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5 Signs There's Idolatry in Your Church

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GRACE ASSEMBLY OF GOD MICA (P) 036/02/2014

GRACE ASSEMBLY -

A Missional Family Church

Let me reiterate the vision and direction again which I shared recently.

There are two important Scriptures.

THE GREAT COMMANDMENT

Matthew 22:37-39 NIV

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.'

• THE GREAT COMMISSION

Matthew 28:19-20 NIV

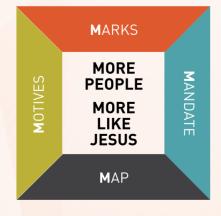
Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

The vision and direction of Grace Assembly are wrapped up around these two passages, which can be depicted as a Vision Frame.

Vision Frame:

In the Vision Frame, there are 4 Ms, each of the M explains the What, Why, How and When in accomplishing the vision of Grace Assembly.

VISION FRAME



MANDATE

It defines what the Church is ultimately supposed to do.

(What are we doing?)

'To fulfill the Great Commission by obeying the Great Commandments'.

Matthew 22:37-40; 28:18-20

MOTIVES

It is the shared convictions that guide the actions and reveal the strengths of the Church.

(Why are we doing it?)

- . Live Life Missionally
- Obey God Radically
- Value People Wholeheartedly
- Engage Our World Creatively

MAP

It is the process or picture that demonstrates how the Church will accomplish its mandate on the broadest level.

(How are we doing it?)

- . Impactful Worship Service
- . Intimate Small Groups
- Intentional Discipleship
- Intercessory Prayer
- . Incarnational Outreach

MARKS

It is a set of attributes in an individual's life that define or reflect the accomplishment of the Church's mission.

(When are we successful?)

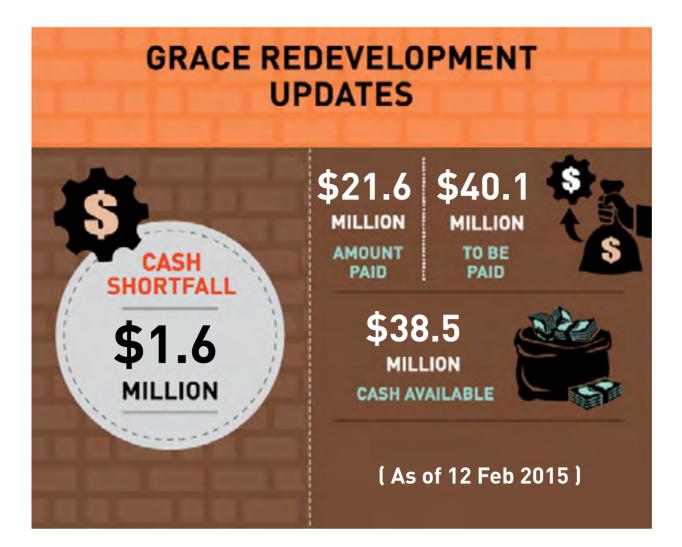
'BIO'

- Before God Daily
- . In The Family Weekly
- . On Mission 24/7

So together as a Missional Family Church, we want to see 'MORE PEOPLE MORE LIKE JESUS'!

Senior Pastor

Pastor Calvin Lee



54th ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING (ABM) MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The 54th ABM will be held on 20 March 2015 (Friday) at GII Sanctuary, Level 2.

We thank those who have updated their membership details online or have returned the hardcopy forms to us. To find out whether you have updated your membership successfully, please log on to http://www.graceaog.org/register, and click on "ABM Status".

In accordance to the Church Constitution, members are required to update their membership details, whether there are any changes to your particulars or not, at least 2 weeks before the 54th ABM (by 5 March 2015) to be eligible for voting at the Meeting. Members who are 18 years old and above are qualified to vote.

If you did not receive your membership update letter from Grace Assembly, we encourage you to go to the church office, to call or to email us (please see church info below) with details of your name, NRIC no, home address, contacts and the service that you are attending.

Grace Assembly of God Admin Office, Level 3 1 Bukit Batok West Avenue 4, Singapore 659125 Phone 64100800; Email cms@graceaog.org



SERMON SERIES: JANUARY-MARCH 2015

ORDINARY EXTRA PEOPLE ORDINARY DOWNERS

ORDINARY PEOPLE, EXTRAORDINARY POWER

- THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE LIVES OF OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS "... David had served God's purpose in his own generation ..." Acts 13:36

They were prime ministers, craftsmen, captains, builders and kings – ordinary men transformed to extraordinary leaders through the gifting and power of the Holy Spirit. Whether it was in administrative or creative work, in prophetic action or words, and in times of peace or war, they depended on the power of the Spirit of God. How can the stories and journeys of Joseph, Bezalel, Gideon, David, Elisha, Daniel, Zechariah and Solomon, speak to us today? What relevant lessons can we learn from the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the Old Testament characters? Old is gold. Come and be inspired by these timeless tales in the first quarter of 2015 to live the extraordinary life that God has called us to live.

- (1) Lead with Extraordinary Influence: Joseph, Moses, Joshua
- (2) Work with Extraordinary Gifting: Bezalel, Oholiab
- (3) Battle with Extraordinary Courage: Othniel, Gideon, Jepthah
- (4) **Defend with Extraordinary Strength:** Samson
- (5) Walk with Extraordinary Guidance:
 David
- (6) Minister with Extraordinary Power: Elijah, Elisha
- (7) Speak with Extraordinary Insight:
 Balaam, Amasai, Daniel,
 Ezekiel, Micah
- (8) **Build with Extraordinary Grace:** Zechariah

ACCEPTANCE OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

BAPTISED CANDIDATES

- 1 Felder Kwek Wei Siang (GI Mandarin)
- 2 Angelita Corpuz Magno
- 3 Darren Paro Raguero
- 4 Franz Jeaneth Retuta
- 5 Jakielyn M Vuelta
- 6 Lea Pelayan Miranda
- 7 Magielyn Malagayo Ferrer
- 8 Mary Rose Ramos Alacon
- 9 Melvin Garcia Relucio
- 10 Rednazela Viray Bayaua
- 11 Catherine Lim
- 12 Chee Wai San
- 13 Chua Yi Jin Daphne
- 14 Darren Neo Eng Jye
- 15 Edelia Tan
- 16 Eiko Oda
- 17 Elijah Yuen
- 18 Fock Zhi Hao Sebastian
- 19 Ho Joo Hong Jonah
- 20 Liew Li Ching
- 21 Michael Lim Kim Jiat
- 22 Ng Chiew Huey
- 23 Shirley Ho Ying Wah
- 24 Wee Zi Ying
- 25 Yvonne Ang Shi Fun

