

ywwLink



For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6

Oct - Dec 2011

A quarterly newsletter of the YWCA—Young Women's Christian Association of Singapore

www.ywca.org.sg

Highlights



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Editor's Note

By Love Serve One Another

The motto for YWCA is "By love serve one another". This is taken from Galatians 5:13-14 –

"You, my brothers were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. For the entire law is summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself".

The life of Mrs Thevathasan (our Spotlight this issue) and her contribution to the church and community, is an example of one person who has lived and continues to live by the YWCA motto. There are many more such members and volunteers of YWCA who are quietly giving their time and talent, serving one another, to the Association. All the activities of the YWCA or the regular meetings of the various committees involve members and friends of the YWCA who are dedicated and committed to serve one another.

The YWCA is blessed to have received donations through its street collection on her Flag Day on 3 September 2011 and by individual donations, which will be used towards the community services operated by the YWCA.

The Cook-Out on 1 October 2011 and the Christmas Bazaar on 10 December 2011 are events by which YWCA

members and volunteers continue to serve the community as well as allowing members and friends to be involved in community-based activities.

As we move towards the celebration and commemoration of the birth of Jesus on 25 December, we also think of the practice of giving to our loved ones and the needy. The Bazaar Committee, in the build-up to the Christmas Bazaar on 10 December, will hold 2 Mini-Bazaars at Fort Canning Lodge on 27 November and 4 December from 9 am to 2 pm. Please take this opportunity to pick up gifts for your friends and family and the needy. If you are unable to visit FCL at this time, you can also make pre-orders through the YWCA. You can also buy the blank greeting cards from YWCA as your seasons' greeting cards, knowing that the sale proceeds will go towards our community services.

We thank God for his many blessings on YWCA, members, volunteers, staff and friends throughout 2011 and the years to come.

"And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them" 1 John 4:16

Tan Kee Leng,
Editor

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Published by YWCA

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MICA (P) 006/05/2011

Upcoming Events

NOVEMBER

16 – 18 NOVEMBER

(WEDNESDAY – FRIDAY)

YMCA / YWCA / MYMCA World Week of Prayer and World Fellowship

Venue : 16 November - Lunch

Fellowship @ YWCA Fort

Canning Lodge, Pool Terrace

(Level 3), 6 Fort Canning Road

17 November – Lunch

Fellowship @ Metropolitan

YMCA, Auditorium (Level 2),

60 Stevens Road

18 November – Prayer & Praise

Jam @ YMCA of Singapore,

Auditorium (Level 1),

1 Orchard Road

Time : 12 noon – 2.00 pm

(Lunch Fellowship)

7.00 pm – 9.00 pm

(Prayer & Praise Jam)

18 NOVEMBER (FRIDAY)

K2 Graduation Ceremony cum

Concert 2011 (Bishan CDC,

McNair CDC & Outram Kindergarten)

Venue : YWCA Fort Canning Lodge,

Sophia Cooke Ballroom (Level 2),

6 Fort Canning Road

Time : 6.00 pm – 9.00 pm

19 NOVEMBER (SATURDAY)

K2 Graduation Ceremony cum

Concert 2011 (Bedok CDC)

Venue : Tampines East Community Club

Time : 2.00 pm – 6.00 pm

28 NOVEMBER (MONDAY)

Christmas JoyTalk

Venue : YWCA Fort Canning

Lodge, Pool Terrace (Level 3)

6 Fort Canning Road

Time : 12.15 pm - 1.30 pm

DECEMBER

01 DECEMBER (THURSDAY)

K2 Graduation Ceremony cum

Concert 2011 (Pasir Ris CDC)

Venue : Tampines East Community Club

Time : 5.00 pm (Refreshments are

served from 4.00 pm – 4.45 pm)

10 DECEMBER (SATURDAY)

Christmas Bazaar

Venue : YWCA Fort Canning Lodge,

Sophia Cooke Ballroom

(Level 2), 6 Fort Canning

Road

Time : 10.00 am – 6.00 pm

17 DECEMBER (SATURDAY)

K2 Graduation Ceremony cum

Concert 2011 (Bukit Gombak CDC)

Venue : Grassroots Club @

Yio Chu Kang

Time : 2.30 pm – 4.30 pm

For more information, please visit our website at www.ywca.org.sg.

