

NECF 40-DAY FAST AND PRAYER

LET YOUR KINGDOM COME

7TH AUGUST - 15TH SEPTEMBER 2013

FOREWORD

THIS YEAR'S 40-DAY FAST and Prayer is held within Malaysia's Jubilee year. When the fast ends on Malaysia Day on 16 September 2013, we will mark 50 years as a nation formed by three sovereign and equal entities - Sarawak, Sabah and Malaya. As we celebrate 50 years, it is appropriate to take stock of where our country is.

Malaysia is blessed with rich natural resources, physical development and a diversity of peoples and religions. We are a remarkable story of nation-building for despite all our differences, we have for the most part, enjoyed national unity and harmony. Yet in recent years, we see threats to this peace as certain quarters attempt to lay claim to various "rights" and privileges in a bid to cement their hold on power, whether politically or religiously. We are modern and developed in many aspects, yet still too many of our fellow citizens remain impoverished and unreached by progress. Resources are plundered and wealth abused. Safe spaces for the freedom to think, express and practice one's religion are diminished. That which has all along been our shared heritage as a nation of different peoples - to live peacefully in prosperity and enjoyment of the common good - can so easily come undone if selfish agendas are placed above that of the nation's interests.

As a continuation of Malaysia's Jubilee, let us as Christian believers seek one agenda - to see "Thy Kingdom Come". This is the theme of this year's 40-Day Fast and Prayer during which we want to intercede for the fulfilment of God's sovereign plan for Malaysia and for His presence and transformative power to fill every sphere of influence in our country. The rumblings and discontent we have been witnessing in recent times are but labour pains. Let us labour on in prayer to see His Kingdom come, His will done on earth as it is in Heaven. And then, let us be that change which ushers in His Kingdom!

My hope is that this prayer booklet will encourage you to never give up building this nation as our act of worship and our living sacrifice to our Almighty God. May you be blessed as you seek the Lord for Malaysia.

Eugene Yapp
Secretary-General NECF

THY KINGDOM COME

THE NEXT 50 YEARS FOR MALAYSIA, if the Lord tarries, will be a precarious time politically, socially and economically.¹

As the Church prays, “Thy kingdom come”, she needs preachers like the prophet Jeremiah to arise. The message of Jeremiah to the people of Judah was: eliminate your idolatrous heart.

Jeremiah was appointed to “root out, and to pull down, to destroy and throw down, to build and to plant” ([Jer 1:10](#)). While the people were hearing words of “*peace, when there is no peace*” ([Jer 6:14](#)), Jeremiah preached of impending judgment. While Judah’s perverted worship and wayward living were tolerated by their leaders, Jeremiah strongly denounced their idolatry and sins. While Jeremiah’s message contained hope of building and planting, it would ensue only *after* the overthrowing and plucking ([Jer 31:28,40](#)).

If we care to admit it, many of God’s people have turned their affections away from God to embrace empty materialism and “respectable worship” without commitment to the Great Commission. Putting money and pleasure first, we are in part responsible for our society’s immoral and decadent state. In the midst of lamenting the symptoms of a corrupt

and crumbling society, we need to hear the cause: God’s people have forsaken God.

Until we turn back to God and follow His commands in His word, pleading “Thy kingdom come” will be but empty chants.

We need to return to the “old paths” ([Jer 6:16](#)). Loving the Lord with all of our heart, honouring His word, glorifying Him with godly living, while guarding closely our example before others, is the Lord’s clear path.

Our nation (and the world), is just a very few short decades away from eternal destruction. The Lord’s return is imminent. This nation needs the Church that dares to condemn sin and set before all the good way of the Lord and warn of the imminent judgment with tears.

Then, and only then does it make sense for us to cry “Thy kingdom come”.

¹ I personally believe His return would be much sooner than that.

► Dr Khoo Kay Hup, Chairman, NECF Prayer Commission

WHY WE NEED TO PRAY AND FAST

IT HAS BEEN 12 YEARS since NECF initiated the 40-Day Fast & Prayer. The question after all these years is, why do we still continue with it?

What do you think? I believe that as long as Jesus has not returned and Satan is still causing havoc in this world, we need to be vigilant and watchful in the face of spiritual warfare. The Apostle Paul reminded the believers in Ephesians

6:10-12, Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.



Many Christians may understand the need to pray like Jesus did at the Garden of Gethsemane to withstand the hour of temptation (Matthew 26:36-41). We also understand the need to be persistent in prayer (Luke 18:1-7). To fast, however, is another thing. The New Testament appears to be silent about fasting. However, to win in spiritual warfare, we have to not only pray but to fast on occasion as well. In order to defeat certain spirits, Jesus told His disciples that they had to pray and fast (Matthew 17:19-21 and Mark 9:23-29). In fact, Jesus said that when He (the bridegroom) is taken, then would His disciples fast (Matthew 9:14-15; Mark 2:18-20). And subsequently it was mentioned in Acts 13:1-3; 14:21-23 and 2 Corinthians 6:3-5; 11:25-27 that His disciples and the Apostle Paul did fast and pray. And Paul expected the believers of his time to set aside time to fast and to pray (1 Corinthians 7:5).

Jesus, His disciples, the Apostles and the early church fathers fasted not only as an act of spiritual discipline but they understood its implications within the context of spiritual warfare. How much more do we need to pray and to fast if we want to be victorious in this war.

As Jack Hayford said: "Most New Testament believers will acknowledge that fasting has some place in the church today, but few understand it. Just as with "spiritual warfare," which many neglect for want of teaching,

so fasting—a powerful weapon in warfare—is overlooked. Some even question the place or validity of fasting. What did Jesus say? While Jesus may not have made a direct commandment, "Thou shalt fast!" He did make strong statements about fasting—words that cannot be circumvented and we dare not overlook as spiritual warriors. "

So let us press on with this discipline to set aside days within this 40-Day Fast & Pray to do just that. May God help us as we do it in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

UNDERSTANDING ‘THY KINGDOM COME’

THE EXPRESSION “THY KINGDOM come” is understood by many in different ways. To some, it expresses the hope of the final consummation of all things in Christ. Others see it as the fulfilment of the prophecy of the coming of Christ as savior and *messiah* of the nation of Israel. In the days of Jesus, it referred to the anticipation and longing of the Jewish people for the coming rule of God upon all mankind. It involved the fulfilment of God’s purpose in history and upon this earth. In the Book of Matthew where this expression is found, the writer alludes to the Gospel as that announcement by which this promised rule of God is revealed and which begins in the person and work of Jesus Christ. In practical terms, such a pronouncement means that God’s will be done on earth and that God the sovereign Lord will bring about goodness and transformation to the present order of the day.

Although the phrase is expressed in the form of a prayer, it nevertheless has ethical implications for every disciple of Christ. This is clearly seen in the fact that Jesus taught his disciples to pray in this fashion. Every disciple is a witness to the promised rule of God begun in Christ Jesus as informed by the Gospel. As disciples of Christ today, we are the recipients of this blessing and we

are participants in this reign of Christ. Hence, the ethical imperative is that we reflect and exemplify this good news to those around us; our neighbours, the community we live in, society and the nation by which we acquire our national identity.

In this sense, Christians in Malaysia during this year of the Jubilee are to manifest the reality of God’s rule and presence everywhere, anywhere and at all times in our family life, job or career and indeed in every sphere of influence God has placed us in.

FASTING GUIDE



A. Fasting

AS WE PREPARE OURSELVES ONCE AGAIN for the National 40-Day Fast & Prayer with the theme, "Thy Kingdom Come", let us be reminded that true fasting is about the condition of the heart. Let us ask ourselves why we are fasting and what the Lord requires of us.

