

Review on: FLAMES OF HOPE

It has been rightly said the contributions of the ordinary lay man and woman often go unnoticed or even if recognition is given, it is for that moment. Church history is about man's work for God and his meager efforts to build His church. But without these and their passion and diligence, we will not have a history.

This booklet entitled, “**Flames of Hope**” attempts to show just that. It is about generations of families of Tamil Methodist Church, worshipping, serving and handing the baton to their children. There is the hidden silk thread of Hope: hope that children will grow to God's people and His witnesses. Above all else, it is how ardent is our desire to cling onto the Hope of God's promises and realise for ourselves God's faithfulness.

*“The title of the book, **Flames of Hope**, speaks the author's intention very clearly. The tree can only grow upwards, reaching its height if its roots are running deep. It is also an image of a community standing together and adding to the beauty of God's creation. This recorded history adds to the contribution from our laity to this beautiful Church.” [Rev James Nagulan]*

Article by: Veronica R. Poore

Bible Quiz

On the afternoon of the 29th of July, 2012, at Tamil Methodist Church Short Street, teams of women, men and the youths were armed with “swords”, all geared up for a battle. Don't be alarmed! They were armed with their spiritual swords; re-reading and memorising Scripture verses for the Church Bible Quiz 2012.

The three teams comprised the WSCS; the Youths and the Men's Group. As expected, the women were the most prepared as there were also entering the ETAC-WSCS quiz. The youths' strategy was to divide the study text amongst them; smart move! The poor men were scrambling to get participants. The participants were ready for an exciting and enjoyable time to challenge each other's knowledge on the First Epistle to the Corinthians

The quiz prepared, by lady Quiz Master, Mrs Kalaimathi, was divided into five categories: Question and Answer; Charades; Win, Lose or Draw; the Pyramid Game and the Sword Drill. On the prize table were the glittering trophies for the winners, and food hampers for all participants. The observers cum supporters created a joyous atmosphere with their scene of teasing and laughter.

Rev Dr Immanuel Babu started off the first segment (Q&A); the groups showed some nervousness. It was amazing to hear some of the participants' answers which were word perfect. Soon the mood entered into a lighter note when they were quizzed on the charades and WLD. I must say that we do have creative people. Both young and elderly animated the required phrases with much enthusiasm.

The evening came to a close with WSCS team being crowned as the overall winners. The Youths took second place and Men's team was behind by a few points. We thank our dear pastor's wife, Mrs Mathi Nagulan for planning the quiz just as she had done so previously. This programme brought the church families to a greater time of bonding notwithstanding the knowledge gained through the quiz.



