



Hallelujah. Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Peace be to you all.

Dear UK Youths,

God's Grace Given to Us

One of the most memorable moments in the NYF, student convocations, and YTTC of 2007, was when two brethren saw visions of Christ's crucifixion. These visions were given in mercy to us all by God (Eph 2.4). As in the case of the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him, the revelation were to be shown to His servants, so the visions of Christ's crucifixion were not for the sake of the individuals, but for the youths, for the church (Rev 1.1). The reason why God shows us these things is Him bearing witness of all that we have heard, confirming that what we have received is indeed the truth (Heb 2.3-4). His showing of these is not only to comfort, but to strengthen our faith (2 Cor 1.3-4; 1 Pet 5.10). His strengthening of our faith is to let us know again His love is true and everlasting. For God has said, "Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you" (Jer 31.3). And indeed the testimony is true: "By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us" (1 Jn 3.16). Let us all say, with our spirits within us, in echo of the psalm which exhorts us, "His mercy endures forever" (Psa 118.1-4, 29).

The meaning of the visions confirms not just the truth of what the bible says and the church preaches, but much more that the Lord God is in

our midst. As in the day of John, who saw the vision at Patmos: our Lord is the one who is in the midst of the seven lamp stands, which are His churches (Rev 1.12-13, 20). Our Lord God back in the time of Moses called the Israelites to make the tabernacle, a sanctuary; it is stated explicitly that its purpose was for God to dwell among them (Exod 25.8). The very same Lord God who appeared to Paul on the way to Damascus also revealed to the church, through him, that we "are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit" (Eph 2.21-22). The One and Only Saviour, the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne is shepherding us and leading us "to living fountains of waters" (Rev 7.17). And as He is in our midst, even those who testified, their tears are no longer tears of regret, but tears of sweet peace and joy that all grace we have received is so true: He is Immanuel – "God with us" (Mt 1.21). Hallelujah.

No holidays on earth can exchange what only the Lord God can give to those who wish to purify themselves, to join with those who call upon Him with a pure heart, to seek peace with God (2 Tim 2.22). There are those who have longed for that sweet, heavenly peace, and have received it. They are those who must testify of the wonder: "For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the Lord our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him?" (Deut 4.7). For our great God is not only the one whom we can talk to, but of whom we can ask and from whom we get an answer; as it says, "You answered them O Lord

our God; You were to them God-Who-Forgives..." (Psa 99.8).

How can we keep any longer our mouths, our hearts closed, but to open them in proclamation, sounding out His praise and glory, testifying with unrelenting urgency and boldness, like that of the psalmist: "O God, You have taught me from my youth; and to this day I declare Your wondrous works" (Psa 71.17). And to whom shall we declare God's wondrous works, but to the great assembly, in following the good example set out for us, "I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart; I have declared Your faithfulness and Your salvation; I have not concealed Your lovingkindness and Your truth from the great assembly" (Psa 40.10). We thank God for those who have received such grace, having been humbled to exalt our great God, our wonderful Saviour, in the presence of the local church congregation. May such and other God-blessed brethren transfer from their hearts to pen their God-given grace, to share with those further a-field church publications, to the glory of His Holy Name.

Brief Report YCC Meeting

On the 16th September 2007, the YCC Committee, with representatives from all eight churches, as well as from Cambridge Prayer House (CPH), met in Newcastle church and discussed the following proposals.

UNITED IN PRAYER

Firstly, the Prayer Circle has been up and running for a period of time. In order to encourage spiritual unity, we would like to invite youths all over the UK to pray together for 15 minutes at least between the times of 6am to 9am or 9pm-12am. We pray not only to ask God to help us in our spiritual journey, but also to earnestly ask Him to increase direct intervention; working through the brethren, to build up and strengthen His church even more in the UK. We ask God not only to send more workers into the field, but also to give spiritual gifts for the edification of the youths and the church as a whole.

We pray also that God grant us a vision of His will to see the overall progress of the church, and for God to place the mission not just in the minds and hearts of the leaders and preachers, but in every member. And we ask for His Spirit not just to enlighten us, but to drive our fervour into a determined, sustained and united action.

May we all humble ourselves daily, to bow the knee to the Lord of lords and King of Kings, in love for God, His church and the souls of ourselves and those yet to be called into His glorious kingdom; to call upon Him who can and will make all things possible.

The second proposal was to decide the theme for National Youth Fellowship (NYF) 2008. NYF 2007

in Newcastle was enjoyed by around 60 youths from all over the UK. From reports, it is hoped that the fellowship could return to the longer period of four days, with more time to bond and to fellowship. Aside from that, the theme "What's next?", through God's grace and blessing, was edifying and enlightening.

"WHAT IF...?"