R-AGErs (18 years old in 2014)

- 26 Chia Wynn Tat Dominic
- 27 Danelle Lim Yun
- 28 Echando Airam Micah De Gozman
- 29 Marinela Abrogar Abogado
- 30 Ng Qi Li Emily
- 31 Siva Esther
- 32 Soon Duan Zhi Benedict

TRANSFERRED MEMBERSHIP

- 33 Georgina Ho
- 34 Goh Yong Seng Jeffrey
- 35 Kay Ren Shiang
- 36 Lim Choong Yan Grace
- 37 Swan Huey Ling Janet
- 38 Wileen Tan Yi San
- 39 Wilfred Tan Ban Hock
- 40 Winna Tan Yi An
- 41 Winnie Tan Yi Jun

VOLUNTEERS FOR GRACE BOOKSTORE

If you are interested to serve in bookstores at the new GI and current GII, please email your details to bookstore@graceaog.org

Churchwide Events: February-April 2015

19 Feb (Thu) Chinese New Year service (combined) GII Sanctuary 9.30am
20 Mar (Fri) Annual Business Meeting (ABM) GII Sanctuary
28 Mar-24 May (Suns) Operation GO! MSC, Furama, GII

1 Apr (Wed) J333 Prayer meeting (combined) SJSM 7.30pm
3 Apr (Fri) Good Friday services GII Sanctuary 9am, 11.15am

4-5 Apr Missions Conference GII Sanctuary

Ministry Events: February 2015

4. 11 Feb (Weds) Women of Grace WOG 1 GII Praise Room 10am 5 Feb (Thu) Power Encounter meeting (Chinese) GII Chapel 7.30pm 7. 28 Feb (Sats) Women of Grace WOG 2 Orchard Plaza 10am 7 Feb (Sat) R-AGE Parents' Circle I GII Sanctuary 9.30am 14 Feb (Sat) YAYP, Grace Kids services 3rd Space, B1 China Sq Central 5pm 14 Feb (Sat) Cantonese service Queenstown Lutheran Church 5pm 21 Feb (Sat) GFM Couples' Night Furama Jupiter III 7pm 26 Feb (Thu) GDP class 103 GII Glory Room 7.30pm

Event details are subject to changes, please refer to www.graceaog.org for latest info & updates.

WORLD PRAYER @ J333



"My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations." - Isaiah 56:7

For World Prayer this month, we are praying for Bangladesh.

Religious discrimination and tensions are rising rapidly, as forced reconversion to Islam becomes an increasing threat. Christians, who only make up 1% of the population, face intense persecution, to the extent of destruction of properties and often times, death. Despite these persecutions, God's goodness abounds, there is encouraging growth among the believers, both inside and outside the country's conventional church structures. As Grace Missions continues to train and send workers there, let us unite as a church, to pray for the nation of Bangladesh!

Focus: Grace Missions Partners in Bangladesh

Date : 11 February 2015 (Wednesday)

Time: 7.30 - 8.30pm

Venue: St John's St Margaret's church (SJSM), 30 Dover Ave, Singapore 139790

For enquires, email to matthew.tan@graceaog.org

J333 PRAYER MEETINGS

4 Feb New Grace – A People Moving in the Spirit!

11 Feb World Prayer – Praying for Bangladesh

18 Feb NO J333

25 Feb Missional Living – Gracians as Light in the Marketplace

Venue: St John's St Margaret's

Church (SJSM), L3 Glory Sanctuary, 30 Dover Avenue, Singapore 139790

Time: Wednesdays, 7.30 – 8.30pm



CHURCHWIDE

The Holy Land Tour

An Israel & Jordan Biblical Tour (12 Days 10 Nights) is planned on 5-16 December 2015!

The estimated cost* per person is as follows:

Adult @ S\$3,640 (twin sharing) Child @ S\$3,400 (bed sharing room with adults)

* includes airfare, majority of meals, local transport/transfer by coach buses & accommodation, excluding airline fuel surcharge & airport taxes (approx \$650).

If you are interested and would like to better appreciate the Holy Scriptures:

Step 1: jot down & save these dates in your calendar!

Step 2: email your name and contact details to jacilia.ong@graceaog.org

Note that due to limited spaces, reservations are on a first-come-first-serve basis.

The Tour is organized solely for GRACIANS only.

More detailed information will be emailed to you.



CHURCHWIDE

Grace House Kindergarten @GII Intake For Year 2016 Is Open For Registration For Church Members

Date: 6 March 2015 (Friday)

Time: 9.00 – 11.00am Venue: GII, Level 4

You are cordially invited! Registration for Nursery 1, Nursery 2, Kindergarten 1 & Kindergarten 2 (children born between 2010 to 2013) is now open. Please bring along your child's birth cert, health book, both parents' NRICs, and Church membership certificate or letter. Registration fee and deposit (a total of \$534) are to be paid on the day of registration.

For more information, please contact:

Evelyn Tay Tel: 6899-8851

Email: evetay@gracehouse.com.sg Website: www.gracehouse.com.sg



MINISTRIES

Saturday Services On 14 Feb 2015

On Sat 14 Feb 2015, Saturday services at My Saviour's Church (MSC) will be moved to the following locations (see maps provided):

| Services | Location | Services timing |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| YAYP service | The 3rd Space, China Square Central | 5.00-7.00pm |
| Grace Kids Children's church | The 3rd Space, China Square Central | 5.00-7.00pm |
| Grace Kids Pre-School | The 3rd Space, China Square Central | 5.00-7.00pm |
| Cantonese service | Queenstown Lutheran Church | 5.00-7.00pm |



The 3rd Space

18 Cross Street #B1-05, China Square Central Singapore 048423 http://www.chinasquarecentral.com/getting-here



Queenstown Lutheran Church

709 Commonwealth Drive Singapore 149601 http://www.qlc.org.sg/about-us/service-times-and-location/





RETREAT RATES

| ROOM TYPE | ATTENDING GRACE | NOT ATTENDING GRACE |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | RATES ON SELF DRIVE ¹ | RATES ON SELF DRIVE ¹ |
| Single | \$530 | \$664 |
| Single Senior ² | \$465 | \$664 |
| Twin | \$370 | \$488 |
| Twin Senior ² | \$350 | \$488 |
| Triple | \$350 | \$464 |
| Triple (Youth) | \$280 | \$464 |
| Children | \$160 | \$255 |
| Extra mattress | \$120 | \$120 |

1. Prices for self-drive, if you require transport, it will be additional SGD\$20 per person.

2. 60 years old and above



中文事工 =

「…你要尽心,尽性,尽意,尽力,爱主你的神。 其次,就是说,要爱人如己。再没有比 这两条诫命更大的了。」(可12:29-31)

