

Methodist Preschools

A combined stake in the future of the Church – Off to a good start!

Council on Education

The Methodist Church in Singapore



Bishop Dr Chong Chin Chung with Paya Lebar Methodist Church pastors, staff and students of Covenant Kindergarten at PLMC

Preschool education has traditionally been seen as a strength of the Church. Over the years, while commercial ones could shift their operations to the latest neighbourhood centres, the church kindergartens stayed put. Thus, as demographics changed over time, half of our church kindergartens have had to close after struggling for years with falling enrolment and substantial financial losses. In his speech to the pastors, management committee members, principals and staff who had gathered online for the annual Methodist Preschools Long Service Award ceremony, Bishop Dr Chong noted that, "We (the Church) were satisfied that we were providing low-cost kindergartens or preschool education to the community and neglected to have a holistic strategy to develop our teachers and upgrade our teaching resources."

On 30 July 2020, the Methodist Church in Singapore approved the setting up of a new agency to be called the Methodist Preschool Services Pte Ltd (MPSPL), which was then successfully incorporated on 4 September 2020. It will work with the local churches to take over the preschool businesses under one umbrella. Coming together as one will facilitate the integration of best practices in curriculum and administration, the introduction of unique learning experiences, as well as joint staff development. Ms Kwok Wan Yee, Education Secretary, said, "With many centres under one umbrella, we can look forward to working closer together, drawing on one

another's strengths and being more courageous regarding innovations. We can also expect economies of scale and the harmonising of HR policy and practices, and build our brand on the Methodist heritage of excellence in education."

Bishop Dr Chong conveyed that the Church must affirm that preschools are an important social responsibility of ours. Secondly, preschools serve as "a very important bridgehead as the Church faces the spread of new movements and new doctrines that will affect

future generations". He reminded all that in order to establish steadfast values according to biblical truth, it is necessary to have proper and balanced teaching, beginning with the preschools. Thirdly, we are all urged to work towards "church to church, or preschool to preschool collaboration... We must have a kingdom mind-set, where we seek one another's good, combine our resources to run together, for we have a combined stake in the future of the Church." With that, the children in our Methodist preschools are "off to a good start!"

Mr Henry Tan, Chairman of MPSPL, expressed, "We are so grateful that the leadership of The Methodist Church in Singapore is fully behind the consolidating of Methodist preschools as we share common branding and curriculum. We hope to be able to provide a holistic education based on Christian values that helps to nurture our students' potential."



Children with their art work, from Kampong Kapor Methodist Church Kindergarten