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editorial

When children say, "Dad, when I grow up, I want to be just like you," it is not because they have to, but because they want to. We are children of the Most High! We have received a faith as precious as the apostles'. As His children, we look unto Jesus to learn how He lived and how He taught us to live. Peter writes in 2 Peter 1:3 the divine plan for developing Christian character –

His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

It is only through the Word of God that we learn of Him; only through obedience of His word we begin the journey of learning to be like Christ, and this issue covers topics that are relevant to believers in this ongoing journey.

The last few months have been the most trying times for humanity in recent history, and there is a lot of worry and anxiety for our well-being and the future. But God is with us; the Holy Spirit indwells and empowers us to respond wisely to our situations. God is calling each of us to reach out in tangible ways and be a blessing during this crisis.

Remember how Jesus was "moved with compassion" every time he saw a person in need.

May we all strive to live for God; love others; pursue relationships that are effective in spurring one another on in greater Christlikeness; whatever we do, let us do it all to the glory of God. This is our shared journey of discovering and becoming who we are called to be, as we become more like Christ.

We thank all the contributors. We hope you enjoy reading this issue.

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INTIMACY WITH GOD

I have so many fond memories about growing up in UBC. One of them is attending camps. I remember in one of the youth camps I attended *Intimacy with God* was a topic, and my first reaction to that was: "I'm not sure if I want that", because it sounded intimidating and too heavy. I thought that intimacy with God is not for ordinary people, and one needs to be at a different spiritual level altogether to have this kind of relationship with God.

If that's your reaction on seeing the title of this article, I totally understand. But please don't put the magazine down, because it is not as intimidating as you think. Please read on.

It begins from where you are

What do I mean by this? We normally ascribe intimacy with God to the religious and pious. Because of this we think that it is not for ordinary people, and therefore unattainable. But let this notion be laid to rest. It begins somewhere. It begins from where you are, and where you are could be the point where you are farthest from God.



Rev. Rachülie Vihienuo
Pastor
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The story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-32 comes to mind. The young man forcefully took his share, left home for a faraway country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. But after he had spent everything he had, a severe famine hit that country and he was without food and could find nothing to do except look after a rich man's pigs. From having everything, he was left with nothing. No person could be farther from a loving father than this young man. Yet it was at that farthest point, "he came to his senses" (v.17). From there began his journey of intimacy with his father.

Where are you right now? Your journey of intimacy with God begins right there, and not at some extraordinary spiritual level. God meets us where we are. He demonstrated his love for us that while we were still sinners, he sent Jesus to die for us (Rom. 5:8).

It is intentional

Intimacy with God does not happen in a vacuum. Nor is it enough to realize we are far away from God, though that's where it begins. It must be intentional. The young man's realization led to his decision to do something about his predicament. He decided: "I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father I have sinned..." (v.18). The young man's intentionality should not be missed, it is with that same intentionality that we need to pursue intimacy with God.

Two things stand out in the young man's response: he resolved (*I will set out and go back*) - which emerges from introspection, and he owned responsibility of his mistake (*I have sinned*) - which leads to repentance. Without such intentional resolve and repentance, intimacy with God is farfetched.

It is stepping towards God

Intimacy with God does not happen in passivity. No one slides into it. It requires active response from our end. It is possible to realize one's mistakes and where one has gone wrong, and do nothing about it. This doesn't take you anywhere except in making you miserable.

Acting upon his resolve and repentance the young man made the move to step out of the pigpen and go to his father: "So he got up and went to his father" (v.20). No matter how far he had moved away from his father's home, he stood up and headed home. Each hesitant step from that faraway country was a step closer towards intimacy with his father. Each shaky step was a step towards healing and restoration. His steps weren't perfect. He must have stumbled on the way, and perhaps even found the journey tedious and tiring, he might have even thought of giving up. But he continued, one step at a time until he reached his father's embrace. You might ask, "why did he continue?" I believe it was his longing for his father's love, coupled with the confidence that no matter what, his father will still accept him.

Intimacy with God is a pursuit that is attainable. In this pursuit our steps may be unsure, hesitant, shaky and imperfect. Sometimes we may stumble and feel like giving up, but stepping towards the Father, we must.

Sadly, today we have made intimacy with God a very complicated affair, something that is only for the spiritual elite. We do this with man-made regulations and do's and don'ts which people cannot keep up with. A longing for intimacy with God and the confidence that the loving Father will accept you no matter what, is all that should drive you in this pursuit.

Notice that the father did not put out any preconditions should his son return. There wasn't any "do this" or "do that" nor any "ifs" or "buts" and "see I told you so". Just a compassionate heart ready to forgive and embrace. God compassionately waits for your return with no preconditions. You can come to him just as you are.

It is restored sonship

Intimacy with God happens only in a restored relationship. In the story, the father's love for his son did not change all this while. In fact, every day he compassionately expected his son to return. And the day he finally returned the father did some extraordinary things.

First, he ran to *his son* (v.20). The silhouette he saw approaching him from a distance was that of his son who had rebelled and left. But he was still his son, so he ran to him. In that culture it was very undignified for a man to run like this, and more so if he was a man of social standing. Yet, this rich father who was respected by society broke all social norms and etiquette and ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. This scruffy and disheveled man whom no one wanted to be identified with was still his son. So are you!

Second, when the son asked for forgiveness, the father without answering him turned to the servants and began giving them instructions (v.22). Didn't he forgive him? Well, if he hadn't he wouldn't have done what he did for his son: gave him *the best robe* - a sign of distinction, put *a ring on his finger* - a sign of authority, *sandals on his feet* - servants went barefoot and sons wore sandals, and killed *a fattened calf* for feasting - a special occasion. In these extraordinary actions of the father we see the young man being reinstated into the family as a legitimate son with all the privileges thereof. Did the son deserve all these? No, but notice the reason for which the father did this: "*For this son of mine was dead and is alive again*" (v.24). To the father this undeserving man was still his son. So are you!

It is not God who lost intimacy with us. He can't because he is God with us. It is us who have lost our intimacy with him. And like the father, God longs for us to re-establish that intimacy with him. So he compassionately waits for our return. And when we return to him we are restored back into the family with all the privileges of a son intact, with no questions asked. Simply a repentant heart on one hand and a compassionate heart on the other. Restoration happens when these two meet and an intimacy marked by grace and gratitude is established.

