

SIM *now*

EAST ASIA EDITION



1 PETER 4:10

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

Empowered

TO EMPOWER SOCIALLY
TO EMPOWER SOCIALLY
TO EMPOWER SOCIALLY
FOR CHRISTIAN ONLY

EDITORIAL

03

Belinda Ng Consultant, Singles and MK Care

BIBLE STUDY EMPOWERED TO EMPOWER SOCIALLY

04

Rev. Edwin Lam
Senior Pastor, New Life Baptist Church

EMPOWERING THROUGH EDUCATION

05

Fe & Mhai Philippines

EMPOWERING THROUGH READING

06

Norah CAN

EMPOWERING AMIDST SERIOUS SICKNESS

07

Carmen Tam CAN

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

08

Watson Rajaratnam Regional Director

REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING REPORT

Ng Khee Yang
Deputy Regional Director, SIM East Asia

Official publication of SIM (Serving In Mission), an interdenominational Evangelical Protestant mission. SIM includes Africa Evangelical Fellowship, Andes Evangelical Mission, International Christian Fellowship, Sudan Interior Mission and Middle East Christian Outreach.

The East Asia edition of SIMNow is printed by SIM East Asia, 116 Lavender Street, Pek Chuan Building, #04-09, Singapore 338730. Tel: +(65) 6298 3611
ISSN 0711-6683-11981, MCI (P) 050/03/2023.

Permission to reprint any material must be obtained from the SIM East Asia Editor at eastasia.info@sim.org
Chief Editor: Watson Rajaratnam; Assistant Editor: Mae Wong; Designer: Sam

For security reasons, contributors are occasionally given pseudonyms*.
All rights reserved. When applicable, stock photos are sometimes used to help represent stories.

E-copy of magazine can be found on website and FB



Editorial

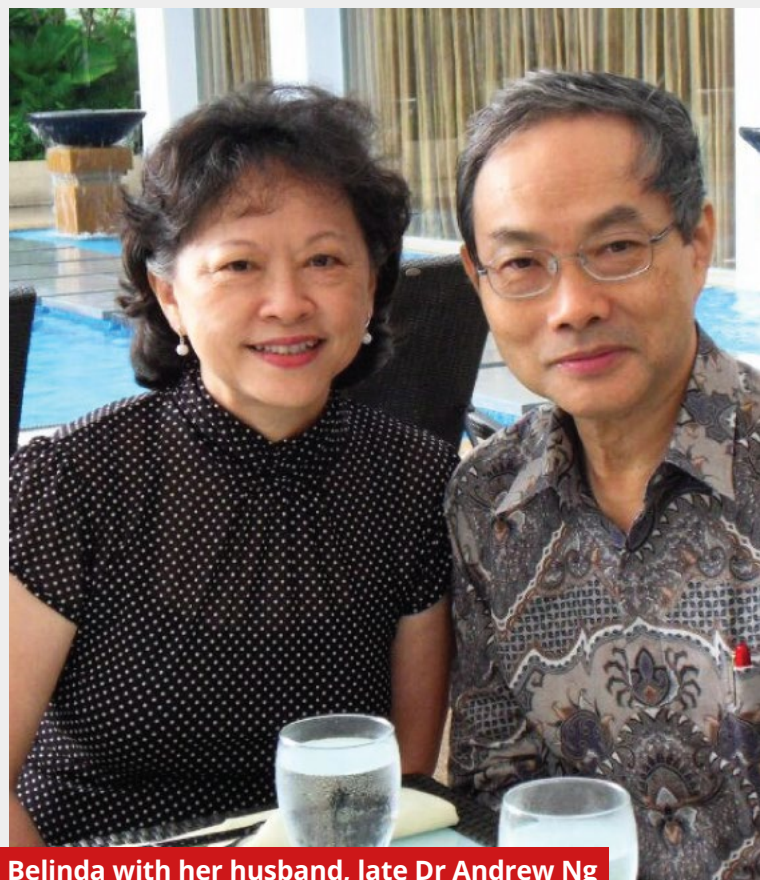
Belinda Ng

Consultant, Singles and MK Care

Responding to immediate felt needs of strangers, helps us to build relationship with them. A good example of that is compassionate medical care ministry, demonstrating the love of Christ in a practical and tangible way. We believe in bringing healing both to the body and soul. Every day, patients who come to Galmi Hospital in Niger, not only have the opportunity to experience the love of God through the medical care but also to hear the Gospel message. Regardless of their faith background, our medical personnel reach out to them wholeheartedly.