The theme for 2008 is "What if...?" To hold everyone in suspense, we will announce all, through our coordinators by email and posters, in due course. It is hoped that everyone who would like to participate could allocate their limited times ahead in order to help the host church to prepare.

The third proposal was to agree on the Three Year Syllabus for the National Church Working Youths Training Seminar 2008:

Year 1

- 1) The Mission of the True Jesus Church
- 2) The Choosing of Workers
- 3) The Candidate's Requirements
- 4) The Spiritual and Moral Characteristics of a Worker

Year 2

- 5) An Overview of the Church's Works For Internal Growth
- 6) An Overview of the Church's Works For External Outreach
- 7) How important Religious Education is to the Church
- 8) How is the Church Organised

Year 3

- 9) The Worker and What They Must Equip Themselves With
- 10) The Worker and The Impact of Prayer in their Ministry
- 11) The Worker and How to Work with Co-Workers
- 12) The Worker and Their Family Life

The purpose of the three year course is to invite youths, whether they have graduated from YTTTC or not, but who

are of the ages of 21 and above, to offer their minds and hearts to have the same understanding as leaders and preachers. It is possible that a youth working in the church is aware only of the task they do. But by the grace of God and through revelation presented to us by God's word, leaders and preachers have received not only teachings, but experiences as well as insights into the overall needs, functions as well as the mission, of the church. Not only what she will encounter, but also how she can overcome the challenges that she faces, so they can see how one part affects the overall growth and building up of the body of Christ.

SHARE AND EQUIP THE YOUTHS

With this invaluable understanding they have received, it makes sense now to share and equip the youths with the internal and external works of the church and her responsibility; to lead the youths to see each work as a special God-given gracious ministry and to see its impact on the overall progress of the church. Not only to reinvigorate but to instill the spirit by which we ought to serve God and how we should work alongside each other, whether younger, same-age, or older than ourselves. But much more, how we ought to constantly watch over ourselves in relying on God through sincere and heartfelt prayers, as well as continual renewal and equipping of ourselves of what we need to win new and greater battles for God. It is desired not only that youths have the fervour to do His work, but have the faith, conviction, and realisation that the power is not in ourselves, but in our emulating the spiritual and moral characteristics of Christ, the perfect servant, for God to consider, to entrust and place us in the position as He sees fit.

The details of dates and locations of the National Church Working

Youths Training Seminar in 2008 will be released later. In the next few weeks, for those who have received the blessing of training in YTTC, or have been given the opportunity to work, or have this desire to do much more for Him, or humbly have this awareness that what we have is not enough, COME! Let us take heed of the words of Jesus, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Lk 9.62).

Let us not stroll into His kingdom, but strive in fighting with endurance as good soldiers of Christ (Lk 13.24; Acts 14.22; 1 Cor 13.7; 2 Tim 2.3, 12; Heb 10.36), as Christ has done, steadfastly set our faces to where God wants us to go from here (Lk 9.51). It is high time not for ourselves to despise our youth (Rom 13.11), but the time to humble ourselves (Jas 4.10), offering willingly (Exod 25.2; 35.21), mind and heart (Deut 10.12; Josh 22.5; 1 Sam 12.24), to learn (Mt 11.29; Rom 15.4; Tit 3.14; Heb 5.8) to be an example (Jn 13.15; Php 3.17; 2 Th 3.9; 1 Pet 2.21) to the believers (Heb 13.7, 17; Php 4.9), in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith and in purity (1 Tim 4.12). That we can realise in His coming, that our works we do for Him have been done to the praise of His glory (1 Pet 1.7). Let us pray for God's guidance in His Holy Works.

May God continue to bless and guide the footsteps of the youths in UK, walking closely with each other, and much more closely to the Chief Shepherd.

Shalom



Steven Shek

YCC Executive

Sunderland Church

A Fruitful Summer

Thank God for giving the members of Sunderland Church a full and fruitful summer. Although the workload has been heavy, God has shown Himself to be faithful and loving in all matters, encouraging a stronger bond between all the youths and workers of Sunderland, and establishing the work of our hands. We hope that this renewed fervour for divine work and fellowship continues to thrive, even as the autumn leaves begin to fall.

Back at the start of summer, Sunderland Church was host to the National Evergreen Fellowship on the 21st – 22nd May. The newly reformed JYF Choir (Junior Youth) were able to present some hymns for the over-60s who attended the event; the age-gap may have been a big one, but the children and the evergreens managed to fill it up with love and praise, and the hope that one day these seedlings will also grow to be evergreens in faith.

In June-July, we held two evangelical events: an Open Day with Pr. Steven Shek and a Hymnal Evangelical service with Pr. FF Chong. We thank God that several truth-seekers, some Chinese- and some English-speaking, have been led to the church, attending these events, Sabbath and Sunday services. Continue to pray that God continues to guide them, so that they may know the Truth.

