

# MCHK

The Methodist Church, Hong Kong

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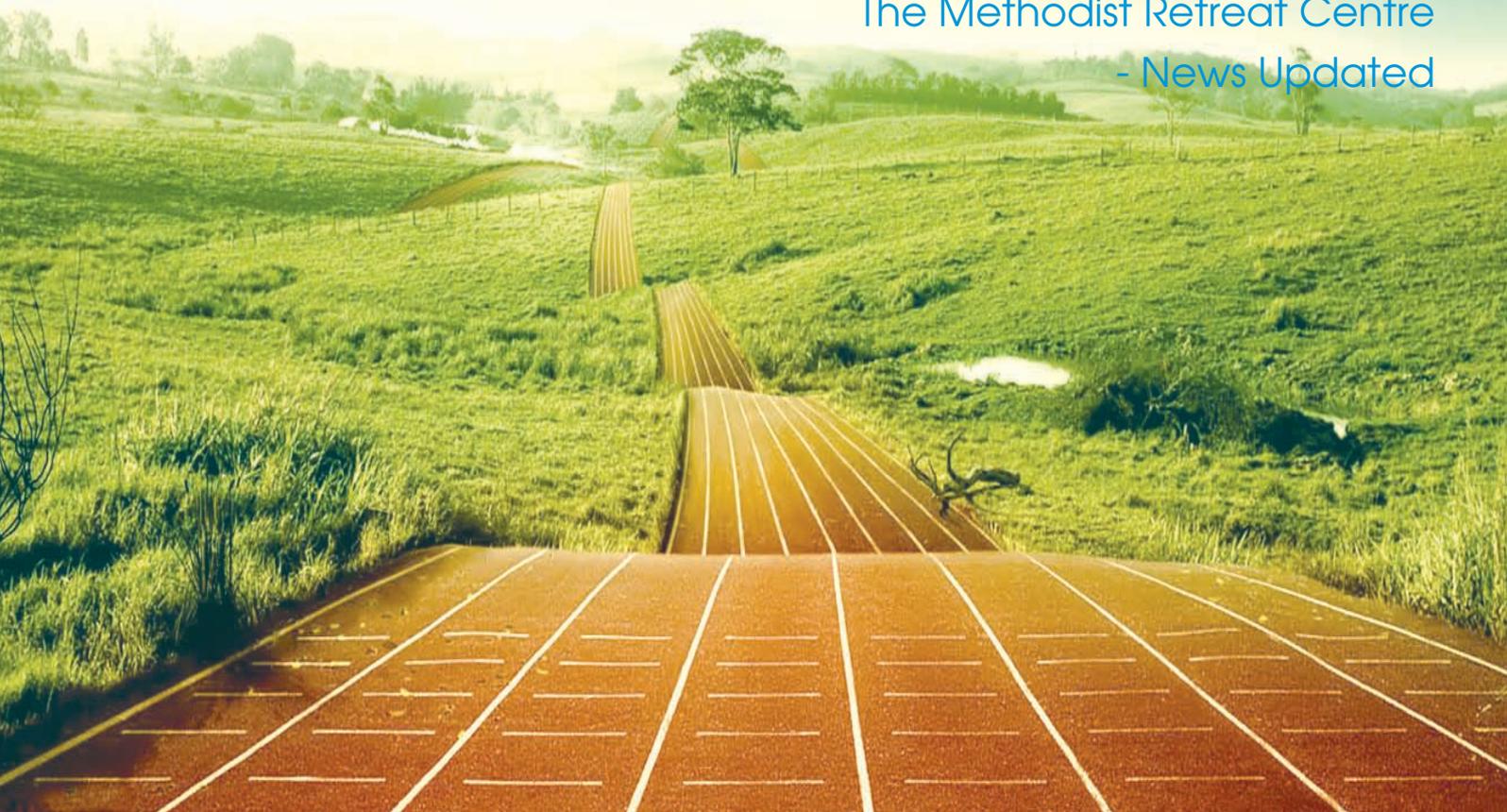
# NEWSLETTER

## Abundant Grace

### What Methodists Can Learn From London 2012?

Redevelopment of the  
Methodist International Church, Hong Kong

The Methodist Retreat Centre  
- News Updated





# Be Rooted in Scripture Use Your Time Effectively Offer Yourself as a Follower of Jesus

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# EDITORIAL: ABUNDANT GRACE

The Rev Tin-yau YUEN  
President of the Methodist Church, Hong Kong

**When** I was elected as the President in the Representative Session of the Conference last year, I did not wish to take up the office because I deeply felt that I was unworthy. However, your prayers and support finally give me the courage to accept this challenge. Of course, I am convinced that this is God's grace too, as the Bible says, "Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God." (2 Corinthians 3:5) "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12:9)

People have asked me what my ambitions and plans are as the new President. I consider that being the President is not like running for the Chief Executive so much so that I need to have an election manifesto. The development of our Church is definitely not dependent on the leadership and decisions of any single person. Policies and of our Church are formulated through deliberations in meetings (such as the Representative Session of the Conference) among church leaders. I truly believe that I am only a servant, and together with our brothers and sisters, we will take up the mission and responsibility which God entrusts on our Church.

As you may have already known, there will be development in various aspects of our ministry in the coming years. The Kwun Tong Methodist Church has purchased a new premises as a strategic point for spreading the Gospel and serving the white collars in Kwun Tong which is undergoing tremendous transformation. Next year, we will start our ministry amongst Indonesian domestic helpers in Hong Kong; and we are planning for the redevelopment of the Methodist International Church, Hong Kong (MICHK) as well as the North Point Methodist Church.

In fact, we have been exploring the redevelopment of MICHK for a long time. Unfortunately, the Town Planning Board has been imposing height restrictions on buildings erected on land zoned as "Government, Institution and Community" (G/IC). For over a year, we have been discussing with the Planning Department and have recently sought judicial review. Under God's guidance, we should be able to procure approval for rebuilding MICHK up to 110 mPD. This project, if materialized, will provide additional space for MICHK to serve peoples of different racial and cultural backgrounds, and our Conference Office will move there too.

The redevelopment project cannot be accomplished within a short span of time. Apart from raising funds, the most paramount task is to maintain close bondage among church members and rebuild the church that belongs to God and to all members in unity. Besides expanding our physical space, we should also deepen our mission work.

It is my conviction that our God is a bountiful provider. I also trust that our brothers and sisters love our Church and are willing to make offerings to develop our ministries. In fact, in the past years, whenever there are needs in our Church, our brothers and sisters were enthusiastic in making contributions in different ways.

Monetary offering is certainly important in the building or purchase of the hardware of the Church, but I think it is more important to establish the "Church" that comprises pious and committed Christians. It is my fervent hope that through all these development plans and offering in faith, the hearts of brothers and sisters could be pulled together so that with concerted efforts, we will strive for the common goals of evangelism, building up the Church and strengthening the congregation. 🙏

# What Methodists can learn from London 2012 ?

The Rev Canon Dr G Howard Mellor

**This** summer millions of people were captivated by the Olympics and the Paralympics. Even those of us who know little about dressage, synchronized swimming or clay pigeon shooting have been glued to the screen, marveling at the speed, accuracy and prowess of the athletes. We rejoiced with Sarah Lee Wai-Size of Hong Kong as she won bronze in the women's keirin and it was good to see the Hong Kong flag proudly flying in the packed velodrome at London 2012.

Coming from England I was delighted at the overall third place of Team GB, and many of the winners came from my home county Yorkshire, which made it all the better. The English press would have us believe that the pavements of London are paved with gold medals!