World YWCA Council 2011 and International Women's Summit

The World Council 2011 and the International Women's Summit (IWS) were held from 10 to 16 July 2011 at Zurich, Switzerland. Over 1,000 enthusiastic participants comprising of women from 115 delegations and representatives from partnering agencies participated in this milestone event.

The theme for World Council 2011 is 'Women Creating a Safe World'. The theme was chosen as this issue has always been a cause for concern among women across the globe. Despite the extensive work done by the YWCA movement and other women's organisations worldwide to advocate and promote a safe environment for women such as freedom from violence; personal, economic and political security; full access to sexual and reproductive health services; and HIV treatment and care, not every woman has equal access to resources and basic human rights. Hence, this quadrennial meeting seeks to empower the YWCA movement by providing the ideal platform for stakeholders to address and reflect on this issue.



Delegates from YWCA of Singapore attending the International Women's Summit (From left to right: Mrs Leung Yee Ping, Ms Mavis Tsoi, Mrs Ma Kheng Min and Ms Janet Tan)

With a focus on the implementation of goals and strategies for change, the 7-day programme was filled with myriad of opportunities for discussion, socialising as well as networking. The core programmes included Pre Councils, Business Meetings, Young Women's Leadership Forum, Informative Skills Building Workshops, Plenary and Breakout Sessions, Regional Meetings and Award Ceremony. In addition, all the delegates had an opportunity to discover the beautiful lakeside city of Zurich. A gala dinner was also specially organised to welcome the delegates from all over the world where they were treated to a delicious traditional Swiss meal.

Inspirational opening speeches were given by former Presidents, Dr. Michelle Bachelet and Mary Robinson. The inaugural Mary Robinson Award for Young Women's Leadership in Human Rights was also launched at the World Council. Many were inspired by the awardees who have set exemplary examples in their areas of work in their home countries.

The business meeting took place over three fruitful days and many critical decisions regarding the movement were made. One of the major decisions was the election of the new Board of the World YWCA. Led by the newly elected President,

Deborah Thomas (Trinidad & Tobago), the new Board is made up of 18 women, 8 of whom are young women. The new Vice Presidents are: Ida Ituze (Rwanda), Tricia Gideon (Belize), Kirsty Kelly (Great Britain), Andrea Nunez Argote (Mexico), Jessica Notwell (Canada) and Susan Brennan (Australia). Carolyn Flowers (USA) assumed her new role as the Treasurer. The other Board members are Rabbecca Phwitiko (Malawi), Monika Simeon (Namibia), Belinda Bennet (India), Valerie Felicia Ho (Taiwan), Young Hee Won (Korea), Anna-Kaisa Ikonen (Finland), Geeske Zanen (Netherlands), Silvana Ayaipoma de Mattos (Peru), Haifa Baramki (Palestine), Hoda Kamal El Mankabady (Egypt), Hong Kee Lee (USA), and Alice Iwebu-Kale (Solomon Islands).



Delegates from the YWCAs worldwide singing and dancing to the YWCA Song

The closing ceremony saw the installation of the new World YWCA Board. Great appreciation was shown to the World YWCA staff, volunteers, and YWCA YMCA Switzerland, who hosted the event. Delegates returned home with a renewed spirit and new ideas and strategies to be implemented as well as forged bonds of friendships. Overall, it has been an enriching experience! With the 27th World Council behind us now, we look forward to the next World Council in 2015 in the land of smiles of Bangkok, Thailand.



Sight-seeing near the Hotel

Regular programmes

The YWCA caters to the needs of both the young and the young at heart, whether members or members of the public, by organising regular programmes and activities to engage them in all aspects - socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually. Some of these programmes include Golden Y Circle (GYC), Joy Talk and YWCA Kids' Club.

Golden Y Circle (GYC)



Started in 1995, the Golden Y Circle (GYC) was formed to meet the needs of ladies above the age of 60. The ladies meet regularly on Mondays, from 10.30 am to 2.00 pm, at the YWCA Outram Centre. The weekly fellowship programme includes Praise & Worship, prayer and sharing, sing-a-long session of favourite oldies and home-cooked lunch. The ladies also enjoy playing Board games, of which Rummikub and Mexican Train are hot favourites among them. In addition, the ladies also enjoy sharing and exchanging health tips with each another.