A Rain of Spiritual Blessings

We thank God for the many

teachings and blessings that were received by the youths who attended the various National Students' Spiritual Convocations (NSSC) in July, either as students or as counsellors. Many have returned richer in spirit, stronger in faith and brighter in countenance. Some were greatly moved even through the simplest act of singing together with their fellow brothers and sisters. One brother was blessed with a vision of Jesus on the cross, and he was touched by Jesus' plight, even experiencing His pain and sorrow as his own. Praise be unto the Lord that another child, who was a first-time NSSC-attendee, returned with a new urgency to be baptised. We also thank God that three youths returned with the blessing of the Holy Spirit.

Working with One Heart

The highlight of Sunderland's summer calendar was, of course, hosting YTTC for Years One and Three. Although Sunderland is a small church, the workers are diligent, and preparations were done as quickly and efficiently as possible to accommodate about sixty-five students, preachers, teachers and interpreters. Everything went as smoothly as can be expected, with military precision of planning and communication with Newcastle Church; so that workers could be moved between the two churches, and we could also plan a joint activity session, a joint Farewell and a joint Graduation Ceremony. Some Newcastle brethren even offered their voices to help Sunderland Youth Choir present some hymns at the Graduation. All in all, even



though preparations were hectic, and sometimes last minute, we all managed to join together and work as one, wholeheartedly glorifying God. Thank God that the students all showed a willingness to learn, encouraging and supporting one another academically and emotionally. From the youngest observer to the oldest third-year, they showed themselves to be the “sweetest little lambs” (in the words of Pr. Michael.)

Finally, thank God that Pr. Steven is able to continue pastoring Sunderland Church, and especially the youths. A small band of brothers has benefited from sleep-over fellowships whenever Pr. Steven has been in town. Perhaps when his leg has fully recovered, he'll be able to join the brothers on one of their small fishing trips to the pier!

New Arrivals

We are glad to welcome Sis. Malan, the second daughter of Sis. Cecelia, who has safely arrived from Zimbabwe to be reunited with her family. She was baptised on the 19th May, along with baby Alicia, daughter of Bro. Eddie and Sis. May Chan.

We also welcome Sis. Carmene Chin from Sabah, Malaysia, who is coming to Sunderland to study.

Reminders

Sunderland Spiritual Convocation will be held on 22nd – 24th October.

For Sunderland youths, remember that RE prayer is 8.30-9pm every night. Let us be united in prayer and in spirit, so that we may grow from strength to strength, for the glory of

God, who is our protector and our light. Amen.

London Church

Past Events

We thank God for the holy matrimony of Bro. Kao and Sis. Dan from China on Sunday, 30th May.

We had our first car boot sale and food gathering in London Church basement on Saturday, 23rd June. Over £1000 was raised and all proceeds went to London South Building Project. Members brought food to church for sharing and donated car boot sale items were available for members to purchase with a freewill offering. This was a precursor to the car boot sale held in Wandsworth on Sunday 5th August, organised by some of the youths. Being a success, we now have plans to arrange another sale in an October car boot sale event

London South has submitted its layout plans for planning permission; please pray that the planning permission process will be smooth. If it is passed, we will start appealing for funds for demolishing the existing derelict building and build a new four-storey building.

Accommodation Issue

Thank God, recently a number of youths were given the chance to be involved with the London accommodation committee, looking into options of resolving the accommodation problem. There will be an Extraordinary General Meeting held on 13th October to decide

whether to proceed with a limited refurbishment of the building, in order to address the accommodation issues for the short term. Please continue to pray for the accommodation issue.

Local and National Fellowship Activities

The Youth Fellowship has involved a mixture of discussion and Bible study topics, and workshop-based sessions. Topics have ranged from discussing controversial scenarios from a biblical perspective to learning how to lead hymnal sessions.

Thank God, we were also able to have a special mid-week one-day youth gathering in June for the students. The local preacher and students were edified by spending the day studying the book of Job.

Many of our youths from London attended this year's National Youth Fellowship in Newcastle Church and thoroughly enjoyed the two-and-a-half day event on “What's Next?” As well as holidaying over the summer months, many of the RE students and university youths attended the National Students' Spiritual Convocations and the Youth Theological Training Course.

In July, a number of youths visited Cambridge to help with leafleting and evangelical work in advance of the Spiritual Convocation in September.

We are thankful for Elder Ho's visit to London Church with his wife on 23rd – 28th August, sharing with us many experiences and teachings through a series of lectures. Another elder, Elder Chang will be visiting London at the end of September.

Thank God our RE End-of-Year service on the 1st September was a huge success, featuring a play by our RE students from London Central and a hymnal presentation by students from London South.