But wherever we watched and whatever nationality we hold, I am sure that none of us can fail to be impressed at the dedication and endurance of the participants. This will be even more evident as we watch the Paralympics. As the Olympics unfolded and the athletes spoke of their journey, I judged that there are many things we as Methodists can learn.

## Courage and commitment

Note the commitment of middle distance runner David Rudisha who is a member of the Maasai tribe in Kenya. He ran for his Church School and though hardly known internationally, has been training every day for 12 years. Now aged 24, he outpaced his competitors and won gold in 'the best 800 meter race ever' (Sebastian Coe). All the athletes interviewed spoke of hard work, years of commitment, regular exercise and determination over many years. For many the chance to compete was the completion of years of effort.

This attitude is very different from the way we experience much of life today. Our culture craves the immediate, exhilarating, personally packaged and not too demanding. Unfortunately much of our Christian experience is formed by this ethos, rather than the Olympians experience. We



▲ **Howard** is the Senior Minister of the Methodist International Church. He and his wife **Rosie**, who is a teacher, consider this opportunity for ministry in Hong Kong as a great privilege.

need to regain the methodical discipleship which marked out the first 'Methodists'. Wesley called it the Means of Grace – prayer, bible study, fellowship, conferring, worship and sacraments.

## Team commitment

What was very compelling, as an Englishman, was the high level of team commitment which the participants had to each other, in Team GB and in other nations. There was real delight in the achievements of others as well as their own. Our unity in Christ is given by God, but most churches are a long way from being Team \_\_\_ (put in the name of your church). We need to work constantly to ensure that we have an owned vision for our work, worship and witness and are a grace-filled welcoming community.

## Enlisting volunteers

Quite rightly the focus of the Olympic games was on the competitors but London 2012 also enlisted, trained and supported 70,000 volunteers who worked with enthusiasm to welcome participants at airports, throughout London and at the Olympic Park. This was a very good example

of how to enlist and empower volunteers to take a full part in events. I think it is a challenge to all church leaders to make sure that we evoke, enable and equip people to take a full active part in the life of the church.

## Holding a Vision

If the politicians of the day and sports leaders had not held a vision and planned for it, then London 2012 would not have happened. The Church needs people of passion, experience and vision to see what might be possible and to help the church develop the processes to make it happen.

## Encouragement

Some of the stories from the Olympics were so compelling. Take the story of the eight year old boy who with his family from Somalia became asylum seekers in the UK. Shunned as different at school and in trouble with teachers, his PE teacher, Mr Alan Watkinson, saw his ability in sport and especially running. Watkinson encouraged and mentored Mo in this sport and very quickly he was winning inter school cross country races. Mo Farah won the 10,000 and 5,000 meter races at London 2012. When Mo married, Alan was his best man. All of us need encouragement and with it we can undertake tasks which would daunt us otherwise.

## Working together

The lighting of the Olympic flame became a symbol for us also. There had been much talk about which experienced athlete would light the Olympic flame. In a remarkable opening ceremony the torches were handed to young athletes who are likely to compete in future Games. It was a parable of the importance of handing on to the next generation the responsibility for the Games. The cauldron

itself was made of 204 separate 'petals', which rose and came together to form one dramatic flame. It was an image of the importance of working together, for we have more light, more visibility, more power when we work together. It is true of individual churches, the Connexion and ecumenically. All my ministries I have noted the way that working together is so vital – more people are reached, more people respond, more obviously the church is visible in the community.

## Thanks giving to God

The Olympic opening ceremonies spectacularly celebrated the history of Britain and the extent of human endeavor. There was one theme missing – praise and thanks to God who brought all things into being and formed us as human beings able to undertake these remarkable feats. It is a reminder that we have a huge task to share the good news of Jesus in an international, developed, secular culture which has no place for God. Our contemporary task is to speak again the most remarkable story of Jesus who by his life and death and resurrection is able to transform persons and communities.

In all of these we celebrate the Olympic movement which I believe is a real challenge to us Methodists. I agree with Jacques Rogge, the President of the International Olympic Committee, who described London 2012 as 'Absolutely fabulous'. Sebastian Coe, Chair of London 2012, thanked competitors and volunteers and for their 'tenacity, ambition and imagination.' They are qualities I crave for our Church and that in the public arena we will be able to celebrate the transforming story of God in Christ. Now the baton comes to us as Methodists in Hong Kong. May God by his Spirit enable us to fulfill our high calling as servants of Christ and in our day. Amen. 🏹



▲ Middle distance runner David Rudisha.



▲ Wai-sze LEE wins bronze medal in the women's keirin.

# Highlights of the Representative Session of the Conference 2012



▲ President, Vice-President together with guests and officiating members after the Inaugural Ceremony of the President and the Vice-President

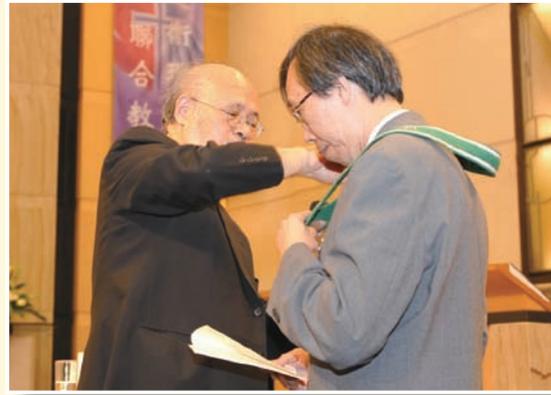
**The** Representative Session of the Conference 2012 was held on 25th and 26th May at our Chinese Methodist Church, Wan Chai, Hong Kong. There were 370 delegates and observers. During the meeting, the Rev Dr Sung-che Lam and Mr Richard Lap-kei Tsang were elected as the Secretary and the Treasurer respectively for 2012-2015.

The Inaugural Ceremony of the President and the Vice-President marked the opening of the Session on 25th May. The Outgoing President, the Rev Prof Lung-kwong Lo, handed over to the new President, the Rev Tin-yau Yuen, what symbolize the power and the code of practice of our Church, namely the Bible, the Gavel, the President's Stole as well as the Constitution and By-Laws. The Vice-President's Stole was then passed to the

new Vice-President, Mr Sze-yuen Ng. Souvenirs were also presented by the new President and the new Vice-President to the Outgoing President and the Outgoing Vice-President, Mr Stuart Chen. Following that were the reports made by the Outgoing President, the Circuit Superintendents of the Hong Kong Circuit, Kowloon East Circuit, Kowloon West Circuit; International Church Circuit, the Associate Director of the Divinity School of Chung Chi College; and the Outgoing President of the Hong Kong Methodist Women's Association. After the representative of the Methodist Church in Britain, the Rev Anne Brown had delivered her speech, the motion of the Ministerial Session of ordaining Mr. Chi-wang Chiah as full-connexional minister of The Methodist Church, Hong Kong was passed. When the motions of purchasing the 6th floor of Millennium City 3 at 370 Kwun Tong Road for



▲ Over 370 delegates and observers attending the Representative Session and Inaugural Ceremony of the President and the Vice-President held in the Chinese Methodist Church, Wan Chai, Hong Kong



▲ Outgoing President, The Rev Prof Lung-kwong Lo, handing over to the new President, the Rev Tin-yau Yuen, the Constitution and the By-Laws that symbolize the code of practice of our Church; and giving the Vice-President's Stole to the new Vice-President, Mr. Sze-yuen Ng



▲ Big applause to the new President and the new Vice-President

Kwun Tong Methodist Church to develop her city mission with the fund raising target being set at HK\$40 million (\$20 million to be borne by members of the Kwun Tong Methodist Church and \$20 million to be raised at the Conference level from members of other Methodist Local Churches and subsidiaries) were accepted, the Kick-Off Ceremony for the Fund Raising Campaign for Purchasing New Church Premises for Kwun Tong Methodist Church was held. Representatives from different Local Churches received the relevant information of the Campaign, signifying their full support and participation. Over 200 brothers and sisters from the Kwun Tong Methodist Church came to witness this historic moment.

