



# WINDOW TO BGST NEWSLETTER



SEP 2019

WTB 2019-09

# REFLECTIONS ON THE SINGAPORE MICAH CONVERSATION 2019

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 19-20 JULY 2019

BY SAW SEANG PIN

“

## At the Micah Singapore Conversation July 2019, we broke down walls.

Walls are more than physical structures separating one physical place from another, Pastor Munther Isaac (Bethlehem Bible College) said in one of many excellent addresses that day. Walls have a profound psychological and mental impact. They change the way we think and how we feel about others. Walls block our view and create an unknown. Walls encourage our tendency to assume the worst of what we do not see and can only imagine. Walls make us fear.

But when we break down walls, we see others for who they are. We can have a conversation, and we can empathize.

At the Micah Singapore Conversation, we broke down several walls:

### The wall between proclamation and demonstration

Micah Singapore is part of the International Micah Network. The Micah Declaration on Integral Mission states that (2001) states that:

*Integral mission or holistic transformation is the proclamation and demonstration of the gospel. It is not simply that evangelism and social involvement are to be done alongside each other. Rather, in integral mission our proclamation has social consequences as we call people to love and repentance in all areas of life. And our social involvement has evangelistic consequences as we bear witness to the transforming grace of Jesus Christ.*

Dr Melba Maggay demolished the compartmentalized framework that sets up social action and church planting as opposites. It is reductionist, she said, to think that kingdom transformation is social action only, or that church planting only plants churches. For instance, doing justice while identifying as Christians has, by itself, evangelistic consequences. Mission is witness to the lordship of Jesus in all of life.

*Tamar Village and Homeless Hearts* live out James 2.14-22 integration of proclamation and demonstration by caring for the oppressed and marginalized of all faiths. Their selfless love as Christians who love their neighbours as they love their God is their proclamation that the Kingdom of God is at hand.





## **The wall between sacred and secular**

Reuben Ang (Elsie's Kitchen) did not set out to "do missional business", but with a clear understanding that faith touches every aspect of our lives and work, he set out to be the best possible employer and business associate in the market. James Quek (MyHelper maid agency) pours out his lives to serve foreign domestic helpers and make their lives better, with passion and sacrifice usually associated with missionaries. Covenant Chambers LLC, a law firm, has a calling to see everyone have the legal representation they deserve and be cared for as human beings, as well as to build a healthy eco-system for lawyers to thrive in.

## **The wall between church and community**

"We see the community dinner as another church service. Because the people who come will never sit through a traditional church service." Thus, Woodlands EFC re-defines "church service". It serves meals on its premises together with fellowship, worship, and caring relationships.

Living Hope Methodist Church's *Mighty Connection* ministry also breaks down the

walls between church and neighbourhood. The ministry is upfront about its inclusion of bible stories in its tuition and kids camp programs. Tampines residents who otherwise might never step into a church eagerly enrol their children.

The very format of the Micah Conversation refused to extract the church from its surroundings. Covenant Presbyterian Church was chosen as the venue for its location in Little India, and delegates were sent out into the neighbourhood for meals and a vision walk.

Dr Munther Isaac spoke movingly of the walls that divide Palestinian Christians and Messianic Jews, and of ideologies that pitch Christians of Zionist persuasion against Palestinians' right to exist. Dr Isaac spoke to all of us when he spoke of the universal biblical imperative to intentionally tear down walls that divide people. He does not think it incongruous that he should be involved in inter-faith dialogue and peace efforts as a pastor and bible school teacher. He made it clear rather that for someone in his situation, to not engage in the public and political space would be to leave lives untouched by the Kingdom of God.



## **The wall between mine and ours**

The nine case studies of integral mission in Singapore were presented by volunteers who interviewed and visited the ministries, followed by Q&A with the people who did the ministries. As a result, the impression was not such much that people were presenting "their ministries" to "us". Rather, the feel was a lot more collective: "Here is this ministry. It's not mine personally, but isn't it amazing. It's in this space where we all are, and here's how any of us can be involved."