Other regular programmes throughout the month include the following – the celebration of birthdays on the first Monday of the month; a friendly competitive game of bingo which the ladies play every second Monday of the month. Winners of the competition will each receive a prize consisting of a small cake specially baked by one of the ladies. On the fourth Monday of the month, there is also a music and movement session led by Mrs Catherine Chan, Chairperson of the GYC Committee. Sometimes, a potluck party will be held where two to four ladies will form a group to cook a dish or two to bring to the gathering. On festive occasions such as Chinese New Year, Easter, Mother's Day, National Day and Golden Y Day, special programmes and/or outings are planned for the ladies.

The GYC Committee continues to play an active role in the planning of programmes, activities and lunch menus for the ladies. The Committee currently consists of 14 members. New and younger members are always encouraged to join the Committee and are groomed to be leaders to take over in future.

"Every Monday, I look forward to attending the GY gathering. I enjoy the warm fellowship with the other members. We are like a family as we have known each other for a long time. When we meet, we share about our families and our problems. We understand each other's needs and problems and we offer each other support and advice. The GYC gives us a sense of belonging and it is a place where we feel wanted and accepted." – Priscilla Wong, in her 80s, a long-time member of the GY.

Joy Talk



First started in June 2003 by the YWCA of Singapore, Joy Talk is a monthly lunchtime fellowship meeting held at the Fort Canning Lodge on the last Monday of every month. Joy Talk seeks to reach out to the community at large by offering spiritual and physical nourishment for people from all walks of life in a casual and non-threatening setting over lunch. Each month, a special guest speaker is invited to deliver a message on a topic which the Holy Spirit has impressed upon his/her heart.

Majority of the attendees are females who are retirees. A small handful of working professionals, who work in the vicinity of the Fort Canning Lodge, also make an effort to drop by during their lunch break to attend the meetings.

The programme is such that a simple lunch is first served followed by a time of praise and worship and then a short message delivered by the invited speaker.

The strength of Joy Talk lies in the adoption of a holistic approach in meeting the people's needs in body, mind and spirit. Physical food is first provided to feed the body. Spiritual food is then supplied to nourish the mind and refresh the soul. Some of our attendees who have benefited greatly from the physical and spiritual nourishment they have received over the years have since been faithfully attending the Joy Talk meetings since 2003. Some have also brought their friends along so that they can also be blessed by this service.

YWCA Kids' Club

Launched in 2007, the YWCA Kids' Club is a literacy and mentorship programme targeted at children aged 5 to 12 years old, who are also beneficiaries of the YWCA's free meals delivery programme for children from low-income families, Meals-on-Wheels for Children. The YWCA Kids' Club seeks to offer a holistic approach in helping these children realise their potential through social, emotional, moral and academic support.

Held every Saturday from 10.00 am – 12.30 pm at the YWCA Outram Centre, the weekly tuition and thematic lessons are conducted by volunteers. In addition to the thematic activities, celebrations and outings are also organised throughout the year to provide the children with a fun and rewarding experience.

"Kids' Club has improved my English and it also helped me to be the top 10 in my class." – Tham Jing Heng, 12 years old

Renovation for YWCA Building

The YWCA Building is being given a makeover!

It has been over 14 years since the YWCA Building was completed in 1997 and the launch of the Fort Canning Lodge (FCL) which is located in the YWCA Building. Over the years, the YWCA Building has been well utilised by the Association and used by Wesley Methodist Church and numerous companies and organisations for their services and events. The YWCA Building was definitely in need of a major renovation to the exterior and interior of the Building, and so in August 2009, the Board approved a proposal to carry out the major renovation of the YWCA Building, which houses FCL, a social enterprise of the YWCA.

The renovation is being carried out in phases. Phase 1 involved the replacement of the chiller system and AHUs at all the room floors and was completed on 20 August 2010. Phase 2 was for the external works which include repairing and painting of the external walls, upgrading of the courtyard which has been redesigned and tiled and new plants were planted, installation of new external signages and conversion of the tennis court to a roof terrace which can be used for functions. This phase was completed in August 2011. Phase 3 is the internal renovation which includes the upgrading of all the guest rooms and improvements to the Coffeehouse, function rooms and the public area. Phase 3 has recently started with a completion date in November 2011 for the Coffeehouse and the rest of the internal works in April 2012.

On completion of this project, the FCL will be like new, with the upgraded rooms and function rooms and a new coffeehouse.



New signage at the entrance of the driveway.

The renovation of the YWCA Building is handled by the Buildings Committee under the Chair of Mrs Gan Soh Huan (2009-2010) and Ms Mavis Tsoi (2011-2012). Together with a team of consultants appointed by YWCA and staff of FCL, the Buildings Committee has been working hard since August 2009 on this project.

