.

The fact that Jesus gave a listening ear to the instructions of the Father has a great deal to do with His mentality (Isa 50:4f). His heart was well cultivated. Likewise, keeping the heart with all diligence is requisite to listening to others. Holy work is not to be done by a single individual or a small group alone—it needs collective effort. God has given each worker a measure of wisdom: when put together, their collective wisdom forms the direction of His work. The manifold wisdom that God has bestowed to His church (Eph. 3:10) shall fully be understood and acted upon when we listen to each other in the fear of the Lord.

To pursue unity: The knowledge that workers are interdependent fine-tunes the heart to pursue unity with ardent fervency. The unity the church pursues ensures growth, and comes from the Holy Spirit. For that reason, Paul teaches that holy work is to be done with a clear intent to maintain the unity of the church at all costs (Eph 4:3). Since the church exists in the Spirit, who fills individual workers, the church must rely on the Holy Spirit to attain to standing in unity. This is crucial for her to perpetuate the commissions entrusted.

The church is deprived of her stability and assurance from the Lord when she is thrown into disarray by factious workers, who are unwilling to patch up differences. The desire to disregard unity stems from many factors. One is the instinctive response, say, to a “horrorsome practice” in the church. Instead of thinking calmly, in reverence, of how best this wrong can be stopped and put right, the mind is dragged into a cycle of frustration and anger; in no way can the righteousness of God be achieved through this mindset. Segregation from the “unruffled worker” becomes inevitable. The result is one of greater confusion and further disunity.

To take a step back and pray: It is necessary for a worker to withdraw from difficult situations such as this, so that the mind can be freed from any encumbrance. This is in no way an easy task. Controlling the inner being cannot be harder if it is swept back and forth by the lingering waves of negative thoughts. The mind is highly susceptible to being unsettled by unpleasant events. Once it is troubled, it becomes extremely difficult to come to a swift and amiable agreement between conflicting parties, which further unsettles unresolved matters.

To take a step back is not to run away from problems. Rather, it is a courageous and advisable step forward in raising our level of spirituality, which is needed to stop years of cultivation being washed down the drain in a moment of madness. Taking a step back allows one to enter into prayers with a view to solicit divine help from the supply of the Spirit (cf. Phil 1:19; Eph 6:18). The help must first be rendered upon the one who is offering prayers. With a desire focused on fulfilling the purpose of God above all else, one is given wisdom to continue to serve with the right perspective, in the midst of problems.

To defend the truth: One major problem in particular that one shall face is the issue of heresy. This is the most daunting task that the church faces. To combat heretic infiltration is not only time consuming, it is also extremely mentally draining. Being conversant with the word of God and rooted in the beliefs of the church is inescapably essential for one to stand firm in time of heretic incursion. It is imperative to know that the word of God is not given to change, for God is unchanging (Heb 13:8f).

As well as discernment, sacrifice is sometimes required to combat against heresy. The finger of suspicion can be turned round to point at one person, when he tries to correct a twisted teaching. At worst, he could be branded as a troublemaker obsessed with fighting “trivial issues”. To stand against relentless fiery attacks from false teachers, one must be patient, steadfastly waiting and suffering for the Lord in unceasing prayers to God. Most important of all, one must not be intimidated into not speaking the truth for the good of the church (Tit 1:13; 2:15; 3:10) when the going gets tougher and tougher.

As the sermon was drawing to a close, the congregation was well aware of the unerring task ahead of this new soldier of Christ. It is the practice of the church that the brethren offer unceasing prayers for the frontline workers, which is very encouraging and uplifting. As the battle for the Lord is nearing its most critical phase, the church should all the more offer concerted prayers, so that the ploys of the evil one can be identified and rendered ineffective against the purpose of God, to ensure that the church is eventually built up for His glory.