服从诫命来完成大使命是我们恩典堂使命家庭教会的使命宣言。要尽心、尽性和尽意爱我们的神需要我们有能力和意愿掌控我们的意志和情感。从真理或过程来看像是显而易明的步骤实践起来却不是这么容易。从智商和逻辑思考的层面,即使我们明白并愿意接受和服从圣经的诫命,我们的情感还是由不得我们去掌控。所以保罗在7:15 "因为我所作的,我自己不明白。我所愿意的,我并不作。我所恨恶的,我倒去作"。我们就如保罗一样,在这成圣的过程中仍然有我们罪恶的本性在影响我们,这本性一般来说就是我们借着每一天情感所带动而行出来的行为和生命。而我们的情感有先天和后天的影响。圣经启示,我们是按着神的形象所造。神也有不同的"情感"。祂有哀伤,(创 6:5 -6),愤怒(出32:9-10),喜悦(太 3:17),担忧(赛63:10)和喜爱(诗 149:4)等等。但是神的"情感"是建立在爱和使人从迷失中寻回生命为出发点,而我们一搬情感的出发点是建立在自私和自我或有限的基础上。信徒如果以圣经的启示来反映他们情感的出发点和目的,就能有效的借着时间和服从真理来管理他们的情感。所以,加5:22-23圣灵的果子就是仁爱,喜乐,和平,忍耐,恩慈,良善,信实,温柔,节制。这样的事,没有律法禁止。我们是不能用意志来控制我们的情感,但是借着服从真理和圣灵在我们的里面运行,我们是可以管理好我们的情感而收割圣灵的果子。

配合教会一系列的活动和计划,恩典堂的家庭生活事工在2014年10月份就办了健康情感和灵命的讲座。我们相信借着我们的愿意和教会的带动,家庭生活事工可以为教会和信徒在服从大诫命和完成大使命上有一定的贡献。











congratulations!

Heartiest congratulations to the following couples, may the Lord continue to bless, protect & guide them with love & wisdom as they embark & commit to new journeys in their lives together!

14 FEBRUARY 2015 - KELVIN LOW AND CHRISTY LIM

Grace Discipleship Process

BAPTISM & MEMBERSHIP CLASSES

Dates: 26 February 2015 (Baptism - 'The Key to a New Life')

5 March 2015 (Membership -'Life in a New Family')

Time: 7.30 - 9.30pm Venue: GII L1 Glory Room

Water Baptism will be held at Furama Riverfront Hotel, L5 Jacuzzi pool, on 5 April 2015 (Sunday), 10:45am

Sign up for this course if you would like to be water baptized. For those of you who have yet to transfer church membership, become an official member now. Sign up via www.graceaog.org/gdp. Registration closes on 15 February 2015.

FEATURED STAFF

Kenneth Yeo



Hi, my name is Kenneth Yeo and I have been serving in the youth ministry for 8 years. I worked at Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS) before joining as fulltime staff in Nov 2014. Well you know the life transforming impact Jesus had on tax collectors so here I am in R-AGE! I didn't expect God to call me to fulltime ministry but all that changed during Grace Retreat 2008 when Pastor Zane Anderson prophesied over my life. From then on, I witnessed how

God showed His favor and opened doors for me to fully serve Him.

God changed my life through R-AGE. Through looking after a bunch of crazy young people, He taught me what love, grace and belief is truly like. And as I love and believe in the young people, I experienced His love and belief in me. That has shaped and molded me to be the person that I am today. The one thing that keeps me going in ministry is watching the young people blossom into God-fearing world changers. Whenever I see a young person become so passionate for Christ, the joy is indescribable. Dwight L Moody once said, "the world has yet to see what God can do with a man fully consecrated to him." Imagine what the world would be like when every young person fully consecrates his/her life to Christ!

One other thing about me is that I enjoy sports a lot, especially soccer. I wish I could play soccer every day, if my knees permit. And I am a huge Manchester United fan. On match days, you can probably hear me cheering United on at the top of my lungs. GGMU!

5 SIGNS THERE'S IDOLATRY — IN YOUR CHURCH



he greatest sin in the Bible by far is the sin of idolatry. Idolatry is the main reason why God rebuked and judged the nation of Israel. (Read the major and minor prophets as well as the books of Kings and Chronicles.) Idolatry is when we violate the first of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:3), which says, "You shall have no other gods before Me." It is when we put something or someone first in our life, before the living and true God. Idolatry is the root cause of all other sins—which is why the first two commandments dealt with this. While the church today is focusing on various sins related to human sexuality and lifestyle choices—many in the church who may not fit into these two categories may be deluded into believing they are OK even though they may be breaking the greatest commandment.

The following are five signs of idolatry in the church based on my perspective of serving as a lead pastor for 30 years as well as extensive extra-local apostolic ministry to churches.

1) THE IDOL OF CELEBRITY PREACHERS

There are believers who run all over the country attending conferences of well-known preachers. Often, when they meet them in person, they fawn all over them and almost faint. Some well-known ministers cannot even go out in public without constantly getting stopped by admirers so they can take "selfies" with them. (Since I know and have worked with many of them, I have seen this first hand.) Although I am a proponent of having a culture of honor and respect for those leaders who labor among us (Hebrews 13:7, 17), some people have stepped over the edge into idolatry. They follow everything they say without question and irrespective of scandal, and they do not search the

Scriptures themselves to see if what is preached aligns with God's Word. When Cornelius met the apostle Peter and bowed down before him, Peter rightly told him to get up, that he was only a man like himself (Acts 10). There is nothing wrong with emulating or following a leader, but there is something wrong with idolizing a Christian leader. There is such a pervasive "celebrity preacher" culture in the body of Christ today that some huge churches and enterprises have literally closed down when their celebrity preacher stepped down. If churches and ministries would build according to the New Testament pattern in which the whole body exists to edify and minister to one another in love, then we would not depend merely upon one leader for the congregation to function (Ephesians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 12).

2) THE IDOL OF WORSHIP/ENTERTAINMENT

There are many believers who flock to churches that have skilled singers and music primarily to get entertained. Consequently, many of the believers don't realize that they are putting self-gratification and entertainment before true worship. Years ago, many churches would not even have musical instruments and people would flock to churches anyway—even though the congregation only used hymnals and sang a cappella for worship. Now, it is very common for pastors to budget a large amount of money to pay for professional singers and musicians in order to fill their church services with people. In my opinion, even though we are called to worship with excellence and skill—we have gone too far in the church and have mingled as a core value the entertainment culture of the world. At the end of the day, whether we have worship performed by professionals, use merely a CD or sing a cappella, congregations should worship

5 SIGNS THERE'S IDOLATRY IN YOUR CHURCH

and adore Him just the same—in spirit and truth—which is the only kind of worship God seeks (John 4:23-24). Those who leave their local church to attend another church with better "worship," in my opinion, are often guilty of idolatry since they cannot worship God from their heart without being entertained by professionals.

