

**Nehemiah 4:6:** So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart.



**Vision: CCBC, Toward Healthy Growing Disciple-Making Church**

**2014 Theme: Building and Bringing**

**January 2014**

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## REFLECTIONS 2013 AND LOOKING AHEAD

**2014: THANKS BE TO GOD FOR HIS WORK OF GRACE AND TRUTH** *By Rev Gary Choong*

2013 was a significant year for Covenant Community Baptist Church. God is calling and stretching the faith of the church in two major areas: Discipleship/Disciple-making and Community Outreach. These two faith-calling and stretching ventures are testimonies of God's work amongst us.

(1) The call to be a healthy, growing disciple-making church was launched in September as we overwhelmingly embraced this significant journey together. The mission-vision shared in January was followed by a church-wide One-Day Prayer Retreat in February to seek God's clear direction to move ahead. A Core-Team emerged to spearhead an eight-month long consensus-building, deliberation and conversation among many stakeholders toward a disciple-making journey together. At the June Retreat, it was affirmed as we moved forward to launching six Disciple Groups (DG) with respective leaders to lead with identified DG assistants. We thank God for this new beginning!

(2) The call to community outreach through an invitation to partner with the Friendship Christian Student Centre (FCSC) in Bishan. This venture of faith was spearheaded by a Pro-Tem Committee, and after a feasibility study, they

proposed to adopt the FCSC as our community outreach through After-School student care (see Nov Newsletter). After several rounds of conversations, discussions, visits, interactions, and various ad-hoc participations, we are positioned to running the FCSC as God's call to reach out to the community via student care and other student activities with the purpose of making an impact and influence upon the lives of the students with the love of Jesus Christ.

Today, January 5, 2014, an Extra General Meeting will be held to listen to one another and make a formal decision on this venture of faith. We thank God for yet another new beginning!

(3) Wednesday Prayer Partners (WPP): By the grace of God, several of us have been gathering regularly on Wednesday mornings to PRAY for the church and all that is taking place as we witnessed God demonstrating His ways amongst us as a body of Christ. We have been doing so since early 2013 meeting at church and most recently at the FCSC. The prayer team had been a blessed source of mutual encouragement to one another as we sought the mind and heart of God to intervene in personal and congregational lives to draw each of us closer to God and His ways.

(4) Disciple Group Leaders and Assistants: To each of these dedicated men and women, and their respective DGs, we give thanks to God and

to each of them for their commitment to be the best they can be, by the grace of God: taking time to prepare for weekly DG meeting, meeting some of the pastoral care and concerns of members, listening and providing prayer and personal support, and a host of many other related responsibilities, we are indeed grateful for each person's life.

(5) BOD-CEB-HR: To each of these dedicated men and women, whether as a deacon(ness), or as a member of the executive board. We give thanks to everyone who, despite their work pressures and demands have shouldered several leadership responsibilities in their own stride. Each has demonstrated to the best of his or her ability to shared-responsibilities and burdens as a team and as an individual leader in his/her own capacity.

(6) CCBC PULPIT and WORSHIP MINISTRY: I am thankful to everyone who has shared the pulpit as lay persons who endeavoured to learn to feed the flock. To each who has laboured with me these past few years since being trained and equipped in 2007-8: I am very proud of each of you because I can see that your labour in the Word has influenced and impacted those who listened. On the same note, I can say the same for those who share a devotional Word before the Lord's supper is observed.

To the worship leaders who plan the weekly worship and music, and to the accompanists who give of themselves to complement the worship experience, many thanks! Your labour is not in vain. God has used both the music we offer, and the message we preach to give the worshipper an enriched and deeper work of grace and truth at work in our weekly worship experience.

(7) THE MANY UNSUNG HEROES AND HEROINES: Whether it is the children ministry, ushering, tea-reception, projector, audio-visual, and perhaps other involvement, THANK YOU very much for your quiet and faithful service to

the Lord. We could not have come this far without your service.

(8) MISSIONS AND BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY: Your support toward missions in my going to minister and teach at the Manipur Theological College in August, and to speak at the 50th Anniversary cum 15th Conservative Baptist Association of the Philippines Biennial Conference recently this month had been our partnerships in missions beyond the church walls. Your allowing me to teach part-time at the Baptist Theological Seminary the past year is also another mark of your willingness to share your pastor with others in the wider community. I thank the leaders and CCBC for your generosity to share what you have with others.

LOOKING AHEAD 2014: PRAY FOR BREAK-THROUGHS. (1) Pray that God will manifest His grace and truth in and through each DG--that everyone will grow in love for God, love for the lost with a view to reach them for Christ, and love for one another to spur each other to grow in Christ. (2) Ask the Lord to bring leadership renewal at every level of the church's ministries, especially to the pastoral level. It is a known fact that we are a greying church with very limited human resources to be able to meet our current level of ministry needs. As the Lord directs growth, we will be needing new blood to be infused into the church life. Pray the God will raise new, committed and gifted younger people to meet our hour of need. (3) Commit the FCSC into the Lord's hand to give wisdom and guidance to the management committee to lead and run the centre with a clear sense of purpose and with enough dedicated personnel (volunteer and paid staff) to enhance outreach to the young, youths, and families that are part of the FCSC ministry.