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May 2011

The 64th Edition

May 2011

Go into all the world and preach the gospel (Matt 16:19)

UKGA board members, deacons and preachers

An Ordination’s Message

Preacher FF Cheng, London
The 1st Church Delegates Conference of the 9th Term Board Meeting Minutes

Present: Elgin
Edinburgh
Gifford Park
Newcastle
Sunderland
Leicester
London
Portsmouth
Cambridge
Sunderland
Gifford Park
Edinburgh
Elgin
London
Leicester
Newcastle

Absent with apologies:

Silas Chan
Chung Pok Chan
Chung Sing Chan
John Ho
Stephen Ho
Isaac ST Chan
Luk Ho
Ken Fai Cheng
Michael Cheung
Vincent Yeung
Danny Chan
Ling Tsz Shek
Thomas Chan
James Tang
William Ho
David Ho
Edmund Kwok
Kenneth Zhou
Tony WHo
Gideon Ho
Clifford Shek
Simon Ho
Jimmy Chan
Johnny Liu

Present by invitation:

Chairperson: Silas Chan
Minute-taker: Luke Chan

(VI) Review of the action list of previous meeting

The chairman suggested that once the UKGA by-laws and Standing Rules and Regulations are translated, each church delegate should have a copy and each local church library should have two copies for reference. The RA department explained the reasons why the number of participants of the Evergreen Fellowship was decreasing. The reasons are:

- Personal health problems.
- Accompanying the family to holidays.
- Visiting relatives in Hong Kong.
- Inconvenience of travel.
- Child protection policy.

Brother Michael Hsu suggests that we follow in the footsteps of Leicester Church. The FA department suggests each local church should register as a charity organisation or a religious institute as soon as possible.

The aim of religious education for every age is to increase knowledge of the Bible and enhance application of the teachings; we should continue to learn lessons throughout our lives. It is hoped that each local church can promote this education.


Chairperson: Silas Chan (written report)
Religious Affairs Officer: Luke Chan (written report)
General Affairs Officer: Thomas Chan (written report)
Religious Education Officer: Michael Hsu (written report)
Literary Ministry Officer: Vincent Yeung (written report)
Financial Affairs Officer: Ling Tsz Shek (written and verbal report)

The auditors, Haggai Liu and Denny Chan, confirmed that they have audited the 2009/2010 financial statements of income and expenditure, and found them to be correct.

(VIII) Status report of UK churches

Refer to UKGA Annual Report.

(IX) Deliberation of proposals

Proposal 1: To recruit an additional full-time preacher in the UK.

Rationale: Firstly, the UK is a large area to take care of, and secondly, cultivating the workers needs time.

Method: If this proposal is passed by the CDC, UKGA will send out letters to local churches for open recruitment.

Resolution: Passed by thirty votes.

Proposal 2: To revise articles regarding the UK Standing Rules and Regulations about vote-counting and voting results (proposed by UKGA).

The following articles have been amended:

Article 9: Those attending and present and entitled to vote shall constitute a quorum for the General Meeting to proceed.

Resolutions in general shall be passed with an affirmative vote of majority (more than half), whereas more than a two-thirds majority vote shall be required for approval of any matter deemed important.

Article 29: Those representatives attending and present and entitled to vote shall constitute a quorum for the Church Delegates Conference to proceed.

Resolutions in general shall be passed with an affirmative vote of majority (more than half), whereas more than a two-thirds majority vote shall be required for approval of any matter deemed important.

Article 33: The members attending and present and entitled to vote shall constitute a quorum for the UKGA Board Meeting to proceed.

Resolutions in general shall be passed with an affirmative vote of majority (more than half), whereas more than a two-thirds majority vote shall be required for approval of any matter deemed important.

Resolution: Amendments passed.

Proposal 3: To approve the Income and Expenditure Statements of UKGA for 2009/2010 (proposed by UKGA).


Income: £229,587.46
Expenditure: £224,823.04.
Resolution: Unanimously passed.

Proposal 4: To approve the UKGA budget for Year 2010 (Proposed by UKGA)

Suggestion: UKGA 2011 Financial Budget

Income: £229,600.00
Expenditure: £243,100.00
Resolution: Unanimously Passed.

(X) Election of UKGA Board Members of the 9th Term

There are eight ex-Officio Delegates from eight churches. The rest of the seven board members will be elected from the church delegates (thirty-two delegates in total). The outcome of election: Michael Hsu, Ling Tsz Shek, Vincent Yeung, James Tang, Simon Ho, Kenneth Zhou and Tony Kw Ho were elected to also be members of the UKGA Board. The following are stand-bys: Chung Sing Chan, Haggai Liu, Gideon Ho and Anthony Tang. Elected UKGA Auditors: Johnny Liu and Denny Chan.

(XII) Any other business

Discussion theme: “How to help church members to root their faith and return their hearts to God?”

