



*Welcome* Prof. Marva Dawn and Myron, to Singapore! We look forward to an enriching time of learning and fellowship with you. We wish you both a very pleasant stay in Singapore.



## GOOD BOOKS

*Journeys Beyond the Comfort Zone*, by Rev David W. F. Wong (Singapore, 2001), is the closing volume of the trilogy which began with the highly popular, *Journey Mercies* (1997) and *Love's Rough journeys* (1998). Rev Wong is the Training Director of the Haggai Institute and he is based in Maui, Hawaii and Singapore. This book is sub-titled, *What Happens When We Leave the Familiar and the Routine?* Rev Wong writes with poignancy, clarity and succinctness. He has a growing reputation as a writer who has urgent and important things to say to the Church and to Christians today. As a pastor-teacher he understands intimately the problems many face in our disoriented world. His biblical and real life examples are powerful and I am confident that all of us in our respective life journeys will benefit greatly from this book.

Listen to what others say about Rev Wong's latest book. Dr Russell Shedd, Prof. of NT at the Faculdade Teologica Baptista de Sao Paulo, Brazil: "Author David Wong makes readers recognise that the main actors on God's stage of biblical history had to face disconcerting, daunting disappointments, just as we all do. The life journeys of these well-known heroes provide important lessons. In this book, a reader can drink cool, crystal, satisfying drafts of wisdom to face life's decisions and challenges with Biblical candour." Mr Ken Anderson, of Ken Anderson Films, Indiana, USA, writes: "When you read David Wong, he invariably takes you on a journey, often a quest or a struggle. At times he is a fellow comrade at your side, assuring you that 'God has not taken the phone off the hook,' even though we, in our confusion, recognize that 'we know how to pray in non-crisis times' when 'prayers are uttered as a matter of routine, prayers that do not matter much whether they are answered or not.' At other times he [Rev. Wong] becomes our captain, showing the way by example and exhortation - as, for instance, in this splendid writing, he dares to flee his own comfort zone [in Singapore] to find 'God's higher purpose' in leadership roles he now so ably fills and dares you to emulate." Read this Good Book!

This book, and the previous volumes, can be ordered from Rev Wong's website, [www.owlnook.com](http://www.owlnook.com) and if you are in a hurry for this latest book, BGST Library has a stock of it for immediate purchase (QSH)

## Chapel

Chapel on 21<sup>st</sup> March was an occasion that made us both sad and happy. Samuel Kim, who graduated with the DipCS in January, spoke at Chapel, and also brought along his wife Sarah and their two sons Kyung Soo and Youn Soo. Samuel and his family will be leaving Singapore on Friday 30<sup>th</sup>, going first to his home at Inchon, Korea, then to New York City, where Samuel will be a Director at the Korean Seamen's Mission.

All the family had something to say, and Samuel also sang for us. Samuel then described the nature of the work he will be doing. Many Korean sailors live a difficult and lonely life when they are out at sea. The pressures faced by their families are heavy and his Mission aims at offering them both social and spiritual help. Befriending them gives opportunities for sharing the gospel. The Mission also has a centre with sports rooms and other facilities where sailors can come and relax. The response to the Mission's work is generally good: the sailors appreciate the kindness of the workers, and often welcome the opportunity to talk about their hard lives. Samuel concluded by setting us all an 'assignment' (which is fair enough, as he has written plenty himself while at BGST), namely, to pray for him and his family as they move to New York City. So we were sorry because we shall miss one of our most cheerful and hard-working students; but happy to learn about the good work that Samuel and his family will engage in. We wish them the Lord's blessings.

On 30<sup>th</sup> March it was the turn of another of our students, David Chan, to lead. He took us through a set of his beautiful slides which he took when he went to Israel and Turkey last year, on one of BGST's Bible Lands Study Tours. Many of the major sites were covered: in Israel Caesarea, Capernaum, the River Jordan, the Sea of Galilee, the plain of Megiddo, Masada, Qumran and, of course, Jerusalem; in Turkey Pisidian Antioch, Lystra, Laodicea, Ephesus, and Istanbul. It was sobering to see the shots from Turkey: with the exception of Istanbul, the biblical sites in Turkey were all in ruins. These were once flourishing cities, with lively churches in them. In the final analysis, David Chan concluded, it is faithfulness to God which counts: without that, any church will in time become a heap of ruins.