KOINONIA Tamil Methodist Church

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Church Calendar

December

- LCEC Installation
- Caroling
- Christmas Service

Ongoing Programmes:
Friday Praise & Prayer
session 7.30pm to 9pm

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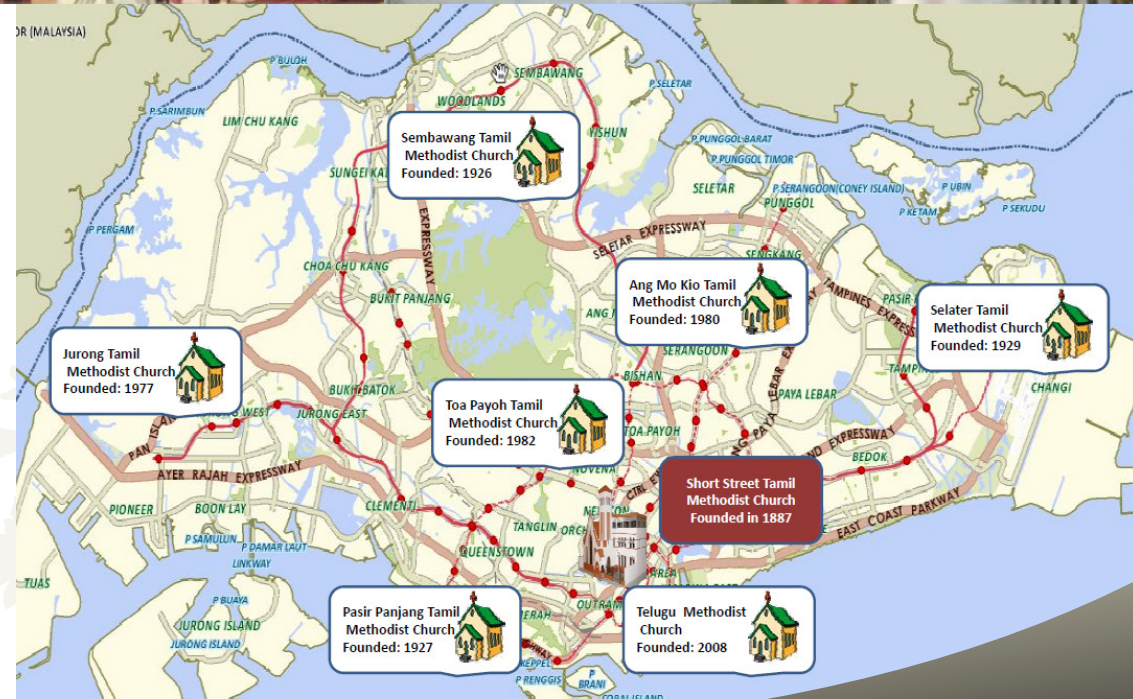
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TMC 125

LOVING GOD, LOVING PEOPLE



Celebrating God's Grace – Loving God, Loving People



On reading John 1:35-51 which tells of Jesus calling His first disciples caused me to once again celebrate God's grace in the life of the Church. Jesus' ministry began with the celebration of His grace towards persons who would follow Him.

Two of John's followers who heard John the Baptist preach that Christ Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah, followed Jesus. One of them, Andrew rejoices over the news and shares it with his brother, Simon. He brings him to Jesus who renames him, "Peter". Later Jesus calls Philip to follow Him. Philip rejoices over the news of knowing who Jesus Christ is; and in turn he shares this news with Nathanael.

One significant comment that the Scripture text makes is that these three disciples came from the same town, Bethsaida. What is so significant about Bethsaida? In Matthew 11:21 we read, *"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes."* Jesus' words against the inhabitants of this town are very harsh.

Though the people from Bethsaida were rebuked as being of an un-repentant heart, these men responded to Christ Jesus' call and followed Him. These men were looking for the arrival of the Messiah and when they found Him they loved Him and followed Him. These same men went looking for other men to bring them to Jesus. What a way to celebrate the love of Jesus Christ!

When Philip approached Nathanael and told him that he had found Jesus of Nazareth, Nathanael responded with disbelief and mockery of the little village. Nazareth. Yet, when Jesus saw Nathanael He loved him and called him "a true Israelite in whom there is no guile". Jesus went beyond prejudice and loved him. This is God's grace.

Celebrating the grace of God is clearly evident in this passage. When we celebrate the birth of Christ in our hearts we also celebrate life. When we find Jesus Christ we cannot but celebrate His Grace that leads us to love God and His people.

The first disciples celebrated the birth of Christ in their lives by bringing others to Christ. These Jews were looking for salvation and when they found it they shared it. Jesus once shared the story of the "Good Samaritan" in response to a question by a Pharisee, "Who is my neighbour?" Today, there are many hurting and suffering in spiritual darkness. We who have found the light of salvation, and are considered as 'Good Samaritans' have a moral and spiritual responsibility to take the light into their darkened lives. This is God's Mission that must be ours.

As we commemorate the 125th Anniversary of the Church, let us celebrate the grace and faithfulness of God Almighty. Let us be Christ's disciples who have understood what it really means to: Love God and Love His People!

*Your Pastor in Christ,
Rev James Nagulan*

TMC125
LOVING GOD, LOVING PEOPLE

Hymn Writing Competition

To celebrate the 125th anniversary of the church, members were given the opportunity to be creative to compose a hymn that would be sung during the anniversary. A total of 13 songs were submitted and scored by the judges. The winning hymn was composed by Melvin Dineshraj. Below is what inspired him to write the song.

