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Issue 24



Follow in the
Lord's steps
and become
His real disciples

Hills Christian Alliance Church Newsletter

Pastor's Sharing – Follow in His Steps

Rev. Almon Li

The church theme for this year is "Follow in the Lord's steps and become His real disciples". This theme reminds me of a book *In His Steps* that I read many years ago.

The book's basic concept deeply influenced my spiritual life. One very important central message in this book is "What would Jesus do? How would He do it? What would He think?" This concept is based on biblical teachings and it has guided me in my decisions and actions so that what I do corresponds with the truth.

Although *In His Steps* is only a novel, but its content and message have impacted many believers and influenced their lives. The most captivating scene in the novel is when the minister, the main character of the story, used 1 Peter 2:21 to preach the message of "In His Steps". His sermon was very touching. When he finished preaching, a shabby-looking young man walked up to the pulpit and asked to speak to the congregation. He said: "I'm not an ordinary tramp. I lost my job ten months ago. I am a printer by trade. What do you Christians mean by following in the steps of Jesus? Why am I still tramping through this city to find a job? My wife died four months ago. My little girl is staying with a printer's family until I find a job. I keep hearing you all say that you will follow in the steps of Jesus, but I am still tramping on the steps outside...". Before he even finished his speech, the man fainted before the pulpit.

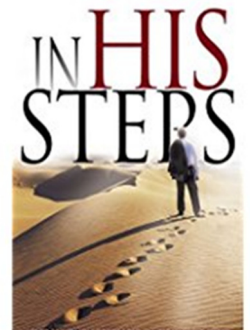
The minister took the man to his own house to look after him. The man lingered till the next Sunday morning before breathing his last breath. The minister was haggard as he entered his pulpit that Sunday. It was near the close of his sermon that he said: "The stranger in the church last Sunday had passed away this morning in my house. He has compelled me to ask as I never asked before 'What does following Jesus mean?' A good deal that was said here last Sunday was in the nature of a challenge to Christianity as it is seen and felt in our churches. I do not know that any time is more appropriate than the present for me to propose a plan. What I am going to propose now is something which ought not to appear unusual or at all impossible of execution. I will put my proposition very plainly, perhaps bluntly. I want volunteers from the First Church who will

pledge themselves, earnestly and honestly for an entire year, not to do anything without first asking the question, "What would Jesus do?" and after asking that question, each one will follow Jesus as exactly as he knows how, no matter what the result may be."

It was not easy to describe the sensation that such a simple proposition apparently made. There were approximately fifty believers who were willing to pledge themselves to this proposition, "What would Jesus do?" This movement had begun and it would lead to the most remarkable series of events the city had ever known. One of these events includes the editor of the newspaper not printing news of the prize fight, omitting advertisements of doubtful character and discontinuing the Sunday edition, which all results in the falling off of subscriptions. Another example is a talented young woman rejecting an offer to sing leading soprano with a large travelling company of the season for a large figure, to join the evangelists and sing for the services in the most notorious district in the city. One more example is a leading merchant learning to become more like Jesus by caring for his employees and giving them their personal share in the profits of the business.

In the end, more and more Christians joined this movement. As a result, the church was filled with people, and the bars stopped operating, and wardens were out of jobs because there were no more criminals.

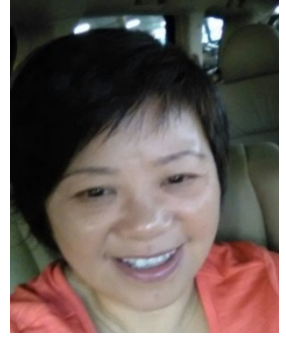
Although the above is just the plot of a novel, but I believe that if we all ask the question, "What would Jesus do?", before doing anything and making any decision, our relationship with our family would be much better, our church would grow, and our lives would become more abundant than ever.



I hope that in this new year, we will all be closer to Jesus, learn to understand His will, and vow to follow in His steps each and every day. Amen!

The 4th Deacon Board Series (2) : Membership and Caring Department (Note)

In the current term of the Deacon Board, Deacon Ling Chiu is the in-charge of the Membership & Caring Department. This is the second time that she has taken up the same ministry. She first took up the ministry when she was a member of the Advisory Committee for 2008 – 2010. Therefore, to Ling, this is the most familiarised post among all in the current Deacon Board as well as the ministry that she has the greatest passion. Ling said, “I serve God as my response to the grace that He has given to me. Thank God that He has given me the passion to care brothers and sisters, and the sensitivity to their needs.”