On the second day of the Session (26th), the meeting began with a worship led by the Rev Wilson Chan on the theme "Thy Kingdom Come", and the Rev Winnie Ho delivered the sermon. After accepting the reports from the Ministerial Session and observing a moment of silence in memory of the late Rev Lincoln Leung who passed away in January, the reports and motions of the Standing Committees and different Conference Committees were considered. Listed below are the important resolutions:

In view of the difficulty of the Rev Tin-yau Yuen having to perform the duties of both the President and the Head of the School Education Division, it was resolved that the Rev Paul Kan should take over the latter. Moreover, as the workload of the Division had grown heavier, it would be impractical for the Division Head to take up all the responsibilities by himself and this structure could hardly nurture future successors, the suggestion by the Joint Retreat of the Executives' Meeting and the Development Strategy Sub-Committee of appointing Mr Shun-kwong Leung, Dr Raymond Chen and Mrs Yuen-lee Ng to serve as the Deputy Heads of secondary schools, primary schools and kindergartens and nurseries respectively, with the Rev Tin-yau Yuen supporting in his capacity as the President was accepted. The Deputy Heads should be ex-officio members of the School Education Committee and its Sub-committees/Working Groups, and be entitled to sit in the pertinent School Management Committee meetings. This arrangement would be reviewed after 1 year. Meanwhile, the Rev Maria Lau was appointed as the Head of the Laity Training Division, replacing the Rev Paul Kan until the end of the Rev Kan's original term (30th June 2013).

Further, the members accepted the application of Mr Chan Lik-hang, member of North Point Methodist Church, for becoming a Candidate for Local Church Parish Worker; agreed that Mr Ka-fai Lo, Candidate for Local Church Parish Worker, to continue his service at the Fellowship of Evangelical Students (FES) in response to FES's invitation and that his 3-year service at FES in the past would be treated as being equivalent to service for the same period of time at our Local Church/Chapel upon completion of his training, and he would not be required to repay the financial support provided by the Church during his training. Besides, the members also appointed Mr Fun-kuen Au as our Principal Honorary Legal Advisor and Mr Kin-yuen Ng as our Honorary Legal Advisor; appointed Dr Raymond Chen as our Principal Honorary Medical Consultant and appointed medical doctors of different specialties as our Honorary Medical Consultants for 2012-13, namely, Dr Raymond Chung-I Chen, Dr Vincent Wai-chung Chan, Dr Joyce Kit-wah Lau Kwan, Dr Sylvia Chia-lu Chen, Dr Sze-tong Chan, Dr Danny Chi-wah Tsoi, Dr Pui-yau Lau, Dr Yiu-wing Ho, Dr Arthur Hon-wing Wu, Dr Owen Tak-yin Tsang, Dr Geoffrey Chi-fung Mok, Dr Alec Ho-chuen Fung, Dr Marianne Man-yan Lam, Dr Kuen Chan, Dr Lucilly Ka-wai Hung, Dr Daisy Mei-yea Kan, Dr Chi-kwan Kong, Dr Wing-hung Ng, Dr Dawson

To-sang Fong, Dr Chi-wai Kwok, Dr Wai-chong Wong, Dr Denise Shu-ting Lam and the Yang Dental Clinic.

The members also accepted the proposal of the Ministerial Session of approving the application of the Rev James Fan for extension of 1 year's service upon retirement; approved the application of the Rev Dr. Sung-che Lam to take the 3rd (last) session of his sabbatical leave so that he could continue his writing on the chronicle of the life of John Wesley and the Methodist Movement; approved the application of the Rev Peter Wong for a 1-month no-pay leave (from 1st to 31st July 2012) to attend international conferences and summer courses jointly organized by Cambridge Theological Federation and the Divinity School of Chung Chi College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong; approved the application of the Rev Wilson Chan for 1-year sabbatical study leave in 2013 or 2014; approved the application of the Rev Sally Wong for 1-year sabbatical study leave (might be taken in separate sessions depending on the requirements of the programmes); approved the application of the Rev Alan Yu for becoming Prison Chaplain so that he could visit prisoners more frequently and promote prison ministry among pastoral workers and church members.



▲ Our new President, the Rev Tin-yau Yuen, presenting the souvenir to the representative of the Methodist Church in Britain, the Rev Anne Brown



▲ In the worship on the second day, the Rev Wilson Chan leading the congregation in the rallying cry "Thy Kingdom Come" to show our Church's commitment to evangelism and the Kingdom of God



▲ With the fall of the President's gavel, the resolution of purchasing a new premises for Kwun Tong Methodist Church was passed. The Kick-Off Ceremony for the Fund Raising Campaign followed with the Rev Prof Lung-kwong Lo leading the prayer

In 2012 -2013, the new stationing of pastors included: as from 1st July 2012: the Rev Dr. Sung-che Lam would cease to be the Consultant Pastor of Kwong Yuen Methodist Church; the Rev Paul Kan would cease to be the Pastor-in-charge of Shau Kei Wan Methodist Church; the Rev Maria Lau to serve as the Pastor-in-charge of Grace Methodist Church; the Rev Christina Lam to serve as the Pastor-in-charge of Shau Kei Wan Methodist Church; the Superintendent of Kowloon West Circuit to serve as the Pastor-in-charge of Asbury Methodist

Church; the Rev Fung-har Chung to serve as the Pastor-in-charge of Tai Po Methodist Church; the Rev James Fan to serve as the Pastor-in-charge of Chinese Methodist Church, North Point; the Rev Tim Lam to serve as the Pastor-in-charge of Church of the Saviour (Methodist); and the Rev Sally Wong would assist in Macau Ministry. And as from 1st August 2012, the Rev Peter Wong to serve as the Pastor-in-charge of Asbury Methodist Church.

To help our Local Church Pastoral Workers better understand their career path, the proposal put forward by the joint meeting of the Executives' Meeting and the Development Strategy Sub-Committee regarding "Local Church Deacon" and "Local Church Pastor" was accepted: "Local Church Deacon" who had served the Church for 2 full years would be eligible to apply for the position of "Local Church Pastor" or "Conference Deacon". The application would be recommended by the pertinent

Leaders' Meeting and scrutinized by the Ministerial Session, details of which would be discussed next year. "Local Church Deacon" would become "Retired Deacon" upon retirement and ex-officio member in attendance of the pertinent Leaders' Meeting and the Representative Session.

In view of Town Planning Board's conditional approval on 14th November 2011 of the minor relaxation of the Building Height Restriction of North Point Methodist Church, a Task Force for Extension or Redevelopment of North Point Methodist Church at the Conference level was appointed. After understanding the needs of different units of the North Point Methodist Parish and the Conference, the Task Force should make a concrete proposal on extending the building or redeveloping the site. A Construction Working Group and a Users Working Group at Conference level were also set up.

The members accepted the allocation of the Education Bureau that North Point Methodist Primary School be relocated to Pak Fuk Road (Ex-Tanner Hill Police Married Quarters Site) in September 2015 and that it would operate on a whole day mode; and an agreement would be signed for returning the existing school site and the school premises to the Government.

The members also accepted the suggestion of the Ministerial Session that our Church would start the Indonesian Ministry in Hong Kong upon the arrival of the lady parish worker from Indonesian Methodist Church next year to respond to the needs of the local Indonesian domestic helpers. A 4-year ministry was planned for the time being and a "Starting Indonesian Ministry in Hong Kong Work Group" was formed to coordinate and promote the ministry.