## NEWS BITS

### NEW COURSES STARTING SOON!

#### Research and Writing, by Regina Lee

(GS 116, 1.5 credits). Students intending to take this course please note that it is now postponed by two weeks. It will run on **Wednesdays**, starting 25th April. There will be six sessions (7.30-9.30pm): 25th April, 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th May.

#### Children in a Changing World, by Dr Moira Lee

(CE 355, 1.5 credits). This course is scheduled to begin on Apr 19 and the deadline for registration is **SOON!** This course attempts to understand developmental processes of children and focuses on building discipline, instilling courage and self-esteem in children, and integrating children into the faith community.

### OTHER COURSES (all 1.5 credits)

#### Preaching Practicum, by Rev Edmund Chan.

Registration closed: the class is full. **NT Textual Criticism, by Dr Quek.** This open only to those who have had at least one year of NT Greek. **Interpreting Judges, by Dr Satterthwaite.** Registration is still open.

### NEW VENUE!

**Rethinking Worship (Dr Marva Dawn)** The venue is BGST (4 Bishan St 13), not YWCA, Fort Canning.

**GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH** has several positions on its pastoral staff for its English language congregations and is inviting applications from suitably qualified persons who have particular gifts in any of these ministry areas: preaching, teaching, pastoral care, evangelism, missions, adults, youth, children, music, men's, women's or seniors. Enquiries are to be directed to: Tony Chan, Chairman, Search Committee, tel: (65) 9755-3820, email: [tc@cpl-sg.com](mailto:tc@cpl-sg.com). More information may be obtained from this website: <http://www.gracebap.org.sg>

### THE ALTAR

A broken ALTAR, Lord, thy servant rears,  
Made of a heart and cemented with tears;  
Whose parts are as thy hand did frame;  
No workman's tool hath touch'd the same.

A HEART alone  
Is such a stone,  
As nothing but  
Thy pow'r doth out.  
Wherefore each part  
Of my hard heart  
Meets in this frame  
To praise thy name.

That if I chance to hold my peace,  
These stones to praise thee may not cease.  
Oh, let thy blessed SACRIFICE be mine,  
And sanctify this ALTAR to be thine.

- George Herbert, 17th century

## A Peek at Purim ... Mrs S. M. Peck



Purim Festival itself was on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> March. On Thursday evening, the Meggillah of Esther was read in all places where people were gathered to celebrate Purim. I was invited by friends to join them in the Great Synagogue in Jerusalem. It was an interesting experience. People came in costumes of all kinds with masks on their faces. Many brought with them noisemakers as well. When the cantor was reading through the scroll, every mentioner of Haman's name was anticipated and drowned out by noise. There was the click-clacking of the wooden noisemakers, boos and whistles of different pitches and decibels, banging of furniture, stamping of feet, and other un-discernible cacophony!

At church on Saturday, it was more of the same. Our Pastor gave 5 seconds for each 'noise' but it was uncontrollable. Finally he began to refer to 'that bad guy' and other similar terms. I think many were tempted to ask, "Which bad guy?"

Of course I had to ask (not 'which guy'!). So I learned that one explanation for the use of costumes and masks was to highlight the fact that things are not always what they seem to be. E.g. even though God's name is not mentioned in the Book of Esther, it is clear that God is the controlling mover behind all that took place.

What are some other features of this celebration held by Jews throughout the world? We Singaporeans should understand that no celebration is complete without a distinctive food. So what do we eat at Purim? 'Haman's ears' of course. They are samosa-shaped pastry with poppy seed filling or dates and nuts. Esther 9:19 & 22 also recorded the giving of gifts of food as part of the celebration. So I too gave and received gifts of food - chocolates and candies, very sensible gifts indeed.

### Our Deepest Condolence

We share your grief, **Priscilla Lee**, on the peaceful home-going of your beloved husband, Lee Weng Fatt, who is now resting in the Lord after a long struggle with cancer. Weng Fatt did special studies at BGST. Those who wish to communicate with Priscilla may send their email to: [bng7@hotmail.com](mailto:bng7@hotmail.com)

### Birthday Greetings to the following, with prayer for God's richest blessings

Mr Tsang Wing Hung Rupert 02/04

Mr Larry James 04/04

Mr Lim Hung Heng David 06/04

Mr Michael Chan 08/04