Report from Preacher Steven Shek:

As the shepherds of our church, it is our responsibility to help members to root their faith and return their hearts to God. However, if we want to reach this goal, we ourselves need to become examples to the members. We need to see the behaviour and speech of the shepherds whether in the family or in church or in society. Members will see and remember our example.

Our life of faith must rely on prayer and God’s word. Therefore, we need to have regular spiritual cultivation in our daily life. Our faith needs to be expressed throughout our life, and we need to utilise our time wisely to concentrate on spiritual cultivation. Unfortunately, most of our time and energy is wasted on useless myths which are not worth telling. We need to train ourselves up in the way of godliness, through daily prayers, Bible study, attending church services regularly and reading spiritual books. Cultivating our spirituality will bring promise to this life and to our future life also, so we must do this every day. The Bible says we need to instruct others and teach others in this way.

Prayer is communication between man and God; it is also a way by which man asks God for help, and receives the inspiration of God’s Spirit. If we do not pray, our relationship with God will be cut off. The more we believe in God and the more we pray, the more we will be moved by Him. Then we will return to Him and find peace in Him. So a praying life is important if we are to return our hearts to God. We need to concentrate on prayer every day, no matter what happens or how busy we are. We need to pray regularly, every day, in the same way that we need food every day. If we can enjoy the prayer in Spirit, we will not be disturbed by our surroundings, no matter what they may be.

We need to be a positive testimony before other people, so that they can come to know Jesus through us. Jesus walked among the crowd and cared for them, and was close to His flock. We should therefore take Jesus as our example, observe the commandments and practice them, so that we can establish mutual trust and mutual help among members.

Report from Brother Michael Hsu:
If we want to try and root the members’ faith and help them return to God, first we need to ask: Who am I? This is a simple question, but one that many people cannot answer. As a matter of fact, many people do not recognise their true existence; we are living in a complicated society in which all kinds of distraction confuse the...
senses, causing a conflict between reality and the way we perceive reality. We only recognize or know ourselves superficially; we do not know ourselves on a deeper level. Therefore, in order to be a leader, we first need to learn to recognize and know ourselves deeper. Through the shepherd has been entrusted with a mission, if he does not understand his responsibility, he cannot concentrate on the advancement of his own spirituality and become a good example to other members. Therefore, it is important for us to know ourselves first, to find the true "I", before we can help others to root their faith and return their hearts to God. How are we to know ourselves? "I am a daughter’s father", "I am a deacon", etc. If we do not know our own value and worth, we will be cast out from heaven. All kinds of noble titles cannot help us to enter the heavenly kingdom; therefore everyone needs to think of the meaning of their existence. Maybe we think we are very good, but let us not forget that it is our good deeds and our offerings that are recorded by the angels, not our titles or our awards. We need to communicate with them using god's word, combining our faith with our worship God effectively and serve Him in spirit.

Church Delegates

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<td>2</td>
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Encouragements from other delegates and preachers:

Confucius says: “If a leader acts justly, his followers will do the same without the need for any instructions. On the other hand, if a leader does not act justly, even when there are strict law and order, people will still not obey.” This is why a shepherd should first be a good example. The actions of a shepherd or a leader are very important, because if he forbids others from doing something, he must gain their trust by first following his own ruling. A leader should lead others by his own virtues and not by force; the influence and authority of a leader are not predicated on his position or status, but on his inner virtues and spiritual wisdom. Through his spiritual influence he can lead and guide those around him to return their hearts to God.