The application of Lei Yue Mun Methodist Chapel to become a Local Church with effect from 15th July 2012 was accepted and it would be named as "Lei Yue Mun Methodist Church".

Moreover, the members approved the amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws; passed the allocation of the Church Development Fund for 2012-13; assigned more than HK\$22,440,000 to Methodist Centre for her central administration, to the 4 Divisions to develop new ministries, to support campus ministries, Macau Ministry, the work amongst Chinese under the umbrella of the Britain Methodist Church, work in the China mainland and of the Methodist Church in Myanmar, Bangladesh and Cambodia, Grass Root Mission Project of Epworth Village Methodist Church, Mission Project for Indonesian



Workers in Hong Kong and to offer donations to the Divinity School of Chung Chi College, CUHK etc. The audited report for 2011 (there was a surplus of \$0.55 million in our Income and Expenditure Account) was accepted and the budget for 2012 with an anticipated surplus of HK\$200,000 was approved.

With immediate effect, the requirements for being commissioned as Local Preachers from “completion of red ‘Disciple’ and ‘Walk to Emmaus’” to “completion of red ‘Disciple’ or qualified as red ‘Disciple’ trainer, and completion of ‘Walk to Emmaus’ were revised.”

The suggestions of the Pre-primary Education Development Concern Sub-Committee were accepted so as to have standardized practices in our kindergartens and day nurseries: “To set the retirement age of the head-teachers and teachers at 60. Any staff member who wished to continue service after attaining the age of 60 should submit an application to the School Management Committee which should decide after considering his/her appraisal report and health conditions. A successful applicant would be granted an extension of not more than 1 year each time until reaching the age of 65.” and “To adopt the Master Pay Scales provided by the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) as from the 2012-13 school year.

To cater for the different situations of our kindergartens and day nurseries, the pertinent School Management Committee might decide whether or not to adopt any pay scale provided by the CSB within the previous 4 years.”

The setting up of “Rainbow Project Work Group” was approved to coordinate our 5 Social Service Agencies in the development of joint service for students with special education needs. The suggestion of the Lay Nurturing Executive Committee to set up a “Three-year Certificate Course in Theology Executive Committee” was accepted to concentrate on planning theological training for our lay members.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30pm after the Rev Dr Ping-kwong Li had led the closing prayer and given the benediction.



▲ Group photo of all participants



▲ The Rev Dr Howard Mellor giving the report of the International Church Circuit



▲ Photo of the new President, the Rev Tin-yau Yuen(3rd from left) with the new Secretary, the Rev Dr Sung-che Lam(1st from left), the new Vice-President, Mr Sze-yuen Ng (3rd from right), the Outgoing Vice-President, Mr Stuart Chen(2nd from right) and the new Treasurer, Mr Richard Lap-kei Tsang (1st from right) after presenting the souvenir to the retiring the Rev Prof Lung-kwong Lo (2nd from left)

# Report from the Outgoing President

The Rev Prof Lung-kwong Lo  
25th May 2012

**Dear** Guests, Members of the Representative Session, Heads and Colleagues of Our Subsidiaries, Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

How time has flown! With the wonderful guidance from our Heavenly Father and the unstinting support from colleagues and fellow members, I have completed my second term of Presidency. I am thankful to our Lord and am looking up to Him as I am delivering the "Report from the Outgoing President" to you today.

I am thankful because there has been progress in different areas of our work through years of industry; I look up to our Lord because there are still various difficulties and challenges ahead which require our colleagues and members to seek the grace and guidance from above as well as to undertake and thrive on with strong will, stamina and good teamwork.

## **(1) Development of our Work**

Having the support from our members and several professional teams, we have been liaising and discussing with various Government Bureaus and Departments, and it is hoped that the Town Planning Board will in one or two months' time relax the height restrictions on the land lots on which our Methodist International Church, Hong Kong, and Ward Memorial Methodist Church/Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service now stand. This will enable us to design new buildings with sufficient space so as to serve our neighbours more effectively in due course. These redevelopment projects will demand the professional support, prayers and offerings of our brothers and sisters. May our Lord bless us with wisdom, perseverance and courage.

The 20-year joint venture with the Hang Lung Group regarding the management of The Wesley ended on 31st January 2012. Let us give thanks to our Lord for the happy cooperation and let us pray for our new partner that they could, with the assistance from their professional team, obtain the requisite license soon and embark on the renovation works smoothly.

Good progress has also been made in the improvement of the hard-ware of North Point Methodist Church and North Point Methodist Primary School. Having won the appeal against the Town Planning Board, the former is actively exploring the feasibility of developing her ministries as well as physical expansion or redevelopment. As for the latter, the Education Bureau has tentatively agreed to allot one of the two new school sites on Pak Fuk Road for her operation on a whole-day mode. We hope the relevant stakeholders will utilize the opportunities made possible by these changes and build a sound foundation for future development.

After decades of hard work, our Kwun Tong Methodist Church, though without her own premises, has developed well in youth work, planting new chapels and integrating pastoral and evangelistic work with school education and social services. Last month, she identified a premises of 8,140 square feet being the whole of 6th Floor, Phase 3, The Millennium as an ideal base for developing her city evangelistic ministry. It is hoped that our representatives, after understanding the background, will approve the purchase this evening. The purchase price together with the costs will amount to \$60 million, one-third of which to be borne by the Conference, one-third by members of Kwun Tong Church and the remaining one-third to be raised from all our members and our subsidiaries under the "Campaign for Purchasing New Church Premises for the Kwun Tong Methodist Church" launched in the name of the Conference. I have repeatedly emphasized that no matter in which Local Church were we baptized or at which Local Church are we now attending, we are all members of The Methodist Church, Hong Kong. Those of us who are worshipping in premises built or bought by our Church are enjoying the fruits of the hard work of our predecessors. We are all branches connected to Christ. We should therefore help one another and support the purchase of the new Church premises for Kwun Tong Church with a thankful heart. For those members who are now worshipping in schools or social service centres, we do hope that we could



help to improve the physical environment before too long. Nevertheless, we should always remind ourselves not to focus on the physical premises but on the real meaning and the purposes of our gatherings – we gather in the name of Jesus and we aim at materializing “Thy Kingdom Come”! In this respect, Kwun Tong Church has borne a good witness in the past 50 years. May Kwun Tong Church maintain its vitality and her members serve more vigorously with their talents after the purchase of the premises.

To bring eternal hope to mankind and to live out the righteousness and love of God is, no doubt, the mission of every Christian. Over the past thirty years, many families in Hong Kong have relied on Filipino domestic helpers to care for their elderly and young children. With the support of the United Methodist Church in the Philippines, our Methodist International Church, Hong Kong has successfully carried out her ministries amongst her Filipino members. In recent years, there are more and more Indonesian domestic helpers in Hong Kong and their number is now almost 150,000, most of whom being Muslims. We have therefore decided to start the ministry among Indonesian domestic helpers in Hong Kong. We are profoundly grateful to the Methodist Church in Indonesia for providing us with a lady missionary. It is proposed that upon her arrival at the territory (likely to be in January 2013), she will start the ministry in the Integrated Youth Centre of the Methodist Centre at Aldrich Bay. We hope our brothers and sisters will support this proposal and take part in this ministry of serving the less privileged by prayers, offerings and acting as volunteers.