It can be so near yet so far

Who is the good guy in the story? The older brother, of course. Because he was the obedient and hardworking one who never brought any heartache to his father, right? Wrong, and here's why. When he returned from the field to find a big celebration going on inside his house because his wayward brother had returned, he couldn't stand it. He became furious and refused to join the celebration (vv.25-30). He being the good guy who had been with the father all along, one would have expected him to be more intimate with the father, and in this incident share the joy of his father. But far from it. He was so near yet so far from his father. His brother was lost but found. He was with his father but more lost than his younger brother. How tragic!

This big brother can be you and me. We may be at the right place at the right time doing the right things for God, and everybody may think we have it all in place, yet be far away from him. It happened to Martha who was too busy making arrangements for Jesus. It happened to the rich young religious ruler who came Jesus asking, "What must I do to be saved?" It can happen to you and me.

It must be nurtured

What does a relationship need in order to grow in intimacy? Several things come to mind - time, loyalty, trust, commitment, understanding, empathy, sacrifice, generosity, no fear, friendship, and many more. These things don't happen in a vacuum. It has to be nurtured. Similarly, intimacy with God needs to be nurtured. God is loving, compassionate, and kind hearted and he knows us better than we know ourselves. His love for us doesn't change. As mentioned earlier, it is us who have lost intimacy with him and therefore the nurturing has to be our initiative for our own good. Just as the more time and effort you put in a relationship helps that relationship grow closer and stronger, this relationship also needs the same. Time in the Word, listening to him in silence, talking to him

through prayer, fasting, worship – both corporate and personal, etc are some regular disciplines we need to form in order to nurture our intimacy with God. They are the lifeline.

It is personal and evident

I must add that intimacy with God is a personal matter in the sense that every person's experience with God is as unique as the person. God will not violate your personality, temperament and the way you are wired to accomplish his purposes. This is because he created you in his image and has embedded in you the capacity to know him. Therefore, you need not become or try to become someone else, worse still compare yourself with others, in order to know God. You can be yourself and have an intimate and personal friendship with God. This is also what makes Christianity unique from any other religions.

Though it is personal, it is also evident. Knowing God intimately transforms a person and though the transformation happens in the quiet recesses of the soul, the fruit of that transformation is evident in a person's life.

Finally, scripture says, "No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known" (Jn.1:18). "He is the image of the invisible God" (Col.1:15). It is through Jesus Christ, God's son that we come to know who God is. So to know God is to know Jesus. John Oswald Sanders former Director of the then China Inland Missions once said, "Once the joy of intimacy with God is experienced, life becomes unbearable without him." I pray that this is your experience as you grow in your intimacy with God in Jesus Christ because Jesus said, "apart from me you can do nothing" (Jn.15:5).

And yes, it is for the ordinary. †



Starring: Sharman Joshi, Stephen Baldwin, Shari Rigby

Director: Aneesh Daniel

Screenwriter: Andrew Matthews

Producers: Aneesh Daniel, Andrew Matthews

Executive Producer: Victor Abraham

Distributor: Skypass Entertainment Inc.

The film won "**Best Picture**" at the International Christian Visual Media "Crown Awards" (November 2019).

STORYLINE

A powerful tale of forgiveness of an Australian Christian missionary's wife Gladys Staines(Shari Rigby) who learns to forgive those who murdered her missionary husband, Graham Staines (Stephen Baldwin) and her two sons. Manav Banerjee (Sharman Joshi) is portrayed as a conflicted young journalist who recently moves to Orissa with his pregnant wife and tries to make money for his family in attempting to outcast Graham Staines. Manav has been sent as an undercover by his editor to seek evidence of the forced conversions of leprosy patients. Graham Staines treated anyone with leprosy with love, compassion and humility even if they were non-Christians. He's painted with Christ-like qualities, showing immense patience and love even towards those who hate him. While keeping a close watch over the missionary, the journalist slowly begins to admire the kindness, generosity and conviction for which Graham Staines is called to serve and who was ultimately burnt alive along with his two sons. When confronted with the choice to hold the convicts accountable for the injustice her family faced, Gladys Staines chooses to forgive the murderers, just as Christ taught us to do in the Bible. Based on a true story and shot in India, "THE LEAST OF THESE" beautifully illustrates the power of love, hope and forgiveness.

WHY SHOULD YOU WATCH THE MOVIE?

Graham Staines personifies sacrificial love and humility when tending and caring for the lepers thereby truly demonstrating the love of God as well as reflecting a true believer's life conforming to the likeness of Jesus Christ. The movie clearly points out that God is in control of everything even when we do not fully understand. It makes you reflect and access your own life. A must watch movie. I highly recommend for families to see this true story of complete submission and sacrifice for God's glory clearly conveying the message that truth and love always overcome evil and hate.

"Forgiveness doesn't take away all the consequences, but because Jesus lives I can face tomorrow. All fear is gone, because I know God holds the future." – Gladys Staines -2018



Serving God and Others Without Worrying

By Damon So,
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Because of the Covid 19 pandemic, the church buildings in the UK have been closed and I was attending different church services via the internet. One Sunday, I listened to a sermon on Luke 12:22-34. The speaker talked about our relationship with our Father (v. 30) and his care for us so that we do not need to worry about the attack of the virus (Covid 19). He railed against materialistic atheism and consumerism in the world. He cited an example of how a doctor was touched by the loving and selfless service of a priest (who had the virus) to fellow patients in the hospital. This doctor became a Christian because of the priest's witness and set his heart even more to serve the people, now that he knows the God who loves him. So, the speaker used this to illustrate Jesus' injunction to his disciples to sell their possession and give to the poor (vv.32-34). That is, because we know God's love, in this love we go out to serve the people. It is a good sermon overall and it does take into consideration vv. 32-34 about serving other people and did not merely stop at v. 31 which would have been quite anthropocentric or self-centred, not God centred. However, even though he refers to the parable of the rich fool (trusting in his big barn of grain and goods) in the preceding passage in his sermon, he did not make the most of it to make plain what Jesus emphasised in these two passages.



