

UKGA

YCC newsletter  
Now with UKGA Newsletter extracts

JULY 2010  
.....  
TRUE JESUS CHURCH

Hallelujah.

Dear youths,

Praise and thank God for His guidance during the recent NYF (Sunderland) and NSSC (Elgin, Edinburgh and Gifford Park); and for the YTTC (Sunderland and London), which is now underway.

We hope those who have received blessings during the convocations will be able to write them up and share them with the members throughout the UK, by sending them to the Whispering Hope Through your sharing, others will be able to rejoice with you, be encouraged, and give thanks to God. Some of you have learnt to testify – you should take the step to glorify God even more by reaching out to a greater audience through writing. Please forward your contributions to: [whisperinghope@tjc.org](mailto:whisperinghope@tjc.org)

I have been really encouraged that more youths are holding fast

to the teachings they learn during the summer and are applying them in their lives. I received a couple of emails from youths who attended the convocations – they asked various questions about their faith, after having received the Holy Spirit. They enquired about what they can or cannot do. It is good they are asking such questions because it shows they are serious about their faith. They have received God's grace and do not want to lose it. As youths we should pay attention to what Paul had to say: "Finding out what is acceptable to the Lord" (Eph 5:10).

If we want to grow in our faith through the winter months, as we do in the summer, we must be prepared to kneel to let the Holy Spirit give us a deeper peace and greater joy. It is important to receive the Holy Spirit; but it is even more important to draw nearer to God after we have received the Holy Spirit. To obtain the Holy Spirit and then not rely on Him to overcome our weaknesses and change ourselves by God's power

is like when a "lazy man does not roast what he took in hunting" (Prov 12:27).

We hope that each church can arrange a mini convocation for the youths during the winter months, in order to preserve each other and give one another encouragement; an opportunity to pursue a closer relationship, not only with each other, but with our Lord Jesus Christ too. Let us take Paul's encouragement to us: "Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (2 Tim 2:22).

May God bless you all until the next issue.

Shalom



Steven Shek

## UKGA NEWS

Translated by Brother Tony Chan,  
Sunderland

The 11th Meeting of the 8th Term Board

Date: 19th – 20th April 2010

Venue: True Jesus Church, Gifford Park

### Encouragement from the Chairman

Recently we have heard about many natural disasters around the world, as well as the tribulations and difficulties faced by our brethren. This only serves to remind us of what Jesus said: "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn" (Mt 24:30). When I attended the IA Truth Study Committee Meeting, I also heard people talk about the warnings from the Bible as the end time approaches. We should, therefore, stand firm in faith, studying the word of God for a better understanding of His will, cultivate ourselves, and prepare for the coming of our Lord!

### Reports from Each Department

Chairman: See Report on the IA Directive Meeting.

#### Religious Affairs Department:

1. The list of China members in UK is being collated by Brother Ar-Ling Lu.

2. The most essential task in setting up a new place of worship in a pioneering area is to select suitable people who can be responsible for leading services or Bible studies. Regarding the Cardiff Place of Worship in Wales, the members have hired a venue for services.

3. Seminary student Brother Raymond Leacock is awaiting a letter from USGA,

in order to apply for his visa to the US.

4. For the Place of Worship in Dublin, Ireland, the board for the new term have been elected: Religious Affairs (RA) – Brother En Wong; Assistant Religious Affairs – Sister En-Ling Lin; General Affairs (GA) – Sister Ai-Chin Yu; Evangelical Planning Group (EPG) & Auditor – Brother Je Lin; Financial Affairs (FA) & Secretary – Brother Eddie Weng.

#### General Affairs Department:

Regarding the refurbishment of the premises of the Manchester Place of Worship: still waiting for quotations from the local members. The GA department will contact the member responsible for these matters and, once the details have been decided, the job should be carried out as soon as possible.

#### Religious Education Department:

The venues and number of attendees for this year's National Student Spiritual Convocation and Youth Theological Training Course will be finalised by the end of May.

#### Department of Literary Ministry:

1. The writing team for the English publication Immanuel will hold a meeting in May 2010 at London Church. Deacon KC Tsai, the Director of IA DLM, will be attending the meeting.