Our founder placed great emphasis on prison ministry. However, owing to Government policies,

only a few denominations and organizations could administer pastoral care to those who are imprisoned. Nevertheless, some of our pastoral workers started to participate in prison ministry when they were in the Divinity School, and several of them, together with some members, have been participating in the prison ministry actively in recent years. The Rev Alan Yu has applied to be a Prison Chaplain earlier this year so that he could visit and show concern for prisoners more freely. May God grant him unflinching dedication and at the same time, move more brothers and sisters to follow the footsteps of our Founder, the Rev John Wesley, in steering the prison ministry.

The last few years have seen the fruits of our emphasis on youth work and our increasing efforts in this direction. Our Local Churches undertake the mission of nurturing our young leaders and have jointly organized “Life Camps”. We have also started “training the trainers”. We are particularly appreciative of the diligence of the Revs May Poon and Wai Ki Lo as well as a group of devoted members from the Kwun Tong Church who are always prepared to share with other Local Churches. May God reward them for offering their time and labour.

## **(2) Personnel Structuring**

Thanks be to our Lord for having prepared the Rev Canon Dr Howard Mellor for us over 30 years ago. The Lord has placed in the hearts of Howard and Rosie the vision to serve overseas since the time of their honeymoon. Starting from September 2011, Howard has been serving as the Pastor-in-charge of the Methodist International Church, Hong Kong (MICHK) and the Superintendent of our International Church Circuit. With abundant experience in pastoral

care, teaching and administration, Howard has swiftly connected different congregations of MICHK, equipped them and engaged them in taking up various duties to develop the Church. He has built up strong teamwork with the Rev Jesus De Los Santos and the Rev Marybeth Asher-Lawson. We hope that they could recruit a youth worker shortly so that they could bring the ministries of the Church to a greater height.

Besides, we should give thanks to God for the ordination of 6 Local Church Deacons. We pray that the Rev Ms Lai-lin Leung, the Rev Edwin Tang, the Rev Mary Law, the Rev Dickson Cheuk, the Rev Tak-hing Wong and the Rev Benson Lee are taking up more pastoral duties in their respective Local Churches and are rendering their services more effectively. The Ministerial Session will, in the coming year, study the details of the application by Local Church Deacons for being Conference Deacons or Local Church Pastors after two years' service.

Whether you are a Local Church Parish Worker, a Local Church Deacon, a Local Church Pastor, a Conference Pastoral Worker, a Local Preacher, the Principal of our School or the Head of our Social Service Agency, you are a co-worker of The Methodist Church, Hong Kong. I sincerely hope that you will grow and derive joy as you serve Him, and that you will bring more people to Christ and administer pastoral care to one another.

If you approve the motions by the Ministerial Session and the Standing Committee, we will ordain the Rev. Chi-wang Chiah as a minister in full connexion on 10th June, and there will be an additional candidate of Local Church Parish Worker being sponsored to pursue the 3-year programme for the Master Degree of Divinity at the Divinity School of the Chung Chi College. I must reiterate that nourishing and retaining manpower, as well as preparing and fostering successors are imminent tasks of our Church.

### **(3) Organization and Operation**

The Executives' Meeting and the Development Strategy Sub-Committee of the Standing Committee have lately been discussing ways to motivate more members to participate in our work at the Conference level on top of serving in their local churches. This will enable us to look into ways to improve the Conference operation, and gather human resources to promote inter-church ministries and projects. Let us pray that our Father would lead our new President in the organizational reform, help him listen to different opinions, and would move more of our brothers and sisters to offer themselves unreservedly and to take up responsibilities readily.

In fact, as a church leader, we should always be vigilant. We should always carry out our work with care and be responsive to the growing expectations from the public about the management and financial transparency of non-government organizations. We should learn to develop our ministries without relying on special privileges and should remind ourselves that our work is subject to public scrutiny from time to time. The financial report to be examined tomorrow was prepared under the "Hong Kong Auditing Standards No. 800" and it is hoped that we could achieve the compilation of a consolidated account of the Conference and all local churches and chapels within 3 years' time.

The workload of our School Education Division has been increasing. Besides the daily routines, there is an enormous amount of follow up work on the drafting of the IMC Constitutions, the development of New Senior Secondary Ethics and Religious Studies, the expansion of the School-based Educational Psychology Service, the application for the lot at No. 42 Gascoigne Road for our school education development, etc. Therefore, during the meeting tomorrow, apart from recommending the Rev Paul Kan to take over the work of the Head of the School Education Division from the Rev Tin-yau Yuen, 3 Deputy Division Heads will also be recommended.

Our 5 social service agencies co-organized a joint youth programme last year, and they are now exploring the possibility of providing services for students with special educational needs in concerted effort. The Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service has taken up the daily operation and the financial responsibility of the Hua Xun Social Service Centre in Sichuan as from January 2012, and the other 4 agencies have provided assistance and arranged staff to Sichuan to train the supervisors and volunteers to serve the needy there. The division of labour and cooperation has brought about progress in our ministry. I have to thank the staff of our agencies for their commitment and dedication.

#### **(4) Missions and Evangelism**

The social services our Church started in Macau and Cambodia have been very well received. And our Outbound Missionaries have all done well. Ms Wai-ling Leung has finished her ministry in Davao, the Philippines. Starting from April 2012, she has been receiving linguistic training in Payap University, Thailand to prepare for her literacy work in the future. Ms Kennis Lam has visited Japan to learn more about the missions of the United Methodist Church in May. It is hoped that she could be commissioned to Japan from Macau after summer to work among young people in response to her calling. We thank God that Ms Sophia Lui of Tin Shui Wai Methodist Church, our first Lay Member Outbound Missionary, could serve in Cambodia with her medical and hospice training background. She has returned to Hong Kong in recent months because her mother is terminally ill. Please pray for her and her mother. Let us pray that our Heavenly Father would keep up the vision of our frontline workers and would move our brothers and sisters to support them with prayers, care and offerings.

#### **(5) Overseas Exchange**

Last year, our Church organized the Meeting of the 6th Executive Meeting and the 4th Theological Seminar of the World Federation of Chinese Methodist

Churches; the annual meeting of the Fellowship of Asian Methodist Bishops & Presidents, the Executive Committee Meeting of the Asian Methodist Council and the 3rd Assembly of AMC in June. We also received 59 overseas guests in late October who came to join the activities to celebrate the 160th Anniversary of the arrival of our first Methodist missionary the Rev George Piercy in Hong Kong. I went to Newcastle, England to hold the Inauguration Ceremony of the Leaders' Meeting of the Newcastle Chinese Methodist Church in early May, witnessing the remarkable development of the Chinese ministry in Newcastle under the close cooperation between our Church and the Methodist Church in Britain.

Next month, 80 pastoral workers and church members will join the 6th Mission Conference of the World Federation of Chinese Methodist Churches in Taipei. It is expected that these conferences would help us to know more about the wider Methodist family and broaden our horizon.

Owing to time limitation, I could only highlight some issues which are more important and merit your attention. The Circuit Superintendents, Division Heads or Secretaries of various Conference Committees will present the details to you these 2 days.

Here, I would like to thank you again for your unfailing support, trust and encouragement over the years. I am also indebted to you for your support to the Divinity School of Chung Chi College. As I do feel physically exhausted, after discussing with my family, I have decided to retire when I reach the age of 61 on 3rd September this year but will continue to serve the Church as a retired minister. Time is fleeting by and it is hard to believe that I have been serving the Church for 36 years. Actually, I do not deserve what I have received having regard to my weaknesses and mistakes. I could only ask for our Lord's mercy and your forgiveness. I earnestly hope that you will continue to support the work of the Church and particularly, the new President, the Rev Tin-yau Yuen. Let us all be faithful servants of God, love one another, love the Church and love the people around us. Amen. 