We find the biblical basis for this kind of compassionate care ministry in Jesus' parable of the Sheep and Goats in Matthew 25: 31-46. Jesus said, **"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"** We have seen people appreciating the care provided by Galmi Hospital by saying "Sai Galmi", this is the place to go as the hospital reaches out to people who are hopeless. James while talking about practical ways of helping or empowering people said, **"Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead"** (James 2:15-17).

Empowered people of God empower others socially and physically at Galmi hospital which is a good demonstration of God's love by God's people by meeting the physical needs of the people. This is Mission in action and deed. During the time



Belinda with her husband, late Dr Andrew Ng

when my husband and I were there, many of our church planters and those who were not involved in medical ministry used to say that Galmi opened the door for them to do what they did in terms of church planting. People who had been blessed by the medical ministry, would not have known anything about church ministry. But when they talked about the hospital it opened the door for them to follow up with them and meet both their physical and spiritual needs. The current SIM Now issue has many such stories from our members on how they have been empowering many in their respective mission fields socially and bringing hope to many. As we prepare for His soon coming, let's continue to empower others socially, leading many to know Him personally!

Yours Sincerely,

Belinda

B I B L E S T U D Y**Rev. Edwin Lam**

Senior Pastor, New Life
Baptist Church / Chairman,
Singapore Baptist
Convention / President
Emeritus, Asia Pacific
Baptist Federation

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me."

MATTHEW 25: 35-36

Prince of preachers, Charles Spurgeon described personal evangelism as "one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread." In global terms, the 1974 Lausanne Covenant declares: ***"Evangelism is presenting the whole person of Christ to the whole person by the whole church to the whole world."***

Love in Action

On one hand we must hold the Bible, and on the other hand we must clothe, love, and visit in Jesus' name. This is not so much earning the right to be heard, it's declaring the truth with love shown in word and deeds. True love doesn't just desire the best but also does the best for those we claim to love! Evangelism is not simply presenting the Gospel in different ways, but it should include feeding, giving, clothing, loving, and visiting in Jesus' name.

Gospel in Action

It is not about preaching a social Gospel, but the Gospel must be able to meet physical, materialistic, emotional, financial, mental, and most of all, spiritual needs. Our utmost concern is not just the salvation of the soul-spirit of every individual, but we must also care for the whole person. Love must be the reason of all we do for Christ! Jesus Christ alone is the Way, the Truth and the Life! There is no other name under heaven given by which we must be saved (John 14:6; Acts 4:12).

Great Commission in Action

We must preach Christ to the nations because God is the God of the nations (Psalm 67), but is the church fulfilling the Great Commission or is it just a Great Commotion? What is the condition of the church today? Are we inward-looking? We can obey God's command to go and make disciples of all nations only when we keep in step with the Holy Spirit. He alone can empower us to preach the whole Gospel to the whole person!

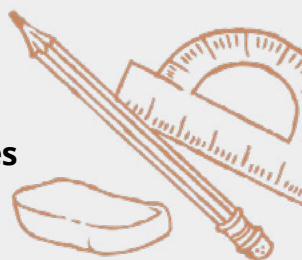
Few years ago, I was walking down the slums of Cambodia, asking God to show how we can minister to the poor, sick, naked and needy. That night, I was very exhausted, and asked God why at my age, I was still walking through the slums! The Lord rebuked me and said, "Edwin, it is for them that I came! How about you? Are you not also poor, sick, naked, and needy, yet I came for you, loved you and accepted you!" I cried, and told the Lord, "Lord, please let me walk through more slums!"



The Bajao people group in Batangas City were traditionally sea gypsies. Many were not issued birth certificates at birth or granted legal status. Thus, it was impossible for them to enroll in schools. As, without formal education, climbing up the socio-economic ladder was difficult, the Bajao people were the poorest among the different people groups in the Philippines.