Isaiah 58 shows that true fasting goes beyond the act of abstaining from food and beyond religious activities. God saw through the hypocrisy of the hearts of His people based on their empty religious rituals. Their shallowness without sincere hearts of obedience or

true repentance cause Him to turn His face away from His chosen people.

Thus our focus, motivation and heart attitude when fasting will determine the degree of breakthrough in our lives, individually and corporately, even as we His people desire to turn our families, communities and nation around. It is time for us as individuals and as a corporate body to take stock and examine our hearts, to submit, connect and align our hearts back to Him, allowing Him to turn us inside-out, so that His will becomes our will. Only then can we pray effectively for His Kingdom to come

and His will to be done in every arena of society. To the degree we obey and allow the Lord to plough deep, to the degree we submit to Him, to that degree His kingdom will rule in our hearts, rendering our prayers effective.

The goal of our fast is not to twist God's arm but to seek His face and to turn from our wicked ways so that our relationship with God will be deepened and our spiritual senses will be sharpened to hear from Him. Moreover we need to restore a holistic approach so that prayer and fasting is not compartmentalized. Rather, it is an integral part of living a life with God, demonstrating kingdom values and principles in deeds and actions to glorify Him as salt and light that blesses all people.

During fasting, spend significant time to seek the Lord in prayer and in reading His Word. Feel free to be led by the Lord as to the kind of fast you should undertake:

- **Total Fast:** Partaking only of water and liquids, abstaining from solid food.
- **One Meal Fast:** Sacrificing one meal a day.
- **Daniel Fast:** Abstaining from meat, eating only fruits and vegetables.
- **Denial Fast:** Abstaining from something one enjoys daily such as coffee, tea, chocolates, sweets, or even from gossip or careless words.

- **Media Fast:** Abstaining from television, newspapers, computer games, movies, the Internet.

As you fast, it would be beneficial to involve others. Below are some suggested ways you can include others:

- **Family Fast:** To build family altars, agree to fast and pray as a family. Decide on the type of fast that members of the household are comfortable with. For Family Devotion Time; gather to read and pray according to the Word from the Prayer theme for The Day.
- **Cell Group Fast:** Fast together as a group by agreeing on a specific fast. You may schedule a specific time each day for cell members to synchronize prayers as they fast.
- **Office Fast:** Encourage Christians in your office to fast together. You may use tea breaks or lunch breaks to fast and pray through the Prayer Focus of the day.
- **Mobile/Skype Fast:** In this age of communication, praying together is just a beep away. Commit to pray with a friend by keeping a daily prayer appointment by phone. Agree on a specific time and call each other up to pray. It will be great if you can pair up with someone from another church or denomination!



B. Giving

WE ARE REMINDED IN LUKE 12: 48 THAT “to whom much is given, much will be required.” As the Lord has continued to bless the Malaysian Church with abundance of spiritual and material resources, we will continue with our yearly charity collection. We urge believers to sow their meal savings towards this fund for the purpose of blessing those who are in need and for nation-building projects. Here are four steps to send in your giving:

1. Put the savings from the meals you abstain from during the fast into the envelope provided.
2. At the end of the fast, count your savings and send the amount by cheque using the envelope to us.
3. Kindly make the cheque payable to: **NECFA/C 2**
4. On the back of the cheque, kindly write: **Designated to Charity 2013**

C. Malaysia MyHome

IN ADDITION TO OUR ANNUAL FASTING and charity collection, we are also calling on Christians to adopt the Malaysia MyHome project. This is the initiative of taking prayer beyond our four walls into our streets, neighborhoods, communities, workplaces, schools, colleges or wherever else the Lord has placed us. We believe as we do so, God will grant us opportunities to bless and do acts of kindness as a witness of the Kingdom of God to our land. We therefore urge you to fast as well as to pray physically in your street, neighborhood, community and institutions throughout the next 40 days.

► Day 1 | 7 August

GOD'S RULE

For the LORD is the great God, the great King above all gods.

Psalm 95:3

Jesus had just finished praying. The disciples came and asked Jesus to teach them to pray. Jesus replied and said, pray this way: Father, Your Name is holy. Let Your Kingdom come.

What does it mean, 'Let Your Kingdom come'? It is to ask God to rule and reign over our lives, family and world.

Why do we need His rule? Before sin came, the Kingdom of God ruled the earth. The world was perfect and without blemish. However, when man disobeyed God, the Kingdom was removed. Instead sin, sickness and Satan reigned. That was the beginning of the corruption and destruction of mankind and creation. However, God did not abandon His creation. He sent His only begotten Son to die for the sins of men. This paved the way for the possible return of His Kingdom on earth and to mankind. Through His Kingdom our lives, family and world can be restored.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray for Church to submit to and uphold the rule of the King.
- ☐ Pray for men and women to return to the rule of God.
- ☐ Pray the rule of God to be established in our nation.
- ☐ Pray for the restoration of our nation as the rule of God is established in this nation.

► Day 2 | 8 August

TRANSFORMED BY THE KINGDOM

*But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. **Luke 11:20***

When Jesus began his earthly ministry, he brought about a revival in Galilee. People began to hunger for the Word and sinners turned to God. The sick got healed and the oppressed delivered. Multitudes gathered to hear the Word and an entire community awakened. What was the reason behind this impact? It was the presence of the Kingdom. Jesus declared, 'the Kingdom of God has come!' When the Kingdom comes, hearts will be changed, lives will be transformed, communities will be restored and nations will be changed. What we need today is the presence of His Kingdom.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray for the Church to desire and manifest the presence of the Kingdom.
- ☐ Pray for the presence of the Kingdom to be established throughout the entire length and breadth of this nation.
- ☐ Pray for men and women to be impacted by the presence of the Kingdom.
- ☐ Pray for this nation to be transformed by the presence of the Kingdom.

WELCOMING THE KING

*Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors; that the King of glory may come in. **Psalm 24:7***

For every kingdom, there is a king. The Anointed King of the Kingdom of God is Jesus. He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Where the King is, the Kingdom of God will be present. Jesus was able to declare and manifest the power of the Kingdom because He, the King, was present. To receive the Kingdom, we must receive the King. Where the King is exalted, His Kingdom will be established. Where His Kingdom is established, His power will be manifested. As we welcome the King, we are welcoming the Kingdom.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray that the Church will obey and exalt the King throughout this land.
- ☐ Pray that men and women will see the beauty and glory of the King.
- ☐ Pray that men and women will open their hearts to the rule of the King.

► Day 4 | 10 August

THE POWER OF THE KINGDOM

*How shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will. **Hebrews 2:3-4***

In the first 30 years of Jesus' life, he did no healing or miracle. However, after being baptized by John the Baptist, he began to proclaim the Kingdom with signs and wonders. What brought about the change? It was the Spirit of God. It was at his baptism that the Spirit descended upon him like a dove and He returned to Galilee with the power of the Spirit. And here lies the power of the Kingdom – the Spirit of God. It was through the Spirit's power that Jesus did all healings and miracles. This is the same power that can work in us and through us, if we were to ask our Father in Heaven because it is His Spirit that is with us.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray for the Church to return to the power of the Spirit.
- ☐ Pray for the power of the Spirit to fill the Church.
- ☐ Pray for the restoration of the power of the Spirit with signs and wonders.
- ☐ Pray for men and women to be convicted, restored and changed by the power of the Spirit.