Announcements

Our dearly beloved Auntie Mei Chien passed away on the morning of 18th August; please pray for her bereaved family members. On the very same morning, baby Noah Jackson Loo was born to Bro. Jack and Sis. Hazel Loo, weighing 5 lbs 14ozs.

Our Autumn Spiritual Convocation is coming up on the 5-7 October.

Welcomes and Farewells

This year we say a temporary farewell to Sis. Jessica Chan (Newcastle Church) who will be going to Korea for the next 12 months.

As usual we welcome the new youths who will be studying in London: Jessica Fan (Portsmouth Church), Stephen Ho (Portsmouth Church), Jane Kwok (Leicester Church) and Suzanna May (Malaysia).

We also welcome the new working youths: Maria Liu, Marilyn Liu (Leicester Church); David Chui and Joyce Chan (Edinburgh Church). We welcome back to London Lawrence Chan (Elgin Church), now a working youth. And finally, welcome back to all our university students from around the UK.

Edinburgh Church

A Summer Full of Fellowship!

Praise God for a wonderful summer

period filled with spiritual gatherings and fellowship!

The annual National Sisters' Fellowship was held in Edinburgh Church on the 14 - 15th May with words of wisdom and encouragement from Pr. Michael Chan and Dn. James Tang. The theme of the fellowship was To Change Oneself and centred on how we as sisters can change ourselves for the better in the family and faith environment. Sisters from all over the UK filled the large church hall and the sound of laughter and joy echoed throughout the two days!

An evangelical praise fellowship was held on Sunday 10th June with the theme Jesus Gives Us Rest. Thank God, seven precious souls attended the event where they had a chance to listen to God's message, testimonies from members, and hymn presentations by the various choirs. The fellowship ended with a tea and discussion session focussed on sharing one another's testimonies.

Bonding, Eating, Building, Catapulting

On the 24th June, fifty-five junior youths from Edinburgh Church and Gifford Park Church gathered together for a joint fellowship... Junior Ready, Steady, Bond. The youths were generally well behaved and enthusiastic as well as loud and chatty! Scrumptious pizzas, salads and desserts were made by the youths who were split into 4 groups. Thankfully no-one contracted any food poisoning and all the food and dessert were finished! They built impressive walls to 'protect the brethren' from the outside world and creative catapults to 'spread

the gospel as far as they can'. Only one team's wall failed to 'protect the brethren' and the catapults worked well too, some better than others! Bro. Michael Hsu gave a few words of encouragement before the ending prayer, and after dinner we took group photos as well as team photos. Everyone also received a handmade bookmark, which had an encouraging Bible verse as written by themselves.

On the first day of July, an RE outing to Lochgelly, Lochore Country Park was held. Children from the youngest class to the eldest class gathered in the lovely country park where we had sports games and orienteering. Luckily we managed to cram in a lovely lunch feast before the Scottish skies poured down rain in the middle of summer! Despite the outing being cut short due to weather, it was an overall enjoyable trip.

Learning and Growing within the Lord

The National Student Spiritual Convocations started on 22nd July and Edinburgh Church was host to the Intermediate Youths. A total of around 60 youths attended the Convocation with the assistance of Pr. TK Chin and Bro. Johnny Liu. Topics covered were the book of James, the Twelve Disciples, Honouring Your Parents, and the Sacrament of the Holy Communion. On the last day, God blessed a young brother with a vision of Jesus' sufferings on the cross during a prayer session. He later testified to the rest of the students, providing words of encouragement to all.

In the months of July and August, we were blessed with pastoral visits from Taiwanese Elder Ho. During these months, numerous seminars and



family fellowships were held in order to make use of the elder's time and for us all to receive as many teachings as we could.

The RE End-of-Year Service arrived swiftly again at the end of August. Once again students, teachers and parents were able to listen to words of encouragement, enjoy some hymn singing and quizzes from the RE classes, as well as continue to witness one another growing up in the house of God.

May God's Work Be Done through Us

As autumn draws closer, we ask God to continue to walk with us through the rest of the year. Where there is further divine work to be done, may He continue to prepare His vessels for the work. Where there are souls to be saved, may we remember our commission and work whilst it is day.

As youths we can look forward to another dose of spiritual training as Pr. Steven Shek will be with us for Youth Spiritual Seminars on Sunday, 28th October and 4th November.

Gifford Park Church

Gifford Park's annual Spiritual Convocation was held on the 11th – 13th of June, based upon the theme of "Commitment." Thank the Lord that many members could take the opportunity to spend these precious few days with God, with encouragements from Pr. Y. M. Yang and Pr. Michael Chan, and to witness the baptisms of a toddler and a baby. May

we all make the determination and truly commit our hearts in pursuing after eternal life, and in living in harmony with one another.