Fe & Mhai
Philippines



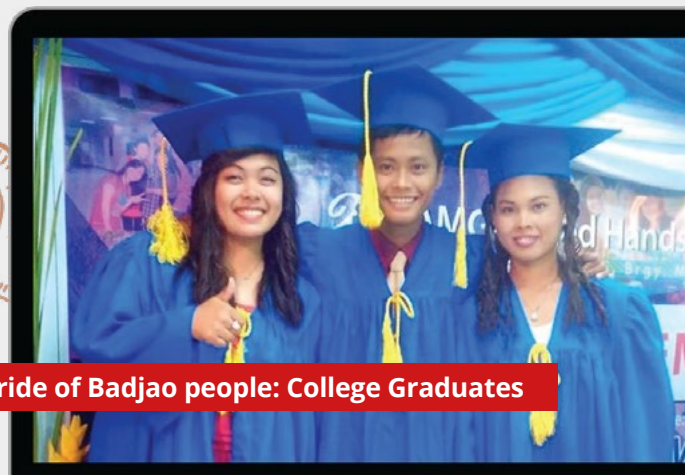
Poverty and Education

To lift them out of poverty, we sought to help them to obtain legal status. Our first step was to help them apply for a birth certificate and then to help the uneducated parents to send their children to schools. Children who enrolled in schools often went without any breakfast and returned home in the afternoons on most days with an empty stomach. Many could not afford to buy school supplies or uniforms.

Transformation and Education

Since we lived between the community's compound and the school, we decided to provide breakfast for the children before they set off for school. While they were waiting for their breakfast, we would share a devotion and pray with them. We even packed them lunch and ensured that they had adequate school supplies and uniforms.

By the grace of God, we helped many children through elementary and high school education. Nine have even finished college. We believe that God has a beautiful plan for all the families and their children in the community. They have not only learnt to depend on God but have also finally understood the importance of education and are now helping to transform their community.



Church and Education

On July 26, 2023, it was with joy that we celebrated 23 years of our involvement in the children's ministry. The ministry has grown to such an extent that we now have a church serving our community. This year we celebrated 14 years of Sahaya Bajao Parhimpunan (Light Bajao Fellowship). We have grown from a meagre seven families to sixty-five families! Our children and their families are growing in faith and in their relationship with God. The church holds regular prayer meetings, Sunday worship and many special events that help bond the community. We enjoy serving the community so much that not even Covid could dampen our spirits. In fact, despite the pandemic, we continued providing the community with food and clothes. We even helped rebuild homes after a recent fire razed them to the ground. We continue to pray, praise and worship God together as a family of God!

EMPOWERED THROUGH EDUCATION

By Norah, CAN

I was tired and hungry after spending two hours at a reading programme in a refugee school, and at a meeting with a volunteer coordinator. As I was walking home, I spotted a girl in her school uniform who came running and gave me a huge hug and a big smile. Taken by surprise, I felt my weariness replaced by a sense of warmth and strength. On closer inspection, I recognized her as a former student, whom I had taught a few years ago. Apparently, she was there as a volunteer for the afternoon shift. I took that chance encounter as God's invitation to increase my involvement in the refugee school.

Empowering is Rewarding

The reading programme at the refugee school was designed to help the young students to read. Each student looked forward to reading with a volunteer once a week. Helping students read is an extremely rewarding experience. Not only were the students being empowered, volunteers, too, experienced a sense of fulfilment as they saw the students making progress in just a few weeks.

Empowering is Serving

While serving among the students, I often witnessed God at work. I recall one incident when a desk toppled onto a student's foot and seriously injured it. His best friend brought him to the school nurse. As the nurse was not around, the finance personnel took over and helped soak his foot in



Reading program held in the library

cold water to soothe the swelling and pain. As I did not know what to do next I prayed and told the student to perform the same cooling procedure on returning home. The nurse who came in later advised me to have the doctor check his foot and possibly get an X-ray done. But to our great surprise, we saw that kid running around the very next day! Aware of our limited resources, God miraculously healed the kid. God's helping hand is mighty and His grace abundant.

Empowering is Demonstrating Love

Assisting refugee students to read helped to build up their self-esteem, demonstrating Christ's love for them and leading them to faith in Christ. Many of them came from broken families and were raised by relatives who worked as maids or cleaners who did not have a stable income. They experienced various forms of discriminations and were even abused by their family members. The school lunch might have been the only meal they would have had for the entire day. Some students even visited the office staff just for a hug or a word of comfort.



EMPOWERING ADMIST SERIOUS SICKNESS

By Carmen Tam, CAN

MiLaa, * my 12-year-old student from a remote village was abandoned by her relatives when her parents passed away. She suffered from a serious disease called Aplastic Anaemia. During the pandemic, MiLaa had a stroke and went into a coma. When I prayed for a miracle, God answered by miraculously bringing MiLaa out of her coma. However, the doctor reminded me that MiLaa was on the last leg of her life.