*"I was inspired by the stately tune, which has been a favorite of mine ever since I first performed it 12 years ago. I knew it then as the theme from the *Jupiter* movement of Gustav Holst's orchestral suite *The Planets*. I recently discovered that the tune had been used in a popular Anglican hymn – *I Vow to Thee My Country*. One particular rendition of that hymn evoked an incomparable sense of grandeur and fervor in me. I wanted to recreate these emotions, befitting of memorable occasions like TMC's 125th anniversary, which is why I penned the following lines to the same tune."*

LOVING GOD, LOVING PEOPLE

O-o God, our Shield, our For-tress, Protector through the years
We proclaim your works of wo-nders, the Victor o'er our fears,
Wi-th love as you have taught us, wi-th love for all to see
That your hand is upon us, this reason we are free.
Wi-th heart and soul and mi-nd, we will love you endlessly,
Lifting up our voices, prai-sing you for eternity.

O-o Christ, the spotless La-mb, who for us did sacrifice
Perfect love, by which we're ran-somed, our living for a price
Th-is love, we strive to follow, th-is love, we share with Man,
With the weak and the needy, who live upon our land.
Wi-th Christ, our end in mi-nd, we are heeders of His Call,
Then our love will be a bea-con that lights the hearts of all

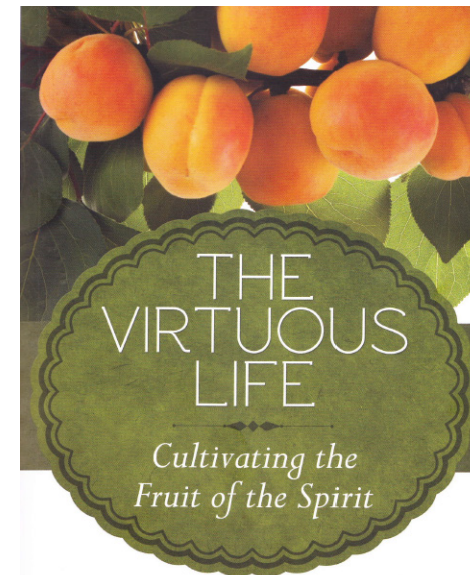
O-o Church, our time has co-me now, shine forth for all to see
That our charge to serve in Holy Love, is of the high'st degree
Thro-ugh love, we find our purpose, thro-ugh love, the nations hear
Of the Savior Christ Jesus, with Hi-m all is clear
'Loving God and Loving Peo-ple', this vision we'll strive for
Then His Church will stand fore-ver, we'll stand forever more.

"In an age when character is increasingly in short supply, it is important to think of the virtuous life which we are called to live in. It is God the Father's will that we should all become like Jesus. But how should we do this?" – extract from *The Virtuous Life* by Robert M Solomon

The Virtuous Life provides a guide into "how we are to depend entirely on God's grace and how we can respond to it by cultivating the fruit of the spirit in our day and age." In commemoration of our 125th Anniversary, Tamil Methodist Church has released 500 special edition copies. Get your copy today before it is sold out.

Article by: Melvin Dineshraj

The Virtuous Life



ROBERT M SOLOMON

The TMC Healthy Carnival



TMC125
LOVING GOD, LOVING PEOPLE

**125 வருடங்களாகத் தேவனுடைய கிருபை –
தேவனிடத்தில் அன்பு கூரு , மக்களிடத்தில் அன்பு கூரு**

The TMC Healthy Carnival was held in Short Street Tamil Methodist Church on 11th August 2012. It was a community outreach programme with health screening and blood donation drive being held for the first time in the Church. To make the event successful, a committee was set up to plan and liaise with the various external organizations including SATA, Red Cross and the Tamil daily, Tamil Murasu,

Every level of the Church ground was used for the Carnival. Setting the stage was the car park, which was turned into a carnival ground with garage sale, face painting services by Anglo-Chinese Junior College (ACJC), games stalls, food stalls, mini barbecue and more. For those who prefer quiet time, Christian movies were screened at the sanctuary. The social hall was turned into a mini health screen and blood donation centre. As early as 9am, staff from SATA and Red Cross set up the hall with all the necessary equipment, instruments and beds. Many Church members, fellow ETAC Church members and friends started streaming in to get their health checked and to donate blood.