2. The DLM needs to encourage UK members to participate in the Internet Missionary Program (IMP) as volunteer workers.

A specialist financial planning firm was invited to introduce: "How to apply for Charity Organisation Status & Gift Aid"

#### Content of the seminar:

1. A church organisation is eligible to apply for charity organisation status, but it is not compulsory to do so. Once UKGA has the status of a charity organisation, then all UK churches can also share this status.

2. A charity organisation can benefit in terms of taxes, e.g. being exempt from income tax, council tax, as well as being entitled to Gift Aid. However there are also some obligations.

3. UKGA must first decide whether to register in England or Scotland as a charity organisation.

4. If a local church has been assigned an "exemption number", then it has already been deemed as a charity organisation and does not need to apply for charity organisation status.

5. Gift Aid is a kind of tax benefit which allows a UK tax payer to claim back 28 pence from the government for every pound he/ she offers to a UK charity organisation.

6. Brief introduction to the basics of Inheritance Tax.

#### Proposals Discussed:

1. Re-discussion of the UKGA Contract Workers' living allowance. The FA department should re-calculate a more reasonable salary paying system for part-time and contract workers. This will be discussed during the next UKGA Board meeting.

2. The preparation work of UKGA in registering as a charity organisation:

The FA department should prepare financial statements and all related account records. After the next term's UKGA Board has been elected and formed, UKGA will apply for charity organisation status in England. The UKGA Chairman, GA-in-charge and

FA-in-charge will be the trustees of this charity organisation.

3. How to implement Religious Education for the next generation in this modern, liberal society.

#### **Content of Discussion:**

The three main goals of Religious Education are:

- a. To teach spiritual knowledge in order to establish the correct faith.
- b. To instruct proper conduct and to cultivate a Christ-like life.
- c. To pray for the power of the Holy Spirit in order to serve Christ.

These three goals should all be realised in terms of administration, pastoring and/ or training work in the church. These goals should not only apply to children or RE students, but also to every member of the church as well.

- a. To enhance the sense of responsibility of each believer/ RE teacher and student.
- b. To hold various training seminars according to the needs of the local church, e.g. pre-set topics (Holiness, Serving God, Family Education of a Believer, Between Two Generation, etc.) so members can understand the importance of Religious Education for themselves and their children. The church should organise RE so that it is closely related to other church works, and not treated as an isolated task.
- c. The RE department should arrange the National RE Teachers' Training Seminar to deal with the needs of the churches – to provide solutions/ useful advice to problems and difficulties faced by RE teachers, and strengthen the quality and spiritual cultivation of the teachers. It should also provide effective care and assistance for RE teachers.

d. A child's parents will always have a greater and more direct influence on them than their RE teachers in church; therefore it is essential to promote and establish a Family Altar in every family in the UK.

4. Standardise the format and layout of the UK church status report in English and Chinese.

5. A recommendation from the 2010 Global IMP Symposium of IA DLM will be explained by Brother Vincent Yeung during the next meeting.

6. The RA Training Program.

#### **Content of Discussion:**

1. A believer needs to be properly trained first, so they can understand their responsibilities before being elected as a Church Board member.
2. This kind of training can be treated as an extension of YTTC.
3. A participant can choose a training class, and also a suitable date and time for training, according to their needs.

#### **Resolution:**

1. The content of the training programme and schedule will be discussed during the next UKGA Board meeting.
2. UKGA will inform each church by writing that a list of eligible candidates for the local Church Board should be ready by the end of August, and encourage the candidates to attend the Church Board Members' Training Seminar in September.
3. As to the Ministers' Training Seminar, which can be held during the Ministers' Conference, the content of the seminar can include some practical UK case studies as teaching material.

7. Leicester Church request a letter of consent from UKGA, to allow them to purchase a property for church use in Leicester.

#### **Other Matters**

1. Revise and update the Certificate of Baptism for UK churches by GA department.
2. All UK publications should obtain the signatures of the members of UKGA Publication Reviewing Committee. A copy of e-mail should be kept by DLM as proof that the articles have already been reviewed.
3. The FA department will send a letter to every UK church to encourage the members to continue with the (20 pence per day) offering towards the World Evangelical Fund of IA.
4. Matters concerning the China brethren and their applications for permanent residence will be discussed at the next meeting.
5. Next UKGA Board meeting will be held on 12–13 July 2010 at Edinburgh Church.