THE COMING KINGDOM

*The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign forever and ever. **Revelation 11:15***

While His Kingdom has come through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the **full manifestation** of His Kingdom is yet to come. When will this be? It will take place at Christ's second coming when He will come with all of His saints to rule and reign on the earth. When that day comes, the world will see the physical Kingdom of God on earth, and earth will experience true peace, justice and righteousness because the King of Kings will be reigning. This will be the fulfilment of the entire Gospel and the completion of our sanctification. This is what will establish lasting change. And we can hasten this event by praying and longing for His return.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray for the return of the King.
- ☐ Pray for the full restoration of our world.
- ☐ Pray for our nation to be ready to welcome the King.
- ☐ Pray that the Church as the Bride of Christ will be ready for her wedding.

► Day 6 | 12 August

THE KING OF THE KINGDOM

*Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place." **John 18:36***

The Kingdom of God is not merely a concept but a radical reality that should produce a radical lifestyle. There are only two kingdoms in existence: the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of this age. There is no neutral ground. We either live under the rule of Christ, or we live under the rule of a kingdom that is not His. These two kingdoms are in constant conflict with each other. When we submit to Jesus, the Word of God, the Kingdom of God is released, but when we resist Jesus, the Word of God, the other kingdom is released. Jesus can never be our Saviour if He is not our Lord and King. There is no good news without the Kingdom and there is no Kingdom without a King. Jesus is King of His Kingdom. His kingdom is not of this world nor did it originate from this world. When all other kingdoms cease, the Kingdom of God will continue for eternity. H.G.Wells in his book *The Unshakable Kingdom and The Unchanging Person* wrote, "Why, here is the most radical proposal to replace the present world order with God's order – the Kingdom of God." The Kingdom of God is at hand.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Reflect on John 18: 36-38 and Matthew 12: 25-30. Jesus is your Saviour. Would you submit to Him as your King and let Him rule you in all aspects of your life?
- ☐ Ask the Holy Spirit to show you areas in your life that you have not fully surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus. Repent of those areas. Invite Jesus to take His rightful place.
- ☐ Pray that God will prepare your heart to commit to see His kingdom come at every level of your life through daily surrender.
- ☐ Ask God to teach you the ways of His Kingdom and to fill you to be devoted to live the kingdom lifestyle.

***Declaration:** King Jesus, I welcome you into my life. I come down from the throne of my heart and declare you to be my King who sits on the throne of my life. Take your place and let your kingdom come. Let your will be fully done in me.*

► Day 7 | 13 August

KINGDOM PRINCIPLES

*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will. **Romans 12:2***

Jesus' teaching on the Kingdom of God was contrary to the system and values of the age. Until we are consumed by His Word and by the values and principles of His Kingdom, we can in no way be effective witnesses to impact or advance His Kingdom. In many ways we have been overcome by the standards and values of this age that weaken our effectiveness. What we require is to die to self.

In Acts 17:6, Paul and Silas completely shook the status quo of those days uncompromisingly with the principles of His Kingdom. There is no short cut if you long to see your life impact and turn cities, towns and communities upside right for His glory. We need radical change of hearts and mind. When we realign our values and principles based on His Word, His kingdom will come, His will be done.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Give up your status quo, surrender your compromising faith. Appeal to the Lord.
- ☐ Pray for deliverance from the lies of the evil one. Embrace the call to die to self with joy and to experience true freedom in Christ
- ☐ Ask God to help you love and show kindness without strings attached in all spheres of society.

***Declaration:** I renounce self-exaltation in my heart. I declare that deliverance and salvation comes from God and He will lead me into all truth. I release everything and everyone that I would hold on to for security. I declare God is trustworthy and I will serve Him and follow Him. I am willing to die to self so that I can obey God.*

► Day 8 | 14 August

KINGDOM POWER

*For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. **Romans 14: 17***

Romans 14: 17 tells us that the Kingdom Of God is in the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit contains the realm called the kingdom of God. The power of the Holy Spirit is the authentic demonstration of that kingdom. It is the Holy Spirit that resurrected Christ from the dead. He is also the river Jesus spoke of, that flows from the heart of the surrendered believer. He gives life and refreshes. We have the privilege of living in the power of the Holy Spirit. The responsibility of living in the power of this Holy Spirit ought to drive each believer into the secret place to cry out for deep encounters with Him where His power can flow through us to change things.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Repent and empty yourself of anything that will hinder you from being filled with His Holy Spirit. Ask God to fill you with His Spirit.
- ☐ Pray that God will give you a deep thirst for a spiritual encounter with Him.
- ☐ Offer yourself to be a conduit for the Holy Spirit to flow through you to impact the people around you.

***Declaration:** I declare that the Kingdom of God is in me because the King lives in me. I refuse to believe every lie that contradicts the word of God. I disarm the powers of deception in my life. I believe I am empowered by the Holy Spirit who lives in me to live a godly life. I declare that out of my most inner being shall flow rivers of living water that will bring life and change the atmosphere around me.*

► Day 9 | 15 August

KINGDOM AND PRIEST

And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth." **Revelations 5: 9-10**

Despite our failures and flaws, we are still the most powerful transforming agent in the hands of God to advance His kingdom, carry out His plan of redemption, and to bring hope and healing into all spheres of society. God's goal is not just to get you to heaven, but to live the reality of the kingdom of heaven that is within you and through you. In Revelation 5:8-10 we are all called to be a kingdom and priest to our God and to rule and reign with Him on earth. We are called to lead and have dominion in our world. You may not be a leader in the church or marketplace, but as you submit to His rule willingly and consciously, you will assert His rule wherever you are. We are to follow the King who ruled with a shepherd's heart of compassion for people.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Give worship to God for what He has done for you and called you to be.
- ☐ Ask God to give you boldness and spiritual maturity so that you can be a representative of His ruling authority.
- ☐ Pray and ask the Lord to show you which areas of work and life He has called you to assert His rule and be His ambassador.
- ☐ Pray and ask God for a shepherd's heart.

***Declaration:** I declare that the kingdom of God is within me. I believe that God has saved me out of darkness and the Spirit of God is transforming me to be like Jesus, to rule and reign with Him. I repent of withdrawing from the call of God to be kings and priest to Him. I submit to the King and rise by the Spirit of God to provide the spiritual leadership in my own life, family and church.*

► Day 10 | 16 August

ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 2: 5

Jesus is King and Priest. God desires that His people be a “Kingdom of priests” with Him as their King. A king speaks about ruling the subjects but a priest speaks about worshipping and ministering to God. The wise men in Matthew 2: 1-2 came seeking to worship. They were not from Jerusalem. They had kingdom hearts. They were kings in their own rights, but they sought to bow down in surrender and worship of the King, Jesus. They were committed to see change in the world, beyond the scope of their own domains. They came to worship a King greater than themselves. They saw the star and came to the place of worship.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Ask God to change you so that you not only see the outward (star) but become a true worshipper in spirit.
- ☐ Repent of divided heart of worship to the King and ministering only out of convenience.
- ☐ Ask God to open your spiritual ears to hear what He desires from you as your act of worship to Him.

Declaration: I declare Jesus seated on His throne and exalted above all. Let there be more wise men who will see the star and be willing to pay the price to worship Jesus. Open the heavens and let there be a revelation of the worth, glory and holiness of King Jesus over this land.