We look forward to the new YWCA Building and FCL in 2012.

Cook-Out

The YWCA held its annual Cook-Out event on Saturday, 01 October 2011. More than 20 volunteers and staff of the YWCA came together to prepare a scrumptious weekend meal for over 200 beneficiaries of the Hungry No More (Meals-on-Wheels for Elderly and Children) programmes.

In addition to the lunch packets, the elderly each received a goodie bag consisting of items such as toilet rolls, soap, instant noodles, cereal drinks and biscuits; while the children received stickers and a variety of snack items such as cookies, chocolates and potato chips.

The YWCA would like to thank and acknowledge Aries Fresh Pte Ltd for the donation of ingredients such as mushrooms and sweet potatoes; the Heads of Departments of the Fort Canning Lodge for the donation of goodie bag items for the elderly and children. Their kind and generous donations have brought a smile on the faces of all our beneficiaries. The YWCA would also like to thank everyone who has helped out and contributed in one way or another to the success of this event. We look forward to their continued support and partnership in our future programmes and activities.



Events

Christmas Bazaar 2011

The YWCA will be organising a Christmas Bazaar on Saturday, 10 December 2011, from 10am - 6pm, at our YWCA Fort Canning Lodge, Sophia Cooke Ballroom. If you are looking for Christmas gifts for your family and loved ones and good bargains, look no further! There will be more than 50 stalls selling Christmas goodies, food items, children's books, fashion accessories, clothes and handmade jewellery. You are bound to find suitable gifts from among the wide array of items available for sale!

Other highlights will include many fun and exciting activities to engage the children as well as carol singing to brighten up the Christmas mood. Also, don't miss out on the chance to meet up with the Storm Troopers from Star Wars as dressed up by the 501st Legion as well as take a picture with Santa.

Combining good fun and great bargains, this Christmas Bazaar promises to be an enjoyable and fun-filled event for the entire family. So spread the news around and make a date with us today! See you at our Christmas Bazaar!



Thai Cuisine Cooking Class



Participants from OCBC Recreational Club attending the morning session of the cooking class

On Saturday, 13 August 2011, the YWCA Y-Cook Committee organised a Thai cuisine cooking class. The class was held at Fort Canning Lodge and was conducted by Ms Dancy and Ms Maureen. The two instructors demonstrated their skills in cooking Thai Green Curry, Thai Fish Cake and preparing Red Ruby.

At the start of the lesson, Ms Dancy and Ms Maureen took time to explain to the participants on the preparation of the three dishes and how to use the required herbs. The participants felt that both trainers' explanation and sharing of kitchen tips and the usage of herbs were useful. The participants asked many questions, all of which were patiently answered by Ms Dancy and Ms Maureen.

In addition, this was the first time members from OCBC Recreational Club and Fraser Suites attended our YWCA cooking class. With such overwhelming response received from both organisations, the cooking class had to be split into 2 sessions, one at 11am and another at 2 pm.

At the end of each session, the participants had the opportunity to taste the freshly cooked dishes that they had earlier learnt.



Display of fresh herbs



Red Ruby

There was even tea and coffee to go with the food and friendships were also forged when participants exchanged small talk.

The Y-Cook Committee will be organising another cooking class in October on Nonya cuisine. We look forward to greater participation from other companies.

Events

YWCA Flag Day 2011

This year, the YWCA Flag Day was held on Saturday, 03 September 2011. Staff and school volunteers went islandwide to raise funds. Gross Flag Day proceeds totalled about \$68,000. Proceeds from the Flag Day event will be used to fund the YWCA's wide range of community services and projects, which include the following:

- Hungry No More (Meals-On-Wheels For Elderly)
- Hungry No More (Meals-On-Wheels For Children)
- Hungry No More (Sustenance For Families)
- "Yes U Can... Be Included!"
- Financial Assistance Programme
- YWCA Kids' Club
- Bursary Scheme

The YWCA would like to thank all who contributed one way or another to make this event a success.



YWCA Family Sports Day



It has been two years since the YWCA celebrated its Family Sports Day in 2009. On 30 June, 2011, the YWCA once again gathered the children and their families for a day of fun and excitement at the Toa Payoh Indoor Sports Hall to celebrate Family Sports Day

The turnout for the day was a good sizeable crowd of 1335 strong consisting of parents and children, staff and Board and Committee Members of the YWCA. As the crowd started to arrive as early as 8:30 am, they were ushered by the staff of the National Office to their designated seating areas.

