

Insight



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God’s vision for God’s people

Thinking, praying churches will always be asking ‘What is our vision?’ God renews his people by giving them fresh vision of how the world and the church might become.

How we can discern an authentic vision from God which inspires us to go on a journey together; an owned vision to which each of us can commit.

I believe that God is calling us to a ministry that is deeper, higher, and wider building on a heritage of 160yrs of work. It will be exhilarating and demanding; it will challenge our pockets and stretch our faith.

Deeper — moving to be more committed disciples of Jesus Christ, for God has not finished with us yet! Discipleship is the process of investing in prayer, taking time to read the scriptures, being in fellowship with others, receiving the sacraments, being with God, wanting more of God and his perspectives.

Higher — higher means a new quality of fellowship, real sharing breaking down barriers and building bridges. The early church discovered that multi-cultural, multi-

ethnic churches can have tricky issues to deal with. Higher calls us to deal with these issues with grace serving ‘one another’, whatever our status or background.

Wider — to look beyond ourselves to a world in need of the good news of God’s forgiveness and reconciliation; confident that justice will prevail, evil will be defeated and working for peace and justice are ultimately worthwhile. Such a vision will respond to God’s heart for a broken world and broken lives. It is our response to his call for reconciliation, hope, justice and faith.

Insight considers how in the name of Jesus, the love of the Father and empowered by the Spirit we can do all kinds of scary and wonderful things, deeper, higher, wider.



Howard

Revd Dr G Howard Mellor

Building Community

In Acts 2: 42-47 we read about the earliest believers of Christ. They were a group of people living together, 'devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching, to fellowship, to sharing in meals, and to prayer. ... And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.' Our life together as a community of believers sharing meals and praising God together becomes a way for others to come to meet Jesus, the saving one. The picnic on the Peak, the Harvest Lunch, BBQ in the courtyard, and combined choir extravaganza pointed people to the wondrous work of God in our midst. Through the Holy Spirit, strangers become friends and God is glorified. We hope you'll join us this spring for community gatherings. Watch the weekly notice sheet for fun fellowship to come!





Jesus — The Heart Of Christmas at MIC

Christmas is the time to celebrate Jesus for He came to reign in us and frees us from sin.

As 'church' we started the season with a Christmas Concert, wherein various choirs rendered significant songs that inspired every listener. Our children, teens, and Sunday School teachers joined together in re-creating the nativity scene from the first Christmas.

Christmas at MIC is a time to be jolly. On Christmas Day we had a family lunch wherein we shared a festive meal. It was a fun-filled day, as Revd Jess and Revd Howard & Mrs. Rosie Mellor enthusiastically



spearheaded unforgettable games. Jesus is the heart of Christmas – the reason we celebrate the season.

GLORY IN EXCELSIUS!!!!

Rodelyn T. Canedo, Living Faith Choir

CHRISTMAS PARTY

It was a day of laughter and tears of joy as the Theological Education Ministry (TEM) celebrated their thanksgiving and Christmas Party on Dec. 26 with inspirational singing, testimony and thanksgiving. Our speaker Esther Ayon encouraged us all to thank God every tick of time for all His goodness. We shared in the birthday offering as each gave an offering representing their age; and all enjoyed the many different Bible games, drills, and quizzes.

The food was wonderful and plentiful. Thanks to the food committee led by Gina Domingo, and to our sister Mely Domondon for her tray of ginger bread man cookies and her inspiring short message. Thanks to all who came that day and made the party an awesome one. TO GOD BE THE GLORY!!!!

Prepared by:

***Jenny A. Salvador & Esther Ayon
(Theological Education by Extension /
Theological Education Ministry)***

8th Bibliolympics, Another Success!

‘Bibliolympics’This word is a combination of the two words Bible and Olympics. It is what we call the Bible Games held every New Year to encourage everyone to open and read their Bible and to be familiar with the events, characters, places and verses which serve as an armor in our daily Christian living.