► Day 11 | 17 August

KINGDOM LIFESTYLE

*By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me. **John 5: 30***

Jesus established a model kingdom lifestyle to be followed. The will of the Father is was His desire and the Kingdom of God His priority. Secondly, whatever Jesus said was what He heard His Father said. Whatever He did, it was in like manner as He saw His Father do. "I and the Father are one". Jesus, the Word of God became flesh. The world was created in like manner; through the spoken word of God. Jesus revealed and modelled this connection of His lifestyle with that of His Father. As a human being, He was without sin. He emptied Himself so that He could be completely filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Man is to live by every word that comes from God. Jesus lived a lifestyle devoted to hearing the voice of the Father, to speaking words of power and to releasing God's presence and Kingdom through those words.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Ask God to cleanse your heart and mouth that they will be instruments of righteousness to steward His presence .
- ☐ Ask the Holy Spirit to empower you to follow Jesus in His lifestyle of connecting with the Father every moment of the day.
- ☐ Ask God to show you how to align your priorities with His.
- ☐ Ask God to speak to you a word for someone in need, for your city or community. Pray and release that word in faith believing that God will release His anointing over the situation.

***Declaration:** I declare that the Kingdom of God is within me. I declare peace and faith over every impossible situation of conflict and fear in my life. I will not shrink back but press in to hear the word of the Lord. I will set my heart to discover what is He is doing, not to accomplish my goals but His purposes. I will commit to do what He tells me to do and leads me to do.*

► Day 12 | 18 August

DOMINION IN THE KINGDOM

*God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground. **Genesis 1: 28***

Under the authority of God's supreme dominion, men and women rule over creation. Our rule involves stewardship of the earth, the air, water, soil, plants, animals and natural resources. We are to exercise dominion over nature but not to abuse or exploit it, for nature is the loving design of Creator God. We are to harness nature for the benefit of humanity. When God granted man this dominion, he handed to man the responsibility to serve and care for the earth. Environmental stewardship is thus part of our Christian responsibility.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Take time to give thanks to God for the creation around you that reflects the beauty of our Creator King.
- ☐ Pray that God will give you wisdom and understanding how to discover and use new resources for the benefit of humanity.
- ☐ Pray and ask God to show you where you have not shown stewardship over His creation but instead neglected and even abused your authority. Repent.
- ☐ Pray that God will give you a renewed mind and heart to protect, conserve and cherish nature, and use its resources in a sustainable manner.

***Declaration:** I declare that the earth is the Lord's and all its fullness therefore. The world and those who dwell therein. I take back what belongs to Him. I repent for neglecting my responsibility to steward nature which God has granted me dominion over. I receive God's power to create and design ways to care for and conserve nature that will benefit humanity.*

► Day 13 | 19 August

THE FAMILY EMPHASIS

*Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him. For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him. **Genesis 18: 18-19***

Family is God's grand plan to perpetuate the faith in Him and magnify Him throughout the earth. It is the primary place where this faith in Him is nurtured.

Family is also a place where church leaders are groomed (1 Timothy 3: 2-5).

Worldwide family life statistics clearly point to Satan gaining ground rapidly in destroying the church by ruthlessly attacking the family. The church and the family are the two institutions God created to advance His kingdom. How much longer can the Malaysian church, presently faced with the increasing family breakups, continue to effectively carry on as salt and the light to the world?

Prayer Points:

- ☐ That church leadership will begin to discover more and appreciate the state of the health of families in the church.
- ☐ They will give proper priority to building strong families in the corporate life.
- ☐ The church will invest adequately in equipping and supporting believers of all ages in their home life.
- ☐ The leadership and the congregation will embrace missional perspectives in developing families with the capacity to impact the community as salt and light with their Christian family lifestyle.

► Day 14 | 20 August

CHURCH AND HOME PARTNERSHIP

*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. **Deuteronomy 6: 4-9***

*It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. **Ephesians 4: 11-12***

Both the Old and New Testaments clearly assign parents the primary role of leading their families. The Christian family is not called just to live a godly life (strong marriage, effective parenting, passing on faith, care of the aged, etc.), but also to be the transformational agent that significantly impacts communities they live in.

But families cannot do these on their own, and it was never meant in God's design for families to walk that journey alone. Though every man is called to lead his family (Ephesians 5: 23, 25-29 and 6: 4), no man is gifted to do all that is required to lead it. That is where the body of Christ comes in. God has given the church the mandate to support families in fulfilling their God-assigned purposes. In spite of the ground tilled by para-church organisations in ministering to families over the years, the Malaysian church generally is still in a reactive mode to emerging crises. The church needs to be more systematic and take a long-term view in the development of healthy families in their midst.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ For the recognition by parents that, by divine appointment, they are primarily responsible for leading the home.
- ☐ The church (leadership and congregation) to know with conviction and accept the responsibility to support the home leaders in their endeavours.
- ☐ They will take a long-term and systematic approach to developing families who fulfil their God-assigned purposes.
- ☐ The proper working out of this partnership in raising up future generations who will be fervently after God's heart.
- ☐ For local churches to network with one another in providing family ministry support.

► Day 15 | 21 August

HOME LEADERSHIP CRISIS

Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.

Joshua 24: 15

For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. **Ephesians 5: 23**

Leadership is about direction and influence. Families do not become what God intends them to be naturally. Someone has to orchestrate this with specific plans to bring this about. The top priority of God's calling to Joshua is godly leadership of his household. Joshua as the head of his home, is the thermostat that sets the spiritual temperature of his family. Without adequate emphasis from the church, Christian families tend to drift to priorities that relegate the place of spiritual growth to weekly moments at corporate meetings. Church leadership often has to battle with parents in the spiritual development of their children. The mother, as helper, also supports the leadership of the home with her husband. But fatherhood remains critical in providing the needed influence and correct model for home leadership. Absent fathers pose a serious threat to the sustainability of Christian homes. Many mothers are forced to become de facto leaders of the home.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ That right focus is given to the development of home leadership in the church life.
- ☐ For effective training on leadership in raising a godly home.
- ☐ For a revival of fatherhood in the hearts of the Christian fathers in taking their rightful place in their homes.
- ☐ For understanding and acceptance on the biblical purpose of the family by each Christian home and the direction it should take.

► Day 16 | 22 August

FAITH LEGACY

*I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter hidden things, things from of old what we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done. He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands. **Psalm 78: 2-7***

*I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also. **2 Timothy 1: 5***

The family is God's primary method in passing on the faith from one generation to another generation. It is the place where our hearts and the hearts of our children are powerfully shaped with a deep and abiding love for Him. For this reason, God gives parents (and grandparents) overwhelming power and influence in nurturing the hearts of their children.

The spiritual battle for their hearts is intense. The prevailing culture and media which promotes increasing materialism, consumerism, and "me-first" self-gratification are attempts of Satan to draw our children away from God. The spiritually hostile environment we live in requires parents to intentionally, passionately and fervently take well-thought and thorough steps to nurture children to know God and love Him while they are in our homes.

Though corporate church meetings and children and youth ministries have their roles to play, we cannot rely on these alone to win such a battle. This is where church comes in to support the parents by equipping them to complete this critical task.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ For Christian parents to be committed in giving top priority to the spiritual development of their children.
- ☐ The wisdom and courage of parents to learn what is needed to pass on the faith effectively.
- ☐ For church ministries to partner together in nurturing the faith of children.
- ☐ For the church's commitment to give adequate support, including training, to parents in their endeavours.

► Day 17 | 23 August

HOME LOVE: MARRIAGE

"Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

Matthew 19:4-6

It is alarming to see Malaysia's divorce rate rising rapidly. In 2010 alone, we had a record of 33,000 divorces. This is just but the tip of the iceberg. A much bigger marriage crisis looms underneath among our families. Even among Christians, marriages are breaking down at an unprecedented rate in recent times. The breakdown of a marriage incapacitates the family from passing the faith from generation to generation. Further, it thwarts God's plan in "seeking godly offspring" (Malachi 2: 15) to manifest Him.