The parable is about the rich fool who thinks his security is in what he has – his barn full of grain and goods – but he stores up these things for himself and therefore he is not rich towards God (v. 21). The clear implication is that we should use our wealth for others, not only for ourselves. But if that is the case, will we not suffer from a lack of provision? That is a real question that I have experienced and all of us will experience if we follow Jesus in a radical way, as his radical disciples, to store things up for others, or more accurately to give things up for others. This question needs to be addressed and it is in this context that Jesus taught his disciples not to worry about provisions in vv. 22-31. There he invoked the Fatherhood of God and how he values us more than any other things; and he used two sharp contrasts of value (the values of birds and flowers contrasted with our value in his sight) to emphasise how our Father will not forget what we need but will faithfully and lovingly provide us with what we need (as I am writing this in my dining room, at home, in Oxford, I am reminded of how he faithfully and lovingly provided this house for us to live, a roof and shelter above our heads). Hence, Jesus answered this implicit question: will we not suffer from a lack of provision if we do not store riches for ourselves but give to others as a way to become rich towards God (v. 21)? His answer is: we will not suffer from such lack of provision for the reason of the Fatherhood of God and our infinite value as his children in his sight, that is, he will surely provide for his beloved children.

Having given this answer, in v. 33 Jesus then explicitly tells his disciples to serve others by sharing their/our wealth with the poor, this injunction being already implicit in his conclusion of the parable of the rich fool (v. 21). That is, now that Jesus has given the sure foundation and security in the Fatherhood of God for carrying out this explicit injunction, what was implicit in the parable (self-giving instead of self-storing) is now made explicit. Jesus taught his disciples not to worry (what not to do) but to seek God's kingdom (what to do) and he made explicit the meaning of this 'what to do' in his kingdom: 'sell your possessions and give to the poor' (v. 33). Seen in the greater literary context including the preceding parable of the rich fool and the succeeding explicit injunction to give to the poor, we can see the focus of Jesus' teaching here: do not store up wealth for your own self-interest, rather use your wealth to serve the poor without worry, without worrying about our future because our Father in heaven will provide for us. Or put in a Chinese proverb, 無後顧之憂, 'no worry about our back' when we are going forward. In our case, when we give ourselves to others, our back has been covered by our Father in heaven who loves us with a never changing committed covenantal love in Jesus Christ who loved us and died for us on the cross.

According to the above exegesis of Jesus' teaching, our failure to serve the poor only serves to demonstrate our spiritual poverty (see the rich fool who serves himself only and is therefore 'not rich towards God', v.21). One of the most important causes of the physical poverty in the world is spiritual poverty of the rich since the spiritually poor rich are not willing to share their wealth. Of course, there are other factors for physical poverty that cannot be discussed here (such as the spiritual poverty of the poor). But the point here is this: if we wish to serve the poor, one of the most effective ways, amongst others, to serve the poor is to address the spiritual poverty of the rich, or address the spiritual poverty of the relatively rich (like Jesus addressing his disciples who had businesses to run and were relatively rich). Jesus set us the example here: he did not only reach out to the poor and needy; he also taught his relatively rich disciples to give their possessions to the poor. As the rich and the relatively rich turn their hearts to the poor in godly compassion, then there is real potential for them to make useful contribution to the poor. I did not know before but now I think Bill Gates is such an example.

*In an interview with Rolling Stone, Gates stated in regard to his faith: "The moral systems of religion, I think, are super important. We've raised our kids in a religious way; they've gone to the Catholic church that Melinda goes to and I participate in. I've been very lucky, and therefore I owe it to try and reduce the inequity in the world. And that's kind of a religious belief. I mean, it's at least a moral belief."*¹

Gates also said:

I agree with people like Richard Dawkins that mankind felt the need for creation myths. Before we really began to understand disease and the weather and things like that, we sought false explanations for them. Now science has filled in some of the realm – not all – that religion used to fill. But the mystery and the beauty of the world is overwhelmingly amazing, and there's no scientific explanation of how it came about. To say that it was generated by random numbers, that does seem, you know, sort of an uncharitable view [laughs]. I think it makes sense to believe in God, but exactly what decision in your life you make differently because of it, I don't know.

Bill Gates and his wife set up the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to help the poor in developing countries. They pledged to give most of their wealth to charity during their lifetime or to commit to doing so after death. That means giving away most of the fortune of Microsoft which is worth about 100 billion US dollars.²

¹https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill_Gates

²<https://www.businessinsider.com/bill-gates-reveals-why-hes-giving-away-his-90-billion-fortune-2018-2?r=US&IR=T>

Also see Evita Perón (former first lady of Argentina,)

Fraser and Navarro write that it was Evita's work with the foundation that played a large role in her idealization, even leading some to consider her a saint. Though it was unnecessary from a practical standpoint, Evita set aside many hours per day to meet with the poor who requested help from her foundation. During these meetings with the poor, Evita often kissed the poor and allowed them to kiss her. Evita was even witnessed placing her hands in the suppurated wounds of the sick and poor, touching the leprous, and kissing the syphilitic. Fraser and Navarro write that though Argentina is secular in many respects, it is essentially a Catholic country. Therefore, when Evita kissed the syphilitic and touched the leprous she "...ceased to be the President's wife and acquired some of the characteristics of saints depicted in Catholicism." Poet José María Castiñeira de Dios, a man from a wealthy background, reflected on the times he witnessed Evita meeting with the poor: "I had had a sort of literary perception of the people and the poor, and she had given me a Christian one, thus allowing me to become a Christian in the profoundest sense...."