The scope of responsibilities of the Membership & Caring Department is very wide, some duties are even trivial. To summarise, the Membership Department is responsible for : arranging ushers for Sunday services, arranging training for ushers, arranging the bread and cups for Holy Communion, general affairs for baptismal services, preparing gifts for those baptised, preparing wedding gifts/funeral wreaths (for members only), arranging floral sets, tea and snacks for Sunday services. Furthermore, the Caring Department is responsible for: setting up reception team, caring for new comers, organising home-visit teams, and caring brothers and sisters who have special needs.

As it can be seen from the above, most of the tasks of the Department are on regular basis (such as arranging ushers for Sunday service) while some are irregular or unscheduled (e.g. home visits, caring). Apart from maintaining both the regular and irregular services mentioned above, the Department has planned to carry out the following in the coming two years:

- To strengthen the teamwork of ushers, for whom a gathering was held in December 2016;
- To set up an usher in-charge for each Sunday service;
- To recruit new ushers;
- To strengthen the New-comer Reception service so as to better care new comers;
- To reorganise the home-visit ministry and to recruit new members;

- To care the needs of new-immigrant families so as to help them to settle down earlier.

In the past two and half a year, the Meeting Point Fellowship was responsible for caring new comers so that they could know one another as well as the church. From 2017, the responsibility will be taken over by the enhanced New-comer Reception Team.

As the ministry requires additional workers and leaders, church members who are willing to serve as usher, to receive new comers, to prepare tea and snacks or to visit brothers and sisters may contact Deacon Ling Chiu direct for more details.

Note: Thanks to Deacon Ling Chiu for the interview and previewing this article.

The 4th Deacon Board Series (3): Education Department & Publication Team

Deacon Anna Kwok

O God, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.” (Psalm 119:105) When I wander at the cross roads, your word is my guide; when my spirit is crushed, your word is my comfort which warms my heart and gives me strength. I thank God that after becoming a believer since my youthful years, He has continuously given me the opportunities to learn His Word and to equip myself in churches and theological seminaries. Looking back at my numerous weaknesses and dark times in my service and my daily life over the past years, God’s Word has been a bright light as well as a flaming fire to light up and lead my way so that I have overcome with His presence.



Not long after settling down in Sydney in early 2012, I joined the Education Department of HCAC. Since last July, I have started serving as a deacon, responsible for the Education Department and the Publication Team. Over the past four years, my ministry at HCAC has been guided and directed by His gracious hands. Hallelujah, praise the Lord!

Below is an introduction to the various units of the Education Department as well as the Publication Team:

1. Bible Study Class for the Elderly : At present, there are around 6 to 8 elderly persons gather before each Sunday Service to learn God’s Word. Instructors are Daniel Li and her wife, Petrain Mok.

2. Nursery : This year, there are 8 members taking turns to look after children at the age of 2 to 4 during Sunday Services. They are: Ruth Yu, Wylie Tam, Joanne Ou, Yan Zhang, Crystal Phan, Susanna Lee, Jeanie Wong and Nicole Keung.
3. Library : This year, there are 6 helpers, namely, Juanita Yeung, Cecilia Young, Miranda Chow, Carmen Chan, Rosa To and Wendy Wong.

4. Equipping Program Team : To formulate courses and arrange instructors/teachers, with Anna Kwok and Rev. Almon Li as members of this team.
5. Publication Team : To be responsible for editing, proof-reading as well as translating for church-wide publications. Members include: Sherwood Kwok, Ruth Yu and Anna Kwok.

Last year, co-workers of the Education Department gathered together to familiarise with each other and to share on the progress, plans, visions and goals of the various units. We hope to continue with such gatherings so that members of different teams can support and pray for one another.

Thanks be to the above-mentioned co-workers for their faithful services and devotion to their posts during the 2nd half of year 2016. The HCAC Newsletter for July and October 2016 were published smoothly. A church member shared that it was warm to read the Newsletter, like reading a letter from family. Such a feedback really encourages us and is the spiritual virtue of loving one another in practice. The following courses were held from July to December 2016: "Zechariah" (Instructor: Rev. Almon Li); "Life no longer the same" and "Ruth" (Instructor:

Deacon Anna Kwok).

In 2017, the Education Department will run the following courses: "Gifts and Ministry", "Revelation" and "Ephesians". Also, there will be topical talks in April, August and November. At present, team members are working to establish a Library in the Church Building. The quarterly HCAC Newsletter, published by the Publication Team, will cover various ministries under the Deacon Board (such as their work plans), testimonies as well as sharing by members. Then on Lunar New Year Day 2 (29/1), the Elderly Bible Study Class will perform hymn singing.

