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华人年议会会长

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President, Chinese Annual Conference

心灵相簿

The President's Gallery

跑吧, CAC!
Run CAC, Run!

会长摄于2022年12月新加坡, 乌节路。

Photo taken by President along Orchard Road, Singapore, December 2022.

感谢上帝赐予我们丰盛的恩典, 保守我们度过三年的疫情。随着安全措施条例放宽, 我们可以有更多的会友回到教会参加崇拜。歌颂赞美与团契聚会也恢复了。让我们珍惜能够相聚在一起的时光。我也要感谢所有的牧者和教会领袖们在过去年日的辛劳, 在岗位上尽忠职守, 全力配合因安全措施条例改变而需做出的调整, 并持续牧养会友和关怀社区的工作。愿我们的信心被坚固, 我们在世上活着, 也有更清楚的异象。

马太福音 28:18-20

耶稣进前来, 对他们说:天上地下所有的权柄都赐给我了。所以, 你们要去, 使万民作我的门徒, 奉父、子、圣灵的名给他们施洗。凡我所吩咐你们的, 都教训他们遵守, 我就常与你们同在, 直到世界的末了。

1. 塑造门徒的年议会专案组

我们从主耶稣基督领受了大使命。信心社体也是塑造门徒的社体。教会里有许多事工。它们设立的目的是为了栽培门徒, 完成大使命和塑造门徒。

随着信徒人数增加, 许多教堂被建立, 更多的活动集中在教堂内, 我们花更多时间维修建筑, 为各事工分配时间和空间, 制定更多条例, 召开更多的会议以维持和谐情况。结果, 我们忽视了教会终极的目标, 也就是塑造能建立更多门徒的门徒。

自从年会决定了“塑造门徒的年议会”的主题, 我们便积极鼓励所有堂会拟定塑造门徒的策略。在杨乾元博士的领导下, 教会受邀参与以及成立实习社体, 彼此分享塑造门徒的最佳方案。在8月6日的华人年议会领袖团契中, 有参与试验计划的五间堂会的牧师和领袖分享了他们教会的塑造门徒的策略。参与者在分享会中得到激励和启发。

杨乾元博士在呈交给执行部会议(10月3日)的报告中表示每间堂会都必须参与塑造门徒的工作。除了由主理牧师在教会中主导塑造门徒的运动, 教会的会友领袖也需积极参与并委身于塑造门徒的运动; 全体堂会需意识到塑造门徒是全教会的运动而不是活动, 虽然在教会中存有不同的次文化。杨博士也鼓励主理牧师或堂会的执事寻找可提供全体会友使用的塑造门徒资料。

每个堂会虽可采用各自的塑造门徒架构来培育信徒成为门徒, 杨博士也强调各堂会聚集一起, 彼此鼓励, 分享最佳实践模式, 互相分享点子、知识以及所学习到的功课的重要性和益处。它们有助于教会完善他们现有的模式。他也分享到专案小组正在考虑的一些计划, 就是: 建立年议会塑造门徒的基本架构作为参考; 透过达成共识的方式来拟定出一间塑造门徒教会的样式(特点) - 作为教会参考的工具, 能自我评估, 了解进度阶段; 以及确认适合作为培训领袖的专题并提供集中培训, 帮助教会训练更多的工人。

这工程虽然不易，却是必须进行的。让我们继续前进，成为一个塑造门徒的年议会。

2. 东北社区外展专案组

随着近十年我国的住屋发展改变，人口的分布已与过去十年、二十年、三十年大有不同。全岛不同的地方有许多新的住宅区被建立，特别是在西部和东北部（如：裕廊西、文礼、榜鹅、盛港一带等），而我们许多的堂会比较靠近市中心和成熟组屋区，如大巴窰、女皇镇和宏茂桥。盛港和榜鹅区仍然有新建的组屋工程在进行，将会有更多的人民，特别是年轻夫妇和家庭，搬到这个新区居住。

年会目前有两间堂会 - 盛港堂和樟宜堂，位于东北区。盛港堂目前的土地契约还剩八年，他们的执事会已预备要更新为期三十年的土地契约。随着土地的有限和建筑费用成本的升高，我们需要更有策略性的规划东北区的外展计划。

东北外展专案小组在10月3日的执行部成立，以盛港堂作为主要计划的堂会。严家慧牧师(博士)将带领这专案小组，吴毅华牧师协助。东北外展专案组也会取代年议会榜鹅外展计划。