Paul quoted Jesus' words: 'It is more blessed to give than receive' even though these words are not recorded in the four gospels but in Acts. We need to speak to the rich: that trusting in their wealth, hoarding wealth and hogging wealth (like to the rich fool) does not actually bring real happiness. It will give only a false sense of happiness and a false sense of security. Real happiness is when you give yourself and your possession to serve others, especially when you are doing this in a community of like-minded people. When you do this, the sense of joy, the sense of communion and community, the sense of purpose and the sense of love, i.e., the sense of the presence of God that we receive by the power of the Holy Spirit, is more precious than anything money can buy in this world and this sense of joy and love in God's presence will continue in eternal life.³

The total number of death from Covid-19 in the world since its beginning in December 2019 is 239,236 (at the time of writing on 2nd May, 2020), according to John Hopkins University's website: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>. However,

On May 28th [2019], we observe World Hunger Day. It is an effort to focus attention on the fact that despite global progress, some 21,000 people still die every day from hunger or malnutrition. ... Today, some 821 million people suffer chronically from hunger.⁴

In merely ten days, the number of people dying from hunger or malnutrition in the world is about the same as the fatalities from Covid-19 in more than four months.

It has been a long time since I last felt hungry. But because of the lockdown in the UK I have not been cooking that consistently for myself; I have felt hungry a few times recently and this reminded me what millions of people in this world go through in their daily experience as a matter of real life. It also reminded me of Ron Sider's book which I read in theological college, Rich Christians in a World of Hunger (Ron Sider is one of the founders of the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies.)

When the virus threatens the lives of many people in the developed countries, we see such a concerted effort to combat the virus, including the effort of Dyson, Formula One racing teams such as Mercedes and McLaren, Bosch and Tesla, even Amazon, Google and Apple. If the same concerted effort is put into dealing with the problem of poverty, hunger and diseases, I think the progress could be more (though even this cannot be guaranteed as these problems are very complex which also involves local cultures, values and practices). The point is that the West can pay huge attention and make great effort to help themselves when its people's lives are threatened, but when its people's lives are not threatened, the West's effort to help those – who are struggling in poverty and hunger and therefore are in no less danger than the Covid-19 virus – is considerably pale compared to the effort to save themselves. How does God assess the discrepancy of efforts here? What is God's will for us here? See Isaiah 58 for the powerful message there.

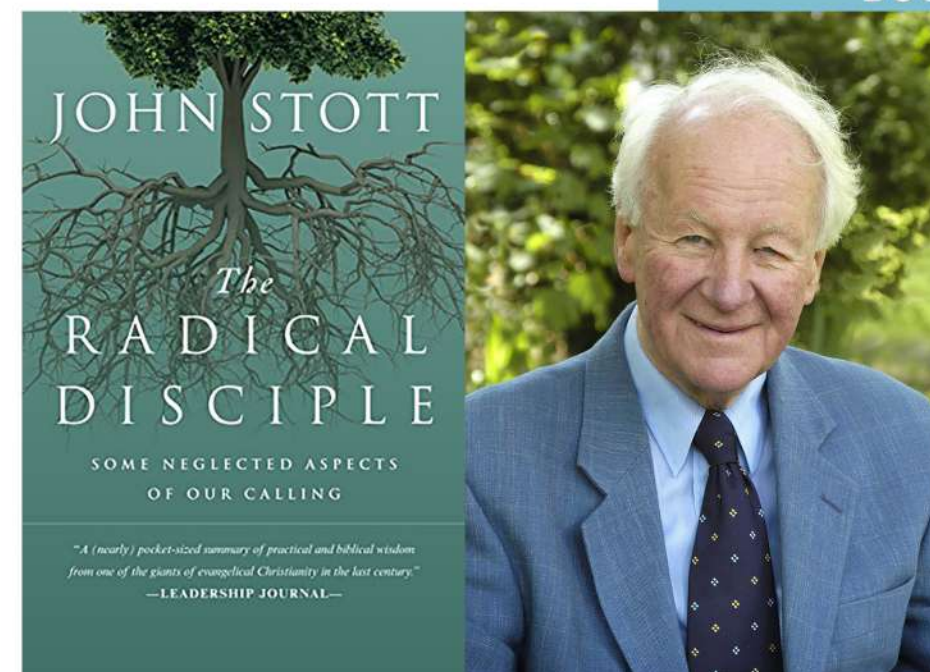
For those of us who are from non-Western countries, some of us have been blessed spiritually and materially, just like some of the disciples of Jesus. Although we will not be as rich as Bill Gates, we need to ask ourselves in light of Jesus' teaching – on the Fatherhood of God and our seeking first his Kingdom and righteousness – what our attitude should be towards those who are less fortunate than ourselves, and what specific actions we should take as individuals and as his corporate church.



Damon So and his wife

³https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eva_Per%C3%B3n

⁴<https://editorials.voa.gov/a/world-hunger-day-2019/4935420.html>



THE RADICAL DISCIPLE – John Stott

"The Radical Disciple" is the last book written by celebrated Theologian and author, John Stott, where he delves into the idea of radical discipleship and discusses upon "eight characteristics of **Christian Discipleship** which are often neglected but deserve to be taken seriously" –

He challenges us to maintain **Non-conformity** against the world's ideals of pluralism, materialism, ethical relativism and narcissism, but rather develop a Christian counterculture - to engage without compromise. He calls us to practise **Christlikeness** for "if we claim to be Christian, we must be like Christ" and discusses, therefore, on the need for **Maturity** to have a "fresh, clear, true vision of the authentic Jesus" and the dangers of "growth without depth". He touches, next, on the topic of **Creation Care** that is bestowed upon men, to carry out our duty of responsible stewardship, for "our care of the creation, reflect our love of the Creator". The author goes on further to discuss the practise of **Simplicity** with the belief that if the life is new in Christ, the lifestyle should be new also. His next concern is about learning to **Balance** our identity and purpose in Christ as we are called to individual discipleship as well as fellowship, work and worship, pilgrimage and citizenship. This is followed by a timely reminder that **Dependence** on God is fundamental since "to attempt to live without Him is precisely what is meant by sin". The author here also reminds us that dependence on each other in the course of life was intended by God and must be sought with humility. Finally, the book concludes with a view on **Death** and the biblical perspective of life through death – Life through Christ's death and our death to the world – and our subsequent life in the heavenly abode thereof.

John Stott presents to us several timeless insights that are worth learning or re-affirming into our lives as we strive on in our Christian walk and continue to work towards the ideals of The Radical Disciple.