With the start of a new year, I hope that more brothers and sisters will be willing to equip themselves in God's truth and learn God's Word. The elderly are our good example for us to imitate in learning God's Word regularly with perseverance. In order to thoughtfully design the Equipping Program to train believers, the Education Department will conduct a survey in 2017, aiming to understand the courses (both biblical and spiritual-life building) already undertaken by brothers and sisters. I look forward to the active participation by all of you.

Aged Care Ministry

Yan Young i/c of Aged Care Ministry

" There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven." (Ecclesiastes 3:1)

"I am growing old. Not older". We all say this from the moment we are born – "I am growing old." We start thinking if our children or family will ever come and visit our humble little, downsized home. Will they help with daily groceries? Some Peking duck pancakes and chocolate cake, milk and cookies would be good. How about washing our clothes and vacuuming our home from top to bottom OR will they just throw us into a nursing home where the furniture is older than the combined age of everyone.

However sad this maybe, growing old brings with it many joys. One that many long for, is being able to grow old with loved ones but the reality of this is that not all have such privileges to share their old age with loved ones.

Not everybody has the privilege of having family and friends around to care for them in their old age, to bring their daily groceries or vacuum their homes. One of the most difficult things about getting old would be being alone.

As Christians, we have the privilege of knowing that, with God, we are not alone. We are never alone but sadly there are people who are reaching the final years of their life who would have never met Jesus.

For the entire aged care ministry team, it is our privilege to be able to visit the residents of Ashleigh Lodge, an Aged Care facility at Thornleigh. It is something we felt God calling us to be part of. And thus far, it has been a great privilege to be provided with this wonderful opportunity to

serve and worship with the residents and more importantly share God's living Word.

Together with the team, we replace this vacuum of loneliness by visiting the residents every second and fourth Saturday of each month. We look forward to these visits just as the residents are overjoyed to see us. We started off with only a hand-full of residents attending, and now it has grown to over 20 residents gathering at each visit. Not only has it transformed many residents' lives by bringing them to God but it has also transformed us and our personal walk with God.

There is great joy and satisfaction in seeing the residents come to life when we share and worship. One such example is the pleasure of receiving a heartfelt thank-you note written personally by one of the residents herself. You know that you're making a difference.

The aged care ministry team is always looking for more members who want to make a difference. If you feel like God is calling you or if you like inspiring people, enliven communities and sharing God's Word give me a call to find out more. I'll happily share with you more about the next steps to joining our aged care ministry family.



Share Light Ministry is the church's outreach centre, with a purpose is to spread the good news of Jesus to the Chinese community. Since resuming the ministry this year after a break, not only have we been joined by new committee members, two "carers" are also eager to welcome newcomers.

The new committee includes Rev. Almon Li (Chairperson), Anita Chan (Deacon i/c the Evangelism Department), Jeanie Wong (Treasurer), Ruth Yu (Secretary), Amy Leung, Cal Chan and Joanne Cheung.

Over the past two years, we had 14 classes, 13 speakers and approximately 200 attendees. Through a questionnaire, we also learned that there were 22 participants who were non-believers. I pray that through Rev. Li's messages, the seed of the Gospel will take root in their hearts.



Although Share Light Ministry took a break last year, our table tennis club kept on going. We truly appreciate the efforts of our contact persons including Eric Li, Tommy Mak and James Wong. An average of 6 to 8 people took part in this activity last year. We hope that through messages of the good news, the gospel is spread to non-believers. We also hope that this sport will cultivate friendships and a better physique. I encourage you to invite non-believers to join this activity so that they have a chance to hear the gospel.

This year, we hope to use different activities, courses, classes, and community service to spread the gospel. The activities planned for this year include:

Quarter 1: Safe driving, Flower arrangement workshop

Quarter 2: Cooking demonstration, Exquisite desserts class

Quarter 3: Skin care, Traditional moon cake class

In the previous newsletter, we encouraged brothers and sisters to be part of the evangelical ministry by supporting our activities and introducing them to non-believers. If you have a specialist skill or are an expert in your industry, we urge you to contact Rev. Li to recommend yourself as a speaker. Again, we invite you to pray for the speakers, pastors, volunteers and participants.

Lastly, we give thanks to God who gave us strength and power to serve Him. Pray that God will continue to bless Hills Christian Alliance Church.

Meeting Point Fellowship – Its Beginning and Its Ending

Deacon Anna Kwok i/c of ex-Meeting Point Fellowship

The Meeting Point Fellowship was established in May 2014 -- then under the Membership & Caring Department w.e.f. July 2017 -- with the following aims:

1. To care new comers;
2. To let new comers know HCAC;
3. To be a bridge : to encourage unbelievers to join evangelical bible study classes; to encourage/believers to join cell groups and attend Equipping Program courses.

