

Announcements

GATHERING OF MULTITUDES (GOM)

Calling all Zone Mentors, CGLs, ACGLs and Ministry Leaders! You and your spouse are invited to our annual GOM. This year, it will be held on a Saturday to give us more time to process and interact on where we are headed. This gathering is pivotal for our alignment as leaders. See you there!

Date: 29 Sep (Sat)

Time: 9am – 4pm (lunch will be provided)

Venue: BPJ Centre

SOCCER OUTREACH

Is it challenging to invite pre-believing friends and loved ones to church? What about playing soccer together? Covenant EFC is starting a soccer outreach group and inviting Covenanters who are passionate about souls and soccer to join us! **We are having a briefing, prayer and kick-around session on Sun, 9 Sep.** Please email CefcSoccerOutreach@gmail.com with your name and contact number to register.

SEP 2018 DJ COLLECTION

The Devotional Journal (DJ) for Sep 2018 is now available at our church website and “Covenant EFC” app. Hard copies are available at the Information Counter at Level 1 while stocks last.

COVENANT EFC'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY COFFEE TABLE BOOK

As part of Covenant EFC's 40th Anniversary celebration, we are producing a commemorative coffee table book titled *This Is Us: 40 Years of God's Faithfulness* so we can look back at our journey as a church family, remember God's faithfulness, and catch a glimpse of what lies ahead towards Vision 2028 & Beyond.

This beautifully designed, high-quality book filled with photos will be launched at our 40th Anniversary Service on 2 Sep. Be sure to get your copy then! Price will be announced soon.

HOKKIEN MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL OUTREACH

Share God's love with your Hokkien-speaking family and friends by inviting them to our Hokkien Mid-Autumn Festival Outreach.

Belinda Lee will share her testimony and Ps Gilbert Sng will give a special message.

Date: 22 Sep (Sat)

Time: 7pm - 9pm (free buffet starts at 5.45pm on a first-come, first-served basis)

Venue: BPJ Centre, Main Sanctuary (Level 2)



... for a Vibrant & Healthy Next Generation

... for Godly Families and Generations

... for a Growing IDMC Movement in Singapore

... to Impact Our Society & Culture

... for a Growing Global IDMC Movement

ACKCentre
2 Kallang Avenue,
CT Hub #10-26, Singapore 339407

ONE CHURCH MULTIPLE CENTRES
BPJ Centre:
Sun 8.30am, 10.30am, 12.30pm

WDL Centre:
Sun 8.30am & 10.30am

East Centre:
Sun 9am & 11am

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EAST, 26 AUG 2018

SERVICE LEADER: BENJAMIN SUN • WORSHIP LEADER: DAVID CHONG

Bring the Best of the Firstfruits

ELDER-DESIGNATE TONY TAN, FUNDRAISING CHAIRMAN
REV TAN KAY KIONG AND REV TONY YEO, SENIOR PASTORS

The best of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the Lord your God ... Behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared.
– Exodus 23:19a,20

Our “firsts” are our life priorities. They are the objects of our devotion. They instruct our attention and allegiance. They have our heart and order our affections.

When the people of Israel were being prepared for the conquest of Canaan, the promise came with an instruction – bring the best of the firstfruits into the house of the Lord. This is important because God wanted to ensure that Israel always remembers what should be the **first** in their lives. They were going to receive the great blessing of land and wealth, but these gifts must never take the place of God on the throne of their hearts. God must always be the **first**. To demonstrate this, the people were to bring to God's house annually the very best of the very first of all the produce of their labour.

Covenant is marching into our God-promised land which is Vision 2028 & Beyond, to fulfill the mission of growing

a Local and Global Intentional Disciplemaking Church (IDMC) Movement. Just like the Israelites, every Covenanter is called to contribute the best of our firstfruits as affirmation of the pre-eminence of Christ in our lives. We have been blessed with abundance in so many undeserving ways. God's word to us is to offer the best of our time, talent and treasures to His Kingdom mission.

The \$40M Seed Fund will help Covenant EFC build the infrastructure and capacity needed to grow a vibrant IDMC movement for the next generation. Many Covenanters and families have already indicated what they will offer as the best firstfruits of their treasures, honouring God above their own needs. For my family, this means contributing several months of our household income from work — the fruit of our labor. Will you prayerfully seek the Lord as to what you would offer as firstfruits to the Seed Fund?