Nothing was short at the carnival ground! The garage sale went on with items such as books, costume jewellery, clothes, shoes, handbags and toys. They were selling off very fast as the crowds came in. These items were donated by Church members. The highlight of the sale was the auctioning of branded handbags donated by one of our Church member. Another major 'attraction' during the carnival was the chicken briyani. It was sold off within minutes when Pastor opened his stall. He had to place second order from the caterer. As it is typical of Singaporeans, a long queue was formed awaiting the delivery of briyani. Children kept themselves busy by playing games such as indoor golf and knocking down cans and face painting. The latter was done by students from ACJC who demonstrated their artistic talents by painting the faces of the young and old. Tamil Murasu reporter was present to cover the event and published an article the following day.

The carnival came to end at 5pm. We would like to thank everyone for their support in making this event a successful one.



யோவான் எழுதின சுவிசேஷம் ஒன்றாம் அதிகாரத்தில் எழுதப்பட்டிருக்கும் முதல் சீடனின், அழைப்பை எண்ணும்போது நம் திருச்சபையின் ஊழிய வரலாற்றில் தேவனுடைய இரக்கத்தை மீண்டுமாகக் கொண்டாடத் தூண்டுகிறது. இயேசு கிறிஸ்துவின் ஊழியம் அவரின் கிருபையை முன் வைத்து தொடங்கியது. பரிசுத்த யோவான் எழுதிய சுவிசேஷம் 1: 35 -51 -ல் இயேசுவானவர், முதல் முதலாக சில சீஷர்களை அழைக்கும் கதையை வாசிக்கிறோம். பரிசுத்த யோவானுடைய பிரசங்கத்தைக் கேட்டு இரு சீஷர்கள் இயேசுவுக்குப் பின் சென்றார்கள். அவரில் ஒருவரான அந்திரேயா இந்த நற்செய்தியில் களிகூர்ந்து, தனது சகோதரனான பேதுருவையும் இயேசுவிடம் கொண்டு வந்தான். பின்பு, இயேசுவானவர் பிலிப்புவைக் கண்டு கொண்டார். பின்னர் அவனும் அவருக்குப் பின் சென்றான். பிலிப்பு, இயேசு கிறிஸ்துவை அறிந்து கொண்ட சந்தோஷத்தை நாத்தான்வேலிடம் சென்று பகிர்ந்து கொண்டான்.

இந்த வேதபகுதி கூறும் மற்றொரு கருத்து என்னவெனில், இந்த மூன்று சீடர்களும் பெத்சாயிதா என்னும் ஒரே பட்டணத்தைச் சேர்ந்தவர்கள். இந்தப் பெத்சாயிதா பட்டணத்திற்குக் குறிப்பிடத்தக்க முக்கியத்துவம் என்ன? மத்தேயு 11:21ல் இயேசு, “கோராசினே! உனக்கு ஐயோ, பெத்சாயிதாவே! உனக்கு ஐயோ, உங்களில் செய்யப்பட்ட பலத்த செய்கைகள் தீருவிலும் சீதோனிலும் செய்யப்பட்டிருந்தால் அப்பொழுதே இரட்டுத்தி சாம்பலில் உட்கார்ந்து மனம் திரும்பியிருப்பார்கள்.” என்று கூறுவதை வாசிக்கிறோம். இந்தப் பட்டணத்திற்கு எதிரான இயேசுவின் வார்த்தைகள் மிகவும் கடினமானது.

தங்கள் கடின இருதயத்தின் காரணமாக கண்டிக்கப்பட்ட பட்டணத்திலிருந்து வந்திருந்தாலும், இந்த நபர்கள், கிறிஸ்துவின் அழைப்பிற்குப் பதிலளித்து அவருக்குப் பின் சென்றார்கள். இவர்கள் ஒரு மேசியாவுக்காக ஆவலுடன் எதிர்பார்த்திருந்த வேளையில், இயேசுவைக் கண்டு, அவரில் அன்பு கூர்ந்து அவருக்குப் பின் சென்றார்கள். இந்த நபர்கள் பின்பு மற்றவர்களைத் தேடி அவர்களை இயேசுவிடம் கொண்டு வந்தார்கள். இப்படி இவர்கள் இயேசு கிறிஸ்துவைக் கொண்டாடினார்கள்.