The rationale of setting up the "Meeting Point" is that, through the monthly gatherings and other activities, new comers may know one another, the church (such as its organisation, cell groups and the code of practice for cell group members) as well as other brothers and sisters. After this orientation process (usually half a year or 6 gatherings), they will be referred by the Senior Pastor to appropriate cell groups for continuous caring by and growth in the cell groups. For those members who cannot join any cell group for whatever reason, they will stay in the "Meeting Point" as helpers to take care of other new comers.

Thank God for His blessing. Over the past two and half a year since its establishment, the "Meeting Point" has achieved the following:

1. Out of the 39 new comers attending at least one gathering, 29 are still attending Sunday services at HCAC;



- Among those who are staying at HCAC, 17 joined 6 different cell groups/fellowships in the years 2015-2016 and another 6 will join cell groups in 2017; 13 were baptised or transferred to HCAC; 10 have participated in various ministries (e.g. ushers, choir, Evangelism Explosion Team, New-comer Reception Team); 11 have been attending Equipping Program courses regularly.



As from January 2017, this function of caring new comers will be taken over by the enhanced "New-comer Reception Team" of the

Membership & Caring Department. Therefore, the Meeting Point Fellowship will no longer be in operations w.e.f. 2017.

Renewal and Breakthrough in My Life

There have been a lot of changes in my life since I received training in Evangelism Explosion III (EE) commencing from July 2015. For many years since I believed in Jesus, I have almost never been involved in personal evangelism, forgetting the Lord's Great Commission -- "go and make disciples of all nations".

When I meet unbelievers in my daily life, I have no idea at all, not knowing how to tell them about the gospel clearly and completely. The EE training has made my life different.

2016 is the most fruitful year of mine since I believed in Jesus because one of the EE training requirements is to have 10 practices in spreading the complete gospel. In my 10 practices, 6 of the targets decided to receive Jesus Christ as their Lord. Whether a target will believe in Jesus after hearing the gospel is beyond our control; it is however our responsibility to apply practically the method we have learnt in classroom to share the good news with our targets.

The EE training we received is progressive, starting from observing and understanding, to gradual participation before becoming fully independent in telling the gospel. EE program not only builds up our knowledge but also

provides opportunities for us to practice. After the EE training, I have realized that we can spread the gospel through asking simple questions which inspire people to think and understand the truth.

Through the EE training I have met a lot of brothers, sisters and friends. I have been under the guidance of three team leaders, from whom I learnt different skills in spreading gospel and the art of speaking. The EE ministry emphasizes working as a team. Our team shares the same vision – to seek our targets and spread the gospel to them. We work

Since November 2016, the current members of the Meeting Point Fellowship have been encouraged or arranged to join appropriate cell groups.

I take the opportunity to thank Karen Chan and Sherwood Kwok, who joined the ministry in leading gatherings and organising activities in the past two and half a years. Thanks also to Rev. Li for his support and all new comers who had joined the fellowship.

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven." (Ecclesiastes 3:1) "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow." (1 Corinthians 3: 6-7) We hope that all those who attend Sunday services at HCAC will be compelled by God's word and love, so as to build up a constant and stable relationship with Him, to follow in His steps and to be His real disciples.

Susanna Lee

Graduate of HCAC's 3rd Evangelism Explosion Course

hard together for the same vision; we encourage, pray for and give suggestions to one another; we make improvements together. In this process, I have felt that life really affects life.

Since I joined the EE training, I have reset my priority of life. In the past, I spent a lot of time on my own accounting firm and what I usually chatted in my daily life were nothing but taxation and investment. After the EE training, the focus and topics of my daily life have gradually shifted to the gospel, for example, memorizing the EE outline and the basic scriptures, and learning how to use daily-life examples creatively when spreading gospel. I have been deeply impressed that our faith is so interactive and relevant to our daily life. I am no longer a "Sunday Christian"; I must learn to seize every opportunity in my daily life to spread gospel. Sometimes we cannot answer our targets' questions. This has however motivated us to think, study and find out the answers.

I think all Christians should receive EE training because through the training you are able to re-affirm your faith and learn a valuable evangelism method. You will be more confident to spread gospel and bear fruits of gospel. I am sure that your life will be different.



Hills Christian Alliance Church (HCAC) is a church that emphasizes worship, care, love, evangelism and discipleship. Right from the beginning, HCAC has adopted “praise & worship” and “cell church” as the two major pastoral modes to shepherd the congregation.