Surrendering in Prayer



Annie Punyü
Superintendent Principal Chief
Conservator of Forest and
Head of Forest Force, Kohima



"THY WILL BE DONE" is the third of the seven petitions in the Lord's Prayer. The third request is that God's will occurs. Here we are aligning our will with God's will, we are submitting ourselves to Him, and asking that His way triumphs. It is worth noting that Jesus prays these very words on the Mount of Olives, after sharing His last meal with the disciples: "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." (Luke 22:42, NIV) We are told that His anguish was so great that His sweat resembled blood falling to the ground (Luke 22:44). So if we are to follow in the footsteps of Christ and pray, "Your will be done" this may come at great cost. For here, we are aligning our hearts with heavens ways and laying down what we might want or choose. Instead, we are declaring that God's will is done in our lives.

Jesus prays, "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10).

A kingdom is a place where a king rules and reigns. When you ask God's kingdom to come, you are asking God to sit on the throne of your heart and your life so that His "will" will be done in both.

This is the hardest part of this prayer. The number one priority of prayer is not to get God to do what you want, but to surrender to God—to get Him to do what He wants.

That is why this part of the prayer is difficult. Before you ask for anything, before you tell Him what you want, before you tell Him what you need, say right up front, "I am taking my plans, my ambitions, my goals, my agendas, my desires, and I am surrendering them all to you."

You can't move forward with God in any prayer until you get this issue settled. Before you get to your wants, your desires, your agenda, you have to go to God and say, "I want your will to be done." Seeking God's will above our own isn't easy.

It wasn't even easy for Jesus!

Did you know the only time Scripture records Jesus wrestling in prayer was in the Garden of Gethsemane? What was His struggle? He wrestled over the will of God, and He could not go to the cross until He finally said to God, "Not my will, but yours be done."

The trouble comes in our lives when we don't pray this part of the prayer. The trouble comes when we focus on our will and not His. That is when marriages fall apart. That is when business decisions go bad. That is when you experience the kind of moral failure that can scar you with unbelievable guilt.

The best prayer you can ever pray for anyone, in any situation, at any time, in any place, is the prayer, "Your will be done." Do you know why? Because God's will is always the right and best thing to pray for.

The purpose of prayer isn't about getting your will done in heaven; it's about seeing His will done in your heart. It is not to get God in line with your desires but to help you line up with His.

When you surrender your will to His will, you find that prayer changes you. Your prayers will change as well. That is why getting into that secret place every day and surrendering your will to His is so important. Don't ever leave the place of prayer until you are fully surrendered to Jesus Christ. Without surrender, nothing will change in your life. Nothing will change the perspective, purpose or priority of your life like completely being surrendered to His will.

The truth is that God always listens and hears us when we pray. But He doesn't always answer the way we want Him to. But what the Bible does tell us is that we pray according to His will. How do we do that? When we dwell on His word, spend time with Him in prayer, and constantly seek to do His will, then our prayers will be aligned to His will.

I encourage you, perhaps over the next month, to take the first five minutes of each day and give God your worship. Focus on who He is, where He lives, and what He wants. Surrender to His will and watch how God changes your life.

Family Focus



How do you spend time as a family?

Apart from schools and workplace, we spend time together in conversation, watching movies, playing games. We also like to travel together to places once a year during holidays.

What are your joys of parenthood?

The greatest joy is seeing my children growing up. They are very supportive of one another. They know their own responsibilities and do their own chores daily. My children are the best companions I could ever ask for.

How has UBC played a role in your lives?

The Greatest joy and peace which we have is through UBC. Our church is our guardian as well as our family.

What in your opinion are some strengths of UBC?

All through our despair and happiness, UBC has always been there beside us giving us so much encouragement and support. I feel that the strength of UBC is that it never fails to support one another (in giving, sharing, prayer, moral and physical support).

What do you see in our church that needs attention?

In this generation we tend to be more influenced by foreign culture and neglect our own age-old traditions especially our language. We should focus more on our dialect starting from childhood.

How can UBC better serve the children and youths?

We can nurture our children to live in simplicity, transparency and humbleness.

Do you have any expectations from UBC?

As believers of Christ, my expectation is to strive for unity and closeness among church members.

In what areas would your family like to contribute to the church?

We would contribute and serve the church in any possible ways.

From the Children

What are your interests and hobbies?

Visavonuo Ziephrü: Cooking, mapping and upcycling things.

Khrietsizo Ziephrü: Playing drums, gaming and eating.

Nuneü Ziephrü: Playing the violin, singing, DIY projects and cooking.

What are some things you appreciate in one another?

Visavonuo Ziephrü

Mother: My mother is strong and hardworking. She takes the role of both man and woman. Also, she treats us all equally.

Khrietsizo Ziephrü: His innocence is what I appreciate in him. He is funny too.

Nuneü Ziephrü: She is very responsible since she was little. She is focused on her work and always helps me but she can make us feel so much better when we are having a bad day. She talks like an old lady which is very cute.

Khrietsizo Ziephrü

Mother: I love my mom's cooking.

Visavonuo Ziephrü: I like Visa because she helps me a lot in my studies. And she prepares tasty food for all of us.

Nuneü Ziephrü: Nune is caring and generous. Also she always takes my side and play football with me too.

Nuneü Ziephrü

Mother: My mother is the best. She is always there for me and helps me every time. She is beautiful both inside and outside.

Visavonuo Ziephrü: We are always together though we quarrel. I like her because she gives me internet.

Khrietsizo Ziephrü: I like my brother because he always gives me sweets.



Heno Ziephrü
Govt. Servant

Nuneü Ziephrü
Class-5
Fernwood School



Who is your favourite person in the Bible?

Visavonuo Ziephrü: Jesus is my inspiration. He is holy, gracious, wise, compassionate and not forgetting His immeasurable sacrifice. He is my favourite.

Khrietsizo Ziephrü: My favourite is David because he was a shepherd boy who turned into a king. David was a man of passion, faith and fearlessness. But most importantly, he was known for seeking God's heart.

Nuneü Ziephrü: My favourite person in the Bible is Peter. I like Peter because he really cares for Jesus.

What are the things that you love to do with your family?

Visavonuo Ziephrü: I love to play and have a quality time with my family.

Khrietsizo Ziephrü: I love watching movies and travelling with my family.

Nuneü Ziephrü: I like cracking jokes, playing games with my family.