#### **A Denarius for a Day, by Silas Chan**

*For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. Now when he had agreed with the labourers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and said to them, "You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you." So they went. Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, "Why have you been standing here idle all day?" They said to him, "Because no*

*one hired us." He said to them, "You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive." So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, "Call the labourers and give them their wages, beginning with the last to the first." And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius. (Mt 20:1-20)*

From the above verses, we see the landowner has a caring and compassionate heart. He even hired those who stood idle during the day to work in his vineyard, so when evening came every labourer received a denarius each. The first workers moaned that they should be paid more, but the landowner did not cheat anyone and paid each according to the wage agreed.

We shall not stand idle but go to work in the vineyard, for the landowner is seeking labourers. The vineyard is the house of Israel (Is 5:7), the house of God which is the church of the living God (1 Tim 3:15), the true church of today. Therefore, "be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor 15:58). Be faithful in doing the work that the Lord has entrusted us and He will praise and reward with everlasting blessing in heaven (Mt 19:29).

There was a brother who often experienced God's guidance and blessings. Overwhelmed with joy, he would offer his holiday time once a year to work for the Lord. There is a deacon who gave up a management position so he could dedicate himself to serving the Lord wholeheartedly. They

experienced the true joys and peace in serving the Lord. Even though our outward man is perishing, the inward man is being renewed day by day. Wait with joyfulness for the coming of the Lord, when it is time to receive a denarius for the day. "The lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord' " (Mt 25:23). Amen.

\*This is the election year for the UKGA and local Church Boards. UKGA have informed each church by writing that a list of eligible candidates for the local Church Board should be ready by the end of August. Candidates should be encouraged to attend the Church Board Members' Training Seminar, so that candidates know and understand the role and duty of the board members.

*"Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we (the church) may appoint over this business; we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word." And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose (men) full of faith and the Holy Spirit, whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them. Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith. (Act 6:1-7)*

We shall follow the teachings from and Bible and GA guideline, and elect those who have accompanied us, and are amongst us, to be Church Board members (Act 1:21-22). When the Lord Jesus chose his twelve disciples, He went out to the mountain to pray,

and continued all night in prayer to God (Lk 6:12-13). Likewise we need to pray to God, and continue in prayer, that the right Church Board members are selected to fulfil God's works, so the church can prosper.

## ELGIN CHURCH

### Spiritual and Evangelical Convocation: Press Forward

Thank God for the spiritual and evangelical convocation held in Elgin on 27-30 June 2010. This year's convocation was also a thanksgiving service, commemorating twenty-five years since Elgin Church was dedicated to God. Thank God, this spiritual feast was not only enjoyed by Elgin members. They were able to reflect upon the blessings of God and share this grace with members who travelled up to Elgin from across the UK. Members from Edinburgh, Hull, Portsmouth and Leicester came to attend; not forgetting Preacher Michael Chan, and Elder Huo and his wife from Taiwan, who came to carry out the work. The theme for this year was Press Forward – reminding us that we should look toward Jesus and put our aims onto Him.

One of greatest blessings that brought much joy to the whole church was the return of a lost sheep. We were able to witness the great love of God upon our brother, who bestowed His precious Holy Spirit onto him and brought him back to His loving fold.

We also thank God for adding one new sheep to the fold – a truthseeker who is currently living in Inverness. We now have a new brother in Christ!

We thank God for the blessings and grace He has showered over us during the few days of spiritual convocation. We pray that God will continue to guide us to press on, just as He has done for the past twenty-five years. All glory unto His name!

### Welcomes and Farewells

Our Brother David Shek married Sister Jessica Lau, from Edmonton Church in Canada, on 26 April. David has now moved to Edmonton. We hope God will guide their footsteps together as husband and wife.

We welcome back Michelle Ho to Elgin. Michelle has just finished studying in Edinburgh.

### GIFFORD CHURCH

Greetings to our beloved brothers and sisters.

### An Abundant Life

Thank God Gifford Park Church held its annual spiritual and evangelical convocation on 10–12 May. The theme for this year was Abundant Life. We were blessed to have Elder Huo and Preacher Joseph Shek share with us their words of wisdom, to help us understand that with God in our lives, we have abundant grace and blessings. We may have many possessions in this world, but these are all temporary and will fade away. Only the wonderful love and grace of God is everlasting, and will help to lead us to eternal joy in our heavenly home.