The actual event kicked off at 9:45 am with entertainment from the Emcee, Moe Alkaff, from Moezik Events International. This was followed by a Welcome Speech delivered by Ms Foo Chek Chiang, the Chairperson of YWCA's Child Development Programme Committee, a Cheerleaders Performance and a one-hour talk by PEPS speaker, Mr Joshua Ang, on the topic, "Hot Tips on Parenting".

As the time approached 11:00 am, it was the moment both parents and children had been waiting in anticipation for – the "live" kick off of the games. There were a total of nine games played that day from both the Children and Parent/Child categories and according to the different levels of children, ranging from Playgroup to Kindergarten. The favourite game

from the Parent/Child category was the "Feed Me" game played by the Kindergarten 1s. There was intense competition among the groups especially for the Parent/Child games.

The games finished with a resounding success at about 1:45pm. Prizes were then handed out to the winners of each category by Ms Foo. It was certainly an enjoyable day with much team work and team spirit shown especially by the parents and children!

The YWCA would like to take this opportunity to thank members of the Board and Committee for their support and participation, as well as all the staff who had put in much effort from the inception planning to coordination to the execution and finale of the event; the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports and the Health Promotion Board for their generous funding and grant support, making this fun-filled day possible for our parents and children.



Mrs Gnana Thevathasan J.P.

Interviewed by Karen Chay



At 93 years of age, Mrs Gnana Thevathasan, in spite of her physical difficulties (to walk without a walking stick and hard of hearing and may not be as strong) does not dwell on her condition but continues to actively pursue her favourite pastimes such as gardening, cooking, entertaining family and friends from here and abroad, and creating beautiful floral arrangements. Her beautiful and well-maintained garden, with pots of colourful blooming orchids, bears evidence of her natural ability for gardening.

A long-time member of Wesley Methodist Church, Mrs Thevathasan has been faithfully serving in the various ministries of the church such as the Women's Society of Christian Service (WSCS) and the Floral Fellowship. Mrs Thevathasan joined the WSCS soon after the Japanese Occupation of Singapore and still attends the WSCS Bible Study class conducted every Tuesday. She started the Wesley Floral Fellowship in the early 1950s and still continues to arrange flowers in the church sanctuary for Sunday Services and weddings on Saturdays when she is rostered. As founder member, she also serves in the Wesley Senior Fellowship. And as one of the first lady Justices of Peace appointed in Singapore in the late 1940s, Mrs Thevathasan used to visit the Women's Prison (first at Pearl's Hill and later at Changi) when she was younger and more mobile. She still solemnizes marriages whenever she is able.

As regards the YWCA, Mrs Thevathasan is a Life Member and had served as the Chairperson of the Fort Canning Hostel Committee in the 1960s.

Born and bred in Sri Lanka, Mrs Thevathasan came to Singapore in 1939 at the age of 21 to live with her husband. Armed simply with an obedient heart and a willing spirit, she took the leap of faith to

move to a foreign land without her family and friends by her side. Mrs Thevathasan has never looked back with any regrets as she believes that this is God's will and purpose for her life. Because of her obedience, even in the ordinary circumstances of her life, God used her to be a continuous blessing to others.

How did you become involved with social service work?

Having witnessed the suffering and hardships of the people during the Japanese Occupation in Singapore had heightened a sense of compassion within me. My late husband, who was a medical doctor by profession, was also a man filled with compassion and was sensitive to the needs of others. He further inspired me to develop a greater heart for the poor and the needy. Soon after the war, I got to know a lady who was involved in social welfare services. She roped me in to help look after a group of children who did not attend school and were neglected by their parents, who were too busy earning a living to take care of their welfare. These children had no food to eat and they often stole and got into fights. We provided one meal for them and also taught them some skills so that they could learn something useful and keep out of trouble. Many other YWCA members like Mrs Goh Kok Kee, Mrs Loh Poon Lip and Mrs Ellice Handy also volunteered their services.

How did you become a volunteer with the YWCA? Which area did you serve in?

Mrs E V Davis and Mrs Goh Kok Kee introduced me into the YWCA. I first joined as a member but was not actively serving in any areas. When I began serving in the YWCA in the early 1950s, it was mainly in the Hostel Committee and then the General Committee. Subsequently I became the Chairperson of the Hostel Committee. I also roped in some of the Wesley Church members and the Pastors' wives to serve on the Committee as well.