3) THE IDOL OF PERSONAL PROSPERITY

There are believers whose main motive is to use their faith to leverage influence with God for personal gain. Although God delights in blessing all of His children (3 John 2), but Jesus told us to seek first His Kingdom and righteousness, and our material needs will be added to us (Matthew 6:33). Many attempt to use the benevolent character of God to live a myopic life in which Christianity orbits around the universe of self. God has given us power to get wealth so we can spread His covenant to the whole earth—not merely so we can live a life of ease. I believe that using our faith to put our own needs first is a form of idolatry.

4) THE IDOL OF OBJECTIFYING GOD

Although this point is similar to the previous point, I felt there was enough of a distinction to separate them. Through the years I have seen many in the church preach and promote an "I," "me" and "my" culture. That is to say, much of the preaching deals with self-actualization, fulfillment and therapy rather than sound, biblical theology calling believers to live a life of service. Pastors have often fed into the cultural idolatry of the people in order to attract people into the church—something that displeases God (see Ezekiel 44:10, 12). I have observed that there are too few "cross-carrying" disciples attending churches—but many use God when they need Him. Many come to church to "feel" the presence of God but are not committed to knowing and loving the "person" of God.

Many come to church merely to feel good instead of being equipped to do good works (Ephesians 2:10). Many come to "get a word" instead of coming to "give a word" of edification to somebody (Isaiah 50:4; Ephesians 4:29). Many come to listen to rhetorical messages that excite the emotions with no intention of walking out the word. Many come to shout amen, being deceived into believing that because they shouted, they have already obeyed. Consequently, there are many believers who live no differently than their unbelieving neighbors, which is why megachurches do not always result in "megacultural" influence, and why church growth doesn't always result in personal and societal transformation. Although many have attended church for decades, they have never matured and are still drinking pabulum, never having digested the meat of the Word (1 Corinthians 3:1-3).

5) THE IDOL OF ETHNICITY

There are many believers who have allowed their ethnicity and culture to trump the Word of God. Jesus said culture is even stronger than the Word of God in some people's lives (Mark 7:7-8). Consequently, people read the Scriptures through their Caucasian/Western, Afro-centric, Hispanic or Asian lenses. One of the most important things to do in regards to receiving the Word of God for personal transformation is to attempt to take ourselves out of our own skin and read the Bible through the eyes of the authors original intent—something only the Holy Spirit can accomplish. There is no such thing as a Western European Caucasian Bible or an Afro-centric Bible. We need to stop reading the Scriptures merely through our ethnic lens because the truth is that the Bible was written with a Hebraic mindset and it is foolish to think we can fully understand it with our contemporary ethnic mindset. Consequently, believers often act and react no different from non-believers in regards to things that happen in contemporary society. White, black and brown believers have generally reacted far different from one another when it comes to interpreting immigration reform and the tragedies of the Ferguson shooting and Eric Garner death. Truly, I believe that the gospel is so powerful that it is possible for diverse Christians to come together with one voice and prophetically interpret, speak into and bring solutions to these painful and controversial issues!

God is not color blind, since He made humans black, brown, yellow, red and white in His own image. Hence, He designed us to have distinctions in culture regarding food, dress, language and other things based upon ethnic nuances. However, these distinctions are not where believers should derive their primary identity or anchor their biblical ethics, for in Christ there is neither male nor female, black, white or brown, for we are all one in Christ (Galatians 3:28). When our ethnic thinking trumps our biblical thinking, we are guilty either of ignorance or ethnic idolatry. Unless or until the body of Christ gets over its idolatry according to ethnicity, we will never become the generation that can disciple the nations (or in other words, ethnic people groups as shown in Matthew 28:19). Since there is no neutrality, either the church will disciple the nations or the nations will disciple the church!

Joseph Mattera is overseeing bishop of Resurrection Church and Christ Covenant Coalition, in Brooklyn, New York, US.

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GRACE MISSIONS

GO AND PRAY, PRAY AND GO BY JASMIN LOW

Andrew Murray, one of the forerunners of the Pentecostal movement knew the significance of prayer in world missions, and wrote: "The man who mobilizes the Christian church to pray will make the greatest contribution to world evangelization in history."

In January 2015, Grace Missions re-launched World Prayer @J333 as we seek to cover the world in prayer and help you be passionate for world missions. If you are eager to see the advancement of the gospel, then you will be eager to pray for the nations! There is an important place for prayer in God's purposes for the world. Through prayer, God responds to His people, allowing great things to happen. In Isaiah 37:21, the prophet speaks on behalf of the Lord, "... Because you have prayed to me concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria ..." Because the people have prayed, God saved the city of Judah. It is the same for us now – because we are praying, the Lord saves.

Apart from gathering at World Prayer for Myanmar in January, Grace Missions have also sent one team to East Asia and another to Indonesia. We are looking forward to having more trips in the coming months. As we wield our swords, from victory to victory, let us gather in prayer and in power as a Missional Family Church!

UPCOMING MISSIONS TRIPS IN FEBRUARY 2015

Please pray with the missions trippers for God's protection to rest on them, and that they would be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading:

| 3 – 12 Feb | Taipei, Taiwan | Rev Richard Wee |
|----------------|-------------------------------|--|
| 11 – 16 Feb | Pakistan | Ps Ben Koh |
| 23 Feb - 5 Mar | East Asia | Rev Richard Wee |
| 24 Feb - 3 Mar | West Kalimantan, Indonesia | Rev Chan Peck Yin, Cynric Wee & tripper |

RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS AS INTERPRETERS!

Grace Missions is looking for volunteers, who can speak Bahasa Indonesia, and would like to serve as interpreters. They will assist team leaders & trippers on weekend mission trips to the Riau Islands – Batam, Bintan & Karimun.

To sign up, email Rev Chan Peck Yin at peck.yin@gmagnet.com with the following info: Subject <Bahasa Indonesia Interpreter>, your name and contact number.

GRACE MISSIONS

MIRACLES IN BANGLADESH BY PATRICK NEO



My first contact with Bangladeshi workers was many years ago, at my workplace. As I was reading the newspaper one day, I chanced upon a story about Orissa, where a pastor, together with his children, was burned to death when they were locked in a van that was set on fire. This tragedy prompted me to pray for persecuted Christians in South Asian countries, such as Bangladesh.