Redemption Hill Church breaks down the wall between "mine" and "ours" by not adopting the common church strategy of setting up its own social service arm. Rather, the church works in partnership with social service agencies already working amongst the poor in the church's Chinatown vicinity, mobilizing church members to volunteer with them. This personalized, grassroots approach contrasts with programmatic approaches which might accentuate which ministries belong to the church and which do not.

There can be separation not only between church and social service agency, but even between church and church! A call rang out for neighbouring churches to speak to each

other and avoid trying to serve their local communities in silos.

Pastor Raymond Fong challenged the young people in the room not to think of the lack of understanding of integral mission in their churches as "someone else's problem", but to own the issues as their own and step up into leadership in their churches!

## **The wall between private life and ministry**

"When I prepare a bed for someone, I feel it is worship to God." A young participant shared with me that this sentence, uttered by Adeline, was what touched her the most. Kenneth and Adeline Thong (*The Last Resort*) radically personify what it means to follow Jesus without holding back, to the extent of sheltering in their own home and sharing their lives with teenagers and young people who need a place to stay to weather a crisis in their lives.

\*\*\*

This entire event was put together and pulled off by volunteers who have "day jobs" doing something else. For them, as it should be for us, this work is ministry and ministry is the work. Our lives are about the Kingdom, and the Kingdom is about our lives.



# 2019

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### ENGAGE EXECUTIVE WORKSHOP (FRI)

13  
SEP

"ENGAGING WITH OUR LGBT FRIENDS AND  
COLLEAGUES AT THE WORKPLACE"

7:00 pm - 10:00 pm

@ Centre for New Life

**[bit.ly/engageworkshop19](http://bit.ly/engageworkshop19)**

### INTERFAITH SEMINAR (SAT)

21  
SEP

"CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS IN  
SINGAPORE, 1819-2019"

Dr. Ernest C.T. Chew & Dr Syed Farid Alatas

1:00 pm - 4:00 pm @ The Legacy

**[bit.ly/interfaith200](http://bit.ly/interfaith200)**

### CONFERENCE (SAT)

28  
SEP

"DEI VERBUM: THE BIBLE IN CHURCH AND  
SOCIETY"

ETHOS ANNUAL SEMINARIES CONFERENCE  
2019

Speakers: Dr Lee Chee Chiew, Dr Lai Pak Wah,  
Dr Scott N Callaham, Rev Dr Lewis Winkler

9:00 am - 5:00 pm @ The Bible House, Level 5

**[ethosinstitute.sg/deiverbatim](http://ethosinstitute.sg/deiverbatim)**

[www.bgst.edu.sg](http://www.bgst.edu.sg)

## CONFERENCE (FRI-SAT)

18-19  
OCT

"CHRISTIAN<sup>x</sup> 2019: THE CHURCH IN A DIGITAL WORLD"

Church and Industry Leaders from Singapore. Topic Experts from CODEC Research  
Centre for Digital Theology, Durham University.

Fri, 9:00am - 9:00pm, Sat, 9:00am - 5:00pm

@ Bethesda (Katong) Church, Sanctuary

[bit.ly/christianx19](https://bit.ly/christianx19)

### IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARKER PALMER RETREATS

Fees: S\$600 each. BGST Members & Alumni are entitled to **50% discount**

**Discounted fees: S\$300/each**

**To register for these retreats, contact Ian 9830-8401 or Andrew 9820-0904**

#### RETREAT / (FRI-SAT)

22-23  
OCT

"THE COURAGE TO CARE  
RETREAT"

Speaker: Mr Greg Sunter  
9:00am - 5:00pm @ Katong  
Village Hotel

#### RETREAT / (FRI-SAT)

24-25  
OCT

"THE COURAGE WAY  
RETREAT"

Speaker: Mr Greg Sunter  
9:00am - 5:00pm @ Katong  
Village Hotel

#### TCM PUBLIC TALK CHINESE (SAT)

16  
NOV

"中医与基督教的对话"

Speakers: 迪亚拉博士, 赖柏  
华博士, 刘佩菱医师  
9:00am - 4:30pm  
@ 武吉班让堂卫理公会 (圣殿)  
[bit.ly/tcmnov16](https://bit.ly/tcmnov16)