Visavonuo Ziephrü
Class-11
Genesis School

Khrietsizo Ziephrü
Class-9
Stella School



Loving Difficult People

Dziesengunuo Chadi

Discipleship is a constant pursuing of Christ-likeness; pursuing Christ in our speech, in our thoughts and in our action and this continues until we see Jesus face to face. There are many areas where we are to live like Christ and one of the areas which we are constantly challenged is in the area of loving people who are different than us or rather loving people who are difficult to get along with. Jesus asked these probing questions then and is still asking, "If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?" So the greater challenge here is to love people who are unlovable and greater still is to live life not according to the pattern of the world but a standard set and modelled by Christ Jesus.



We often hear that people management is by far the toughest responsibility of all. And rightly so because we are so complex and there are many factors that contribute to the complexity of a person. We have the environment that shapes us - the environment that we grew up, the way a person is treated by parents and others in the immediate environment, the child's position in the family constellation, the economic condition, the unresolved past issues, etc. We are also made differently; our personality is different, our working style is different, maybe we have character flaws, or we have different principles and worldviews and thus making us so complex and so difficult to comprehend. Take for instance, the smallest family unit - father, mother and a child and this small family unit has relational dynamics that can go sour at times and so to come out from that family unit and extending relationship to people beyond that boundary can be overwhelmingly intricate. We are all different and we all carry around our warts and all. And so the question is when we talk about difficult people, who are these difficult people? Difficult people can be you, difficult people can be me!

When we look beneath the surface of everyone's life, there is a flaw that lives in us and if we are honest and if we reflect deeply on how life really is both inside and outside, we can discover many things in ourselves that can become the thorn in people's life. We can discover many things that we ourselves do not like. And so, instead of wasting a lot of time worrying and discussing about who people are and who people should be, we need to give enough time to oneself and focus as to who I am and who I should become not in a narcissistic way but introspecting life for a meaningful and purposeful living. So, to get along with people, you and I need to look at ourselves first.

Then there are some people who seem, at least to our eyes, to have little good in them. People whom you rather wish would go away or that your paths would never cross. Some people have the ingenious skills to prick you to the bones and you have no option sometimes but to bear that person for life. Such people have a negatively powerful presence in our lives and their flaws can tragically obscure the good in them. However, there is hope; a hope that nobody is beyond redemption. And this is an affirmation from 2 Corinthians 3:18 that "...we who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

As Christians, we have the privilege to experience "Metamorphosis" - that in Christ we can transform and are 'being transformed into his likeness.' There is no quick fix solution to any "warts" but the Spirit of the Lord will help us and on our part, here are some simple reminders for us to be better bearable people!

1. We are created in the image of God even the most rotten person that we would gladly bid good riddance.
2. As Mike Mason would say "practice the presence of people" and we can do so by paying attention to them.
3. Nobody is beyond redemption and we can always cling to that glimmer of hope that God can redeem and will redeem.
4. It is said that "Old habit die hard; new ones are not easily formed." Let us be kind and patient. Assumptions kill the good in people. Let us not assume.
5. Forgive because Jesus has given us the capacity to forgive. Grace given, grace extends.

Let us give each other space and time to grow and mature as we journey along together to becoming like Christ - even in our relationship with people.

LETTING GO OF ENTITLEMENTS

Apem Raman



We first need to clarify the difference between having legitimate entitlements and feeling entitled. Although the lines can be blurry at times, they are very different in nature. To make things clear from the start, I will be writing this from the perspective of letting go of our legitimate entitlements. I'm also aware that this topic can be interpreted from a political and social perspective as well but I want to tie it and bring it from a Biblical perspective.

There can be a series of discussions and teachings on the topic of "Letting go of..." attached by numerous words such as 'entitlements' from the Christian perspective. One can even argue that our christian way of life is in fact marked by a lifelong journey of letting go of things. I believe a topic like this needs to be handled with care and with much wisdom from above because it is one that almost everyone has an opinion of and most of us are guilty of it too. I also believe this is how Jesus intended for us to conduct our lives as christians and it is in the very core of who we ought to be. There are conflicting opinions that tend to often make us go astray and think otherwise. Too many of us unfortunately treat the vital characteristics of God's instructions as alien teachings. What's even sad is the fact that sacrifice, humility and submissiveness are things we rarely see even among believers today. I would want to first explore and challenge some of the reasons I feel are responsible for why many of us have abandoned such vital characteristics. Rather than identifying ways in which we tend to fixate on entitlements, I want to help us identify why we live in a world that is very intoxicated to entitlements. To drive it home and hopefully bring a more contextual relevance to this otherwise wide topic of discussion, I would like to pull in certain points that I feel are relevant.

The first point is concerning the worldview and teachings that are inspiring and influencing the minds of our people. The human mind is an amazing puzzle. A conglomeration of conscious and subconscious thoughts and ideas that are constantly being updated through often untraceable forms and means. Our eyes, ears, thoughts and touch all serve in the constant updating of these information in the thousands and millions. What eventually spews out of our mouths is almost like an orchestra of all the things that eventually form our opinions and views. This is fascinating and worrying at the same time and yes the Bible does speak of this concern extensively. For example, Matthew 6:22 says, "Your eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light." We get to decide what eventually forms our opinions, and that decision and the result of it hugely relies on the way we decide what influences us. Pastor Nathan Finocchio published this little write-up on Good Friday on the prestigious Christian platform Instagram, and I thought it was beautiful and very relevant. He said, "...the world has become a Christian cult, but Christian nonetheless. Misplaced sense of love and compassion, something every Christians are guilty of, has created a new brand of heresy, social disorder, political nonsense, and a rejection of foundational Christian doctrines, like the Atonement. Young Christians are given their views of justice and fairness and equality not from the Scripture but from our Humanities departments, the high priests of Christian cults." A mixture of half-baked Christian teachings and bad theology that is often prevalent today in our society is giving way to the formation of numerous ideologies and way-of-life that is really corrupting our minds from the authentic teachings of Jesus. We live in a world that seduces us to make commodities of who we are. The idea of selling ourselves, literally or not, is not a foreign subject anymore. In fact it has proven to be a really good business model if used well. Therefore to be alive in a time where we are influenced to make the best use of all our entitlements and even venture out into exploiting things we feel wrongly entitled of, the question of letting go of our entitlements would seem like lunacy to many. But as Matthew 6:22 reminds us, we need to fix our eyes on Jesus, even more so, we need to glue our ears to His words, we need to speak of Him more and introduce the touch of our hands to doing His good work and only then there will be a shift in our thinking and understanding that would reflect Him more.