Join Covenant's Board, Staff Team and many Covenanters to actualize the firstfruits giving to the Seed Fund starting from our 40th Anniversary Service on Sunday, 2nd September 2018 until 28 February 2019!

Sermon Outline

Breaking New Grounds

SCRIPTURE: ACTS 13:1-12; 44-49; 52 • SERMON: PROF FREDDY BOEY

Introduction

A. The Holy Spirit propels the new church towards “the uttermost part of the earth”

1. Acts 13 (like Matthew 13) is a pivotal chapter for the new church.
2. The Holy Spirit is proactive, not reactive.

B. When they “ministered to the Lord” (13:2-3), the Holy Spirit “set forth” Barnabas and Saul

1. Ministering to the Lord, what does it mean?
2. Church leaders must lead; but first, they need to be led by the Holy Spirit.

C. “But Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit ... ”

1. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Saul the Jew becomes Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles.
2. We choose the Lord to be saved, but the Lord chooses us to change the world!

D. The Jews were filled with Jealousy but the Gentiles were filled with Joy and the Holy Spirit:

1. The Jews reject the Gospel and in turn, the Gospel turns to the Gentiles.
2. Sensing when the Holy Spirit moves ... “Your Kingdom comes, Your Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.”

NEXT WEEK'S SERMON SPEAKER:

2 SEP, 40TH ANNIVERSARY SERVICE AT SINGAPORE EXPO HALL 1 - REV EDMUND CHAN

Last Week's Sermon Summary

More Than Conquerors

SCRIPTURE: ACTS 12:1-24 • SERMON: REV BARNEY LAU

Introduction

THE CONTEXT: This time the source of persecution is King Herod (Agrippa I) for political gains with the religious establishment and society of Judea.

THE CONTRAST: Relationship between the Jews and Christians had deteriorated from the earlier situation of “having favor with all the people” (2:47 NASB).

THE IRONY: Passover was a celebration of salvation, yet it became an execution of the apostles of salvation, but God overruled it with a miraculous deliverance!

We are more than conquerors when we continue ...

A. Trusting When We Don't Understand It (v.1)

COMMON: (1) Both apostles, James and Peter, were entirely faithful to Christ; (2) Both earnestly prayed and were prayed for by the church.

CONTRAST 1: (1) James was martyred, but Peter rescued; (2) Earnest prayers for James were unanswered, but spectacularly answered for Peter.

CONTRAST 2: Peter was ready to die for Christ, he was sleeping so soundly that the angel had to “strike” him to wake him. Even as the angel led Peter out, he thought it was all just a vision until he was out in the street. Contrast this to the Peter back in the gospels who denied Jesus at the first sign of trouble.

WHICH KIND OF FAITH: (1) Academic: “God, You can!” (2) Presumptuous: “God, You will!” (3) Indulgent: “God, You must!” (4) Mature: “God, You **are** faithful!”

FAITH IS not anchored on our faithfulness, but in God's faithfulness and goodness.

QUESTION: What is God calling me to trust Him for at home, at work and in church?

B. Believing When We Don't See It (v.5)

THE COMEDY: Peter didn't even know he was being rescued by an angel. Rhoda was so excited she forgot to invite Peter in. Nobody would believe Rhoda while Peter stood outside pounding on the door. People thought it was Peter's angel.

FREEDOM OF PRAYER: Just as the disciples prayed fervently NASB (intensely, continuously, feverishly) for Peter, we too have the freedom to pray likewise.

POWER OF PRAYER: Verse 5 began with “so” followed by a gloomy report, then came a hopeful “but” and a report of the church at prayer which led to “behold” and a report of God's intervention. God in His wisdom and power, knows “the end from the beginning” (Isa 46:10) and is able to weave our requests into His purposes.

POSTURE OF PRAYER: However, we must leave God in His sovereign wisdom to carry out His sovereign will. Yet, “The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective” (Jas 5:16 NIV), because “Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance, but laying hold of His willingness” (Martin Luther).

QUESTION: How do we pray in God's willingness for self, family and church?

C. Persisting When We Don't Feel Like It (v.24)

THE SATIRE: Herod was so embarrassed, he stomped off to Caesarea where he was angry again. In a twist of events, Herod died of his egotistic pomp and pride.

GOD PERSISTS: “But the word of the Lord continued to grow and be multiplied.” And because God persists, we can persist in Him because He is with us.

PERSISTING PRAYER: God, You **are** faithful!