There is so much misunderstanding on the roles and responsibilities of the husband and the wife, the place of in-laws, on family finances, and more. There is an acute need for a strong theology on marriage in the church. In addition, there have been relentless attempts to redefine God's original design of marriage as between one man and one woman joined together for life.

Christian marriage cannot assert a positive impact within our culture if it is not held in high esteem in the Malaysian church. The church has the opportunity to make a significant difference as it holds the strongest position among society's competing voices in defining and protecting marriage in its theological context. The church must expound sound teaching on the theology of marriage from the pulpit and through other expressions in the corporate body.

While there is an urgent need to strengthen the marriage institution, the church should not neglect divorced persons and single parents.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ That Christian marriage is appropriately honoured, celebrated, protected and prioritized by the church.
- ☐ For the church to emphasise a biblical theology of marriage and embrace the vision of increasing the number of healthy marriages in the church and in community.
- ☐ The church discovers and appreciates the state of health of the marriages in the church and is structured to build strong marriages from the pre-marital stage to subsequent life stages.
- ☐ That married couples are committed to growing strong in their marriages, taking responsibility for their own marital health.
- ☐ The church will invest in adequate resources to minister to divorced persons and single parents.

► Day 18 | 24 August

HOME LOVE: PARENTHOOD

*Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honour your father and mother"-which is the first commandment with a promise-"that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. **Ephesians 6: 1-4***

It is unmistakably clear that God gives Christian parents the primary responsibility, power, love, and home environment to nurture the hearts of their children for Him. They are primarily accountable to God and will be judged for their faithfulness to this task. Following the modern trend of outsourcing the development of children to various providers, many Christian parents tend to rely on the church, with dire consequences, to carry out this vital task of raising their children spiritually for them. Christian parents are simply irreplaceable in faith development.

Absenteeism at key parenting moments is a serious modern-day parenting issue. Many children, especially teenagers, are feeling a sense of abandonment. This is detrimental to their socio-emotional health and their receptivity to faith development.

There is also a gradual decline to the importance we attach to honouring our parents, with so much emphasis on individualism and pampering and over-protectiveness by parents of their children. The tradition of children taking up the responsibility to care for their aging parents is weakening. For the first time in history, the Malaysian church is grappling with many new aging care issues.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ For parents to taking up the responsibility as the primary mentors for the development of their children, including their spiritual growth.
- ☐ That parents themselves grow as followers of Christ and are equipped to lead in the overall discipleship of their children.
- ☐ For holistic development of children with systematic developmental processes and effective infrastructure (manpower, programmes, etc.) to support it.
- ☐ That children will are honour their parents throughout their life span and care for them in their old age.

FAMILY SHIELD

*Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. **Ephesians 6: 11***

The order of the Ephesians 5: 21-33 passage (on family relationships) with that of Ephesians 6: 10-20 (on spiritual warfare) points us to the integrated way we need to look at family and the warfare they fight spiritually. Family is not just a human organisation but a divine institution with its primary purpose of magnifying God's glory. It is because of this that the family becomes a prime target of attacks. Such attacks began straight after the creation of family (Genesis 3) and have never let up since.

We must not treat the current global crisis of the family as merely a cultural phenomenon but respond to it with appropriate spiritual strategies. Battles are fought in the mind, emotions, and other arenas like sexual temptation. We must be equipped and committed to wage these diligently, in partnership with the church body.

Christian families are laid bare and unprotected in this cosmic conflict. Rarely do we see churches with a culture of regular prayer specifically for marriages, parenting, and other family issues. Prayerfulness in Christian homes are generally lacking, too. The family can be a very powerful army, serving the purposes of God, and advancing His Kingdom as they consistently take time together to share and pray with and for one another.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ The church to give due focus to upholding Christian families in prayer and intercession as a way of life.
- ☐ The home leadership is strongly established to carry out the priestly role for the family.
- ☐ For families to cultivate a culture of prayerfulness through family worship time and other avenues.
- ☐ That the church will invest in equipping homes to establish a family worship culture.

► Day 20 | 26 August

REVIVAL

Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you? Psalm 85: 6

When you look at the church, what will be your desperate cry today? I believe many would echo the same cry, “Lord, REVIVE US!”

“The Lord is God!”, but sadly He has been compartmentalized far too long in the way we live and function. The church is the hope of the nation. And the nation needs a *transformed, vibrant* and *holistically* aligned church to advance His Kingdom and to display His glory before Jesus second coming! Until and unless we align our hearts and mind with a deeper understanding of His Kingdom that is within us, and until we open our hearts and lives to allow the power of the Holy Spirit to invade and turn us inside out, we will not see the transforming power of God to change our families, community, towns and cities! Our engagement in mission is pointless and fruitless without the guidance and the power of His Spirit. Let us synchronize our prayers and acknowledge of our spiritual bankruptcy. Let us cry out in desperate need of God’s divine intervention, for the outpouring of His Spirit and for *revival*!

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray for the invasion of His kingdom power to come upon His church to turn us inside out.
- ☐ Pray for deliverance from deception, delusion, complacency, compromise, religiosity, independence, impurities, indifference and apathy. Pray that His presence will revolutionize our lifestyles in a profound way.
- ☐ Pray for deep and genuine repentance to sweep through His church; yearning for His presence and hunger for His Word.
- ☐ Pray for intimacy and our first love and fear of God to be restored.

► Day 21 | 27 August

SPIRITUAL LEADERS

*Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers — not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. **1 Peter 5: 2-5***

Nationally and globally, the church is facing a leadership crisis. Though the church has grown rapidly, yet she remains shallow and weak, partly because of a lack of disciplined leaders. Instead of focusing on building lives, we have substituted it with self-driven leadership programmes focused on knowledge, skills and techniques. Godly character and accountability are neglected. As a result, many of our leaders are running the church in the ways of the world, finding their significance in ministry, status and position. Thus, the church suffers.

Biblically, we are called first and foremost to seek to be servants and not leaders. For the church to be cutting-edge, we need to go back to biblical foundations to intensify efforts in discipleship through our long term work of teaching, nurturing and mentoring believers so that those whom God calls will be qualified according to the biblical criteria of maturity and servanthood. Our focus and actions today will determine the quality of future generations of leaders which we are raising *now*!

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray for the wellbeing of our leaders and their families.
- ☐ Pray for every ungodly structure and bureaucracy that has been erected in the hearts and mind of our leaders.
- ☐ Pray that leaders will turn away from using worldly ways and unbiblical principles in the running God's church.
- ☐ Pray for the rise of a generation of disciplined servant-leaders whose passion and lives are centered in Christ.
- ☐ Pray for Bible colleges, seminaries and leadership training programmes to focus more on building lives and character besides imparting knowledge and grading performance.

► Day 22 | 28 August

A HOLISTIC MINDSET

*Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — this is your spiritual act of worship. **Romans 12: 1***

The Bible is the foundation that governs our beliefs and behavior. Thinking in a “Christian manner” is essential in every of aspect of our lives. Unfortunately, bad theology that teaches a sacred-secular divide has permeated the church’s thinking and influenced our actions. This is a major stumbling block that has weakened the church’s effectiveness to impact all spheres of influence for God’s glory. This dualistic mindset tells us that spiritual or religious activity belongs to God, whereas other activities are “secular”. This dichotomous mindset has resulted in believers who think their work in the marketplace has little spiritual value, which is not the Bible teaches.