3. 校园外展事工专案组

上帝赐给我们持续不断的学生报读卫理学校。我们有广大的机会能够在他们当中分享福音和灌输优良的价值观念。自2017年开始，所有的卫理学校都有华人年议会的牧师被委派担任校牧，但是至今我们只有四位全职校园事工同工在三所学校服事。我们在校园外展事工需要更加努力。年复一年的拖延，将使我们失去无数的传福音机会。

我们可以参与短期的海外宣教工作，投入大笔的经费支持宣教，却忽略了一个我们可以全年投入福音工作的大禾场。或许你的堂会不是位于校园内，但你可以差派校园事工同工进入学校。要接触未信主的群体，其实尽在咫尺！

我要鼓励你挑战贵堂会的年轻人考虑成为全时间的校园事工同工。现任的校园事工副主席许立欣牧师将成立小组探讨校园事工发展计划，并在明年7月向执行部提交建议。我会和这小组紧密配合，期待我们所有的堂会和年议会能支持在校园里拓展的福音事工。

马太福音 5:13-14

你们是世上的盐。盐若失了味，怎能叫他再咸呢？以后无用，不过丢在外面，被人践踏了。你们是世上的光。城造在山上是不能隐藏的。

4. 家庭联欢日 (5月1日2023年)

我们在9月22日召开了年会各部主席会议。目的是为了促进各部之间的功能，协调各部的配搭。会议也讨论了各部应该如何回应“废除刑377A条例”事件，以及这事件带给教会和会友们的冲击。在会议中，各部主席一致赞同年会的主要策略是巩固家庭生活，并于2023年5月1日，携手举办年会家庭活动。执行部在10月3日的会议中批准了此计划。

这个家庭活动是要传递一个清楚的讯息，就是我们委身于家庭生活。这活动也是一个让十七间堂会和各部合一服事的机会。请为这计划代祷，我们欢迎兄弟姐妹和各教会的支持。

5. 基督徒辅导事工进展

心理健康课题在我国的议程中受到特别关注。近年有关新加坡人心理健康的新闻引起我们的关注，我们也有会友面对心理健康问题。辅导员和社工供不应求，所以我们不能单单依赖现有的辅导机构提供帮助，我们也要参与其中，去服事有需要的群体。我们必须在辅导事工方面加快脚步。

我们在10月6日举办了心理健康的线上讲座，以提高心理健康的意识，并分享成立华人年议会辅导事工的计划。我们在11月5日为年会中一些专业辅导员、治疗师和社工举办了半日退修会，让他们能借着灵修亲近上帝，也能认识同在辅导和社工领域工作的同工。他们给予积极的反馈。我们将继续在这领域支持他们。

现任卫理公会卫斯理堂辅导事工的培训师及资深辅导员陈召星先生将提供六堂培训课程（共十二个小时），预备训练愿意参与关怀事工的教会会友成为平信徒关怀者。这个培训课程将在明年4至5月开办。我们正与一家辅导中心合作，一起设计中文培训课程。

我鼓励堂会与年议会在这辅导事工紧密配搭。

6. 以卫理公会社会准则设计的基督徒世界观课程

虽然透过讲道、圣经班、课程、专题讲座等，我们能传递基督徒世界观，但我们还是需要正规体系的教育方式帮助会友在他们的生活中建立强而有力的基督徒世界观。年会以卫理公会社会准则设计的基督徒世界观课程就是为了填补缺口，专注探讨基督徒在日常生活中的课题，如经济、政治、文化、科技等的世界观。

我们在9月至10月期间开办了四堂基督徒世界观的基础课程。来自盛港堂、武吉班让堂、直落亚逸堂和恩典堂的领袖受邀参与，探讨所设计的基督徒世界观课程，如何融入他们塑造门徒的培训教材里。第一单元的草稿已经完成。基督徒世界观的课程设有教学视频和手册以及领袖培训指导。

路加福音 10:1-2

这事以后，主又设立七十个人，差遣他们两个两个的在他前面，往自己所要到的各城各地方去，就对他们说：要收的庄稼多，作工的人少。所以，你们当求庄稼的主打发工人出去收他的庄稼。

7. 教牧培训的管道

感谢年会近年来重新检讨牧者薪金与福利。这个调整为我们的牧者以及新的试用传道带来一定的帮助。尽管如此，如果我们没有继续引进新的教牧人员，我们将会面临教牧短缺问题。因此，最重要的是要有人加入全时间的教牧服事。

身为信心的社体，我们要向主祈求，愿庄稼的主打发工人出去收祂的庄稼。首先请为你自己祷告，问上帝你是不是祂要差遣的工人。若不是，为什么不是？那你的孩子呢？你是否愿意为你的孩子和孙子能领受上帝的全职呼召来代祷？