The YWCA Hostel's motto was "Home Away from Home" and provided modest but affordable accommodation mainly for students, low-income families and backpack travellers. We also took care of their meals by providing them with free packed lunch, tea and dinner. Because of the affordable rates, the hostel was always running at full occupancy such that we often had to turn people away as

the demand far exceeded the supply of our rooms.

Back then, it was a struggle to keep the hostel afloat as we were living from hand to mouth. We often had to raise money to fund the operational costs of the hostel. In those days we organised mini bazaars known as "Bring and Buy" where we would bring items to sell to help raise funds. The proceeds were modest but we were glad to be able to do our part. Whatever little money we raised was from our hearts and the efforts we put in could not be measured in monetary terms.

When the YWCA decided to build a 6-storey extension for the Fort Canning Hostel, I enlisted the help of some influential Indian ladies and together, we put up a number of Indian musical shows at the Victoria Memorial Hall to help raise money for the building funds.

What did you enjoy most about volunteering with the YWCA?

I enjoyed the fellowship with the ladies. We were like a big family working together to help those from the low-income group. It was a joy to be able to help the less fortunate as we could empathise with them, having experienced difficult times as well.

What do you think is the greatest challenge faced in the volunteering scene today?

I believe the greatest challenge is finding volunteers who are committed, passionate and are willing to go the extra mile.

Who is your greatest inspiration?

My late husband. He made me the person I am today. Without his support and encouragement, I would not have been able to do so much in my volunteer work, nor applied the talents that God had graciously bestowed upon me, to His Glory.

What advice would you give to potential volunteers?

Give of your time and use your God-given talents wisely to serve the less fortunate and underprivileged. Share your blessings with those who are less fortunate without expecting anything in return for your Blessings will be from God in heaven. Those who give will never be in want.

Going Deep with God (Luke 5:1-11)

By Pastor Richard Ong

Luke 5

The calling of the first disciples

1 One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. 2 He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. 3 He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch."

5 Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets."

6 When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. 7 So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

8 When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" 9 For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, 10 and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners.

Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." 11 So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

This passage gives us insight into the lives of the disciples of Jesus, particularly, Peter, John, James and Andrew. They were fishermen by trade before Jesus came calling. After a long night at sea, they caught nothing. They know that no fish means no income for the day. Here comes Jesus asking Peter to let down the nets for a second time. Peter struggles with doing what Jesus asked him to do. First, it was already morning and usually fishermen will go fishing in the night out in the deep sea. Second, Jesus was a carpenter by trade, not a fisherman. They would know better when it comes to fishing. But Jesus had rich lessons for Peter and the disciples through this little incident. Jesus wanted to bring the disciples to a deeper relationship with himself. Through this incident, we can learn four important principles for going deep with God, using the acronym D.E.E.P.

1. Determine to obey God at all times (v. 3, 5)

Peter obeys Jesus even though it does not make good sense to him. He put out the boat a little from shore and let down the nets for a catch. The end result is that they hauled a great catch of fish. Peter must be glad that he obeys the command of Jesus even though he didn't feel like doing it initially. The lesson for us is that we must obey God even when it is difficult,

doesn't make sense to us or go against our life experiences. God has great blessings in store for those who obey him even when it is difficult. We will go deeper in our relationship with God when we obey him in all situations of life.

2. Expect to be tested and tried (v. 4)

Jesus was actually testing Peter to see if he will obey. He knows what will be going on in Peter's mind about his command to let down the nets one more time. Jesus cares for the disciples and knows that they have no income for the day. He wants to provide for them. But instead of simply commanding the fish to jump out of the water into the boat, he stretches their faith to see how much they will trust him. The lesson here is that God often tests us to see if we will trust him and totally depend on him. He does so to increase our faith in him and deepen our understanding of him as a loving and faithful God. Our faith is like the muscles in our body. It needs to be stretched in order for it to be strong. We can expect difficult times, testings and disappointments in our lives. God will use those times to deepen our faith and draw us closer to him.