The second point in concerning the proximity between the dominating culture and the counter culture. Has our understanding of the scripture been compromised because of our close proximity with the world? This is often a danger that so many of us christians face— of being too influenced by views that pertain to the world. Our close affiliations and proximity plays a vital role in influencing us unknowingly. One of the problems of being a nominal Christian is that we are far more at risk of being influenced by teachings that go against the scripture. After all, it is a form of relaxation from authentically following Jesus. Eventually the lines that define normality from abnormality gets blurred. I would like to give you two examples from the Bible to explain this point. In 1 Corinthians 5:1-2, the Apostle Paul is appalled, angered almost, by the lack of remorse and surprise by the christians there over the news of a young man who had committed sexual immorality with his father's wife. They did not react accordingly because it had become normal in their eyes. Paul says this was something "that is not tolerated even among the pagans." (vs.1). They had not only submitted themselves to what was normal for the pagans but they had even created a new norm that was far worse. The second example is taken from Genesis 19:30-33. After the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot lived in a cave with his two daughters. One fine day, the older daughter realising there was no other man around, took matters into her own hands and came up with a plan to 'preserve' offspring from her father. She plotted to get her father drunk and have an incestuous relationship with him. Not only did she accomplish her plan, she plotted one for her younger sister the next day. As shocking as this story is, what baffled me the most was how Lot's daughters were portrayed in the preceding verses. In verse 8, it says they were women who "have not known any man". So how does one go from not knowing any man to committing incest? It doesn't make any sense. My only personal conclusion here is that perhaps it was their proximity to a world of utter sinfulness that influenced their mindset and blurred the lines of normality and abnormality. Sodom and Gomorrah were the epitome of sinfulness and sexual immorality, and by just being

so close in proximity to a world such as that, their minds were colluded. In both the stories, the people's perspectives were so severely influenced because of close proximity. Each of us are in danger of a similar predicament where our mindsets and views of the world are constantly being attacked and shaped because of our proximity to the world. We have easy access to everything. We are constantly bombarded by ideas of self-centredness, selfishness, power and entitlement through our phones and other devices. The danger comes with the blurring of the lines. Foundational characteristics that ought to be on display in our christian walk eventually go missing from a lot of us because of this collusion. What we finally see from both the examples is the infiltration of ideas and world views that slowly over take our christian teachings.

So where do we go from here? My final point is the presentation of the only solution... the imitation of Jesus. Having entitlements isn't wrong, in fact it is a blessing from God. Some of you have worked really hard to earn your entitlements. Some of you have never abused it, rather you've used it to serve those in need. We do not throw it away, rather we let our servanthood and allegiance to Jesus supersede its importance. We do not even consider it in comparison to the fullness and fulfilment we receive in Him (For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory. 2 Cor. 3:10). Jesus is the perfect example of letting go of entitlements. He is entitled in every sense possible but yet He abandoned it. Out of the numerous examples, I want to point out the one in Matthew 26:53 where in the garden of Gethsemane right before His arrest He said, "Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and He will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?" Jesus abandoned all His entitlements for the sake of love. Paul in 1 Corinthians 4:9 says, "For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men." A life of Jesus is a life of abandonment. Ideas such as letting go of our entitlements look like utter foolishness according to the trends of this world.

The abuse of power and individuals who are intoxicated by self importance and entitlement is rampant in our society today. None of us are willing to submit or let go. We are all guilty of it. Also I do not feel comfortable in pointing out examples of how we see individuals flaunting or abusing their entitlements, rather I would like to end this by highlighting something that we are all guilty of as a society and maybe we can work on it. With the direction at which the world is heading, freedom of speech has become a powerful weapon thanks to all the social media platforms available. I love the fact that we are finally speaking up and this is something we are all entitled to. But there are times when we all need to let go of it too. We need to know when to speak in love or not speak at all. This entitlement of speech has given way to so much toxicity and harm in our society. I see it in families, in churches, in workplaces, in friendships, in relationships, in social platforms, etc. It has infiltrated the very fabric of our society. Social platforms and discussion are filled with opinions that are both constructive and damaging. Everyone has an opinion of everyone and everything because we're all entitled to it. Perhaps we feel it is our right and obligation to speak out whenever we can. However, in light of becoming more like Jesus and fixing our gaze on Him, maybe we can all start with speaking in love.

What we do:-
Tailoring unit :
 We stitch school uniforms,
 We take orders
 We stitch masks

We run a kids store by the name "**Pinks & Blues**" at jail Colony where we sell our products as well as export surplus
 We do vinyl, heat transfer and screen printing
 We do sublimation mug print, key chains, sipper.
 We do embroidery .
 We also do leather products only on order basis.

Contact us at:
 Disong Designs
 disongdesigns2017@gmail.com
 Phone: 8729801057

DISONG DESIGNS

ABOUT US

Our story a rather gradual rendition of -
 "When Sound beckons for help, Beat Devices reckons its purpose as an unlikely superhero in a headphone."

After an initial test-run without a place to call home, Beat Devices opened its first store in the year 2016. Established in Kohima, an idyllic yet music-infested town, we seek to converge and remedy all sound requisites within a single marquee. From sound installations, rental, repairing and a retail outlet with an assortment of instruments from the biggest brands in the industry, our aim is to simply afford you music from the noise.

Dial if you must. Knock or text. Fly in if you can. Beat Devices assures you of our quality service as we plug-in to play your list and fill the bill to an overflow.