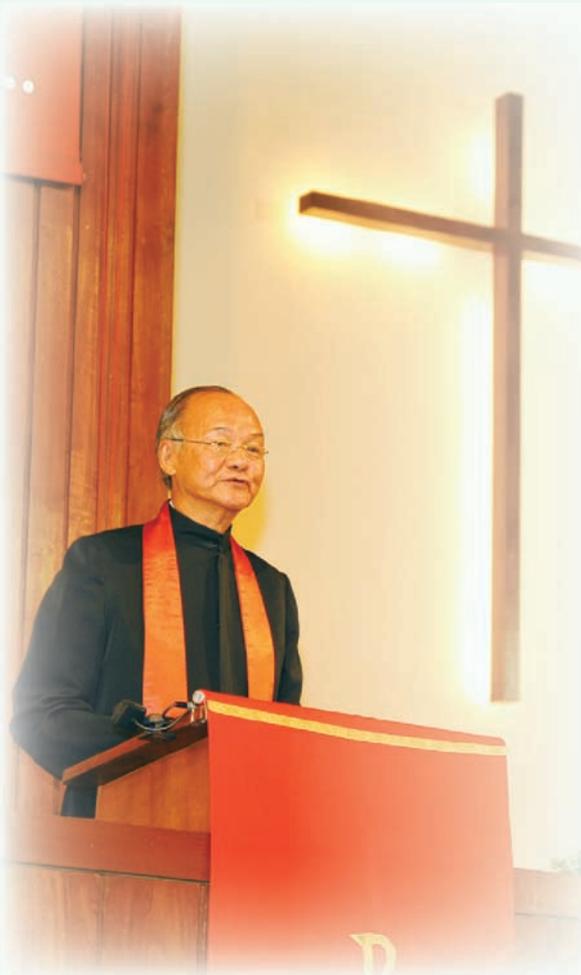
# Highlights of the Ordination Service



▲ The Rev Chi-wang Chiah

The Ordination Service for Deacon Mr Chi-wang Chiah to become full-connexional minister was held at 8pm on 10th June 2012 at Ward Memorial Methodist Church. The Ceremony was officiated by the Conference Secretary, the Rev Dr. Sung-che Lam, with the President, the Rev Tin-yau Yuen, giving the exhortation, the Rev Nai-wang Kwok of the Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China delivering the sermon, and all pastors of our Church laying their hands on Mr Chiah. About 360 pastoral workers as well as brothers and sisters were present, the scene was simple but grand.

Deacon Mr Chi-wang Chiah was a member of the Ward Memorial Methodist Church. He graduated from the Computer Science Department, College of Science & Engineering of City University in 1993. In 1995 and 1997, he was accepted by the Representative Session of the Conference as the Candidate for Local Church Parish Worker and the Candidate for Conference Pastoral Worker respectively. After completing the 4-year Bachelor of Divinity Degree at the Chung Chi College of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, he was stationed to assist with the work of North Point Methodist Church and Shatin Methodist Church. Since 1st July 2004, he has serving pastor-in-charge of Kwong Yuen Chapel, which, under his leadership, has been inaugurated, Kwong Yuen Methodist Church in September 2011.



▲ The Rev Nai-wang Kwok, Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China delivering the sermon “Ministry of the Lord’s Way”

The theme of Rev Nai-wang Kwok’s sermon was “Ministry of the Lord’s Way”. He pointed out that Ordination, though not a sacrament itself, had the quality of a sacrament. It had two indispensable parts: laying of hands and praying for the presence of the Holy Spirit. The hand-laying by all pastors of the Church implied the passing on or pressing upon of the heavy responsibility of the Church : the complete ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ to the person being ordained. The ministry of Jesus is to let the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers clean, the deaf hear, the dead rise, and the poor receive the Gospel. Every minister being ordained should follow the example of Jesus in humbling himself, to be submissive till death and to empty himself in serving others. Rev Kwok reminded Rev Chiah to obtain the support of pastoral workers as well as the congregation and try his best with unreserved commitment of his whole life to carry out Jesus’ ministry: to heal people’s hearts and to help people grow especially among those individuals or groups that have specific needs. Moreover, in society, a minister should reflect “the Lord’s ways”: the most valuable Way of Life, the Way of Possibility and the Way of Hope. He should start from within the Church. He should equip the congregation with the Lord’s eternal way through worship, preaching, sacraments and teachings so that they can face any adversity and even help those that have greater needs. The second indispensable quality of Ordination is prayer – praying for the presence of the Holy Spirit upon the newly ordained minister and the congregation he serves. He should pray

for the guidance and strength of the Holy Spirit who can break through any barrier between God and man and among men, to help brothers and sisters in finding direction and meaning in their lives, loving and supporting each other and extending this mutual care and concern to the neighbourhood and even the Hong Kong society as a whole.

Lastly, Rev Kwok reminded that a good minister should follow the four “R” principle: “Rest”, “Recreation”, “Reflection” and “Relaxation”. He said that rest, entertainment and sports can rejuvenate body and soul. Apart from reflecting on what one had done during the day and the relationship with others, a minister should also reflect on theology because he is called to “talk about theology” and theology is about the relationship between God and man and the ultimate meaning of all things. As to achieving a relaxed mind, a minister should remove all secular values on reputation, status, power and fortune through devotion and meditation. The Christian gospel is in fact “a gospel of giving up”. In closing, Rev Kwok shared with all 1 Peter 5:2-3: “Shepherd the flock of God among you, not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.” 🙏



▲ The President, the Rev Tin-yaun Yuen questioning the faith and conviction of the ordained



▲ Hand laying ceremony



▲ Holy communion followed the Ordination, the newly ordained the Rev Chi-wang Chiah participating in the Holy Communion with the congregation



# Redevelopment of the Methodist International Church, Hong Kong

**The** ministry of the Methodist International Church, Hong Kong which was established in 1873 at 271 Queen's Road East has been thriving in recent years. After years of thorough deliberation, the Representative Session of the Conference 2011 passed the resolution of materializing the plan of redevelopment at full strength with the aim of finalizing the building plans within two years (within 2013).

In view of the enormous budget of this redevelopment plan, our Church launched the "Redevelopment of MICHK Fund Raising Campaign" with a target of raising \$300 million within 7 years through fund raising and financing during the Representative Session of the Conference 2011. Subsequently, the Standing Committee appointed the Rev Dr. G Howard Mellor, the Superintendent of the International Church Circuit and Pastor-in-charge of MICHK, to be the General Secretary of the Redevelopment Project; elected the members of the "Coordination Committee of Redevelopment of MICHK" and appointed the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and members of its "Construction Executive Committee", "Users Committee", "Funding Raising Executive Committee", "Publicity Executive Committee" and "Finance Executive Committee". In its April meeting this year, the Redevelopment of MICHK Coordinating Committee, after considering the consultation progress with different Government departments, resolved to target the commencement of the whole project at June 2014.

Regarding fund raising, the Teddy Bear Sale during Christmas, Chinese New Year and Valentine's Day Campaign has raised over \$220,000. The Standing Committee also resolved to donate all funds raised (deducting expenses) in the Second Sacred Music Festival held on 28th October 2012 to the Redevelopment of MICHK. A sum of about \$790,000 was raised.