ஆண்டவருடைய கிருபையைக் கொண்டாடுவதை இந்தச் சிறிய வேத பகுதியானது தெளிவாகக் காட்டுகிறது. நமது உள்ளங்களில் கிறிஸ்து உதயமாகும்போது நமது வாழ்க்கையில் ஒரு புதிய கொண்டாட்டம். நாம் இயேசு கிறிஸ்துவைக் கண்டுகொள்ளும் போது, ஆண்டவரையும் அவருடைய ஜனத்தையும் நேசிப்பதற்காக நம்மை தூண்டிய அவருடைய கிருபையைக் கொண்டாடாமல் இருக்க முடியாது.

பிலிப்பு, நாத்தான்வேலை அணுகி தான் நாசரேத்துரானாகிய இயேசுவைக் கண்டேன் என்று கூறிய போது, நாத்தான்வேல் நம்பிக்கை அற்றவனாக, சிறு ஊராகிய நாசரேத்தைப் பற்றி பரிசாசமாகக் கூறினான். ஆயினும், இயேசு நாத்தான்வேலைக் கண்டபோது அவனிடம் அன்புகூர்ந்து அவனை, “இதோ கபடற்ற உத்தம இஸ்ரவேலன்” என்று அழைத்தார். இயேசுவானவர் அவனுடைய தப்பான எண்ணத்தையும் கடந்து அவனிடம் அன்பு கூர்ந்தார்.

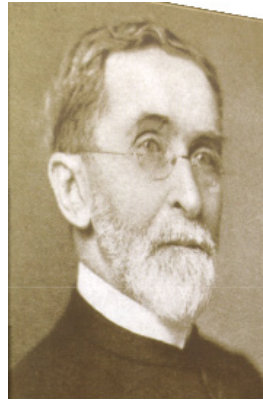
முதல் சீஷர்கள், மற்றவர்களைக் கிறிஸ்துவுக்குள் கொண்டு வந்ததன் மூலமாக, தங்கள் வாழ்வில் கிறிஸ்துவின் பிறப்பைக் கொண்டாடினார்கள். யூதர்கள் வரவேண்டிய தங்கள் இரட்சிப்பை எதிர்பார்த்திருந்தனர். அதை அவர்கள் இயேசுவிடம் கண்டவுடன் உடனே மற்றவர்களுடன் பகிர்ந்து கொண்டனர். பரிசேயன் ஒருவன் “என் அயலான் யார்?” இயேசுவிடம் கேட்டபோது இயேசு நல்ல சமாரியனின் கதையைப் பகிர்ந்து கொண்டார். இன்று அநேகர் உள்ளங்களில் வேதனையோடும் வாழ்வில் துயரத்தோடும் வாழ்ந்து கொண்டிருக்கிறார்கள். நாம், இரட்சிப்பின் ஒளியைக் கண்டு கொண்டவர்களாக, அவர்களின் இருண்ட வாழ்வில் நல்ல சமாரியர்களாக ஒளியைக் கொண்டு வர வேண்டிய பொறுப்புடையவர்களாக இருக்கிறோம்.

நாம் திருச்சபையின் 125- ஆண்டு விழாவை நெருங்கும் வேளையில், சர்வ வல்லமையுள்ள தேவனுடைய கிருபையைக் கொண்டாட நினைவு கூருவோம். தேவனிடத்திலும் மக்களிடத்திலும் அன்பு கூருவதை உண்மையாகப் புரிந்து கொண்ட கிறிஸ்துவின் சீஷர்களாக வாழ்வோம்.