#### TCM PUBLIC TALK ENGLISH (TUE)

19  
NOV

"CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES ON  
TCM"

Speakers: Dr Lai Pak Wah, Diarra  
Boubachar, Dr Liew Joanna  
7:30pm - 9:00pm @ St Andrew's  
Cathedral - Prayer Halls  
[bit.ly/tcmnov19](https://bit.ly/tcmnov19)

# IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

## NEW HOURS FOR THE LIBRARY

The book drop and collection service has been well-used since its introduction in July. The recent launch of Digital Theological Library (DTL) also means students can access a plethora of online books. Due to these changes, the BGST library is no longer having extended hours on Monday and Thursday, with effect from 2 September 2019. The library will remain open on Saturdays and the **New Operating hours will be Monday-Saturday (9 am - 6 pm).**

## FREE LIBRARY BOOKS

With the launch of the Digital Theological Library, BGST is downsizing its physical library, and **giving away hundreds of books!**

Come browse the titles from Monday to Saturday, 9am to 6pm (closed during lunch).

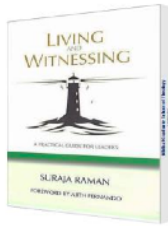
*A love gift would be appreciated.*

## OUR BOOK CORNER IS CLOSING

Take advantage of our parting gifts! **Book Clearance from 5-50% discount** including course texts. While stocks last.

---

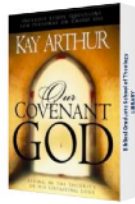
# LIBRARY NEW BOOKS



## LIVING AND WITNESSING: A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR LEADERS.

Raman, Suraja

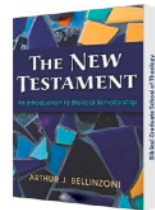
*Communication-  
Religious Aspects-  
Christianity*



## OUR COVENANT GOD: LIVING IN THE SECURITY OF HIS UNFAILING LOVE

Arthur, Kay

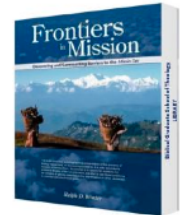
*Covenant-Religious  
Aspects-Christianity*



## THE NEW TESTAMENT: AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL SCHOLARSHIP

Arthur J. Bellinzoni

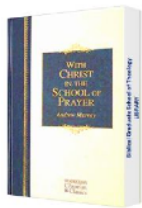
*Judaism-History-To 70  
A.D*



## FRONTIERS IN MISSION : DISCOVERING AND SURMOUNTING BARRIERS TO THE MISSIO DEI

Winter, Ralph D.

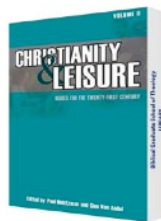
*Missions*



## WITH CHRIST IN THE SCHOOL OF PRAYER: THOUGHTS ON OUR TRAINING FOR THE MINISTRY OF INTERCESSION

Murray, Andrew

*Prayer*



## CHRISTIANITY AND LEISURE VOLUME II: ISSUES FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Heintzman, Paul

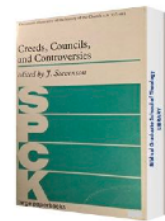
*Sports-Religious  
Aspects-Christianity-  
Congresses*



## REVELATION: A NEW COVENANT COMMENTARY

Fee, Gordon D.

*Bible-Revelation-  
Commentaries*



## CREEDS, COUNCILS, AND CONTROVERSIES; DOCUMENTS ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH A.D. 337-461

Stevenson, James

*Early Christian Literature*

FULL NEW BOOK LIST AT

<https://bgst.vlibonline.com/images/201908-bull.html>





**DONATING  
TO BGST IS  
NOW  
EASIER  
THAN EVER**

**DONATE**



## BIBLICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

**[www.bgst.edu.sg](http://www.bgst.edu.sg)**

50 Kallang Pudding Road, #07-01, AMA Building, Singapore 349326

Tel: 065-6227-6815

### OFFICE TIMINGS

Monday to Saturday: 9:00 am – 6:00 pm

(Closed from 12-1 pm, Wed from 12-2 pm;

Closed Saturdays in June and December)