### **Wednesdays' Prayer** by Ps Chua Siew Tiang

Without coercion or persuasion we banded together, and week in week out we met to share with Pr Gary our Sundays' encounters

with members and friends and we prayed. In each prayer for every adult, teen and child, I could sense the prayer team's heart for the church, their concern for the welfare of the families, and their desire to see CCBC grow in their relationship and commitment to God.

Perhaps we have been overly concerned for every individual in CCBC and I felt that our prayers have become too ingrown. For 2014, may God redirect our prayers to include more intercession for the nations, our pre-believing contacts and the pre-believing children and youths in the FCSC. We are not a closed group. We welcome anyone who is free or has a burden to pray. Come join us on Wednesdays (10.00 -11.00 am, Church premises).

I thank God for the team's friendship and lunch fellowship; not forgetting Pr. Gary's weekly dosage of God's Word for our souls, and I pray that we will tutor our whole being to be attentive to God's heart and to learn to pray according to His will.

### **We are the Young Ones!** *By Cheok Soo Ting*

The DG meetings, as part of CCBC's Disciple-Making journey, kicked-off in September 2013 with much excitement and enthusiasm. It has been encouraging to see various groups of brothers and sisters gathering after service for a time of fellowship and spurring each other to grow in Christ. I'm sure many of us who have been committing to the regular DG meetings have benefitted from the past 3 months of deeper fellowship and growing in the Lord, through bible studies, discussion of life issues, and spurring one another to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord over the various aspects of our lives.

I have been given the privilege of leading the youths in the "Discovery stage". It has been both a challenging and enriching time for me. **Challenging**, as it has been a while since I last worked with youths and challenging as I learned to relate with them and stay relevant to them in

this time and age. (*Most of them are already addressing me as "Auntie Shuting"...*). **Enriching**, as I see a lot of potential in this group of young people. Although they may appear nonchalant at times, they can certainly surprise you with what they can do and accomplish – if they put their heart and mind to it. The recent youth camp was an example of "Youths @ Work" – Although I was involved in the overall planning of the youth camp with Shannen, the main activities and running of the camp was carried out by the energetic and full-of-ideas youths.

As we touched on foundational topics using the *Growing in Christ* series in our DG meetings, it has been a good reminder and refresher for me to take God's Word as it is. I find that sometimes in our journey of faith, we can start to grow cynical and lacking in faith as we grow "older"... the sessions brought me back to the basics as I led the youths in discovering biblical truths on which our faith is built on. It is my prayer that this group of *fellow-sheep* will grow to treasure this relationship they have with Jesus Christ and seek to live their lives in Him and for Him.

As I work amongst the youths, I also came to appreciate the importance of parental support – how supportive parents play an important role in the successful running of a youth ministry. For example, in the recent youth camp, parents of some of the youths were very helpful in providing transportation and food for us. It was a blessing to have their support in these very practical ways! As much as practical helps are important, parents' (and older adults') roles as spiritual models are very important to the lives of the youths as well. The way we live our lives hinges on the condition of our relationship with God – attitudes towards friends, family and other relationships; stewardship of money; decision-making processes; church participation prayerfulness (or lack of); parenting styles – these do make a (spiritual) impact on the lives of the younger people in our midst. Parents

(and older adults) have such an important role in being “disciple-makers” too – outside of the DG meetings!

Please pray for me and the youths as we continue our DM Journey that God will draw us nearer to Himself, and we will have a growing relationship with Jesus as we learn new truths together each week. May the Lord capture the hearts of these youths to Himself, that they may grow up to be men and women after the Lord’s own heart.

***“...not because we think we can do anything of lasting value by ourselves. Our only power and success comes from God.” – 2 Corinthians 3:5 (TLB)***

(Included are some snapshots of the recent youth camp which I felt like I was 18 again, playing with the youths! That’s me taking on the challenge of keeping up with them and staying relevant to them! )



1) At FCSC. The kids are so adorable!



2) Lesson time at FCSC!



3) Our Christmas party

### **Pulpit Schedule (Jan-Mar 2014)**

Ps Gary Choong will be finishing the Revelation study series soon in Feb 2014. The next sermon series will be a study on the book of Genesis beginning with a 7-messages series “Back to the Basics”. ( Chapters 1:1 -11:26)

February 2014 will be our mission focus month and we will have 2 speakers to share with us from their experiences in mission.

Jan 05	Mr Peter Tang (SB Convention)	TBA
Jan 12	Ps Chua Siew Tiang	TBA
Jan 19	Dr Fong Choon Sam	TBA
Jan 26	Dr Gary Choong K G	Rev 21:1-22:5 “City of Gold: All Things New!”
Feb 02	Dr Gary Choong K G	Rev 22:6-21 “Come, Lord Jesus”
Feb 09	Mr Leonard Leow	Message on Mission
Feb 16	S’pore Baptist Convention, Mission Dept.	Message on Mission
Feb 23	Dr Gary Choong K G	Gen. 1:1-2:3 Master Creation by Planner God
Mar 02	Dr Gary Choong K G	Gen. 2:4-25 Man, and Woman
Mar 09	Dr Gary Choong K G	Gen. 3:1-24 Sin entered the world
Mar 16	Tang Wei Qiang	TBA
Mar 23	Dr Gary Choong K G	Gen. 4:1-26 Two brothers, Two hearts, Two roads
Mar 30	Ps Timothy Loo (TSBC)	TBA