The church desperately needs to change and have a vision to equip our present and next generation to regard work in itself as biblically and intrinsically significant, and to function holistically with a biblical worldview to impact and influence all realms to be His salt and light.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray for biblical truth to be restored to the body of Christ; for Christians to see and function with holistic minds, dismantling every dualistic and compartmentalized mindset.
- ☐ Pray that the church will intensify efforts to train believers in whole-life discipleship, to live, think, work and speak from biblical truths /world-view and to be relevant in engaging current issues and society.
- ☐ Pray that the invisible Kingdom will be made visible through faithful Christian living and witness.

► Day 23 | 29 August

DISCIPLING THE NATION

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” **Matthew 28: 18-20**

In the verses above, Christ commanded His church to “make disciples of all nations....teaching them to obey all I have commanded”. Unfortunately, we have reduced His command and have made many “converts” but not “disciples”. We have preached the Gospel of salvation only while forgetting the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. As a result, many churches have grown in numbers, yet remain weak and anaemic, unable to impact or shape the nation.

The church has the awesome task of discipling the nations under God and is His primary agent of transformation. We are a kingdom of priests and kings called to rule, reign and subdue the kingdom of this present age to the Kingdom of our God. In reality, we are far from it. We desperately need to heed to His command and return to the basic call of His mandate: to teach and equip our members with biblical truths and to live out that life in all spheres of society. Unless local churches disciple their people to be salt and light in all spheres, the nation and prevailing culture will disciple and shape God’s people into its mould! We urgently need to reverse this!

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Confess where we have fallen short, loving the Word but not loving the life it teaches; we have preferred convenience instead of the obedience and sacrifice that our Lord demands!
- ☐ Pray for His kingdom to come and to reverse what has been lost. That evangelists, pastors and church leaders will preach and teach the fullness of the biblical Gospel of the Kingdom of God and the cost of discipleship, instead of just merely salvation.
- ☐ Pray for His kingdom to come, to realign and establish a kingdom of priests who are deeply rooted in biblical truths, to engage and to be relevant in all spheres of society.
- ☐ Pray for a generation of reformers to turn all spheres of society the right side up for His glory.
- ☐ Pray for the strong development of discipleship in every local church.

► Day 24 | 30 August

ADVANCE HIS KINGDOM

*Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel. **Philippians 1: 27***

Sabah and Sarawak have almost 60% of the Christian population in Malaysia. The decline of the Christian population especially in Sabah in the last two decades has shaken the Church to rethink her mission strategy, to re-strategize and to look within to pour our resources and manpower to help believers in East Malaysia.

Perhaps we need to see things from God's perspective to discern what He is doing. What is the calling of the church, given that East Malaysians comprise the majority of Christians in the nation? Could it be that they have come together with the Peninsula for the blessing of the entire nation? Our right focus and action today will determine our future demographics! Let us advance His kingdom by strengthening one another to fulfill our purpose and call to touch and bless this nation.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray for the church to rise up in faith as the head and not the tail in our nation.
- ☐ Pray for the church to discern divine strategies to impact communities and to take every opportunity to be a blessing and to reach out.
- ☐ Pray for the church in Sabah and Sarawak to wake up to their role and calling in this nation.
- ☐ Pray for greater partnership and strategic networking of churches to pour in resources to help fellow believers in East Malaysia to be equipped and strengthened.

► Day 25 | 31 August

MERDEKA!

On 31 August 1957, our nation cried in jubilation, “Merdeka! Merdeka! Merdeka!” This historic moment marked a new era of independence from foreign rule. But in the unseen realm, much of the nation is still under the dominion of the enemy. His lies penetrate into the very fabric of society, into customs, cultures, institutions, social structures and laws. Only God’s truth can bring deliverance, release, freedom and healing to our nation.

Let us arise and mark a new era of God’s kingdom and rule in our hearts, decreeing God’s truth to dismantle and demolish every demonic structure and assignment that goes against the knowledge of God and thwarts His purposes in our lives, family, church and nation! Let us pledge our allegiance and renew our commitment with God.

Declaration:

We decree the increase of Your Kingdom’s rule and reign, there shall be no end in our nation and to the ends of the earth! Today, we, Your church, align ourselves to Your kingdom purposes. Let Your Kingdom come upon Your Church in this land and region. Deliver and demolish every assignment of the enemy against Your Church so that she will flourish to bring glory and honour to Your Name. Stir up Your zeal in Your Church to fulfil Your redemptive call to us as a rainbow nation to be a blessing to all people groups! May all people praise You!

We decree, “Your Kingdom Come” in every sphere of society: political, economic, social, religious, judicial, military, education, media and the arts. Position godly and righteous men and women in every high place to serve Your purposes and to align our nation to Your heavenly blueprint. We thank You for those You have placed in authority to govern this nation. May they fear Your name to do justly, love mercy and walk humbly before You.

Thank You for Your provision and Your abundant blessings in our nation. We entrust our economy into Your hands. Lead us on righteous paths for Your name’s sake. Bless Your church with resources to do Your will and accomplish Your task! Help us to steward Your resources responsibly. Deliver us from greed and fear of lack.

Deliver us from an independent and rebellious spirit. Without You, we can do nothing. Forgive us the sin of rebellion, pride, hypocrisy, idolatry, immorality, prejudices, corruption and injustice. Forgive us, Your church, for failing to be salt and light. Open Your floodgates and pour forth waves of repentance and reconciliation.

Lord, for Thine is the kingdom. May Your power deliver Your church and align her for Your eternal glory and purpose! Let Your kingdom come, Your will be done through her and in her for the glory and honour of Your Son, Jesus Christ!

► Day 26 | 1 September

THE ANTIOCH CHURCH

In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen and Saul. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. **Acts 13: 1-3**

The Antioch Church in the book of Acts spearheaded the missionary movement to the Gentiles in the first century that change the whole of Asia Minor. The church then comprised of believers, 90% of whom were in the marketplace. Missionaries were mostly "tentmakers" who supported themselves. The kingdom of God was on the move and His will was done in all realms which practically transformed and revolutionalized all cultures and nations.

What is the difference between our present church and the church in Antioch then? It was the reality of the Holy Spirit's power which was at work in the lives of ordinary people in the marketplace! A major difference was the people's holistic Judeo mindset that they were 100% missionaries called to live out their lives as salt and light in *all* realms, reflecting God's light from the inside out. Missionaries and church leaders are not to be considered as more spiritual than those in the marketplace, for God makes no such distinctions. All are spiritual beings, called to live out the kingdom lifestyle with a radically different value system. Let us restore the reality of the Kingdom of God that is within us, so that His will be done through ordinary people like you to advance the Kingdom, fill it and to subdue it for His Glory. Both in our nation and beyond!

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray for our local churches to become as the Antioch church was in every city, town and village in our nation.
- ☐ Pray for the Lord to break down spiritual strongholds and to turn believers inside out to advance His kingdom to our relatives, colleagues, neighbours and friends.
- ☐ Pray for smaller churches in the rural areas, especially on the East Coast, to be strengthened and empowered with hope, faith and perseverance to press on in the work of ministry.
- ☐ Pray that churches will prioritize prayer, finances and manpower for local and global evangelism.