We saw many brothers and sisters come together to share in the grace

of God throughout the three days. Moreover, a truthseeker received the Holy Spirit and, although she has not been coming back to services on a regular basis, we pray that God will continue to touch her so that one day she will come to His fold.

### Working Together

Throughout the past few months, in all aspects of the church, we have been working together to try to better ourselves for the future. The EPG have continued to hold regular fellowships after Sabbath services to search into the Scriptures and better equip themselves with the word. Furthermore, they have also taken this time to train up new speakers and interpreters for the church. Preacher Michael Chan and Trainee Preacher Johnny Liu have taken time out to help the youths become more confident in sermonising, and have led practice interpreting sessions. We ask God to strengthen and guide the next generation so they can be the future pillars of the church.

The RE teachers are working hard to build up relationships between themselves and the students, as well as with the parents. We know religious education first begins at home; therefore, it is very important for all involved to have good relationships and understand each other well, in order to have unity throughout the church. Regular meetings and fellowships, including a joint training session with Edinburgh Church at the beginning of June, have helped teachers identify matters they need to work on, so that RE can be more fruitful in the near future. We pray that God will continue to guide us in this divine work.

### The Happy Couple

On 6 July, we were blessed to witness the holy matrimony of our beloved Sister Michelle Shek to Brother Eugene Tang at Newcastle Church. May God bless and guide this happy couple and shower upon them His love and grace.

### EDINBURGH CHURCH

Hallelujah! Greetings and blessings to all the churches in the UK.

Edinburgh Church has had a good few months, with National Sisters' Fellowship, Coffee Morning, and a visit from Elder En Yuan Ho from Taiwan.

### National Sisters' Fellowship

It was Edinburgh's turn to host this year's Sisters' Fellowship. The theme was Faith & Traditions. This is the twentieth anniversary of NSF, so this year the event was attended by a lot more sisters than usual. It was also quite special because Elder En Yuan Ho led many of the session, edifying all who were there; and the morning and evening prayer sessions were led by Deacon Silas Chan.

### Elder En Yuan Ho

The elder came over to the UK to share with members words of wisdom and insight into the Bible, so we can better understand what we must do as members of TJC. We have had teacher fellowships and Sabbath sermons on topics such as:

Imitate the Prayers of Christ

To Know the True Church from the  
Salvation Plan of God

Ministry of Teaching

(Teacher Fellowship)

### Coffee Morning

As usual, the youths prepared for this event by carrying out leafleting sessions the day before and on the day of the event. Coffee Mornings are a platform for members to talk to one another in a relaxing environment, and a time for non-TJC members to join us for a cup of coffee and breakfast. The topics of conversation do not always have to be about God, as the aim is to talk to one another in order to build friendships.

We must not forget the members who are unable to attend these events, either because they cannot make it or because they are sick. We must remember to ask God to help those in need. Prayer is the time when we communicate with God – if we don't talk to God then He will not hear what we are asking for.

"Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you" (1Pet 5:7).

## NEWCASTLE CHURCH

Hallelujah! Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### Building Up the Church through Fellowships

Over the past three months, Newcastle Church has held several fellowships that have enabled various age groups

to come together, to learn together, and to build up the church together.

Sisters' Fellowship has held monthly sessions which have been a great platform for sisters, young and old, to fellowship joyfully together. The older sisters in church have taught the younger ones how to make all sorts of Chinese treats, such as mochi and Chinese buns. The coordinators of Sisters' Fellowship also asked visiting Elder En Yuan Ho to lead a session about financial management. The aim of the session was to provide guidance on how we can spend money wisely. Out of the amount we earn, first we offer ten percent to God. Next, we should plan to set aside money to pay for bills, mortgage/ rent, food and other necessities for the family. Finally, with what is left, we can use to "enjoy the fruits of our labour"; for example, saving towards a holiday, new clothes, new car, etc. Simple yet practical principles we can all apply to our lives.

Youth Fellowship has also provided a place for all ages to come together, to learn more about the word of God and to encourage each other to stand fast in the Lord. Preacher Steven Shek recently led a session about the Holy Spirit, where we all shared testimonies concerning the effects of receiving the Holy Spirit and the role He plays in our daily lives. We were reminded to not only think of the Holy Spirit as a "passport" to heaven, because He can do so much more. He comforts us, He guides us, and He helps to transform us into better children of God.