In order to guide others back to God, our family is an important source of support and will be testimony to us. In Joshua 24:15, Joshua expresses this resolution: “...But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” There is a proverb which says that charity begins at home. That is why 1 Timothy chapter 3 states, as one of the requirements of deacons, overseers and elders, that they should manage their own family and children well, so that their family is a good testimony to them. They also need to be able to first help their own family members before they can help others. If a leader is only fit to be praised by outsiders, but is criticised by his own family members in his daily life, then this person will not please God. This is especially true in his spiritual life, in which he needs to be a good example for his family. He must also be supported by his family members as they worship God in unity, so that he can worship God effectively and serve Him in strength. A leader should keep God’s words in his heart at all times, teaching them to his children diligently. Raising children in the faith is very important, so we should apply God’s word in the daily life of our family. We need to communicate with them using God’s word, combining our faith with our family life, establishing a family altar and having regular family services. Therefore, we need to resolve to fight the good fight for the Lord, because in whatever we do God is working in our hearts to accomplish His good will. No matter what our task, we should not murmur or argue, so that we can become blameless and fruitful children of God in this crooked generation. As servants of God, we should remember that He not only wants the church to grow in number but also that the members grow in faith. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear” (Heb 12:28). One must begin with a heart of thanksgiving before he gives his golden years to God, without losing his mind through the praises of man; only then can he overcome the devil and still worship God wholeheartedly. Teaching the members to observe the truth is also very important. Paul wrote many letters to the church encouraging them in the same way that he encouraged Timothy and Titus: to not only accept his good teachings, but to also preach them and spread the truth faithfully (1 Tim 4:11; 2 Tim 2:15; Tit 2:15). A shepherd should walk in front of the fold: he should come to church earlier and lead the prayer before service starts. He should attend all services and Bible studies. The Adult Theological Training Course is further spiritual training for us, so we should make every determination to attend this seminar in full, and be an example for others. Everyone can take hold of this kind of opportunity to accomplish great things through being good examples in the small things.

If we are willing to do these small things for God today, we can obtain God’s glorious blessing in the future. Let us all return to our heavenly Father and pursue a closer relationship with Him. Jesus says: “I am the good shepherd: and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father and I lay down My life for the sheep” (Jn 10:14–15).
Elgin Church

Local Pastoral and Evangelical Work

Preacher Michael Chan came to pastor at Elgin Church from the 7th-28th November 2010. He assisted us by conducting a discussion on divine work and an RE combined class during this session. He also led an evangelistic service at Inverness, as well as leading sermons and visiting members in the Aberdeen district. Preacher Chan encouraged us with sermon topics such as: “Freedom and Peace in the Lord”, “The Three Images of Jesus Christ”, “No Looking Back”, “Mutual Communication among Brethren”, and “Fixed in Everything”. These words inspired us greatly, allowing us to think deeply and advance vigorously in faith. Thank you Preacher, and see you later!

Preacher Johnny Liu came for pastoral visitation during the 20th December 2010 – 16th January 2011. On the day he arrived, all brethren sang together to sincerely welcome him. “We all welcome you, truly welcome you, welcome you with our sincere heart in the Lord. Halalujah! We all welcome you”. During his stay, he discussed in detail the teachings in Psalm 90. He also exhorted us with sincere words and earnest wishes during Sabbath services, with the topic: “If You Believe, You Can See the Glory of God”, “From Weeping to Thanksgiving” and “A Good Work”. As well as understanding teachings, we are also expected to understand the action in our daily life, to glorify the holy name of the Lord Jesus.

In addition, Preacher Liu conducted an RE combined class prayer session among YFC Youth Fellowship. Bible study for the Adult Club, Holy Communion, on RE teachers’ advancement seminar and a team leaders’ seminar. He also assisted in pastoral work in the Aberdeen district. His fervent heart was not held back by the tight schedule of holy work. May the Lord remember his hard work.

On the 1st January 2011, a new year had begun! Although the weather was extremely chilly, with some snowdrift, brothers and sisters happily came to attend the New Year thanksgiving service; even youths who are working or studying elsewhere returned home to join us. The chapel was bustling with joy and excitement. The service was conducted by Deacon Silas Chan, with Brother John Leung interpreting. The theme of the service was “Turn your Heart to God”. The programme included an extraction by Preacher Johnny Liu and a testimony by Brother John Tang. During the second half of the programme, led by Brother Jeffrey Ho, hymns were presented by five groups to praise God’s kindness and greatness. His creation and the grace of His salvation. Group photos were taken after the service. Brother Denny Chan, our newly elected Religious Officer, led a thanksgiving prayer before dinner. While we were having dinner, we grasped the opportunity to take family photos as well. The Purchasing Team had gifts prepared for the elderly members, over the age of 65, as well as the young children. Each family also received a beautiful calendar as a souvenir. Everyone enjoyed a day full of joy and a delightful atmosphere!

Newcastle Church

Co-Workers Team Elections

On the 9th October, we held the Co-Worker Teams elections for the new term of church work in Newcastle Church.

Ordination Ceremony and UKGA Meetings

On the 22nd November 2010, we held an ordination ceremony for preacher Johnny Liu. The following day was the UKGA Board Meeting and Church Delegates Conference, including the election for the 9th term of UKGA members.