► Day 27 | 2 September

THE PURPOSE OF COMMUNITY

God sets the lonely in families. Psalm 68: 6a

No person lives in isolation. All live in and belong to a community. A person may likewise be part of more than one community. More often than not, a person's beliefs, character and behaviour are to a large degree, shaped by the community he or she belongs to. A person's community may be his or her neighbourhood, village, town, school, college, campus, workplace or business and social circle. It is God who made us to live, grow and find our place in and through communities. Communities are important as they provide interaction, opportunities, protection, support, assistance, identity and growth to the individual, family and society.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Thank God for the communities that we belong to.
- ☐ Pray that the Kingdom of God will be felt in our communities, eg. peace, joy, security, goodness, salvation and blessings.
- ☐ Pray that individuals, families and society will be blessed and strengthened through communities.
- ☐ Pray that Christians will engage and contribute to the well-being of these communities.

► Day 28 | 3 September

THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND COMMUNITY

*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. **Acts 2: 41-45***

One tangible evidence of the Kingdom of God is the company of believers living as a community. When the Day of Pentecost came and when the Spirit was poured out, the church began to live as a true community. What was made manifest in the early church is also what God wants for His church and world today. The presence of the Kingdom of God will result in true community living.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray that the church will rediscover true community that comes with the Kingdom of God.
- ☐ Pray that the church will exemplify and model true community for society to follow.
- ☐ Pray for the Kingdom of God to be established in the church as well as in the local community.
- ☐ Pray for local communities to be rebuilt and restored through the influence of the Kingdom of God.

► Day 29 | 4 September

THREATS TO COMMUNITY

*At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other. **Matthew 24: 10***

Community today is very much under threat. This is especially true in urban areas. Modernization and extreme consumerism has eroded community with individualism, self-sufficiency and indulgence. It has also created a gulf between the rich and poor, leading to segregation, corruption, crime and social ills. Community is also eroded when favouritism is applied within society, breeding discontentment, distrust and enmity. Religious discrimination also destroys community by creating tension and division in society. In the rural areas, communities are faced with threats such as drug addiction and promiscuity, particularly among the young. Poor development planning and greed have also caused certain communities to be evicted and displaced, affecting their way of life and livelihood without their consent or just compensation.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray that God would intervene to overcome these threats confronting our communities.
- ☐ Pray that communities would practice and cultivate mutual respect, charity and solidarity among members.
- ☐ Pray that Christians would show the same respect, concern and affection to those of different economic status, ethnic and religious backgrounds.
- ☐ Pray that harmony and peace would be preserved and strengthen in communities.

► Day 30 | 5 September

THE CHURCH AND COMMUNITY

*When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." **Matthew 9: 36-38***

How did Jesus serve his community? He simply became their shepherd. They were lost and wandering and Jesus took the initiative to meet that need. When he began to reach out to them with care and concern, the people opened themselves and received him. Our communities are no less different today. They are still lost and wandering, looking for a shepherd. What role does the Lord want us to play? He wants us, his church, his physical body on earth, to shepherd them. This would mean that our flock is no longer confined to the four walls of our sanctuary. Instead our flock now includes the entire community. How then do we shepherd an entire community? We need to envision the entire community as our church. We need to own them in our hearts. Their well-being and needs become our responsibility. We need to go out to where they are. We need to extend pastoral care to them. Their problems may seem to be overwhelming but God's power and grace are more than sufficient.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray that the church would understand her role in community.
- ☐ Pray that the church would envision the entire community as her flock.
- ☐ Pray that the church would begin to extend pastoral care to the community.
- ☐ Pray that God would empower the church with His power and grace to meet the needs of the community.

► Day 31 | 6 September

UNITY OF CHURCHES

*My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. **John 17: 20-21***

How can an entire community be impacted by God's Kingdom? Pastors, church leaders and churches must come together in unity. When pastors, church leaders and churches come together in unity, God will command His blessings upon them which will in turn impact the community. When pastors, church leaders and churches come together in unity, they will possess spiritual authority to dethrone the powers of darkness. The church will have the resources needed to make a tangible difference. The church will then be able to exemplify community for society to follow. When pastors, church leaders and churches come together in unity, the community's confidence in the church will be restored.

How can this unity be established? Firstly, pastors and church leaders should consider forming a pastors' fellowship to meet together regularly for prayer and fellowship. Secondly, churches should consider meeting together for combined prayer meetings to instil unity and to pray for the community. Leaders and churches should also pray and agree over strategies to partner and bless the community collectively.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray that God will unite His servants and churches in every community.
- ☐ Pray that God will strengthen and lead existing pastors' fellowship and combined prayer meetings.
- ☐ Pray that God will give pastors' fellowships a strategic action plan for churches to work together to impact communities.
- ☐ Pray that through united prayer and efforts of pastors, church leaders and churches, local communities will be impacted by the transforming power of God's Kingdom.

► Day 32 | 7 September

ON-SITE PRAYER

*For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them. **Matthew 18: 20***

I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses.

Joshua 1: 3

What can churches and Christians do through prayer to impact the community? Besides praying together in church, they can pray on-site. There are two forms of on-site prayer which have been effective to impact communities. Firstly, prayer cells. Prayer cells are regular small prayer gatherings by believers in a particular location or sphere held in public places like schools, offices and neighbourhoods, etc. Through prayer cells, we bring the presence and rule of God within these spheres of influence in our communities for transformation.

The other is prayer walks. The idea of prayer walks comes from the book of Joshua. Joshua was promised that as he walked the land, it would become Israel's possession. As we apply prayer walking in our communities, we bring God's rule in our streets and neighbourhood. The darkness that has occupied our streets and communities can be overthrown and driven out to be replaced by the peace and light of God.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray that Christians would take prayer out into the public square and the community.
- ☐ Pray that more prayer cells would be established in our schools, campuses and offices, etc.
- ☐ Pray that regular prayer walks would be conducted by local churches and believers in our streets and neighbourhoods.
- ☐ Pray that the rule and presence of the Kingdom of God would be felt as churches and Christians pray for their communities.

► Day 33 | 8 September

MAKING CONNECTIONS

*In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach... **Acts 1: 1***

To fully experience the blessedness of the Kingdom of God, a community must believe and receive the message of the Gospel. But before a community can consider the message, the community would need to accept the messenger. How well is the church or are Christians accepted by their communities? The key lies in building relationships. The church and Christians need to build more relational bridges to connect with the community before gaining the right to be heard.

Three steps that can help the church and Christians connect with their communities are:

1. Regular visits to the homes and work places of community members.
2. Participate in and/or organize local community events.
3. Bless and contribute towards the welfare of the community.

As churches and Christians apply these steps sincerely and regularly, the hearts of the community will warm up, providing an opportunity to share the message of the Kingdom.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray that churches will see the importance of being relational with their communities.
- ☐ Pray that churches will connect through the three steps mentioned.
- ☐ Pray that the gap between church and community would be narrowed.
- ☐ Pray that churches would be accepted into their communities.

► Day 34 | 9 September

THE HISTORY AND VISION OF OUR FOUNDING FATHERS

*From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. **Acts 17: 26***

God has marked out the appointed times in history for each and every nation. He has marked each and every boundary, each and every dividing line and it is all for one, very specific purpose.

The formation of Malaysia comes as a result of the 1963 Malaysia Agreement between Malaya, Sabah, Sarawak, Singapore and the British Colonial government on the understanding by the States (Sabah and Sarawak) that their safeguards would be honoured and protected.

The interests of the two states were recorded in the Cobbold Commission and Inter-Governmental Committee Reports. These historical documents express the heart, mind and values of our founding fathers and the foundation on which our country was built. Any attempt to amend or alter the terms of the agreement would seriously undermine the very core of the nation's existence.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray for this historical agreement with its original terms and conditions to be taught in our schools and to all Malaysians.
- ☐ Pray for the original terms and conditions of this agreement to be restored and upheld.
- ☐ Pray for all individuals in the nation to acknowledge and respect the terms and conditions of this agreement.
- ☐ Pray for all the promises made to our East Malaysian states prior to and following the formation of Malaysia be kept and fulfilled.