### Holy Matrimony

On 6 July, we witnessed the holy matrimony of Brother Eugene Tang and Sister Michelle Shek. We pray that God pours out His blessings on the newlyweds, so that they can serve the Lord as one. We will also be saying

farewell to our beloved Sister Selina Liu, who too will be married in July, and move to Edinburgh. May God remember the works she has done for Him and the love she has shown to all the brothers and sisters here in Newcastle. We will miss you!

## SUNDERLAND CHURCH

### NYF 2010 Spirit of Excellence

Praise and thanks be to God for this year's National Youth Fellowship, held at Sunderland Church on 20–24 June. There were a total of fifty-nine attendees and, thanks to the mercy of God, many of them were greatly edified. Two evangelism sessions were also held during the event and they were both quite fruitful. May God bless His workers Preacher Steven Shek and Brother Johnny Liu, and all the members who took time out to help. May God also bless the youths and help them apply the teachings in their daily lives, to pursue for a Spirit of Excellence.

### Timothy Youth Fellowship

Praise God that the fellowship continues to grow. Aside from the twice-weekly Bible studies, the youths have used some of the sessions to evangelise and to do general housekeeping work to take care of the church. May God add to TYF, so that the youths can begin to reach out to lost brethren and do more works for God.

### Society Youth Service

Thanks to God that Society Youth Service has been progressing well and the youths have been able to come together in fellowship to study the book of Daniel. The sessions have proved very fruitful and the youths, young and

old, have managed to share modern life experiences coupled with the teachings of the book of Daniel. We too live in a foreign land and need to stay true to God, not conforming to those who follow the trends of this world. May God continue to bless the Society Youth Service in Sunderland as we draw near to the close of its first year. Amen.

## LEICESTER CHURCH

June was a very sad month for us, as we had to say goodbye to our dearest and beloved Sister Wendy Leacock. She had battled with leukaemia since 2007, and throughout the last few years we saw that her faith in God was still very strong. She was never sad and she did not question God at all. This serves as a reminder for us that whatever trials or tribulations we may face, we have to be strong and always trust in God.

The following is a testimony from Sister Lynn Liu, which provides us all with the peace and comfort of the Lord Jesus during this difficult period:

Hallelujah, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ I testify. I was asleep and had this dream. We were having a family Bible study and Wendy was sitting opposite me. We were singing hymn number 432, There's a Quiet Understanding. As we sang, I looked up and saw Wendy giving me a smile. Then it became quite bright and I saw a shiny heart shape, with wings, flying upwards. I was really surprised to see this and started to pray to praise God. That is when I awoke; I was in bed with hands together, saying aloud, "Hallelujah, praise the Lord Jesus." Then I looked at the clock to see what time it was: It was 5.30 am. May all glory be unto our Lord Jesus Christ. I told this

to Preacher Michael and he told me share it with everyone, so that Wendy's family will be comforted, and all the brethren too.

We end with a verse from hymn 187 as an encouragement:

We shall sing on that beautiful shore the melodious songs of the blest, and our spirits shall sorrow no more, not a sigh for the blessing of rest. In the sweet by and by, we shall meet on that beautiful shore; in the sweet by and by, we shall meet on that beautiful shore.

## CAMBRIDGE PRAYER HOUSE

### CPH Activities

Earlier this year, a youth fellowship was held at a sister's halls-of-residence at Cambridge University; an informal Bible sharing took place, followed by a home-cooked meal contributed by the youths. Thank the Lord, several truthseekers attended and it was a successful event. We hope to invite these friends to participate in our upcoming spiritual and evangelical convocation.

Brother John Pang recently hosted a BBQ on Father's Day and kindly invited all members of the congregation, and their friends, to attend. There was a good turnout on the day, and the social gathering provided a great opportunity to share God's words with friends and family. Thank the Lord for the brother's love and generosity to the members.

### Prayer Fellowship

CPH has started holding prayer fellowships, where members gather

at a member's house one Sunday a month to worship the Lord. The first fellowship, in April, was held at Brother Kelvin Liew's home. The session was most edifying and helped members to bolster their faith in the Lord.