3. Expect seasons of cleansing (v. 8)

Peter recognises his sinfulness and unworthiness before Jesus. That's why he says, "Go away from me, Lord. I am a sinful man." (v. 8). To take us deeper with him, God has to do a cleansing work in our lives. He will show us our sinfulness so that we will come to him for forgiveness and cleansing. This is God's way of preparing us for service. He works in us before he works through us. The foundation for effective ministry is character, a character that reflects the beauty of his holiness and love to others. Jesus used Peter greatly in his life as Peter submits to the cleansing work of God in his life. We need to embrace the work of God in our lives. We can expect to experience his moulding and pruning work from time to time. We must not lose heart but trust God that he knows what he is doing.

4. Pursue God's plan for our life (v. 11)

God has a plan for each of the disciples. He has a plan for Peter to be his spokesmen in the early church. Peter did become the leader of the 12 disciples. All the teaching, training, stretching and testings Jesus gives to the disciples is to prepare them to fulfill God's plan for their lives. Nothing that God allows in our lives is ever wasted. Our part is to find out what is the plan God has for each of us. We must submit to his will and follow what he has planned for each of us. God has a good and wonderful plan for each of us.

God, our loving Father, calls and invites each of us to go deeper with him, to know the joy of intimacy with him, to prove his faithfulness over and over again. Will we respond to his invitation?

Pastor Richard Ong has been a pastor for the past 21 years. Presently, he is taking a break from pastoring and doing preaching and training in various churches. His greatest passion is to help Christians reach out to their non-believing family and friends, and to encourage churches to evangelise to the lost.

Announcements

Welcome On Board

The YWCA is pleased to welcome new staff joining the team. We welcome Jeremiah Florence Elsie (Teacher) at Bedok CDC; Fok Wai Ling (Assistant Teacher) at Bishan CDC; Wu Wu Mao (Teacher) at Marine Drive CDC; Seetoh Fook Leng (Gardener) at NOF; Ng Bian Bian @ Teo Siew Tee (Accounts Assistant) at NOF; Renee Anne Augustine (Assistant Teacher) at Outram CDC; Chan Lai Ching (Teacher) at West Coast CDC; and Yu Xichun (Language Teacher) at West Coast CDC.

At Fort Canning Lodge, we welcome Wai Chee How (Leading Cook); Tan Chew IT and Krishnan Kumari A/P Muniandy (Public Area Attendants); and Mary Yao (Room Attendant).

YWCA Recipe Greeting Cards

As another fund raising initiative by the Y-Cook Committee in support of the underprivileged in our local community, the YWCA has launched a set of limited edition recipe greeting cards featuring six selected recipes from our popular 2010 Celebrations Diary such as Sugee Cookies, Roast Lamb Rack with Almond Crust, Cold Buckwheat Soba Salad, Tandoori Chicken, Beef Rendang and Tom Yam Mee Siam. The cards are blank on the inside so they are perfect for any and every occasion.

Make every occasion special for you and your loved ones as you send your love and thoughts to them using these lovely fundraiser cards. Each set of six cards are only priced at \$6.00 so get your cards now and help someone in need today!

The cards are available for sale at the YWCA National Office located at 254 Outram Road, Singapore 169051 and at the YWCA Fort Canning Lodge, Front Office, located at 6 Fort Canning Road, Singapore 179494. For enquiries, please contact Ms Karen Chay @ tel: 6223 1227 or email: karenchay@ywca.org.sg.



Suggestion Box

We welcome your views and feedback! If you have any comments or suggestions on how we can improve on our programmes and services or if you have any creative ideas for fund raising activities or community service projects, we would love to hear from you! Drop us an email at admin@ywca.org.sg.

YWCA International Expeditions

Homeless Shelter @ Nepal

The YWCA organises international expeditions to reach out to the less privileged communities overseas. We are currently organising a Homeless Shelter Expedition to Nepal (Kathmandu) and are recruiting volunteers for this meaningful activity. Volunteers will embark on a 7-day programme which includes teaching English, organising recreational activities or assisting in various tasks at the Orphanage such as painting, decorating or gardening.

Come and be transformed by this humbling experience. At the same time, immerse in the culture and experience the warmth of the host country! If you and your friends are interested to sign up together, we will be most happy to conduct a special briefing session for your group. For more information, please call Ms Han Shin Hui at tel: 6223 1227 or email her at shinhui@ywca.org.sg.

In Remembrance Of ...

Mrs Pauline Chia, who was called home to be with the Lord on 30 July 2011. The late Mrs Chia had served with the YWCA circa 1981 – 1990. She was a member of the Board of Management of the YWCA and was also Committee Member of various committees such as the International Women's Club, Fort Canning Centre and the North/Zone Committee, Fort Canning Programme Committee, Kampong Java Child Development Centre Committee and North Zone Committee.