The five Bible Quiz finalists showing their answers during the clincher round...

Bibliolympics is divided into two categories: The Individual & Group Games.

In the Individual Games, we have the Bible Quiz (in easy, difficult, clincher & verse exposition category), Bible Memory Verses & Bible Drill. These games serve as a test of how many details are learned, how many verses are memorized, and speed of finding verses in the Bible. In the verse exposition, the finalists are encouraged to expound the verse in three minutes. Through these games the contestants learn to depend on God who



gives wisdom. They show how God works in the lives of those who depend on Him. Winners of these games were as follows:

	Bible Quiz	Bible Memory Verses	Bible Drill
<i>Champion</i>	Teresita A. Calauagan	Rubilyn E. Gamal	Shahanilyn B. Martinez
<i>1st Runner-Up</i>	Marcelina A. Seridon	Welma M. Gardoce	Nora S. Asuit
<i>2nd Runner-Up</i>	Joyce A. Dela Rosa	Mamelia S. Bautista	Glorence S. Guzman

In the Group Games, the participants were divided into 3 groups and all were encouraged to join in the Bible Pictionary, Bible Actionary, & Bibliohenyo (Bible Genius) All had fun and enjoyed the company of each other. They learned that to win these games, they have to work as a team and to practice coordination, cooperation & discipline.



The Bibliolympics 2012 winners of the Bible Quiz, Bible Memory Verses and Bible Drill in their gold, silver and bronze medals...

But of course, this event would not be a success without the presence of the Filipino Ministry leaders and guests (Josephine Mingala, Shaning Manalo) who served as Board of Judges, scorers, tabulators, time keepers & watchers, as well as the kitchen committee who prepared our sumptuous lunch and snack, and to all those who served & committed their time and finances to make this occasion possible. To Shatin Fellowship and MCFM for their participation, thank you. Above all, we give the glory & honour to God, the source of life, wisdom, and knowledge.

So, would you like to test how much you know about the Bible? Then what are you waiting for? Grab & start reading your Bible now from Genesis to Revelation and join us next year. See you!!!

Revd Jesus N. de los Santos



Revd Marybeth Asher-Lawson

I Remember....

*Angels and stars shining bright;
Wise men on that starlit night.
Shepherds, flocks, and a cow - 'moo, moo',
A 6-foot camel at the manger, too.*

The 2011 Children's Nativity was a memorable sight to behold. At the end of it all, some sheep wool rolled across the floor, and baby Jesus rested in the manger on the communion table. Gazing at the sight of the swaddled infant on the altar, one remembered that His life, given for us in love at Christmas, was later offered up for us on Good Friday. God on earth *with* us; God in flesh *like* us; God on the cross *for* us.



In Youth and Children's Ministry at MIC we aim to welcome children and teens into the community of faith where they can experience the truth of the gospel: In Christ, God is for us. In addition, we aim to invite young people into relationship with this living God, so that they may know God's transforming power and love in their lives. But we don't stop there. We encourage them, as one

writer put it, to 'spend time *with* Christ, in order to become *like* Christ, so that they may live *for* Christ.' From the youngest children to the oldest teens, we rejoice in the discovery and growth of disciples.

Discovery and growth of disciples requires the gifts of the whole church, though. If God has gifted you with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love, perhaps you might consider joining our teaching team. Or if God has gifted you with organizational skills, you might enjoy being part of our Sunday School admin support. If you have an interest, or sense God is calling you to share in this vital ministry to young people, please see me. Next year's Nativity is just around the corner!

CHILDREN: THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

I am blessed to see the enthusiasm of the Bubbles and Splash every Praise and Worship time in Sunday school. Some as young as 3 years old know the reason why they are at Sunday school. They are there to praise Jesus, they are there to sing praises and learn more about Him. They are so happy singing songs to worship Him.