In 2014, I signed up for a mission trip to Bangladesh. As the date drew nearer, I realized I didn't have enough annual leave for the trip. I expressed my concerns to Pastor Scott, and he encouraged me to pray and trust God. Subsequently my HR department did approve my leave, I was very thankful for the Lord's providence.

My team and I set off to Bangladesh in November. We had many opportunities to share the faith, encourage, pray for our mission partners, and conduct outreach programs. We travelled to Chittagong and visited hill tribes, where Christians face persecutions from religious extremists. At one of the hill tribes, there were about 71 pastors, including speakers like Pastor Scott and brother Raymond, who was there for a pastoral conference. During the conference, Pastor Scott preached on the baptism of the Holy Spirit, after which women with body pains were healed completely! Praise God for the miracles that took place in that village of our mission partner!

We also heard of this report --about a year ago, a team led by Pastor Scott, prayed for four pre-believing women, as they were barren and desired to have children. They were miraculously touched by the love of God and healed of their barrenness! Each one of them eventually gave birth, many villagers came to know the Lord because of these miracles. Also, another report about a Hindu chief, who caused problems to the church, recently had a heart attack. The church members visited him, and prayed for him. He was healed! And he surrendered his life to Jesus.

Praise the Lord for the miracles that took place, He has indeed brought many more people closer to Him. I thank God for this wonderful privilege to serve Him in the mission field, to God be the glory!

ONE SRI LANKA BY DARYL TAY

Much has been said about how mission trips can be eyeopening to first-time trippers. For me, I embarked on one to Sri Lanka in November 2014. Though I was filled with some skepticism, curiosity and trepidation, I am nonetheless thankful for the experience.

To prepare well for a conference there, our mission team made every effort to simplify the lesson materials, and to add more pictures to aid in the participants' learning. There was strong comradeship in the team and everyone was eager to share whatever he or she could share with the locals. Despite the language constraints, it was heartening to see some pastors volunteered themselves to help translate the materials and interpret the messages and lessons.

The main thrust of our mission trip was a conference that we held for pastors and church leaders from the Northern and Southern regions of Sri Lanka. This was significant as it was the first gathering for the leaders of churches that were planted and supported by Grace Missions! In spite of a long-lasting civil war between the two regions, and existing communication barriers because of the different languages spoken (Tamil and Sinhala), everyone was actively interacting and sharing with each other. One defining moment of the trip was in a Holy Spirit-inspired session during the seminar, two groups of pastors and leaders started praying for each other. Although they prayed in languages that could not be understood by the other party, they were resolute to bless each other. Through their fervent prayers, the two groups merged as one 'Sri Lankan' church, no longer separated by two regions! This is truly a testament of God's power and presence in our midst that evening.

It is true that they do not have elaborate musical instruments, comfortable air-conditioned halls and a peaceful and secure environment to conduct their services. But their simple setup and their subtle constant vigilance against potential persecutions and disruptions to their worship services, showed that all things are possible when hearts are willing. Nothing has stopped them from worshipping God wholeheartedly. Indeed, we truly have much to be thankful for in Singapore.

This trip has indeed been enriching, and I would like to encourage fellow brothers and sisters to take time off their schedules, to go for mission trips. Bless and be blessed!







PARENTS, WERE YOU TOO BUSY IN 2014? 4 WAYS TO SLOW DOWN IN 2015!

Better is a handful of quietness than two hands full of toil and a striving after wind.

- Ecclesiastes 4:6 -

Let me ask you three simple questions about the year gone by:

- Did you often feel like your to-do list was endless?
- Did you often sacrifice sleep to get things done?
- Did you frequently complain about how busy you were?

If you answered "yes" to those questions, you were probably too busy in 2014. It doesn't have to be like this in 2015.

THE STRANGE REASON WHY WE IGNORE THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS IN LIFE

In an era where we're connected 24/7, the line between work and leisure has become blurred. Even on a Sunday afternoon, you could send that email. You could reply to that text. You could do something "productive". But should you?

I face this temptation every time I have a day off. The temptation is even greater because I enjoy my job so much! And it's not just me. Through my work with parents – many of whom are busy and stressed out – I know this is a widespread problem.

Author Charles Hummel once observed that the most important things in life are also the most well-mannered. They don't scream for your attention. They don't throw a tantrum to force you to take notice. The reason we often ignore the things that matter most is that they're polite.

In contrast, the urgent things are far less polite. That email from your boss, that phone call, that Facebook message – they're calling out to you right now. You feel like you can't ignore it, so you don't. That's how we become busy, by allowing ourselves to be overwhelmed by the urgent. But there's a way out.

4 EFFECTIVE WAYS TO OVERCOME BUSYNESS

These tips will enable you to focus on the important instead of the urgent. Ultimately, they'll help you to build a happier, stronger family.

1. Set clear boundaries for how much time you spend at work.

For instance, you could set a non-negotiable rule that you'll leave

work by 7pm at least three days a week. On these three days, you'll have dinner together as a family. You might also decide that you absolutely won't check your work email on Sundays.

Here's an example from my own life. I do talks and workshops internationally, so my rule is that I'll never be out of town two weekends in a row. Take a few minutes and think about some boundaries you could establish for yourself. At this point, I can almost hear you saying, "Daniel, this sounds nice in theory. But my job requires me to work and travel all the time. I don't have a choice!" I sympathise with you, I really do. I used to have a corporate job where I worked long hours, and sometimes weekends too.

But I realise that we always have a choice, even if it doesn't feel that way. You could choose to learn more productivity hacks to increase your efficiency. You could choose to talk to your boss about alternative work arrangements. You could choose to look for a new job. Easier said than done, I know.

But in life, solutions rarely exist. Life is all about tradeoffs. Ask yourself what tradeoffs you're currently making. Are you focusing on the urgent things, at the expense of the important things? If you are, it's time to make adjustments.

2. Create a positive family culture.

This might sound like a tip that's unrelated to overcoming busyness. So let me explain. I've worked with many people who occupy themselves with all kinds of activities, just so they can avoid being at home. If your spouse or children choose not to spend much time at home, it could be because your home environment isn't a pleasant one.

Is your home overflowing with joy, positivity and peace? Or is it full of nagging, criticism and unkind words?

If it's the latter, take a moment to evaluate your family culture. What's good and not so good about it? What steps can you take to improve it?

