

# Covenant Community Baptist Church

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## Be and Bring a Friend to Jesus: Building and Bringing

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



Relating to the theme of building and bridging, the logo shows a structure of bricks representing the church while each individual brick represents members of the church. The various colours of each brick suggest the differences of each individual, and through sharing their common identity in Christ, they come together to form support for each other. The brick formation expands by reaching out to the 'lost' bricks beyond the community. These 'lost' bricks have a void which only Christ can fill.

**September 2012**

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### **CHALLENGES OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP by Yuen**

**Chee Meng, Chairman** : What we harvest today depends on the farmers whom we have, the farming know-how applied and the type of seeds sown. To some degree this "harvesting" analogy speaks of the spiritual state of CCBC today – the church leadership (ie. the farmers) and congregation (ie. the seeds) commitment towards the cause of Christ.

Church leadership is about a group of men (including women) called by God to lead His people towards the fulfilment of His revealed vision. There is no finer example for Christian leadership than our Lord Jesus Christ who declared, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). Church leadership is about servant leadership characterized by humility and sacrifice.

Over these years, I have had the privilege to co-labour with several men and women in CCBC and I enjoyed working with each of them. They are responsible, diligent and did their best, though sometimes they might not meet biblical expectations, yet I want to say "thank you so much for being my fellow-workers for Christ". I really appreciate your commitment and effort put in and also the many struggles you had to wrestle with and more often than not in silence during this journey with me.

### **Leadership vs Management and Vision**

The "leaders" we have today are more of managers than leaders. A leader leads – liken to a shepherd who knows the way, he walks in front to direct the way and the sheep follow. A manager manages - like a sheep-dog , which keeps the sheep together and

drives them toward the destination. Leaders at CCBC are keepers of the flock rather than shepherds.

Many of us struggle to catch a glimpse of God's vision for CCBC – perhaps we have not prayed hard enough, we have not been patient or persevere long enough for God nor discerning enough of His voice. Yet we all reckon that vision is the driving force behind the church. "Where there is no vision the people perish" Proverbs 29:18.

### **Spirituality vs Administration**

Apart from the two younger deacons, the current BOD/CEB team is competent in handling the church administrative functions, event organization, small group ministry work but weak in spiritual and pastoral leadership. The deacon board did not grasp her role and function; and we did not fully and responsibly shepherd the flock, manage doctrinal issues, church discipline and setting role-models for the church. For our failures, we want to seek the congregation's forgiveness.

### **Calling vs Coercion**

Sometimes, we have not sought God's affirmation before we commit to church leadership positions. The call to eldership or diaconate is a serious calling from God. Knowing that when God calls, He would equip us and provide us with the necessary gifting – we should not be using our own strength, wisdom and experience in working out our duties but resting on our Jehovah Jireh's grace and provision. If that were so, we should have found joy and excitement in our leadership service and not

burdensome as some of us have experienced. Jesus has promised in Matthews 11:30 “For My yoke is easy and My burden is light”! This is a compelling, responsible, noble/worthy and holy calling, so we must not take on these roles out of obligation or coercion in an irresponsible manner.

#### Life Stage and Job Demands

We have two “just married over a year” and the rest are spanned between mid-30’s to mid-50’s. In terms of life-stage, transiting into married life with new-found responsibilities and struggles with family issues – ie. child education and domestic needs are some real issues faced by our leaders. Some are struggling with overwhelming office work and regrettably these have somehow taken precedence over church leadership duties.

A common saying “Behind every successful man is a woman” – applies to our church leaders too. We need our spouses’ understanding, support and prayer. Without them, we would not be able to be stay focus and give our best for God’s work. Not just our spouses, the church congregation’s prayer and encouragement are important too as these served as affirmation to our leadership and efforts.

#### Leadership Succession

From our leaders’ age distribution, it is apparent that many of us have been holding office for 1-2 terms and direly needing a rest. However, there is still a lack of younger people in CCBC coming forward to take on the leadership baton. Today, I believe CCBC has acute concerns over her leadership renewal and succession. If God has a purpose and role for CCBC in His overall sovereign plan, I am certain He will bring in new leaders in His own time. Please pray.

#### Reflections on “Iron Sharpens Iron” Seminar

**By Ivan Loh:** A few of us woke up early on a Saturday morning in May (a break from my usual routine of sleeping in on a Saturday morning) to attend the *Iron Sharpens Iron* seminar held at Thomson Road Baptist Church. Mr Steve Cretin, the seminar speaker, shared from Scripture and his vast experience on developing and sustaining an effective men ministry – an important, yet often neglected ministry.

Steve’s sharing on David’s Mighty Men (2 Samuel 23:8-39) left an impression on me. As I pondered about the mighty and godly men who stood through trials with David and fought alongside David in battles, I wondered, “Do I/we have such men in our lives?” – Men whom we can trust with our hearts

and lives; men whom we are willing to share our thoughts and struggles with; who understand us and are willing to walk alongside us in the battles of life; whom we know will come to our aid even if it means going out of their way?