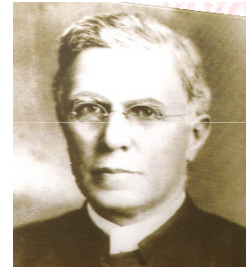
போதகர் ஜேம்ஸ் நகுலன்

A HERITAGE INHERITED

TMC125
LOVING GOD, LOVING PEOPLE



Even while Methodism in Singapore was still in its infancy, in 1885, the call to preach God's Word amongst the Tamil-speaking was responded to by Dr. James Thoburn, then the Presiding Elder of the South India Conference of the Methodist Church. With his wife and missionaries Rev. William Oldham and musical accompanist Miss Julia Bettie he had arrived, unannounced, in Singapore in 1885. Two weeks later the Methodist Church was formed with 26 members. Worship services were in English. But Singapore was a melting pot of Asiatic people of different languages and religions and God needed men and women to minister to various language groups.



William F. Oldham, having been raised in India and Tamil-speaking, was drawn to minister to the Tamil immigrant prisoners, labourers, and other Tamils living within the Serangoon and Middle Road areas. Saturday evangelistic meetings with small groups and Sunday worship services were held for these Tamil-speakers.

In 1885/1886 Mr. M. Gnanamutu, a catechist from Burma worked with Oldham conducted evangelistic meeting for Tamil groups and prisoners. Records state that Gnanamuthu was one of the first Tamil evangelists in Singapore.



The Rev. G.W. Underwood, a Tamil Christian from Ceylon was brought in by Oldham to marshal a growing ministry amongst the Tamils and meet the need for an organized church. Thus, barely a year after the first Methodist Church [Wesley MC] was formed; God's faithful servants built His church: the first Tamil congregation was formed and the Tamil Methodist Church was constituted in 1887.



The hallmark of Methodism in Singapore, as in all regions where God's Word was spread was: education. Mr. Simon Peter is recorded to be one of the first tutors to 45 Tamil-speaking boys. The one-classroom- School known as the Anglo-Tamil Boys' School was housed in Buffalo Road.



In 1887, with Miss Sophia Blackmore, Rev Underwood the pastor of TMC started the first school, for girls, in TMC which has sited opposite our present church. This was the first home of Methodist Girls' School before it moved to Mt. Sophia.

It is worthy of note that almost every one of our early pastors was a school teacher of ACS. Their contributions to the church extended into the lives of a multi-racial community of school boys who were nurtured by Tamil pastors.



Besides preaching and teaching the Good News and planting other Tamil Methodist Churches, TMC never failed to reach out to the community at large through evangelism and Christian social concerns. Beginning with ministering to families of Tamil prisoners, the women and later the WSCS-TMC had and still has a record of service and outreach outside the church. The work of these godly women brought families into the fold of the church.

We celebrate an inherited rich heritage. We have the joy of witnessing that God has preserved this church throughout the past 125 years. *Tamil Methodist Church from: humble dwellings of a shed has moved to a three-storey buildings; a single worship service to 3 worship services today; from a membership of 20 men and women to 300 today; one church it has given birth to 7 other Tamil churches and formed an Annual Conference; one congregation it has housed a number of congregations of other languages, and today houses 2 full church congregations in other languages; from a few faithful servants to countless God's men and women to preach and teach and serve within and beyond Singapore; receiving missionaries it has prepared and sent missionaries to take the Gospel of Christ beyond these shores; receiving to have our members serve in less-privileged regions in SE Asia; humble beginnings, much, much more has been done! All this we celebrate because this is the Grace of God to Tamil Methodist Church.*



To God be the Glory for His unchanging faithfulness to men and women who responded to His call to build His Church of people irrespective of creed and colour.

From our heritage we learn that God's work will have to continue because He has commanded it to be so. Christ expects of His church that each one should use the gifts given to him/her to build up His body. It begins with loving God with a pure heart and loving one another so that the world will know that we are His disciples.

To God we commit ourselves for today and all the tomorrows for all that God has prepared to accomplish through this generation of His servants; and with God's grace our children and those who are received into the fold of Tamil Methodist Church will celebrate a richer inheritance.

HE LIVES and we live in HIM

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