Here are some suggestions:

- Say at least one positive thing a day to each person in your

PARENTS, WERE YOU TOO BUSY IN 2014? 4 WAYS TO SLOW DOWN IN 2015!

family, even if it's as simple as "have a good day"

- Create a new family tradition
- Set up an "appreciation board" in your home, where you write down things you're thankful for
- Have a monthly family board game night
- Have a weekly family meeting
- Develop a family mission statement

Every family member has a part to play in shaping family culture, so create a plan of action today.

As the family culture becomes more loving and supportive, I can close to guarantee that everyone in the family will choose to be less busy outside the home.

3. Stop defining yourself according to your achievements.

For many years, my self-worth was defined by how I performed in school and in my other activities. I was obsessed with doing and achieving more, which caused me to burn out. As an 18-year-

old, I was the vice-captain of the basketball team, and I had basketball practice five days a week. I was also in the Chemistry Olympiad training squad, and I was a member of the Science Research Society. In addition, I was taking three subjects on top of the regular course load, and I was preparing for the SATs. As you can imagine, I was busy and tired. All the time.

But when I stopped defining myself according to my achievements, I became less busy and tired. And I became happier. I started to care less about my performance, and more about living out my purpose and serving others.

It's easy to get carried away building our careers or businesses. Of course, we all need to earn a living and provide for our families. But

more than our provisions, our children need our presence. We need to invest the time to teach and mentor our children, and simply be with them. Our children appreciate this quality time more than the comforts and luxuries we give them.

So if you feel like your identity is based on what you accomplish, take a few minutes to reflect. Ask yourself what your values are, and what matters most to you in the long run. Decide to invest your resources and your life in the things that are of enduring worth. When you do that, you'll become less busy.

4. Limit the number of activities your children participate in.

I know far too many families whose weekend routine revolves around chauffeuring their children to and from activities and classes. Golf lessons. Art class. Music class. Math class. Science class. Tennis lessons. Ballet class. Piano class. It requires a detailed spreadsheet just to keep track of all these activities!

Not only that, the parents don't get to rest and recover over the weekend as they're constantly running from one place to the next. Because their children's lives are overscheduled, these families don't spend much time together. Things are made even worse if either parent travels extensively for work.

Children benefit from being exposed to a variety of activities and experiences. But they also need time to read, reflect and dream. How will they be able to do this when their schedules are jampacked?

Based on my experiences working with students, I've found this to be a good guideline: Children shouldn't be involved in more than one sports-related activity and one music/art-related activity. Anything more than this and children will soon become addicted to busyness – or overwhelmed by it. And children who are addicted to busyness are likely to become adults who are addicted to busyness. When our children are less busy, we'll be less busy too.



THE BOTTOM LINE

Busyness is a fact of life. There will be times when you'll have a pressing deadline to meet, when you'll need to work late, or give up sleep to get the job done. But busyness shouldn't be a way of life. If you're exhausted and stressed, week after week, month after month, year after year... then today's the day to make a change. If you don't, there will be long-term consequences for your physical and emotional well-being, and for your family life too.

So choose one of the four tips and put it into practice. Then work through the other tips over the next few weeks. It won't be easy, but it'll be worth it. After all, everyone outside the home is replaceable.

Not to downplay the importance of work, but CEOs, managers, engineers, designers, technicians and writers (including myself!) are replaceable. If you quit your job today, someone will take over your position tomorrow.

But that's not the way a family functions. Every member of the family is irreplaceable. So we must pull our own weight and be actively involved in the home. Let's remind ourselves of this as we seek to lead fruitful lives, not busy ones. Let's slow down and take the time to build meaningful lives and strong families. With each other's support, I know we can do it.

Written by Daniel Wong (www.daniel-wong.com) Daniel Wong is a learning and teen expert, and is also the bestselling author of "The Happy Student". This article first appeared in Yahoo! Singapore



FamilyLife@Grace

If you need to make counselling appointment, please contact:

Pastor Benjamin Wong Tel: 9066-2994 Email: benjamin.wong@graceaog.org

Chang-Goh Song Eng Tel: 6252-2566 Email: rc@reach.org.sg

All counselling sessions are strictly private and confidential.

WHAT WOULD OUR CHILDREN LIKE TO SEE?

FamilyLife@Grace did a short survey with children from Grace Assembly's Grace Kids, we asked them, 'What would I like to see in my family?'. The responses were overwhelming. Some are funny, some are honest and some, heart-wrenching. However, they all shared something in common - they just need our time, our love and our attention. These are just some of the responses as they are, raw and unedited. Today, go home and love your family.

> Don't you see that children are God's best gift? the fruit of the womb his generous legacy? Like a warrior's fistful of arrows are the children of a vigorous youth. Oh, how blessed are you parents, with your quivers full of children! Your enemies don't stand a chance against you; you'll sweep them right off your doorstep. -Psalm 127:3-5 (MSG)

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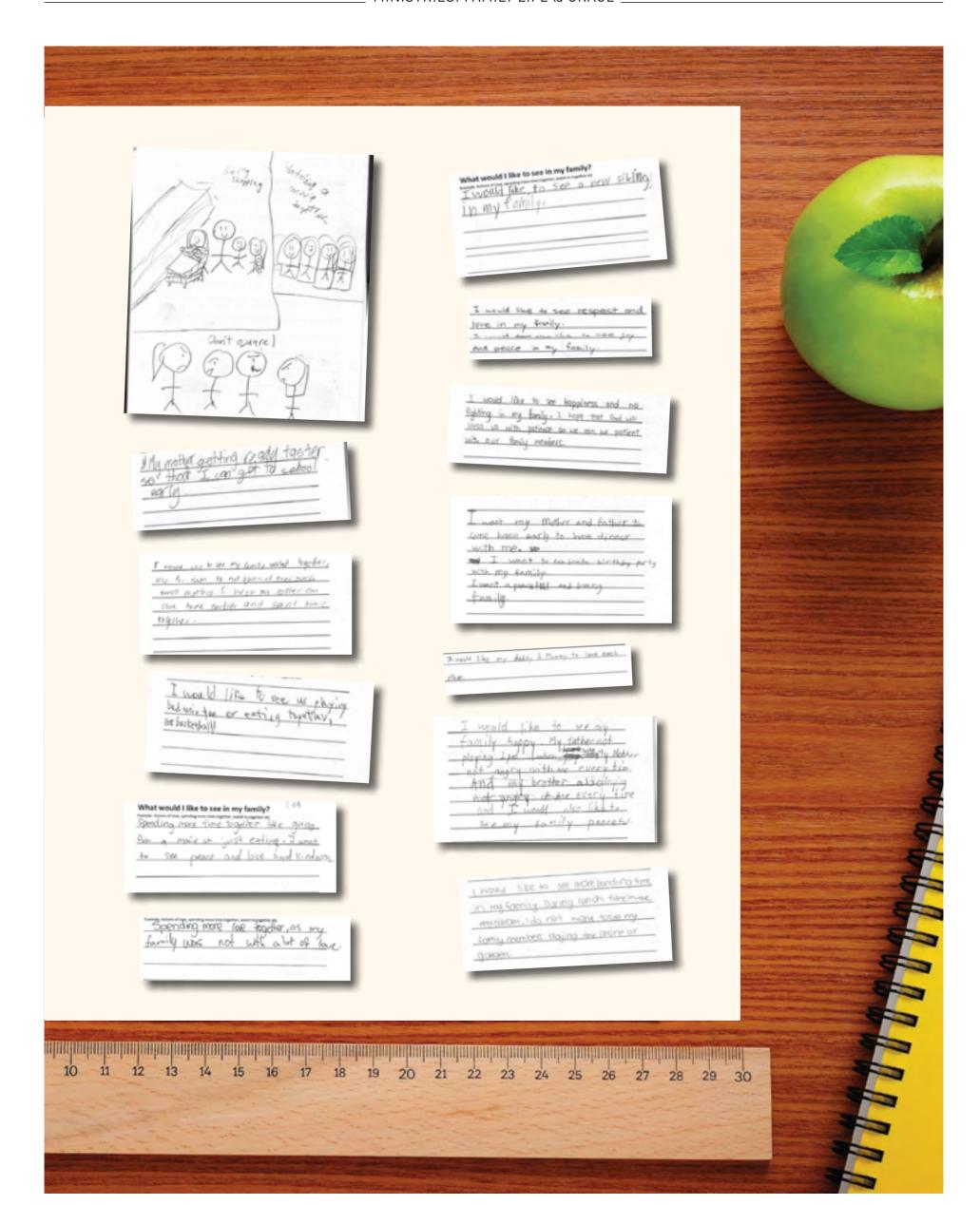
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Wahtotowa