It may seem strange in the world of men, who are supposed to be strong, independent and “cool”, to need the support of other men but that seminar opened my perspective on living out our faith in a community with the support of “mighty men”. The Christian faith should not be a journey on which we travel alone but one that we walk, not only with God, but also with one another. It made me desire to have such “mighty men” in my life to walk with, struggle with and grow with, as “*iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another*” (Proverbs 27:17).

With this reflection, we (I and ST) discussed, prayed and sought feedback from our C&S group members and started a new C&S initiative of an additional meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of every month. We will gather for about an hour on these Sundays for fellowship and prayer – hoping to build deeper bonding, greater accountability and genuine fellowship amongst us. We want to be more involved in each other’s lives and share with one another in our walk with Jesus – to support and “sharpen” one another so that we can grow together in our faith and be effective Christians in the world.

We trust that God, who knows and sees our hearts, will continue to lead us in this journey of faith as we walk alongside each other, serving and honouring Him together, not alone.

*Do you have mighty men (women) in your life?*

#### PRAYER FOCUS

“Prayers are tools that God uses to work his will in our bodies and soul. Prayers are not tools for getting, but for being and becoming.

The non-praying world is a pushing, shoving, demanding world. The non-praying world is also an intimidating world. In prayer we intend to leave the world of anxieties. We decide to leave an ego-centered world and enter a God-centered world.”

(Source: *Answering God* by Eugene H. Peterson; P2, P24)

Join us to pray:

### Wednesday

We meet every Wednesday 10.00 am-12.00 noon Conference Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> level for a time of sharing concerns and prayer.

### Sunday – “27:13 - A Time to Pray” (Aug-Dec)

*“I am still confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord” Psalm 27:13*

At 10.30 am we gather in small groups in rooms available in the church premises.

- Pray for ourselves to allow God to work in our hearts and minds, to break us and shape us for His good and perfect purposes
- Pray for our wholehearted willingness to assume ministry / leadership responsibilities and partner God in steering the church forward
- Seek and wait upon God’s guidance and wisdom to determine the next best course of action for CCBC’s survival and growth

During this season of prayer we seek God for CCBC’s future direction.

**CCBC Pulpit 2012-13:** The next 2 months sermons will be shared by 2 guest speakers and our own home-groomed speakers. Pastor Gary continues preaching his sermon series on the book of 1 Timothy—A Memo to the Minister and the Church, ending September 23.

Sep 02	God, the Perfector of our Faith	Ms Yung Shan Juan
Sep 09	1 Tim 5:3-16 Widows	Dr Gary Choong
Sep 16	1 Tim 5:17-25 Elders’ Care	Dr Gary Choong
Sep 23	1 Tim 6:3-21 “Rich” Perspective	Dr Gary Choong
Sep 30	TBA	Mr Joseph Lim
Oct 07	TBA	Mr Ivan Ng
Oct 14	TBA	Mr Tang Wei Qiang
Oct 21	Praise Sunday	Mr Ivan Ng
Oct 28	TBA	Mr Bennett Wong

### EVENTS

#### Children Ministry Teachers’ Fellowship (7 Sep 2012)

The Children Sunday School teachers will come together for their annual fellowship time and lunch and as a way of thanking them for their dedication.

#### Children’s Day ( 7 Oct 2012)

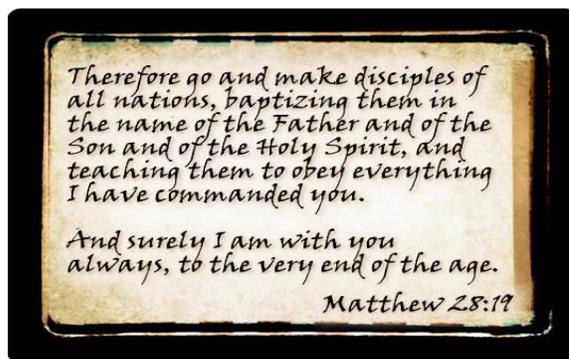
Ivan Ng will lead and coordinate the worship service to celebrate Children’s Day.

#### Praise Sunday (21 Oct 2012)

A special program coordinated by Ivan Ng who is the speaker as well.

#### Children Ministry Meeting (21 Oct 2012)

The children Sunday School teachers will meet for their annual evaluation and planning. Pray for more men and young people to avail themselves to be teachers.



### INCOME/EXPENDITURE FROM JAN-JUN 2012

#### Income:

Collection/Tithes	66,751.80
Sunday School	50.30
Employment Credit	96.00
Interest from Bank	<u>18.89</u>
	<u>66,916.99</u>

#### Expenditure:

Staff	30,331.00
Administration	14,008.63
Ministries	5,863.17
Special Events	8,075.85
Mission & Support	6,395.10
Fixed Assets purchased	<u>1,157.50</u>
	<u>65,831.25</u>