Fun, Food and Fellowship

A Youth Food Fellowship was organised on 17th June at a sister's house. In all, about 39 youths and adults came for an evening of fun and games, as well as enjoying the food prepared by many wonderful sisters. We were also blessed to hear four moving testimonies of God's protection and how precious one's life is. Truly, a man's life is like a flower that quickly withers, but with our lives in the hands of God, we can be comforted that He is always there as our protection.

Junior Ready, Steady, Bond was a joint fellowship between Edinburgh Church and Gifford Park Church, held on 24th June in Edinburgh Church. Aimed towards youngsters aged 12 – 17 years old, the night was filled with a lot of fun and games, as well as a hearty meal prepared mostly by none other than the youngsters themselves! Hopefully, another Junior Ready, Steady, Bond can be organised in the near future.

A Gathering of Writers

English Writers' Retreat 2007 saw the gathering of many international members from Singapore, Canada, and the US in addition to the UK youths in Gifford Park during 24th – 30th June. Having the heart to serve God through Literary Ministry (LM), the participants were introduced to the purpose and mission of LM in

sharing the words and teachings of God with others, especially in terms of evangelism; and had the chance to put their writing skills to use in writing devotionals and full-length articles. However, the week did not just consist of hard work, but also of a day of sight-seeing around the capital to Calton Hill, the Botanical Gardens and to Edinburgh Church in Comely Bank (and a lot of snacking)! The co-ordinators of Literary Ministry would like to take this opportunity to thank Gifford Park Church for all their hard work and labour of love in Christ during the seminar.

Spiritual Cultivation and Training for the Youths

Gifford Park church also hosted the National College Youth Convocation on 23rd – 28th July. Many students from around the UK and Europe came over, to not only be nourished by the Words of God and be trained to be good servants of God, but also to enjoy the spiritual fellowship with other brethren. May God continue to guide you all in your spiritual journey.

Thank the Lord that during YTTC 2007 in Sunderland, five of the 3rd Years of Gifford Park Church graduated. Congratulations to you all! After nine weeks of spiritual cultivation and training, may you be able to put all you have learnt into practice throughout your lives and be shining lamps for Christ.

Welcomes, Births, Farewells and Well Wishes

- Welcome to Dn. Vun and family who are currently visiting the UK from Sabah, Malaysia. We hope that his son James will enjoy his stay in Edinburgh as he furthers his studies here.
- We also had visitors from afar who visited us during the summer months: Bro. Peter Yee and his family from Malaysia, Elder Ho and his wife from Taiwan, and Bro. John and Sis. Elaine Hoo from Hong Kong.
- Thank God that Sis. Lily Wan and Sis. Chan both gave birth to two healthy baby girls in recent months.
- We also bid farewell to Bro. Wong and his wife as they leave for Taiwan after his completion of his studies at Edinburgh University. Our fondest goodbyes also go to Sis. Patricia Shek who will be leaving for Australia in early October to work after graduating as a qualified nurse this summer. Until we meet again, our friends, may God hold you in the palm of His hand.
- As the new university term/semester soon commences and many youths have recently graduated, we wish all students and graduates the best of luck in their studies and in finding employment respectively.

Leicester Church

Past Events

This year has been quick and we swiftly will come to the end of 2007 and welcome 2008. We thank God that many students have been able to attend all the various convocation not just in the UK but also in USA and Canada.

We must also praise God that some students have also received the Holy Spirit and are happy that they went as well.

Sports day on 27th August brought many cheers and laughter not just for the youths, but also for the grown ups who also attended and to enjoy the beautiful weather that has come upon us.

Farewell to Our Preacher-in-Training and Other Brethren

Sadly, we in Leicester have to say goodbye to our Bro. Johnny Liu who is training in the USA to become a preacher. We also say goodbye to two sisters who have been coming to Leicester Church in the past year who have finished their studies and have gone back to Taiwan.

Portsmouth Church

We thank our Lord Jesus, once again, for leading us smoothly through another summer and guiding us towards the latter part of another year. We know that without the guidance of Jesus in our lives, our direction will be unclear and perplexing. Let us constantly be grateful for the presence of Jesus in our lives.

A Summer of Sunshine and Welcomes

In July, three of the Portsmouth youths were able to join in with other UK youths in the National Youth Fellowship held in Newcastle. Thank God that they were able to gain many teachings from the lessons and to also enjoy a time of bonding and fellowship with other youths during this time.

Also in July, the Portsmouth youths were involved in welcoming various visitors to Portsmouth Church. We welcomed Elder Ho and his wife once again for two weeks of learning and fellowship, as he continued his ministry to various churches of the UK. Portsmouth Church was also host to the UKGA Church Board members as they gathered for two days of meetings on 2nd – 3rd July. The following week, all UK preachers held their Spiritual Advancement Seminar with Elder Ho at Portsmouth Church. Both these events were blessed opportunities for Portsmouth Church to show our hospitality to the UK divine workers, as well as to Elder Ho and his wife. We thank God for His guidance through both of these events.