BY PS PETER LIM

"When I say 'OK', you say 'alright'!" said Nicole Liang, emcee for the event. "When I say 'alright', you say 'OK'!" she had all eyes on her. "OK!" she shouted. With one voice, all the children responded proudly, "Alright!"

The hall was filled with laughter and smiles as 40 of our Young Adults celebrated Christmas with around 50 kids from low-income families. Some of them had just received bursary awards from REACH Community Services Society (RCSS) that morning and after lunch, there were games, carolling and gifts planned out for them by the YAYP ministry.

To kick-start the party, the kids were challenged to a hilarious round of musical chairs, where they scrambled for seats when the music stopped. The final two contestants were an adorable 7-year-old boy and a tall 14-year-old boy. Everyone rooted for the Primary 1 boy but burst out in a roar of laughter when the bigger boy got and sat on the last chair instead!

Then, each group had to organize themselves in a line, in the order of their birthdates. After that, each member had a piece of paper attached on each of their back, and he/she had to find out this famous person's name that was written on the paper, by asking questions that can only be answered with a "yes" or a "no". These ice-breaker games instantly helped the children interact on a more personal level.

The children were then asked to put their superb acting skills to good use in a round of charades! We could see every child enthusiastically engaged, as each one took to the stage for their moment of 'fame'. Finally, we channeled their inexhaustible energy into an animated time of singing Christmas Carols! They were unrestrained, dancing around haphazardly, and followed the body movements by Nicole.



The event's highlight was when each child receives the Christmas Wish they had indicated beforehand. The Young Adults pasted the names of the child they sponsored on their own T-shirts and the children went around looking for their names on the T-shirts. The excitement and thrill of getting their presents was incredible! When Pastor Alvin Lim's son presented the gift to his sponsored child, the gratitude and joy could be seen in the child's eyes as he thanked Pastor Alvin at least 5-6 times!

We started packing up at around 3:30pm, exhausted from the day's event, but our hearts bursting with gratitude, knowing that we have made a difference in the lives of these low-income families. We believe this was a unique Christmas for them, as they experienced God's tangible love.

GRACE EVENTS

CHRISTMAS SERVICE 2014 BY RONNIE LEE

Christmas Day services at GII Sanctuary were filled with celebration and activities, to mark the birth of Jesus. The services began with Christmas carols, accompanied with choir, orchestral instruments and dancers. It was then followed by a short enactment/scene of the conversations between angel Gabriel, Mary and Elizabeth, which were wonderfully acted by Ps Ronald Yow, Ps Benjamin Wong, Ps Jadene Ng and Rachel Choo. Ps Lee Meng Cham then led the congregation in Holy Communion, thanking the Lord for His sacrifice on the cross, as atonement for all of our sins. Guest speaker Rev Jerald Robinson preached about Jesus the Life and Saviour of the world. After the sermon, his wife Dr Chin invited those who do not know the Lord, to come up to receive Him and be prayed for. Two precious souls came up to accept Jesus as their Lord and personal Saviour. Praise be to God! What a fitting climax to celebrate Christmas morning, to fulfill the purpose of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ!





WATCH NIGHT SERVICE 2014 BY PS ALVIN LIM

What better way to end the year than by celebrating a year "Clothed with His Power" as Gracians packed the GII Sanctuary at the Watch Night Service 2014! Emcees Joseph Lum and Amanda Ong literally kicked off the night with a human chain charade that was hilarious, as contestants from young to old acted out the phrases "Clothed with Power" and "More People, More Like Jesus". God's presence was precious as we spent an extended time worshipping God with a heart of thanksgiving. YAYP's dance ministry 'Mechola' performed an energetic dance item called "Consecration" to signify putting off the old self and putting on the new self in Christ.

Ps Calvin Lee preached from 2 Chronicles 20:15, to exhort Gracians that for the year 2015, the Lord shall be our Commander-in-Chief, and the battle belongs to Him. We also viewed videos of the amazing testimonies of Gracians who experienced God's supernatural breakthroughs and provision for 2014. Gracians then took time to pray and pen down their thanksgiving for 2014 and resolutions for 2015, on paper doves and after which they hung the doves along strings at the back of the Sanctuary, as a prophetic act. Towards the end of the event, Gracians were commissioned by the pastoral team for another year to be "Clothed with His Power". All glory to God!

COMBINED J333 PRAYER MEETING 2015 BY PS LIM BEE NGOR

Our first Combined J333 prayer meeting was held at St John St Margaret's L3 Glory Sanctuary on 6 January 2015. More than 100 people gathered to pray, from both the English and Chinese adult congregations. After a wonderful time of worship, Ps Calvin Lee challenged the congregation to think of one thing they desire most for this year. Many came to the front altar to dedicate themselves to the Lord for the year and to present their wishes and desires before the Lord. It was a great way to start the new year! The prayer meeting continued on with a time of thanksgiving to God for His goodness and faithfulness to Grace Assembly. It ended with a corporate prayer for Grace Assembly to fulfill her vision and mission in Singapore.