培养一个教牧，需要十年左右的时间。我们可以看三方面：一）邀请平信徒事工同工加入年会；二）委任本处传道为代理牧师；三）重新聘请退休牧师进入全职事奉。我将与人力资源部和牧职部一起探讨此事。我们也将从2023年开始冻结一年的休假申请，直到我们的牧师供应稳定为止。

Translator: Rev Glenn Tan

总结

岂不知在场上赛跑的都跑，但得奖赏的只有一人？你们也当这样跑，好叫你们得着奖赏。（哥林多前书 9:24）

让我们定睛仰望为我们信心创始成终的耶稣，存着信心、忍耐与盼望，一同奔那摆在我们前头的路程！

跑吧！华人年议会！

Thank God for His grace and for sustaining us over the past three years of the pandemic. With the ease of Safe Management Measures, we could have more people return for services, resume worship singing and have fellowship! Let us treasure these times that we get to come together. I want to thank all our pastors and church leaders for your hard work in adapting to the multitude of SMM changes and your faithfulness in ministering to the members and people in need all these years. May we grow stronger in faith and have clearer visions of the purpose of our lives on this earth.

Matthew 28:18-20

¹⁸Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

1. Disciple-Making Conference Task Force Update

We are all receivers of Jesus' Great Commission and the community of faith is one of disciple-making. There are many ministries in the church and each of them originated to equip disciples to fulfil the Great Commission to make disciples.

As the church grew and more church buildings were built, more activities began to be held within church premises. More resources had to be employed towards building maintenance, allocation of time and space for each ministry, and the setting up of additional rules and meetings to maintain harmony. Consequently, we may have lost sight of the ultimate goal of making disciples who make disciples.

Since our Conference has adopted the theme "Disciple-Making Conference", we have been actively encouraging churches to formulate their Disciple-Making (DM) pathway. Under the leadership of Dr Stephen Yeo, churches were invited to form a community of practice and to share their best practices on disciple-making. We had pastors and leaders from five piloting churches share about their DM pathway during the CAC Leaders' Fellowship on 6 August and many who were present were encouraged and inspired.

In his report at the October 2022 Executive Board (EB) meeting, Dr Stephen Yeo prompted all churches to be involved in the works of disciple-making. Conveying that besides having PICs champion DM in the church, lay leaders also need to participate and be committed to DM. Churches need to realise that DM is a church-wide movement, not just a programme. He encouraged the PICs and LCECs of each church to find common DM materials that could be used across their congregations.

Noting that each church can have its unique DM framework for nurturing members into disciple-makers, Dr Stephen emphasised the importance for churches to encourage each other and to share best practices, ideas and lessons learnt, which could aid churches in refining their existing DM models. He also shared some considerations of the Taskforce: to develop a basic CAC DM framework from which churches could take reference; to form a consensus on the characteristics that define a disciple-making church so churches may conduct self-evaluation and track their progress; and to identify suitable training topics for leaders and provide centralised training to help churches train up more workers.

While difficult, the task of disciple-making is one that must be taken on. Let us press on towards becoming a Disciple-Making Conference.

2. North-East Outreach Task Force (NEO_TF)

Our nation's residential landscape has changed. The distribution of our population now is very different from 10, 20, 30 years ago. Many new housing estates have been established across the island, especially in the west and north-east regions (eg. Jurong West, Boon Lay, Punggol, and Seng Kang), while most of our churches are situated closer to the central region and mature housing estates (eg. Toa Payoh, Queenstown, and Ang Mo Kio). Given that new housing developments will continue to be seen in Sengkang and Punggol, we can anticipate for more people, especially young couples and families, to be moving into these estates.

At present, CAC has two local conferences in the North-east region, namely, Sengkang Methodist Church (SKMC) and Changi Methodist Church (CMC). SKMC is currently left with 8 years in their land lease and are preparing to renew their lease for another 30 years. With the scarcity of land and rising building cost, we need to be more strategic in our outreach to the North-east region of Singapore.

The NEO_TF was set up at the 3 October Executive Board meeting with SKMC as the anchoring church. Rev Dr Niam Kai Huey (PIC of SKMC) will spearhead this taskforce with the assistance of Rev Andy Goh. NEO_TF will also take over the Conference's Punggol Outreach.