The summer was also a time of smiles and sunshine, as we met up and reconnected with our brethren whom we had not seen in a while. It was wonderful to receive back the youths who have been studying away. Albeit only just for the summer, we were able to spend much time together catching up with each other.

After our RE End-of-Year Special Service on 26th August, the church held a special barbeque in the church car park. This event was attended by almost all church brethren and by



some out of town visitors, namely Sis. Jenni Cheung and Bro. Colin Chan from London. We were also most glad to see a few of the youths whom we have not seen at church for a while. We hope that we can continue to reach out to the lost and to guide them back with our love and concern for them. May God continue to guide us all in this endeavour.

Farewells

At the end of July, we said farewell to Bro. Tom Ho as he left for London to further his career. Bro. Tom began his journey of faith in Portsmouth as a truth-seeker in January 2005, and was baptised in April 2006. We ask God to continue to guide his footsteps and to keep him close to His heart.

With the summer drawing to a close, it is time to say farewell to our youths who are studying away. Portsmouth Church will be handing over two more youths to London Church this year. Bro. Stephen Ho and Sis. Jessica Fan will be starting university this academic year. May God give them wisdom and strength to stand firm in their faith as they leave home. We also ask that London Church to welcome them warmly and to look after another two of our lambs.

Future Events

During September, there has been a bout of activities in preparing for our Church Open Day on Sunday, 30th September. It has been a while since we opened up the church for such an event. It is hoped that through holding an Open Day, the gospel can be introduced to visitors and truth-

seekers in an informal and relaxed atmosphere, as visitors are able to come and go as they please. Various displays of our beliefs, Church history and churches around the world have been designed to be put up for the Open Day. Much publicity, including leaflets, posters, newspaper adverts, personal invites and a banner outside the church has been completed to promote the day. All church members also underwent a session of 'buddying' training, where they were given pointers on how to converse with visitors and to begin to talk about the gospel with others. We ask God to continue to lead us in carrying out our commission to preach to others.

Portsmouth Church will also be holding an evangelical service on Sunday, 11th November as we have Elder Chang joining us in November.

At the end of this year, the YCC co-ordinators will change as the work is passed down to the next generation. Bro. Daniel Liew and Sis. Lisa Ho will be the main co-ordinators for at least the next term. We ask God to bless the work of their hands and to give them the wisdom to lead the youths.

Spiritual Unity Through Diverse Gifts and Our Love For Each Other

One thing that you can be sure of in Portsmouth Church is that you will find an array of characters and personalities within this small church of ours. We as youths are made up of such a variety that you will not be able to find two peas in a pod as such! But one thing that we can be grateful for is that this assortment of characters does not bring about divisions or tension.

As the Portsmouth youths continue in our study of 1 Corinthians, we are able to glean much teachings and to answer many questions raised. Why was such a gifted church rife with such dissension and disharmony? Why were they unable to focus on Jesus as the head of the church? Why could they not function and complement each other as different members of one body?

We learnt from chapter 12 that through the diverse gifts given to each individual respectively, the church can learn to rely on each other to build each other up, using our different gifts to edify each other and not to seek for selfish ambition. If we all possessed the same gifts, then there will be no need to share and co-operate with each other, but we will fall into the trap of boasting proudly about ourselves. We all have different functions, no matter how insignificant you may feel yours is. God has blessed you with something, so let your gift be a blessing to many others. We have to remember that our diverse gifts have been given to us all through the one Spirit of God. Let us use our gifts to serve God and each other in all humility.

As we proceeded onto chapter 13, we discover Paul's urgency in his advice to the church in Corinth to pursue for the greatest gift of love. We often hear why love is so important: it is a commandment of Christ; it is the very essence of God and it is what we should be exhibiting to one another, be it our friends or our enemies. But like with other teachings, how often is it much easier to listen to them than to put it into practise?

But to love is the greatest commandment from Jesus (Mark 12:30-31). We need to love God with all our heart, all our soul and all our strength, as well as to love each other as we would love our own bodies and want to be loved by others. We cannot neglect one in favour of the other - we need to love God, as well as to love one another. Without love, all our work will amount to nothing but with love, our work will not be in vain and much goodness can be accomplished. Let us ask God to continually fill us all with His love, so that others can be blessed through us and that we can give all glory to Him now and forever.

Elgin Church

Sowing the Seeds

Thanks to God that a way seems to have opened in Inverness for evangelical work. Elgin church is branching out and putting a lot of effort in spreading the gospel there. Services were conducted on 21st May in a rented hall and the focus was to preach to the Chinese community there. So far, we have been quite successful in attracting truth-seekers and will continue to hold services there.