Mrs Christine Reddy, who was called home to be with the Lord on 01 October 2011. The late Mrs Reddy served in the YWCA Katong Club circa 1989 - 1997.

Our heartfelt condolences to the families and loved ones of the late Mrs Pauline Chia and Mrs Christine Reddy.

Child Development Centres

YWCA Bishan CDC's Holiday Programme

By Mrs Rebecca Au, Principal

Kids Arts Village



At the Kids Arts Village

On 27 May 2011, the children from Bishan and McNair CDC went on a trip to the Kids Art Village, which is located at the Esplanade. The Village was set up in conjunction with the Singapore Arts Festival and aimed to provide a special visual performing arts space for the children.

The children participated in the Children's Show Time where they could put up performances. The children from Bishan CDC performed a skit and a Korean dance based on the theme of language and culture. They shared with the audience simple Korean phrases like Kamsahamnida (Thank you) and Annyeong haseyo (welcome) and the popular food known as kimchi. The children were dressed in colourful Korean national costumes also known as the Hanbok. After the performances, the children enjoyed themselves viewing art exhibits at the children's art gallery and participating in the kid's art village activities, peeping through a rabbit hole and making craftwork from recycled materials. It was a great learning experience for the children.



Presenting the Arirang Korean Dance

Playdome



Yu Zhe and Hien Det dressed up as hawkers selling satay at the pretend play corner of The Play Dome

In June, during the Children's Season 2011, the children went on an excursion to Playdome at the National Museum of Singapore. They had fun participating in an interactive story telling session about their journey to the underwater world, which required the children to engage their five sense of taste, smell, touch and sight.

At the Happy Hawkers' corner of the museum, the children engaged in pretend play and had fun selling satay and noodles; while at the Kaleidoscope of Dreams, the children looked through the kaleidoscope at the outdoor garden and created their own kaleidoscope patterns. They enjoyed themselves thoroughly.

Children learn more about themselves and the world at large through exploration and hands-on experiences. They are curious by nature, active and are eager to learn and try new things. Field trips as such are an extension of the classroom curriculum and help the children learn more about their environment.



Hien Det says, "Look at me. Do I look nice with a moustache?"

Child Development Centres

Exploring Science through Experiments

By Teacher Susan, YWCA Marine Drive CDC

Children are curious by nature about the environment they live in and the things that happen around them. Children understand and learn science best through direct hands-on learning and when they are having fun. Exploring about volcanoes was an incidental learning process when news of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan surfaced. The news was so overwhelming that the children started sharing what they heard at home and asked questions about the earthquake. To find out the answers to all the questions, we decided to explore how volcanoes erupt and the after effects of it during the school holidays in June.

The first day started off with the viewing of some visuals followed by You Tube videos of real volcanic eruptions in different part of the world. The lesson went on further to teach the children how some eruptions occurring under the Ocean cause Tsunamis. This stimulated greater interest in finding out the answers to the what, where, why and how questions on volcano.

The next day, the children drew and painted a volcano. Through the dissection of the volcano, the children learned to identify the different parts. They were also given books to read up for more information on volcanoes. By now the children had gathered enough information and were ready to create their own volcanoes.



On the third day, the children started to make their own volcanoes under supervision of the teachers. They were able to make marvelous volcano replicas out of coloured dough and even surrounded the volcano with a farm filled wild animals and houses according to their preference/choice.



On the fourth day, the children were in for a treat. The children were excited to see their mini volcanoes erupt but they were not able to fully understand the eruption process. The children were briefed on the various ingredients that were going to be used in the experiment and how they were supposed to pour them into their miniature volcano and wait for the reaction. The experiment was done in pairs while the others watched. The children followed the instructions and marveled when their volcanoes erupted and pumped out lava down the slope, covering the farm and houses they had built around it. There were a lot of screams of excitement. Exploratory learning had just taken place during the whole process.



Later that day, the children did a reflective writing on their experience and what they felt about the effects of the volcano. With that their learning journey on volcanoes came to a close.

The K1 children were not involved in the initial learning process but they were present on the last day to witness the experiment. They had the opportunity to learn from their seniors, an experience which really benefitted them.

We believe that the interest in science can be cultivated in an informal manner through exploration even before the children receive formal education about science in primary school. The effects of learning through informal ways like exploration, field trips and hand-on activities do play a significant role in their learning process.