Due to COVID-19 outbreak, it was extremely difficult to hire a caregiver to provide care for a stroke hemiparesis patient. I thought, "How about me?" But I was immediately assailed by tons of questions like, "What if she suffered a stroke again? What if she suddenly passed away in my home?", Was it legal for me, a foreigner, to keep a child at home?"

Empowering through Prayer

One Saturday night, I prayed to God that if He would clearly speak to me, I would take on this challenge to care for MiLaa during the last phase of her journey. I also prayed that He would transform her fear of death to one of hope in Jesus Christ. During the following Sunday service, the preacher while focusing on the story of Lazarus, emphasised on John 11:44 where Jesus commanded his disciples to unwrap Lazarus's linen strips and head cloth and let him go. God's message confirmed my next course of action.

Empowering by Accompanying

MiLaa lived with me for approximately four months. I accompanied her to the hospital for her injection. Every day I cooked her nutritious food and supported her with physiotherapy and massage. Occasionally, I turned to social media to appeal for donors of blood platelets for her treatment. On most days, MiLaa and I just praised and worshipped God. We also made handicrafts that she gave to her supporters as an expression of her gratitude.

Empowering till the end

One day, MiLaa suddenly started bleeding from her nose and mouth. She also urinated copious amount of blood. Despite her critical condition, MiLaa exhibited calmness and peace that could have come only from God. She told me, "Teacher Carmen, no worries, I am ready." That was a different MiLaa from the MiLaa who feared death. When she died a few days later I wrapped her in linen strips and a headcloth and sent her home peacefully to the Lord.



**Carmen's blessing prayer over
MiLaa's promotion to glory**

I am grateful to God that I was able to accompany MiLaa in her journey of life. I also thank God for the opportunity to demonstrate His love and care for the weak, the helpless, the needy and the lost.

Empowering
**AMIDST
SERIOUS
SICKNESS**

"For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me"

**MATTHEW
25:35-36**





CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Watson Rajaratnam Regional Director

Dear Supporters and Partners in His Mission,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Mission is empowering others by walking the journey with them so that they can experience love, care and hope in life and succeed in things that they do not believe they can succeed otherwise. That is possible only by reflecting Christ who came from heaven to this earth to serve, suffer and sacrifice His own life for us. When Jesus gave His Great Commission to His disciples, He was not simply assigning a task to them, but He was empowering them to be His witnesses (Acts 1:8). Apostle Paul explains how he involved in the the ministry of empowering others:

"To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings"

**1 CORINTHIANS
9:22-23**

That's what SIM EA missionaries have been striving to do in different parts of the world. Bringing the Gospel of Hope to the hopeless, touching lives by meeting the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of people, discipling new believers, raising churches which become salt and light to their communities in the mission fields, turning mission fields into mission forces, are some of the ways in which they have been involved in the ministry of empowerment. 2023 has been another blessed year of experiencing God's goodness and faithfulness in our lives and ministries. We always thank our God for you because of His grace given to you in Christ Jesus. Thank you so much for prayerfully supporting us and giving us the privilege of serving as your ambassadors of the Gospel. As we finish an eventful year of service, we look forward to another new year to know Him more and to make Him known in places where He is not known.

Blessed Christmas and Christ centred New Year!

Yours in His service

On behalf of SIM EA Colleagues

REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING REPORT

The 32nd Regional Council meeting was held in Kota Kinabalu, East Malaysia, from 15 to 17 November 2024. Rev Dr Caleb Chian, Chairman, SIM East Asia Regional Council and Watson Rajaratnam, Regional Director presented their reports and theme for 2024, respectively. Other reports presented included those by Entity Directors, department heads of Strategic ministries, Personnel, and finance departments. Theme talks on the topic **"Knowing Christ and Making Him Known"** were delivered by SIM International Director Dr Joshua Bogunjoko. Fifty delegates and invited guests attended sessions covering governance, framework for developing our entities towards becoming signatories, trauma healing and opportunities in the Middle East. Each day began with Quiet Time and Prayer. We praised and thanked God as we deliberated on various Council matters, learnt from each other, and enjoyed the fellowship with one another. Regional Council Meeting was followed by a Mission conference for the churches with the theme "Concerned for the Lost." Dr Joshua Bogunjoko was the plenary session speaker and SIM East Leaders led the workshops.

Ng Khee Yang
Deputy Regional Director
SIM East Asia