EGP Gospel Tea

In November, the church hosted another Gospel Tea event, “Join Us for a Cuppa”, to welcome our friends and family to the church. The Lord may bless all those in the EGP and Sisterhood Fellowship who laboured in the preparation and toiled during the event. We thank the Lord that Preacher Steven was present to assist and lead the youths and adults in sharing the truth with our friends. By God’s abundant grace, sixteen truth-seekers (English- and Chinese-speaking) came and expressed interest. May we remember them in our prayers and ask the Lord to guide them to His fold.

The Memorial Service for Sister Chui Tai Ho Chan

On Monday, 13th December, brethren paid their respects and said farewell to our beloved sister Ho Chan Tai Chui, wife of Deacon Mihic Ho. We were reminded of her dedication to the Lord, her unfailing love towards the brethren, and her warm, endearing character which has and will continue to uplift all those who knew her. We thank the Lord for His abiding love, comfort and peace throughout the day.

Sister Fellowship Elections

With one spirit and one voice, the church elected a new church board, sisters’ fellowship committee, and a new co-workers group to serve for the next three years on the 14th November. We praise God for His fervent and diligent workers, as the church embraces the new year with a renewed heart and vigour to offer their best to our Master.

Winter Youth Fellowship

The annual Winter Youth Fellowship was held at the end of December and took place on the 7th-28th November 2010. We praised God for the YFC coordinators, Pr Steven and the many helpers who sacrificed their time to build up the next generation. We hope all the youths can be proactive, and carry this message close to their hearts, as we step into 2011.

Portsmouth Church

Halalujah, and thank our Lord that once again He has guided us safely through another blessed year. We in Portsmouth Church truly thank the Lord for His abundant grace over the last year. Not only has He added more grace to us during this past year, but we feel that as a church we have been bestowed with many teachings to guide us to be more refined for His use. We hope to continue to mature, not only in our love for one another and for God but also in our service to Him.

We ended the year 2010 with a combined thanksgiving and RE service on Sunday 26th December. This was a time to reflect on the wonderful blessings we have received from God in the past. It was also a time to renew our resolve to serve the Lord with more fervour and a heart of thanksgiving. During the RE presentations, the RE students shared their thankfulness to God for all the various blessings they have received, and for the support of their family and church brethren. They also sang wonderful songs and hymns of praise to the Lord, which were enjoyed by all.

During 27th-28th December 2010, the Portsmouth Church youths were thankful to be joined by youths from London Church and Leicester Church for a southern region Winter Youth Fellowship. The theme for his fellowship was “Don’t Be a Stranger”. The fellowship included ‘ice-breakers’ to get to know each other, discussions and hymn singing.

In our discussions, which were based on Ephesians 2:19-22, we learnt about the factors that may lead someone to become like a stranger to the kingdom in which he belongs, and a stranger to God. We discussed ways we can help others to stop being strangers to each other and to God, and to instead become fellow citizens in the household of God. We hope that by taking on the teachings from the passage and through our mutual encouragements, we can all be built up together as a holy place for the abidance of God, worthy for His divine use.

Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being joined together, growth into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:19-22

UK Church News

http://www.tjc.org http://members.tjc.org

May 2011

The participants of the southern region Winter Youth Fellowship 2010 and Portsmouth Church brethren.
At the start of this New Year, the UKGSA has a new theme for the church in the UK: “Turn your heart to God.” This theme encourages us to seek a God-hearing, obedient life, making faith a part of our lives, and live a part of our faith. To do this, we first need to return to the basics of faith.

Today, the faith we hold is absolute and is the only gospel that saves. In order to turn our hearts to God, who is in the midst of it. God is also watching this happen. This is the strength gained from faith.

The rain also covers it with pools. They make it a spring; and He abides in His temple. As Psalm 100:1–5 (Ps 43:4) says, “God wants him who is willing to overcome many difficulties to be present when we are present in the temple in Jerusalem, just as they did at home instead of travelling so far to attend services by any means. Why are there such differing attitudes towards attending services created by a person’s understanding of what attending service means, and their true purpose in attending.

In Psalm 64:5–8, the ancient believers were willing to overcome many difficulties to travel to the temple of God. Life brings many troubles and times of sorrow. During these times, we should try to worship God with joy? Some may only attend service when they are in the right mood or when they feel like it. But I believe we should go to the temple whether they were in times of peace or times of weeping, because to worship God is the most important thing in man’s life.