A Spiritual Convocation and Evangelical Services were held during 25th – 27th June. Even though we did not have many visitors this year, it was very pleasant to hold this convocation for three days. The theme was 'What Do You See?' with Pr. Yang and Pr. Michael mainly conducting the

sermons. We have been encouraged by these sermons, as they focussed on how God understands us and what we should focus in our lives. Unfortunately, we did not have many truth seekers, which it is something that we find very difficult in Elgin and we request everyone to remember this in your prayers.

The church held another Evangelical service in Inverness on 20th August. The service was led by Elder Ho. Thank the Lord three truth-seekers came to attend this service. We know how important this work is and we have to continue in this work. We truly need Gods guidance so that His gospel can be spread further. May we all remember this work in our prayers, as we truly need His guidance. We have long term plans to continue to hold outreaches here in Inverness, so please remember this in your prayers.

Launching Out Into the Community

A visit by the lower youth class to local old folks' home happened on 1st July, to give a sense of service and giving something back to the community. We wanted to get the youths involved in the community, so some youths went to help serve lunch, take a tour around the home and sing a hymn with the residents. The help we gave was much appreciated and it was a fun day for both the youths and the residents. It also was an opportunity to preach and let the residents know of the True Jesus Church in Elgin. Our hope is for the youths to take what they have learnt and continue this good work in society. If it all goes according to plan, we will revisit soon.

Thirst For the Words of God and Prayer

Elgin Church was the venue for the National Students' Spiritual Convocation for those aged 12-13 (Junior Youth Class). The turnout was quite overwhelming and more than what the church could accommodate. Students had to sleep in members' houses and some even offered a whole house for the students. May God remember their love. The topics revolved around the Holy Spirit, Prayer and Western Festivals. It was very touching to see such zeal and thirst that the students had for the Words of God, moreover so motivating were their efforts devoted in their prayers. On many occasions, the students would fast and prayer and any free time available were devoted in prayer. This is something we can truly learn to emulate. This year we have twelve students that received the Holy Spirit. This is so encouraging to see that God was amongst us and evidently that God is with the True Jesus Church.

Another RE Year Has Passed On 26th August, we held our RE End-of-Year Service. Another year has past for R.E and it is surprising fast how another year passes by. We had our presentations from all of the Religious Education classes, prize giving and words of encouragements from a graduating student and from one of the deacons. It was a fun afternoon for everyone and all the performances were entertaining. This year saw the official appointment of new R.E teachers namely Laura Shek, Stephanie Ho, Victoria Chan and Reuben Shek. Lets continue to grow every year.

Prayer Requests

Please remember to pray for Elgin Church's lost sheep. The work is slow but we have plans to try and bring these members back to the fold. Any suggestions and ideas would be welcomed from other churches on how to deal with these matters. We have a few members that have fallen ill ranging from the youths to the middle aged. Some are quite serious and will require our prayers.

Newcastle Church

Fellowship and Fun!

At the beginning of July, Newcastle Church held this year's National Youth Fellowship. We thank God that many youths were able to attend and worship together in one accord. As part of the fellowship, a day trip to Ambleside in the Lake District was arranged where people took part in various activities such as mountain scrambling, rock climbing and kayaking. The weather was great considering the recent floods at the time and everyone had an enjoyable time.

Thirty-eight RE students and teachers enjoyed a recent trip to Kielder Forest during the August Bank Holiday. Activities that we participated in included raft building (and paddling across a lake to test it out!), problem solving tasks and bell boat racing. A great time was had by all and we were blessed with some fine sunny weather on the day, which was handy for those who indulged in some over enthusiastic paddling and splashing!

We have plans to hold a youth fellowship on 9th September with the aim of promoting Wednesday Youth Fellowship (WYF) – the theme for which is 'Onwards and Upwards' to further strengthen the faith of the brethren.

New Additions

Newcastle Church also held a spiritual evangelical convocation between 16th -18th July. During the three-day event, we were edified and encouraged by the sermons given and more sheep were able to be added to His flock. May God continue to bless the newest members of His family.

Learning About the Nature Of God

We also held this year's YTTC for the 2nd year students from July 29th – Aug 19th, in conjunction with Sunderland Church, with the theme this year as 'The Nature of God'. Thank God the three-week event went well and everyone involved was able to gain something out of it. Much preparation and planning had to be done in the weeks leading up to YTTC and it was great to see that our efforts and united spirit and mind were put to good use. So we truly thank God for His presence. There was also time for some youths and preachers to distribute pamphlets during free periods to help with the ongoing evangelism work.