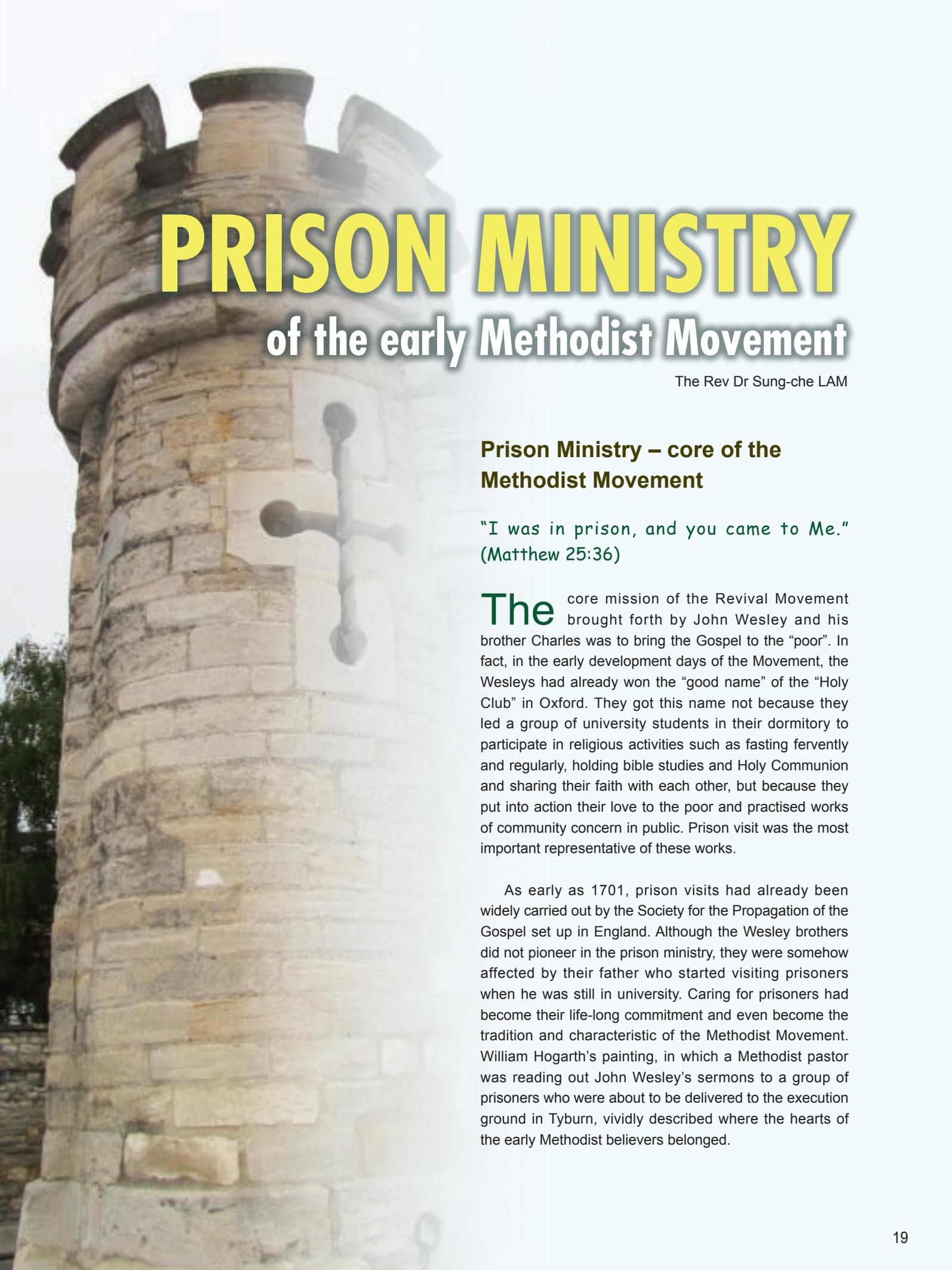
## The Methodist Retreat Centre - News updates

**To** encourage Local Churches and fellowships to hold training courses and camps, some concessions are given in the renting of the Methodist Retreat Centre (MRC): any group with 12 people or more can use the function room free (hourly air conditioning fee will be charged if used). If the whole camp site is rented, the hall and all function rooms can be used free of charge. Besides, no charge will be made in the use of any equipment and facilities (except lap tops) in the function rooms.

The Laity Training Division of the Conference has started a series of regular ministry at MRC, including the "Life Discovery" series – "The Ultimate of Life" and the "Spiritual Exercises at Methodist Retreat Centre" series, and in principle, the "Walk to Emmaus" will be held at MRC. It is hoped that MRC will be better utilized and the spiritual life of brothers and sisters can be enhanced through regular retreats.

These few months saw the completion of many improvement works such as repairing the slopes, setting up safety fences, rebuilding the laundry room, increasing lighting facilities, laying drainage covers, laying grass cover and installing insulating layers on window and door glasses.

The fund raising campaign to renovate MRC still falls short of \$5 million. It is hoped that brothers and sisters will make contributions enthusiastically to support the "Methodist Retreat Centre Sunday" on 27th January 2013 and the "Methodist Retreat Centre Walkathon and Tree Planting Day" on 16th March 2013 so that the Dedication Ceremony on that day would mark the full completion of the fund raising campaign.



# PRISON MINISTRY

## of the early Methodist Movement

The Rev Dr Sung-che LAM

### **Prison Ministry – core of the Methodist Movement**

*“I was in prison, and you came to Me.”  
(Matthew 25:36)*

**The** core mission of the Revival Movement brought forth by John Wesley and his brother Charles was to bring the Gospel to the “poor”. In fact, in the early development days of the Movement, the Wesleys had already won the “good name” of the “Holy Club” in Oxford. They got this name not because they led a group of university students in their dormitory to participate in religious activities such as fasting fervently and regularly, holding bible studies and Holy Communion and sharing their faith with each other, but because they put into action their love to the poor and practised works of community concern in public. Prison visit was the most important representative of these works.

As early as 1701, prison visits had already been widely carried out by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel set up in England. Although the Wesley brothers did not pioneer in the prison ministry, they were somehow affected by their father who started visiting prisoners when he was still in university. Caring for prisoners had become their life-long commitment and even become the tradition and characteristic of the Methodist Movement. William Hogarth’s painting, in which a Methodist pastor was reading out John Wesley’s sermons to a group of prisoners who were about to be delivered to the execution ground in Tyburn, vividly described where the hearts of the early Methodist believers belonged.



## Prisons in 18th Century England

Reforming the prison system and the prisoners' welfare was not the goal of the Wesley brothers' ministry but the mission of General James E. Oglethorpe, member of the House of Commons and Governor of the Colony of Georgia, America. He had been fighting against this inhuman system for over 30 years and it was fruitful. In the early and middle periods of the 18th Century England, prison system and torture were brutal means beyond human conscience still applied by man upon their fellow mankind. At that time, it was considered no such need for humanitarian treatment towards law breakers. The prison environment was extremely disgusting and many prisoners fell seriously ill and even died in this poor situation.

## Early Prison Ministry of the Methodist Church

Long term prison ministry of the Methodist Church started at the Oxford times. In 1730, under the influence of William Morgan, a member of the Holy Club who was much burdened with the charity work, the Wesley brothers visited the Castle Prison where recidivists and debtors were jailed. The experience of this visit was very good and they extended their visits to the North Gate Prison in Bocardo, Oxford in December the same year. With the encouragement and guidance of his father, and after obtaining the agreement of the Prison Chaplain and the Parish Bishop in that district, John Wesley started the prison ministry in full strength. He drew up the schedules for visits to ensure regular participation of members of the Holy Club (John himself was responsible for the

Saturday afternoon time slot). They conducted worship, sermons and Holy Communion in the Castle Prison once a month, distributed spiritual books to prisoners and arranging those who could read to help those illiterate. At the same time, they provided food, medicine and daily necessities to the prisoners. They also helped those unfortunate ones who were in debts because of bad harvest, sickness or poverty to repay debts so that they could be discharged. (Note: As the debtors were in jail, they could not work to repay their debts. Without the help of others in repayment, they would be stuck in prison for a long time. John's father had been put to jail because of debts but was saved by the Bishop and was set free.) Members of the Holy Club needed to know the prisoners personally to make sure they received appropriate legal assistance. That was why the names of prisoners always appeared in their diaries. One example was that John Wesley had encouraged and supported a prisoner who was convicted of homosexual offences and was bullied by other prisoners.