REACH EVENT-

SHARE GOD'S GIFTS, SERVE ONE ANOTHER

BY RACHEL LEONG

"As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." 1 Peter 4:10

GIVING HOPE FOR A FUTURE - REACH BURSARY AWARD 2014

On 13 December 2014, at the REACH Bursary Award ceremony, more than 100 students from primary to secondary schools in Bishan and Bukit Batok, were given recognition for their hard work and academic progress. Held at Hong Kah North Community Club, the event was graced by guest of honour, Dr Amy Khor, Senior Minister of State for Health and Manpower, and Advisor to Hong Kah North Grassroots Organisations. The parents beamed with pride, as they witnessed their children receiving their rewards for academic achievements. Grace Assembly of God has been faithfully supporting the REACH Bursary programme since 2008, bringing hope to needy children in our community.

Many of the parents whom we spoke to, felt the money came just in time for the purchase of school necessities to get their children ready to return to a new school year. Cindy Lee, mother of a Secondary One boy was very thankful to REACH for selecting her son to be a bursary recipient. "The money will be used as his bus fare for the year," she said. Mdm Zaiton, mother of Alyssa Natalia, a Primary Six student also shared how the money from the bursary has always helped the family financially. She is the sole breadwinner as her husband is not able to work full-time due to respiratory problems.

The bursary recipients and their families were also treated to a plethora of activities organised by REACH Youth. Eight booths were set up to showcase REACH Youth's outreach programmes, that will be conducted at the new youth centre, when it starts operations at Blk 417 Bukit Batok West Avenue 4 in February 2015. At one of the booths, children experienced the feeling of being in a real kayak, and held the actual paddles used for kayaking. At another booth, budding soccer players got the chance to score goals. At the REACH Rock station, those who were interested in music, had jamming sessions together on their Xbox Rock Band guitars. At the Dodgeball booth, participants attempted the modern version of Hantam Bola. Our iconic sport 'Dragonboat' challenged children to flip a tyre as many times as possible within a minute! The most

popular station was the Bakerholics booth, where children decorated their own cookies.

COLLABORATION WITH GRACE ASSEMBLY

The volunteers from YAYP ministry made wishes come true for the bursary recipients. Besides the fun-filled programmes they have put together for the children and youth, the volunteers also gifted each beneficiary with something from their Christmas wish list. This indeed brought much Christmas cheer to the beneficiaries! There were more than 130 signups for different programmes, including REACH Mentoring where children and youth from low-income families receives free tuition, and be mentored by befrienders to help in their character development.

We thank God for the opportunities to connect with the low-income families in Bukit Batok, as we prepare to serve alongside Grace Assembly via our new REACH Youth Centre, slated to start operations this month. Mdm Zaiton is excited about the opening of the youth centre. She feels the youth centre will help her daughter, Alyssa to come out of her shell, to be able to make friends and be purpose-driven in her development.

As we enter into the second month of 2015, we continue to anticipate the things which our Lord is going to do through us in the mission fields He has placed us in – REACH Family Service Centre in Bishan, REACH Counselling Centre in Shunfu and REACH Youth Powerhouse in Bukit Batok. Senior Pastor Calvin Lee shared on the direction that Grace Assembly is heading this season – being a Missional Family Church that loves God and love people. As the church's local mission arm, there will be many opportunities and platforms for Gracians to engage in, to serve one another and the communities with the giftings Gracians are blessed with. Do look for volunteering opportunities available at REACH.

Thank you, Gracians, for your kind support. May you continue to experience the fullness of God's grace, that you might continue to give and show grace to those around you in 2015!



GRACE SERVICES

GRACE I MY SAVIOUR'S CHURCH: 2 Prince Charles Crescent, Singapore 159011 | Tel: 6474 2823 | www.mysaviours.org SERVICES: Saturday 5 pm YOUNG ADULTS & YOUNG PROFESSIONALS (YAYP) SERVICE JEHOVAH'S SANCTUARY LEVEL 2 CANTONESE SERVICE SAVIOUR'S SANCTUARY LEVEL 3 GRACE KIDS - CHILDREN'S CHURCH SHELTER ROOM LEVEL 2 GRACE KIDS - PRE-SCHOOL PARADISE ROOM LEVEL 2 FURAMA RIVERFRONT HOTEL: 405 Havelock Rd, Singapore 169633 | Tel: 6333 8898 | www.furama.com/riverfront **SERVICES: Sunday 9 am ENGLISH SERVICE 2** VENUS I, II, III LEVEL 3 MANDARIN SERVICE MERCURY II, III LEVEL 5 GRACE KIDS - CHILDREN'S CHURCH JUPITER I, II; MARS II LEVEL 3; 5 GRACE KIDS - PRE-SCHOOL JUPITER III LEVEL 3 **Sunday 11.15 am** LEVEL 3 **ENGLISH SERVICE 3** VENUS I, II, III FILIPINO SERVICE **MERCURY I** LEVEL 5 YOUTH SERVICE MERCURY II, III LEVEL 5 GRACE KIDS - CHILDREN'S CHURCH JUPITER I, II; MARS II LEVEL 3: 5 GRACE KIDS - PRE-SCHOOL JUPITER III LEVEL 3 **GRACE II:** 1 Bukit Batok West Ave 4 Singapore 659125 SERVICES: Saturday 2 pm CHAPEL YOUTH SERVICE LEVEL 4 SERVICES: Sunday 9 am CHAPEL **ENGLISH SERVICE 4** LEVEL 4 MANDARIN SERVICE **SANCTUARY** LEVEL 2 SERVICES: Sunday 11.15 am **ENGLISH SERVICE 5 SANCTUARY** LEVEL 2 CHAPEL HOKKIEN SERVICE LEVEL 4 SERVICES: Sunday 1.30 pm FILIPINO SERVICE CHAPEL LEVEL 4 SUNDAY 9 am & 11.15 am

J333

GOODNESS & KINDNESS

LEVEL 4

LEVEL 2

Every Wednesday, 7.30 pm, GLORY SANCTUARY, LEVEL 3

ST JOHN'S ST MARGARET'S CHURCH: 30 Dover Avenue, Singapore 139790 | Tel: 67770934 | www.sjsm.org.sg

GRACE KIDS PRE-SCHOOL

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Note: Services are subject to changes, please refer to www.graceaog.org for latest info and updates

Grace Assembly of God