Working for Good Causes

Charity work is also something that has continued over the summer months – collections have been made to gather clothes and unwanted electrical goods to raise funds. A charity car wash and

tea cake selling event is happening on 16th September, which will also help to raise funds for the Dorcas fellowship and other worthwhile causes.

We know how important it is that church work continues to grow and is maintained, so may we all remember this work in our prayers as we truly need God's guidance. Emmanuel!

National Youth Fellowship, Vancouver: A Reflection From a UK Participant – Sis. Victoria Chan

Sitting at Heathrow airport with Annie by my side, we were filled with excitement and anticipation of what we would be doing at the National Youth Fellowship (NYF) in Vancouver, Canada. We truly thanked God for bringing us there because the chance of us going was so slim, considering the issues of finding suitable flights and our delayed registration.

After the ten hour flight, we arrived in Vancouver where we were received with a very warm welcome. To our surprise, a Church-purchased house next door to the True Jesus Church awaited us, prepared for all the out of town youths who would stay there the days before and after the NYF. It was a very homely atmosphere situated in a convenient location. There, we all lived as one family in Christ, having breakfast together in the morning, which very often was so lovingly prepared by Elder Chang who also stayed with us there and would later on take lessons during the NYF.

On Saturday, over 90 youths from various locations in Canada and a few from New York gathered at Vancouver Church for Sabbath,

and departure to the NYF location. After a coach journey, we arrived at Summit Park, the University campus set in a scenery of cascading hills and inspiring woodland, alongside the viciously biting mosquitoes which many of us suffered wounds from. But the Vancouver brothers and sisters provided medicine and helped us put on bandages with loving care. As one brother jokingly said during the farewell speech, on day one we started hitting mosquitoes to protect ourselves, but by day two fellow brethren around began to hit flies for each other. Nevertheless, overall the scenic, rural location with accommodation and chapel was fitting because it enabled us to relax amongst each other and put our minds into the NYF rather than on other things.

The two and half days were short but were filled with excitement, joyful fellowship and also mutual sharing of experiences and testimonies. The theme of the NYF was 'A Life of Transformation', therefore each team was named after a butterfly. At the start of the fellowship, formal introductions were made, then after the very effective ice-breaker games we all settled in to the new surroundings and felt more at ease.

During the fellowship, not only did we engage in team activities, such as the campus scavenger hunt filled with puzzles and riddles based on Biblical questions, which strengthened our friendships and unity, we also enjoyed creating team roles plays to do with Biblical character life transformations. But on the other hand, I was very much captured after hearing and absorbing the inspiring, encouraging spiritual food, which was spoken

during the lessons. The topics ranged from Transforming Views on Studies/Work', 'Transforming our Character' to 'Transforming Views on Serving the Lord' and more. Some sessions were held in the format of group discussions, which were beneficial because I was able to hear the views and methods of work of other brethren from different Church locations.

As an example, one of the sessions was devoted to group discussions on how we could help formulate a work plan for areas such as organising a gospel outreach in the local street market, creating a website or even planning a training seminar for interpreters. We chose our area of interest and personally, I was greatly encouraged by the unique style, expertise and the heart of service that the Canadian youths have when they interpret. One particular youth interpreter was inspiring in the way that it was clearly visible she understood what she was translating and thought deeply about the appropriate words to use in each context. Whilst simultaneously, her voice was thoughtful, which helped portray each meaning effectively.

From the capturing lessons delivered by several church workers and edifying words and experiences of the youths, I have been motivated to be transformed in my life as a Christian, a church worker and as a youth.

Another experience I gained, through observing the church work youths took part in was from the choir singing. Except the words "choir singing" does not do their performance justice in that they were at one with the songs, and with the words. The emotions from each piece were clearly expressed because it became a part of them, which was

then in turn passed onto us. The sheer volume and beautiful resonance that the Emmanuel Choir (nine singers) delivered, not only astonished us, but also glorified God in all humility. They sung with accuracy, through looking at each other as a form of unspoken communication, but also they sung with spiritual joy and unity through expressing the deepest meanings of each piece by singing wholeheartedly, which was shown on their facial expressions.

Later on, we had Holy Communion, then a service back in Vancouver Church where we performed, and finally a farewell gathering was held which ended the fellowship perfectly.

On the whole, the well organised NYF in Vancouver, which was held for the first time in about ten years, went smoothly with the guidance of God. It has opened my mind to more ideas and has made me realise that we as youths are capable of doing a great deal in Church. We have the potential to use and develop our skills to work humbly, proactively and positively. For me, the NYF was a spiritual journey I experienced and travelled, which far exceeded the distance of flying to Canada because of the very edifying lessons, the love of the brethren and their wholehearted humility in service. I truly thank God because it was a blessing that I was given the opportunity to have fellowship and befriend the youths whom I may not have met otherwise..