Before the temple was built, the ancient believers could worship God anywhere. So, some people may pray to God at home instead of travelling so far to the temple in Jerusalem, just as they did before? God said, “When I establish a temple, the glory of God filled it and the people of God come to that place to worship and make sacrifices before God. This is why worshipping in His temple is our duty, and the confidence we have in this can satisfy a man’s heart. It remains in our hearts wherever we are.

Christians, we should seek joy from God through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, so that we do not become insignificant person, no one would notice. But He is with us—God is watching this happen. This happens when we have lost our faith temporarily. It is why we experience this joy, but after we say “Amen” we feel joy? Sometimes we want to share these with you.

We also lose the joy of prayer when we have lost the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (Lk 10:21). The Holy Spirit is called the oil of joy. A person who is filled with the Holy Spirit should be filled with joy, (Ps 4:4), which gives him the ability to face unhappy situations. Unfortunately, many Christians only seek after superficial happiness. What is good is that Christians, we should seek joy from God through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, so that we do not become insignificant person, no one would notice. As man has the Spirit of God, only His Spirit can satisfy a man’s heart. Today we may spend more time on other activities than praying to God. Prayer can be a measure of our relationship with God. If our prayer is unimportant, then God is likely to hold the same status in our heart. If we are lukewarm towards God, He will treat us in the same way. If we draw close to God, He will be as close as us to a friend. Paul and Silas were willing to remain in prayer in their prayers during troubled times—we also need to rediscover to the joy of prayer.

The words of God

Do you find joy in singing hymns? Singing praises to God is our duty, because we are already part of the household of God, and especially because He has saved us (Ps 100:1–5). (Ps 43:4) God wants us to come willingly before Him, and to understand that He is a living God. We sing to praise God, to please Him, and to serve Him.

Singing hymns

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Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns when they were in jail, and the foundations of the jail shook. The gates were opened and the chains of the prisoners were loosened. Hymns will move God and give us strength. So during times of sadness and fear, when our hearts are troubled, singing praises can help us change our hearts and brings us peace.

Accordingly, worship is not a ceremony but the response of emotion, intellect and morality. Through worship, we can communicate with the true living God, and live a renewed life with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Through our prayer, we offer thanksgiving and praises to God, and pray for matters relating to the heavenly Kingdom. We should listen to the teachings of God and worship Him in spirit and in truth. Worship is the action of Christian believers. Through worship, we will experience His spiritual and abundant joy.

In 2011, may we return to the basics of our faith, rediscovering the joy of worship and turning our hearts to God.
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UK, African Committee: Silas Chan, Luke Chan, TK Chin, FF Chong
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Four UK Representatives for the World Church Delegates Conference:
Silas Chan, Luke Chan, James Tang, Simon Ho

New Year’s Revelation
Deacon Simon Ho, Newcastle

At the start of the New Year, people have joyous celebrations and hope that everything will go smoothly in the coming year. From the past until the present, the wheel of time silently moves forward without stopping, without going back. Time itself has neither future nor past; this is only set by men. The old year is no more, and the New Year’s thoughts and values to change too, especially in the ever-changing Europe. It is inevitable that members’ way of thinking will change with the times, in this year, it is very common among the members in the UK churches through discussions and interaction on the internet. Even though our church is built on the everlasting Rock, the members’ way of life and minds has changed. In order to face the changes in the church and in the lives of the members, which can have a great impact on the whole congregation, the chairman of the Delegates Meeting hoped to find a message that is worth holding on to as a reminder to the delegates: to return to the Bible and to “turn our hearts to God”. Even though we are in the flesh, we are not relying on our flesh to fight. Our weapons are spiritual and mighty in God for putting down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. (2 Cor 10: 1-5).

In this New Year, let’s serve God with one mind, open the dust-covered doors of the temple, and rekindle the smouldering wick. We need to remove our evil desires and make a great offering, to produce fruits of righteousness. We need to: do people pick grapes from branches, or figs from thistles? In this New Year, may we raise our tired legs and borrow from King Hezekiah’s New Year gift, and the chairman’s words of encouragement: return to the Bible, turn our hearts to God. May these thought-provoking words: Run towards the goal!