“Praise & worship” must entail contemplation and offering of praise with a grateful heart. In worships, not only should we listen to God’s word attentively, we also contemplate God’s attributes and praise His wondrous accomplishment. Through praise and worship, a true fellowship with our Lord, our wounded hearts are healed, our sins forgiven, and our spiritual lives strengthened and renewed.

In “praise and worship”, what we emphasize is not the style, but our encounter with God i.e. His presence. Therefore, we pay attention to not only the melody but also the lyrics when selecting songs. But the most important factor is the worshipper, not the song or music itself. When we come to worship our Lord, we have to offer ourselves to Lord Jesus wholeheartedly; otherwise our worship will not be God-pleasing. (Note 1)

There are different types of “praise & worship” songs and hymns. For example, some proclaim God’s love, some are for missionary, some bring us God’s comfort or some make commitment to God while some others describe personal experiences or pour out personal prayers. For the “praise & worship” sessions in Sunday Services or church gatherings, those songs which are “congregational” in nature and “participative” by the congregation are more suitable because “praise & worship” is the sacrifice that the congregation offers to God collectively. (Note 2)

At present, there are around 350 songs and hymns, of which the majority are Chinese ones, being kept in the databank of the Cantonese Worship Department. The major sources of these songs and hymns include: Stream of Praise, ACM, Elim, Amazing Grace, Sharehymns, One Circle, Herald Crusaders, Melody of My Heart, Hymns of Life, Youth Hymns, HCAC, etc. All the songs and hymns are being used by HCAC with permission by relevant copyright owners.

HCAC has continued to introduce new “praise & worship” songs. Having regarded to their melodies and lyrics, all the new songs so selected will be vetted by the Senior Pastor to ensure their biblical purity. In each Sunday Service, the worship leader will mainly use

those songs to which the congregation is familiarised; otherwise only one new song will be introduced in each gathering. As the majority of the congregation are Cantonese-speaking, most of the songs selected are Cantonese. For each Sunday Service, the Worship Team will prepare 6 to 7 songs, 4 for the “praise & worship” session, one for response, one for offering and one for blessing.

In all the 40 Sunday Services from January to October 2016 (excluding Combined Services), a total of more than 120 “praise & worship” songs were selected for use. Among these, the following songs were sung most frequently: “All my life to you”, “I will worship you, Lord”, “I will give you”, “Jehovah is love”, “Be Thou my vision”, “My Lord, I worship You” and “We love because God first loved us”. During the same period, the song sung most frequently for offering session is “Father I thank You” while the most favourite closing songs are “May peace be with you”, “May God bless you” and “God’s love”. (Note 3)

Following the schedule of Sunday services and church gatherings of HCAC, which is non-stop throughout a year, the worship teams practise and serve on roster weekly without a break. Thanks God for having such a group of dedicated brothers and sisters. May God continue to use and empower this ministry.

Note 1: Extracted, with minor revision, from the article entitled “A Brief Introduction of HCAC” in the HCAC 15th Anniversary Booklet.

Note 2: See “Worships and Church Music” from Equipping for Christ at <http://equippingforchrist.org/TCindex.php?content=TCmt304>

Note 3: Thanks to Deacon Roy Ho of Worship Department and the Church Administrator who assisted in reviewing this article and providing song lists of weekly Sunday services respectively.



Editor’s Note

In this issue, we will continue to introduce the ministries led by two new deacons of the current term, namely, Membership & Caring Department by Deacon Ling Chiu, and Education Department & Publication Team by Deacon Anna Kwok.

HCAC has set a church theme for each year since 2004. The 2017 Church Theme set by the Deacon Board is “Follow in our Lord’s Steps, be His real disciples”. Rev. Almon Li will explain it briefly in the “Pastor’s Sharing”.

Ruth Yu and Yan Young, who are leaders of the “Share Light Ministry” and “Aged Care Ministry” respectively, will share the progress of these two ministries. Deacon Anna Kwok will let us know why the Meeting Point Fellowship will stop operations wef January 2017.

Susanna Lee, a graduated of our church’s 3rd Evangelism Explosion Training Program, shares the renewal and breakthrough of her life as a result of taking this course.

In the “Knowing HCAC” Series, we introduce the Praise & Worship ministry of HCAC, which is one the two pastoral modes to shepherd the congregation. As it is the ministry in which each of us will participate in every Sunday Service, we need to know more about it.

We hope that members who are interested in this ministry shall join us to serve; we also welcome brothers and sisters to submit your articles or give your opinions on the Newsletter. Our warm welcome to Winnie Chan who has joined us to serve as a translator.