Our 2009-2010 RE Year End Special Service was held on August 29, at 1:45 - 3:30 PM. We were very glad to have Dn. Tim Lin, who was sent by the USGA, to share words of encouragement for our students, teachers, and parents. He re-emphasized the importance of Religious Education. He also encouraged our parents and teachers to listen and communicate with our younger ones, in order to properly guide them in walking their spiritual journeys.

As for awards, this year we have one graduate, Brother Joshua Wong, who graduated from E2 and will be moving to J1 in September. For our teachers, we have two teachers who completed the RE Teachers’ Seminar (RETS) in July at Irvine Church and are now certified by the USGA: Sister Iris Franz and Brother Andrew Yen.

Our Year End Special Service presentation program included a combined E2 and K play on the theme Crossing The Jordan River; a memory verse guessing game from the J1 students; as well as the RE 2009-2010 Reflections movie sharing. We were very glad to see Sister Carol Chan, our K teacher who recently moved away from Houston this summer, making an appearance in our reflection movie. She has been a joyful and enthusiastic teacher who will be missed dearly. May God continue to bless and guide her footsteps.

We thank God’s wonderful grace for giving Houston RE another fruitful year and are looking forward to the new school year to come.
Thank God I survived RETS. Before I went, I actually dreaded this event. In retrospection, although it was challenging and tiring, it was also edifying, rewarding, and fun.

First things first, RETS offers an excellent review on TJC doctrines and the ten articles of faith. Although most of us know these, not everyone can immediately find the Bible verses on which these doctrines are based on. In RETS, not only did we have classes on the doctrines, but we also had an exam at the end. The exam served as a good incentive for us to memorize where to find the Bible verses. This is very beneficial to the teachers, as we are supposed to be familiar with our church’s doctrines before we teach the students.

In addition to classes, there were several prayer sessions each day. Normally when we are at home, we seldom devote so much time in prayer. The eight days in RETS provided us a great opportunity to get close to God.

We also learnt servitude and teaching techniques. I am the most impressed by the classes of Pr. Liang and Elder Liu. Pr. Liang told us that RE teachers should be like a father, rather than a “visiting professor.” A father loves his children at all times, caring and praying for his children. A “visiting professor,” by contrast, only sees students during class time; after the class is over, the visiting professor is nowhere to be found. Elder Liu demonstrated how to teach a Bible story well by figuring out the 6 W’s—who, what, when, where, why, and how. This is a very practical technique not only for RE classes but also for Bible study preparation.

In the name of Jesus Christ I share my reflections from the 2010 RETS held from July 3 to July 10 at Irvine church.

To be honest, I was a little hesitating when I registered for RETS. The duration of this seminar is more than a weeklong and from my understanding most of the attendees are much younger than me so I wondered about how I would fit in at an event like this. A few days before the seminar the participants received an e-mail from Sis Petri and the following points are excerpts from her e-mail:

1. Bring an NKJV Bible with you. Read the following books and chapters before you come: Ephesians 1-6, Philippians 1-4, 2 Timothy 1-2, and James 1-2. We will have Bible reading and a short quiz based on the assigned chapters daily.
2. If you haven’t gotten a chance to study the Ten Basic Belief booklet, please do so this week. We will have a test on the Ten Basic Beliefs.
3. Elder Liu, who is in charge of the class on “Analyzing the Scriptures Before You Teach” has some very helpful notes that you should study before coming (please see attachments). We will have a test on this class as well.

As one can see there are many tests for RETS, especially for a person who has not taken a test in many years. I started to wonder what I had gotten myself into after reading the e-mail.

By the grace of God, the seminar went as smoothly as I could have hoped. The seminar was indeed intense but at the same time, very rewarding. We started our days from around 6 am and were immersed in the word of God until 11 pm. There was little distraction from the outside world so we could truly focus on the lessons and prayers. To give an example, I did not even know which two teams were in the FIFA World Cup finals until the seminar was over which is very unusual for a sports fan like me.

All the instructors were well prepared for their lessons and I could feel their devotion to RE. May God bless their labor. Pastor Liang taught a series of lessons on the Roles and Responsibilities of an RE teacher. I was particular moved by a verse he shared in one of the lessons. The verse is recorded in (1 Cor 4:15), “For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.” In this verse Paul showed his special affection for the Corinthians not only as a teacher (instructor) but also as a father. In Paul’s mind, being a teacher is easy, but being a father, one has to show a lot of love and affection and this is much harder. For the RE teachers if we only focus on the course material and Bible knowledge but do not show true love and affection to the students then we will not be truly effective teachers.

RE is a really important aspect of our spiritual life and is also key to the growth of the church. I think one verse that summarizes the goal of RE is recorded in (Prov 22:6), “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” At first glance this does not seem too difficult to achieve. However, if we look around us and see that there are members who have departed from church due to different reasons, we should realize there is a constant spiritual battle. The RE teachers often play a role in this battle so we need to be committed and pray for God’s guidance so the students will not depart from God’s way.