Luke 18:1-4 says: *The disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' He called a little child and had him stand among them and He said; I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*



The now famous teddies are helping to build the new MIC

These little ones from Sunday school aren't pretentious when they say they are praising and worshipping God. They are humble, totally dependent, weak and ready to be molded by our Heavenly Father. This is the reason Jesus said, we are to become like little children to enter the Kingdom of heaven.

Imelda de los Santos



Deepening Discipleship

What would happen if we treated the Bible like we treat our mobile phones?

What if we carried it around in our bags or pockets?

What if we flipped through it several times a day?

What if we turned back to get it when we find that we're leaving the house without it?



What if we used it to receive messages from the text?

What if we treated it like we couldn't live without it?

What if we gave it to children as a gift?

What if we used it when we travelled?

What if we used it in case of emergency?

What's more important - your Bible or your mobile phone?

ONE — Lent book for 2012

Look out for an amazing book published specially for International Churches in Hong Kong written and designed by Hong Kong pastors and edited by Howard and Rosie. For each of the 46 days of Lent the book contains a passage from the Bible, a short meditation by one of the HK pastors and a prayer. Everything in one place for your Lent devotions.

From the Introduction:

It is not intended to be a trophy for the shelf, or to simply adorn the coffee table. It is intended to be a route towards Easter, a guide for decisions, a vision of the future and a challenge to lifestyle. Indeed it is a subversive book which undermines contemporary assumptions and defies social norms. It is all of this because it is the Word of God as recorded by Mark and others, and therefore is about the transformation of people and communities. For that reason read with eagerness and handle with care.

Make sure you have your copy, only \$10HK and available early February in time for the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday, 22 February.



ONE

voice

hope

Jesus

church

Friday we call Good

God — Father, Son and

Holy Spirit

empty tomb

risen Lord

baptism

faith

way

Compass

A short course for those new to the Christian faith or new to MIC. Developed this last autumn and run once here Compass combines exploring the key issues of the faith in a setting of sharing a simple meal. The issues about Jesus, Bible, Church are also related to the themes which are at the heart of a Methodist understanding of being a Christian.

Stepforward

Stepforward Is a discipleship course developed in the UK and designed to help people to share together in a variety of ways, as they exploring their individual relationship with God.

- The material has a discipleship focus but keeps prompting people to reflect on God's call on their life.
- It has a practical flavour and offers a resource for small groups. It explores some of the basic things we are expected to know and be able to do as Christians and yet don't always get to ask how! It also invites the group to ask, 'what does God require of us?' a question set in the context of fellowship and prayer.



Coming soon — Disciple

Disciple is studied in a group of up to ten, with two group leaders. It meets weekly over a year (with space for holidays etc). Each group meeting begins with a time of devotion and a short DVD presentation, before questions and activities applying the Bible reading to the context of the participants' daily lives.

As part of Disciple everyone commits to a daily personal Bible study of 30-45 minutes, which is then picked up in the weekly meetings.

Everyone receives a manual, with the reading framework, covering 70% of the Bible and space for writing notes. Leaders

have a facilitation manual, but are also group participants.

Disciple has transformed the lives of individuals and congregations in many parts of USA, UK and across the world. It has drawn people closer to God, deepened their discipleship and opens their eyes into the way that God is leading them.

The course moves through the biblical story from creation in Genesis to the New Jerusalem in Revelation. There are theme words and verses, key characters, events and topics which fix the sequence of the biblical story in the minds of the participants. For more information, see Revd Marybeth.



Extending Prayer

Building on the prayer day in November we will have a half day of prayer on Saturday 25 February. This is the first weekend of Lent when we reflect on the need to take hold of God in a deeper fuller way.