### Tenth Anniversary Spiritual and Evangelical Convocation

This year, CPH is gearing up for its tenth anniversary spiritual and evangelical convocation on 17-18 July. The theme for convocation is "What are you missing?", and it will be held in Caxton Village Hall, ten minutes from CPH. The entire congregation, with the assistance of Leicester youths, will be knocking on doors and leafleting in the village and at nearby Cambourne. Please pray for the smooth-running of the event, that God may assist the members in the work that needs to be done. We also warmly invite all our members across the UK to come and worship with us during that weekend.

### Farewells

Sister Wendy and Brother Samson Tou left Cambridge in May to move to Australia for work. The youths held a packing and painting evening to help with their move. We will miss their presence at CPH! May God guide and protect them while they are abroad.

## LONDON CHURCH

### Training to Preach

Thank God, London Church held the Southern Region National Evangelical Group Training on 18 April. The training not only gave us insight into how we can preach to Roman Catholics, but also reminded us how important it is to not only learn the theory of how to



preach, but to put it into action – to launch out and evangelise! Thank God, the youths have taken this to heart and we have seen an increase in the number of participants for Sunday EPG door-to-door and street preaching activities. In addition to this, the youths have shared with one another their experiences of preaching to their friends, family and colleagues. Praise God for this!

### Spring Spiritual Convocation 2010

Thank God for a wonderful and edifying spring spiritual convocation, held on 23–25 April 2010. The theme 'Renewed in Strength & Shine for the Lord' really did edify all the members. We thank God for the wonderful sermons, the amazing testimonies, and the many truthseekers He brought to us! We also praise God for the ten souls added to the fold (four adults and six children). All glory and honour to God!

### Hello & Goodbye

We give a warm London-welcome to Sister Rebecca (Newcastle) who has recently become Mrs. Nic Chu! We pray that God will help you settle down and give you joy as you begin your new life here!

We bid farewell to Brother He and his wife (China); Sister Amy Zhuang and her children, Peter and Joyce (Taiwan); Sister Hazel Lai (Newcastle); Sister Joan Tham (Malaysia); Sister Kimeko Lin (Taiwan); and Brother Stephen Ho (Portsmouth). All of these members have truly contributed to the community of faith in London Church. You will all be sorely missed, but we trust that God will guide you all. May you continue to shine God's light wherever He leads you.

### Prayers for YTTC in London

As London Church prepares for YTTC (Youth Theological Training Course), we ask that all members continue to spend time in prayer for this event. It has been quite a number of years since London Church has hosted YTTC. Thank God, the members have been very willing to offer their services to God – from cooking, sleeping arrangements, singing for choir presentations, and preparing things the students will need. We ask that the youths in London and around the UK join together in prayer for this spiritual event; to pray that London Church will be well prepared for this event, but more importantly, that the Spirit of God will be present to guide us in preparations, and to lead every participant and worker during the event. Without God, we can do nothing. May He personally guide us!

## PORTSMOUTH CHURCH

### The Essence of Love

"By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jn 13:35).

These were the words spoken by Jesus to teach us that if the church walks in love we will bring glory to Him and be preaching through our actions. Therefore we must understand the essence of love to keep Jesus' command.

A recent youth fellowship was about the essence of love based on 1 Corinthians 13:1–7. It is true that, amongst the believers, Jesus has distributed knowledge and gifts that are useful for church work. However, we are reminded that these blessings must be coupled with

love in order to be of any benefit.

If love is not the driving force behind what we are doing for the church, then the church cannot be edified and grow. Otherwise, we are just very good at performing certain tasks but we have no long-term goal behind it – i.e. to build up each other's faith so we can enter Heaven together.

We must bear in mind that we love one another because Jesus loves us, and therefore we want to help each other to progress in faith. As we read verses 4 to 6, we can see the essence of love – how it brings about patience and forbearance toward one another; how we learn not to be selfish but to seek the good of others; how we learn to reject sin and rejoice in the keeping of the truth.

Finally, we see the broad scope of the love that should come naturally to us in verse 7 – the love of God within us helps us to bear all things, believe all things, hope all things and endure all things.

With this kind of love in the church, no matter what we may encounter in our lives of faith and in our services to God, we will not lose sight of our Lord Jesus or the commandment He gave to us.

Let us love one another, and in doing so proclaim proudly that we are Jesus' disciples!