I truly benefited from RETS and hope more members from Houston church can participate in RE so that in two years time, we can have a lot of new teachers attending RETS. May all glory be unto God.
In the name of Jesus Christ, I give a reflection upon my SSC experience this summer. I remember the first couple times I attended a Student Spiritual Convocation. I look forward to everything about it. All the fasting and praying, learning in class, all the mealtimes spent with other brothers and sisters in Christ. This was going to be my 10th SSC, so honestly, it was nothing special and I did not have too much interest in going, like I used to. It would just be another SSC that would come and go, and we would never think upon it too much afterwards. We all get comfortable to our old lifestyles where reading the Bible and praying were rare. I later realized that going to SSCs are a huge wake-up call for all the wrong-doings and sins we commit on a daily basis. And it is truly the grace of God that we are able to attend such convocation where we can learn to draw closer to God and be nearer to Him.

The theme of this SSC was a “Life of Victory”, where we learned that “A Life of Victory” can apply to all of our lives. We learned about Paul, who was about to live the ideal life of victory for God, even though he was put down and beaten up time after time for what he knew was right and according to God. We also learned about Daniel, who was also able to live a victorious life for God. He had the great ability to thank and praise God for all the many talents and blessings he received and was also able to rely and trust that whatever happened, was according to God’s will. We can take these two examples and apply them in our life.

The most edifying thing that I learned in this particular Student Spiritual Convocation was how to back up our basic doctrines by simply using the bible. It is so simple. We use the Bible to explain the Bible! It is everything we need to base our beliefs upon and I learned that we need to continue to cultivate ourselves and use the Bible as our “Holy Grail” to make sure we know what we believe. The Bible is really the book we need to turn to when we face tribulations and trials, or come across failure or success. And I also learned that reading the bible goes hand-in-hand with daily prayer. We cannot have one without the other. And we certainly cannot be good at just one! We must use both to conquer our spiritual battles and conquer what is ahead of us, to resist all the temptations that come our way. Again, I thank the grace of God I am able to attend yet another edifying and wonderful SSC. May all the praise and glory be unto His holy name.
In the name of Jesus Christ I share my reflection regarding attending the 2010 Music Camp, which was hosted from Garden Grove church July 5 to July 8 of this year, we have about 50+ attendees this year.

On the first morning we had an opening orientation. Bro. Alan explained the format differences between these two years. One of the differences is we have three groups this year: E/J group, Presentation Group, and the Sleeping Group.

Regarding E and J group, which is based on grade level, both E and J have to sing a hymn about serving God and how we will serve Him. The E class sang “Forever Praise” while J class sang “We Tell the Glory of God”. Another group is presentation group. Presentation group 1 sang about the divine nature of holiness by singing hymn 1, Holy, Holy, Holy, and singing hymn 348, Wonderful Grace of Jesus. Group 2 sang hymn 381, Oh, How I love Jesus. Group 3 sang hymn 130, Joy to the World to represent how joyful we are. Finally my group, group 4 sang about thanking God for blessings, using hymn 90, Count Your Blessings and hymn 393, Thank You Lord. We also have a big choir that sang “Jubilate, Sing to the Lord”.

We also have electives that teach us how to serve the Lord: Choral conducting can help you lead a church choir; Creative instruments helps you teach K kids, as well as learn songs that go along with the instruments; Finale, which is a computer software that helps reprint sheet music and hymnbooks; And instrumental chamber helps you play hymns for the church. I attended the Finale Group, and I learned how to make sheet music and we also had a final presentation of our work from it.

We also learned about the biblical purposes of music. The first purpose is to praise Him, which means all for God. The second reason is self cultivation, which means for us. We have to remember God’s words, like how we remember the “bible books song”. We also have to learn to identify the mood of each hymn. The moods are solemn, which means you are thanking him and exalting which is like being happy about God’s ways.

All “sleeping groups” have their names based on an element in music. For example, our group is called “Mood”. Mood means how the writer felt when the music was composed. There is another group which called timbre, it means you can use another instrument that is more appropriate for the time. We share testimonies and Bible verses that touched us within our sleeping groups. One of the verses that touched me is Phil.3:7, “But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.” Now when I come across a new hymn, I will think about its mood and good timbre for it.

Music camp in a way is an SSC, but it focuses more about music. There is still a prayer room and prayer sessions. At the end of the presentation I realized that music camp ends quickly and much shorter than SSC, and there are people who are willing to come a long way to Southern California, including people from the east coast. I am glad to meet with my old friends and to meet new friends there. I felt it was beneficial, and if I have another opportunity I will come back. May all the glory be unto God.

Preacher: Who is our enemy?
Joshua: The Nazis
Preacher: Where will we go if we don’t worship Jesus?
Deborah: "Downtown"
Counselor asked Timmy: Our theme this SSC is "Living A Life of Victory." What does "being victorious" mean to you?
Timmy: "Winning in sports, battles and wars...."
Count Our Many Blessings During The Past Year

Religious Education

Year 2009-2010

Year End Special Service
TJC in Houston
August 22, 2010
Do You Know These Hymns?

TJC Houston
RE Newsletter

True Jesus Church in Houston
335 Avenue E
Stafford, TX 77477

Phone: 281-208-5260
http://us.tjc.org/houston