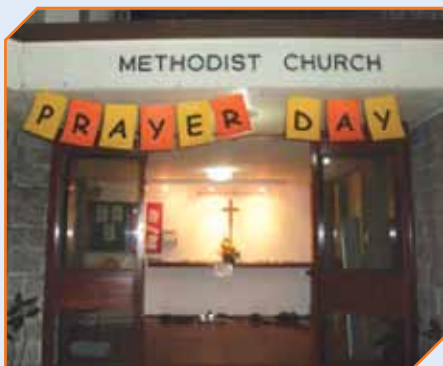
The Prayer time will start at 8.00am, with breakfast at 9.00am cooked by the Revd Canon! Through the morning there will be opportunity for private prayer among a number of prayer stations. Each one will highlight in a need and offer guidance for praying. We will set up a 'prayer wall' of issues for which we wish to pray and this will inform our Sunday worship in Lent. The prayer time will conclude with a special service of prayer for healing and wholeness starting at 12.30.



Healing and Wholeness

Throughout my ministry I have found such services to be profoundly moving. It is God who brings healing and we pray that people will find healing and wholeness in body mind and spirit. In the ministry of Jesus some people come to him, and some are brought by others. The ministry of Christian healing is one in which we may come for ourselves and also on behalf of others. There will be opportunity in the service to receive prayer in the context of worship.

At 12.30 on the 25 February we will focus particularly in a time of worship and prayer for healing and wholeness. You will find the service is itself a healing experience, and all are welcome to come.



Enriching Worship

One of the delights for the whole ministry team is the willingness of people to participate in worship and engage with new ideas. As we move to Lent and Easter we want to develop a number of key ideas but we need your help.

We have people who regularly read the scriptures but there may be others who wish to volunteer. We shall be having short dramatic pieces in the worship and wonder if there are people who would like to be involved. It is our hope to run a Worship Leaders course and this may now be after Easter.

Choosing hymns in an International congregation with so many people and backgrounds involved is frankly a nightmare! Could you let Marybeth, Jess or myself know if you have a Top Ten hymns – we will try and fit them in. Carols of course will need to wait for Christmas!

We want to find ways of bringing art into the sanctuary – like the ‘dressing of the church’ for Advent and Christmas. We are hoping to be building up to Easter throughout Lent and so if you have interest and ideas do let us know.

Baptism

It would appear that we have some people who wish to be baptised on confession of faith and so we hope to do that just before Easter. If you are interested in exploring the meaning of baptism please speak to me.



Membership

There are a number of people who have joined our worship over the last few months. If you wish to be welcomed into membership of the Methodist International Church do contact one of the ministry team.

Who are we?

In order to create an up-to-date database of our church family, throughout February we will be asking people to complete a short form so that we know how to be in touch with you. The data will of course be kept confidential to MIC and used only for the purposes of MIC.

Revd Dr G Howard Mellor

Keeping Good Account


‘You can’t take it with you.’ No matter how much material wealth or familial relationship we leave behind when we finally depart the earth, Christians believe the saying is true: we can’t take it with us. We who have our hope in Christ believe we don’t need to take it with us. We believe that when our life is finally and fully redeemed by Christ in the resurrection, we will experience completion in God, and have no need for cell-phones, suits or money. We’ll have so much more. But how are we to view such things while we’re still on this side of heaven?

As Christians, we are called to be stewards of all that God has given us. In other words, God entrusts God’s people, resources, and creation into our care. God places into our care our family, friends, talents, money and planet. But all of it belongs to God. In the scriptures, Jesus encourages us to be wise stewards of that which God has entrusted to us; to make the most of God’s good gifts for God’s glory.

As disciples of Jesus, we do well to continually ask the question, ‘What kind of steward am I?’ Am I taking good care of the resources that God has placed into my care? Am I living as though it all belongs to God? Am I generous to others the way God is generous to me?

In January’s Covenant Service, we prayed aloud to God together, ‘I willingly offer all I have and am to serve you, as and where you choose.’ During the month of February, we’ll think together about what that might mean for us practically as we explore how to be faithful stewards of our whole lives.

Revd Marybeth Asher-Lawson



*This God is the One
who gives life, breath, and
everything else to people.*

Act 17:25



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