To give the hope of salvation to those who suffered was an essential part of the work of the Methodist Church, thus prison ministry had gradually become an important component of the Revival Movement. The involvement of the Wesley brothers in prison ministry had also increased. John Wesley in his diary recorded his schedule of visiting the North Gate Prison every Monday and Friday and the Castle Prison every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. This arrangement did not stop until he went for missionary work in America. When he came back, he threw himself into the ministry again. The first person whom John Wesley proclaimed "salvation through faith" was William Clifford, a prisoner convicted of rape and theft and was on death row. At the end of the

month, John Wesley visited the prison again and gave him a sermon and prayed with him. After praying, William stood up and said, "I am now ready to die without any worries. I know that Christ has removed my sin and does not consider I am sinful anymore!" Before execution, he was still calm and pleased, enjoying complete peace of mind until the last moment. The change of this prisoner not only led the Wesley brothers give up their long-time prejudice that "it is impossible for a person to repent on his death bed", but also strengthened their faith to proclaim the gospel of "justification by faith".

## **Development of the Prison Ministry – Proclamation through publication**

Prison ministry was an important aspect of the Wesley brothers' life-long service. Although they had spent a lot of time and money to help prisoners solve their physical and financial needs, their ultimate purpose was to let people receive salvation. As only two of them could not contact every single prison and each individual prisoner in the whole country, (note: they mainly visited prisons in

Oxford, London and Bristol) John Wesley started to pass on his faith to every corner of society through publication. He published some inexpensive booklets like "A Word to the Drunkard", "A Word to the Smugglers", "A Word to the Street Sleepers" and a more influential one "A Word to a Condemned Malefactor" through which the Gospel was passed to those waiting for execution.

I am pleased to know the recent efforts made by the Local Missions Affairs Executive Committee of our Church in promoting prison ministry and the enthusiastic response by brothers and sisters. I strongly believe that this is the result of God's will among us and the work of the Holy Spirit in us. It is my wish that the Holy Spirit will continue bestowing upon us God's love so that we can firmly proclaim, "Because God loves these people, we also love them." The love and truth of Christ will give us wisdom and power to make long-term commitment in this important ministry. It is my hope that by participating in this process, colleagues and pastoral workers will receive calling from God for their mission in life; and in serving, brothers and sisters will live richer lives, and grow in spirituality. As a result, our Church will be greatly blessed. 🙏





# LIBERTY TO

**The** Rev Alan Yu (Yu): The Rev Lo, thank you for accepting the interview by the Local Missions Affairs Executive Committee of the Missions & Pastoral Care Division concerning the development of prison ministry in our Church in recent years. Please tell us what the Bible says about prison visits.

## **Jesus' mission to release the captives**

The Rev Prof Lung-kwong Lo (Lo): The Bible has a record of Jesus going back to Nazareth, the place where he grew up, to preach:

“He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book, and found the place where it was written, ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor, He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.’ And He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed upon Him. And He began to say to them, ‘Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.’” (Luke 4: 16-21)

Jesus proclaimed in these verses His mission on earth: to spread the Gospel to the poor, especially to those under captivity and imprisoned. The purpose of His coming to earth was to set them free.

Some people explained “the release of the captives” from a spiritual perspective. They refer them to people bound by their sins. In Matthew 25, verses 31, Jesus said that when He comes in glory to judge all people, “All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison and

you came to Me.’ Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed you, or thirsty, and give You drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ And the King will answer and say to them, ‘ Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.’”

The poor people Jesus referred to were not only those spiritually poor or bound, but were physically imprisoned and materially lacking. Jesus' mission is to release these people. When the Son of Man comes in the Judgment Day, He is not asking us for the receipt of offerings, or any certificate of baptism, but is asking us whether we have taken care of the prisoners; because we did this to the least of His brothers, was doing to Him!

## **Yu: What should we, as Christians bear in mind during prison visits?**

Lo: There is the Chinese traditional view that “When alive, avoid going to the authorities, when dead, avoid going to hell”. People are not willing to go even to the government, not to mention prisons as it is so disgraceful to be put to jail. However, the majority of the world's great men had been put into prison. Jesus had been caught, put to trial, nailed to the cross and in the process, he had been imprisoned; Paul had been arrested and put to jail hundreds of times; recent great man Mahatma Gandhi was put to prison many times in his fight for the independence of India; Dr. Sun Yat-sen, Father of our country, had been put under house arrest; Nelson Mandela, the former President of South Africa, had been imprisoned for 27 years! Being put to jail is certainly not a good thing but we have to understand the reason for imprisonment. No one wants to suffer but the Bible says, “This is a plain indication of God's righteous judgment so that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering.” (II Thessalonians 1:5)

Prison is a special place where the law-breakers in society are put under captivity. However, to us Christians,

# THE CAPTIVES

no matter whether we are in prison, we all are equally sinners in the eyes of God. The only difference is they are prisoners. Jesus, Paul, Gandhi, Mandela, Sun Yat-sen and even Martin Luther King, the American democratic leader, have been prisoners.

Visiting prisoners is in fact putting to practice Jesus' fundamental commandment - be the neighbor to the unfortunate ones. The most important message of the story of "the Good Samaritan" is that we should not just be kind but should be sympathetic. Therefore, as we are all sinners in the world, we are not much better than the prisoners. These people have lost their freedom and freedom is exactly the most valuable gift by God in Creation. Men are given freedom of choice, which includes the freedom to rebel against God and to sin. Man is not a machine, he has the free will to love God; even to decide whether to become Christians. But this freedom of choice implies danger. This is what the Bible says, "For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the wishing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. For the good that I wish, I do not do; but I practice the very evil that I do not wish." (Romans 7:18-19)

The Rev Alan YU (Left) and the Rev Prof Lung-kwong LO

We are not put to jail, not because of our goodness but because of God's grace. We have nothing to boast of because we are also sinners. In front of the prisoners, we should not appear superior and pitiful but should humble ourselves, treating them like friends, and be a neighbor to these unfortunate strangers. We should feel indebted to them as we are not able to visit them often. We have to treasure the opportunity of caring for them.

I hope that each brother or sister will care for the prisoners because it is the mission given by Jesus Christ to each of his follower and also the example set by Founder of our Church, John Wesley.



## Prison Ministry Badge

The design concept of this badge originates from the New Gate Prison of London (1188-1902) and the family shell sign of our Founder, John Wesley. John Wesley (1707 – 1788) was involved in the prison ministry of this New Gate Prison, visiting the prisoners there uninterruptedly for more than 50 years. In view of his long-term commitment, he was even permitted free access of the prison without application. Prison ministry is a unique mission field of the Methodist Church in the caring of the unprivileged groups of society. Brothers and sisters of the Methodist Church, let us continue the service and commitment of the Wesley brothers in prison ministry and may the love of God be with us to encourage us!



Are you willing to be a member of this ministry, to practise what you have learnt? If you are burdened with this ministry and would like to respond, please contact pastoral workers of our Mission and Pastoral Section (Phone:2528 0186 or Email: ps2.mp@methodist.org.hk)



The Methodist Church, Hong Kong  
香港基督教循道衛理聯合教會