3. Schools Outreach Ministry Task Force (SOM_TF)

God has given us a constant stream of student enrolment in Methodist schools. The opportunity to spread the Good News and instil good values in them is vast. We have been appointing CAC pastors to all Methodist Schools as chaplains since 2017 yet still only have four Christian Ministry Staff (CMS) in three schools as of today. We need to work harder in our school ministry because as we delay year after year, we are losing countless evangelistic opportunities.

We can go for short-term overseas mission work, pump in large sums of money to support missions, yet we neglect such a big harvest field that we could be devoting ourselves to throughout the year. Your church may not be situated within a school premise, but you can send evangelists i.e. CMS, into the schools. You don't have to go that far to reach out to the lost!

May I appeal to you to challenge young men and women in our congregation to consider the vocation of a CMS. Assistant Director of School Ministry Rev Edmund Koh will set up a study group to draw up a proposal on school ministries and present his recommendations to EB in July 2023. I will be working closely with this taskforce and hope to have the support of our Conference and local churches in advancing our ministry outreach to schools.

Matthew 5:13-14

¹³"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. ¹⁴"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.

4. Celebrate Family Life on 1 May 2023

A CAC Board Chair meeting was held on 22 September with the purpose of improving synergy and collaborative efforts across various Conference Boards. The meeting also looked into how each Board could respond in view of the repeal of section 377A and its impact on churches and members. During the meeting, all Boards agreed that the fundamental strategy is to strengthen family life and concluded to join efforts in organising a Conference Family event on 1 May 2023. This project was approved of at the 3 October EB meeting.

This family event serves to send a clear message of CAC's commitment to family life, and to unite our 17 local churches and board ministries. Do keep this project in your prayers; we welcome the support of individuals and churches.

5. Progress of Christian Counselling Ministry

The subject of mental well-being was highlighted in our national agenda. News reports on mental health in recent years have caught our attention and we recognise that it is a problem that some of our members are also grappling with. Counsellors and social workers are in short supply, so we cannot simply rely on existing counselling organisations to provide help. We, too, need to play our part in serving the needs of the people. We have to speed up our work in the counselling ministry.

A mental health webinar was organised on 6 October to raise awareness on the matter, and to share about CAC's plan to set up a counselling ministry. We then held a half-day spiritual retreat on 5 November for professionally trained counsellors, therapists or social workers within CAC churches to connect with God and others in their field of work. The feedback received from participants were positive. We will continue to look into supporting them in this regard.

Mr Tony Ting, Trainer and Senior Counsellor of Wesley Methodist Counselling Services, will be conducting a six-session (12 hours) workshop in April and May 2023, to train potential lay counsellors and church members who are in the care or helping ministry. We are also presently looking at developing Chinese training curriculum with a Counselling organisation.

I encourage local churches to work closely with the Conference in this counselling ministry.

6. Development of Christian Worldview Curriculum (WVC) based on Methodist Social Principles

While the Christian worldview may be imparted through sermons, Bible studies and seminars, there is a need for a more structured and intentional way to develop and strengthen a believer's view of the world. Developed based on the Methodist Social Principles, the Christian Worldview Curriculum seeks to address this gap and discuss topics we interact with daily, such as economics, politics, culture, and technology.

A Worldview Basics course (four sessions) was conducted in September and October 2022. Church leaders from SKMC, BPMC, TACMC and GMC were invited to participate and see how WVC can be integrated into their DM pathway. The first draft of the first module has been completed. The WVC will include teaching videos and guides, and a training manual for leaders.

Luke 10:1-2

¹After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. ²He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

7. Pastoral Pipeline

I want to thank the Conference for reviewing our pastor's salary and benefits in recent years. The adjustments have helped many of our pastors and new MOTS who are entering the pastoral ministry. That said, we will eventually face a shortage of pastors if we do not have a continuous inflow of new pastors. Thus, it is of utmost importance that we have people who would respond to God's call to devote themselves to join the ordained ministry.

As a faith community, we need to pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest fields. The first worker to pray for is yourself. Ask God if you are the one he would like to send out. What about your children? Will you pray for God's calling to come upon your children and grandchildren?

We need about ten years to train up an Elder. We can look into three areas: 1) Invite Lay Ministry staff to join Annual Conference; 2) Appoint Local Preachers as supply pastors; and 3) Re-engage retired pastors for full-time ministry. I will be working with BOHR and BOM on this matter. Beginning 2023, we will also be suspending applications for the one-year sabbatical leave until our supply of pastors has stabilised.

Conclusion

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. (1Cor 9:24)

Come and join me as we fix our eyes on Jesus and run the race that God has set before us with faith, endurance and hope!

Run! CAC!