RULE OF LAW AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

For God is not a God of disorder but of peace. 1 Corinthians 14: 33a

The Rule of Law is the principle that no one is above the law and governmental authority is legitimately exercised only in accordance with written, publicly disclosed laws that are adopted and enforced in accordance with established procedural steps, referred to as due process. The rule of law principle is intended to be a safeguard against arbitrary governance, whether by a totalitarian leader or by mob rule. Thus, the rule of law is hostile both to dictatorship and to anarchy. The Federal Constitution is the supreme law of the land and any law that goes against the constitution is void.

As Malaysia Christians, we must appreciate, exercise and defend the constitutional rights to free speech and free religion. This freedom is part of the dignity all human beings have as creatures of free will made by God. We should make practical contributions to law and social reform. We must not neglect our civic duty to maintain the moral tone of society and freedom under the law to positively influence popular culture and public policy. In resisting ungodliness and contending sound laws which serve common interests, it is necessary for us to engage with, rather than to be detached from, what is going on in our society. Initiatives must be taken to educate ourselves and our neighbour about contemporary social issues and participate in shaping these issues.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray that the Federal Constitution would remain as the supreme law of the land.
- ☐ Pray against every erroneous interpretation of the Federal Constitution that threatens to rob Malaysians of what is rightfully theirs.
- ☐ Pray for our citizens that they be aware of their constitutional rights and oppose those who are trying to mislead them.
- ☐ Pray for the church to take an active role in defending the constitution and the formulation of public policy.

► Day 36 | 11 September

GOVERNANCE

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.

1 Peter 2: 13 -14

For any nation to prosper and for good to come upon all citizens, good governance is indispensable. Good governance can only come about when righteousness undergirds all processes of decision and consensus making. It is only when righteousness is maintained and integrity upheld, good governance will ensue and the people from all walks of life will benefit, prosper and live harmoniously with each other. Integrity is not just a practice but a moral value that must be the centre and very essence of our lives. Therefore, the best way we can make our constitution and democracy work, is to create and maintain conditions in which the wisest and best will govern us, who look far ahead to the nation's advancement instead of their own personal gain. This we can only do if we use our votes with care after considering the policies offered by the candidates at any election. And beyond voting, to engage in participatory democracy by continuously holding those we vote in accountable to high standards of governance.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray for the government to uphold good governance practices such as integrity, accountability and transparency.
- ☐ Pray for all corrupt, immoral, racist and arrogant individuals in the government to be removed.
- ☐ Pray for the public to hold the government accountable over any act of corruption and abuse of power.
- ☐ Pray for Christians in the government to speak the truth without fear or favour.
- ☐ Pray for the repair and reform of public institutions which have lost the people's confidence.

► Day 37 | 12 September

THE ECONOMY AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING

Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.

Jeremiah 29: 7

Economists expect Malaysia's growth rate, measured by gross domestic product (GDP), to grow between 5.3% and 5.5% in 2013. This would be an improvement over figures for 2012. However, national debt has also increased. The Government has announced its plan in the 2013 budget to keep the deficit at 4.0%. However, it is questionable whether the Government's original target to reduce the budget deficit to 2.5% by 2015 is still achievable. Government expenditure regularly exceeds government revenue and the Malaysia's budget deficit has grown mostly due to of burgeoning operating costs rather than development expenditures.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray against corruption that robs development funds meant to help needier communities.
- ☐ Pray for the reduction of inflation and poverty.
- ☐ Pray wisdom and prudence in the management of the nation's wealth and resources.
- ☐ Pray for increased job opportunities, economic growth and equitable distribution of wealth, that all segments of society will prosper together and on par with each other.
- ☐ Pray for Christians in the business and corporate sector to live out Kingdom principles in their decisions and actions.

► Day 38 | 13 September

NATIONAL UNITY AND HARMONY

*For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility. **Ephesians 2: 14***

Ethnic relations have always been a sensitive and political matter in Malaysian society. For Malaysia as a multi-cultural society to really flourish where peace and harmony exist between the ethnic groups, national integration is an absolute necessity.

Our national integration must move beyond slogans and mere tolerance to mutual acceptance, respect and even love. We need to learn how to navigate the shared spaces that are common to all groups. And we cannot confine these efforts to just the major groups such as the Malay, Chinese or Tamil speaking groups but we must include the indigenous people such as the Orang Asli and the natives of Sabah and Sarawak. It is only when the language, culture, religion and way of life of every people group in Malaysia are mutually respected and accepted, can we begin on the path to true national unity and harmony.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray for Christians to confess and repent of any hidden racism within.
- ☐ Pray for ethnic relations to be prioritized and strengthen.
- ☐ Pray for greater understanding, mutual respect and interaction among all ethnic groups in the nation.
- ☐ Pray against racism and the politicization of ethnic relations.
- ☐ Pray for true national unity and harmony.

THE CHURCH IN OUR MIDST

He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6: 8

The church as the body of Christ must continually pray and act for the transformation of our nation. This is because we are all called to be witnesses to manifest the reality of the Kingdom of God in Malaysia. This means that every believer, wherever we are and in whatever role and position that God has placed us in, we are to exemplify truth, righteousness, justice, compassion and mercy. In bringing these godly values into society, we also bring God's presence into society.

In this respect, believers in Christ should not only pray but take every opportunity to seek the "welfare of the city and nation". This can be done in various ways such as through direct participation in political and decision-making processes, collaboration with NGOs and governmental organizations, dialogue with various parties and interest groups, and giving of ourselves and time to public services.

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray for God's favour to be upon the Church.
- ☐ Pray for the Church to be a blessing to the nation.
- ☐ Pray for the Church to be involved in nation-building.
- ☐ Pray for the Church to be highly regarded in the nation.

► Day 40: | 15 September

DEDICATING THE NATION

*After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb.” **Revelation 7:9***

Malaysia is home to many ethnic groups, each co-existing in harmony and helping to enrich the country’s cultural lifestyle. Diversity of races, religions and cultures is a significant characteristic of our nation.

We are well-versed with all the problems and failures of our multi-racial and multi-religious country. But as we prepare to celebrate the 50th Malaysia Day tomorrow and Malaysia’s Jubilee, let us not be downcast by all that is happening around us. Let us resolve to be a Church celebrates this diversity, which is God’s blessing and gift to Malaysia!

Let us look to one another as family members despite our differences. The challenge for is to perpetuate justice, mercy and compassion among all communities so that generations after us will say, as Winston Churchill did, “This was their finest hour”.

***Declaration:** Almighty God, we dedicate our beloved land, Malaysia, to You. Malaysia is Yours! You have blessed us with a diversity of people, appointing each one their place and time in this land. Make our spirits rise above the circumstances to engage and reach out with Your love, mercy and grace. Give us your eyes to see each fellow citizen as Your beloved child. We dedicate ourselves to You that we may be Your vessels of blessing and transformation for Malaysia. Lord God, manifest Your Jubilee in Malaysia!*

Prayer Points:

- ☐ Pray for renewed hearts towards our country Malaysia and all her diverse peoples.
- ☐ Dedicate Malaysia to God.
- ☐ Ask for forgiveness for the times we have given up or cursed our leaders and country.
- ☐ Pray for renewed resolve and commitment to love Malaysia as God does.
- ☐ Pray for an enlarged vision that covers Malaysia and goes beyond the confines and comfort zone of our own life and church activities.