RENTAL

SOUND

LIGHTS

PROJECTOR

BEAT DEVICES
 BRINGING YOUR RHYTHM TO LIFE

BEAT DEVICES
 BRANDING YOUR BUSINESS TO LIFE

Facebook: Beat Devices
Instagram: Beat Devices
Email: inquiry@beatdevices.com

AN ATTITUDE OF SUBMISSION

Seyievinuo

Not only do non-believers fail to understand the concept of submission, but also among the believers this is something which is poorly understood and I am found guilty of this as well. For years, I struggled with this concept, typically thinking submission is required only in relation to those in a position of authority over us (and yes! This is true but only partially) but when that same authority over us fails to live up to its role, how can we consciously keep on submitting to it? 'Respect is earned': you just don't receive it freely, was an adage which was ingrained in me and I firmly held on to the belief that if I were to submit to someone or something, that person or thing better be worthy of it.

But gradually this concept changed over the years as I grew in my relationship with my Savior. I keep on realizing Christian submission goes far beyond obedience to those in authority over us and I say 'keep on realizing' here because it has grown from just a concept into an attitude: an attitude which I have to consciously develop and deliberately choose every day.

The two types of submission which according to me can be categorized are: one is of the world (Secular) if I may give a name to it, and the other is of the believers (Biblical) living in this world. And in regard to this, I would like to share some of the key realizations that helped me in changing my pessimistic view on submission :

- Secular submission is compulsory, imposed from without while biblical submission is voluntary, from the heart.
- Secular submission is motivated by self-interest whereas biblical submission is motivated by faith, hope, and love resulting in self-sacrifice.
- Secular submission is mainly a matter of authority while biblical submission is more a matter of priority, putting the interests of others ahead of us.
- Secular submission seeks to minimize dependence on others and to maximize our own independence while biblical submission recognizes our dependence on others and surrenders independence.
- Secular submission is given to those in authority who expect (and sometimes demand) that we act in a way that benefits those over us, biblical submission is given to Him who gave up His rights and privileges in order to bring blessings to us.

What we are being taught in the Bible regarding submission is very important because it was not just mere words written down for us to follow but actually lived out in the life of Christ. I am always baffled and in awe when I think of how Christ chose to come down on earth and take a human form, lived among us under the authority made by men (his creations). He, being the Son of God and His authority over all, still chose to submit because of His love for the Father and for us, as is found in Phil 2:5-8 'Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God, a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.' And if it were not for His submission to the Father's will, Christianity will not even be in existence and

you and I will not be living in this freedom brought through His submission which was paid at a very high cost.

Biblical submission looks out for the greater good of the people as a whole. It is not self-seeking but it is selfless. It is relational because it shows how people are interdependent on each other: not abusing or taking advantage of each other but strengthening each other where the people gain as a community. It is the attitude with which men and women turn to God in faith for eternal salvation. It is also the attitude that underlies servanthood and thus the ministry of believers to the nonbelievers and to one another in church. Submission is the basis for servanthood; submission is the basis for servant leadership. A man cannot truly be a spiritual leader until he has come to submit himself to those whom he leads. It is not that he follow those whom he leads rather he subordinates his interests to the interests of those whom he leads and when he does so, he sacrifices his own selfish interests for the interests of others. And here the paradox of Christianity becomes evident: 'When we die to self, we live: when we give up our lives, we find them; when we abandon our pursuit of fulfilment, we are fulfilled.' And so in submission is the path to blessing and for the good of the individual as well as the community.

As Charles Spurgeon says about the Christian faith 'The Faith which saves is not one single act done on a certain day: it is an act continued and persevered in throughout the life of man', so also is the same for submission, a decision which we will have to take and make every single day throughout our life. And may we, by God's grace, practice this true submission from the heart: 'An Attitude of Submission' from which goodness flows into our community and glory is given to the One Above whose authority is sovereign over all.

THOUGHTS AND REFLECTIONS ON BEING A PART OF THE MUSIC & WORSHIP MINISTRY IN UBC

This time of unthinkable pandemics and relative truths only strengthens the power and authority of Jesus Christ over each passing minute and event. It's such a joy that these trying times could not stop us from worshipping Him, not to suggest that there be any more suffering than already is!

As for me, being called to share my gift through UBC Music Ministry has never felt more relevant. I'm truly humbled and challenged but most of all Blessed Beyond Belief through the Music Ministry.

Alleluia! Alleluia! The Majesty and Glory of His Name!
- AKHO CHIELIE

UBC's Music and worship ministry has always taught me the value of fellowship and what constitutes it. It has continually reminded me that there is a role for each one of us in fellowship; regardless of how unqualified or unsuitable we may consider ourselves to be. As someone who has long struggled with maintaining a lifestyle worthy of testimony, God has used UBC's music ministry to guide me towards reconnecting with Him, reassessing myself, and relearning the value of fellowship, in its many forms.

Today, we are facing a visible crisis of roles, where there's a lot of deliberation on the roles-that-ought-to-be (the govt's role, the citizen's, church's, NGO's, etc). How appropriate that we reminded ourselves, just few months back, of the role that Christ played on earth, a role He played to perfection! Perhaps, pursuing Christ-likeness can also mean finding your role and giving it your best.

When this pandemic ends and life crawls back to normalcy, we will all resume different roles in our work and daily lives. As we resume our fellowship too (the physically present kind), may we all find positive roles to play. And in pursuing Christ-likeness, may ours be a church where the acknowledgement of the pious is equally matched by our accommodation of those who've been led astray.
- VISIETSO SAKHRIE YHOSHÜ

We cannot pause life...it goes on (for as long as God allows). Opportunity comes and goes and I am thankful for the opportunity, privileged to be involved in our Church Music and Worship Ministry through the choir. Music is a powerful tool God uses to touch lives. He has used music to lift up my spirit and comfort me, drawing my attention back to Him, helping me communicate with Him even without words. Most of the time the songs I sing with the choir has helped me to worship my God, express praise and gratitude to my Saviour. Sometimes the songs I sing have been my prayer when I am unable to pray.
- RUOPFÜ YHOKHA

Being a part of the Music and Worship Ministry has been an amazing journey especially being in Sanctuary Choir. I am grateful to God for the many lessons learnt. I have learnt to discipline myself and stay rooted in Christ, my Christian heritage. I am grateful for the opportunity given so that through songs I can bring glory to God. Sanctuary Choir has also given me the opportunity to make new friends and helped me to learn the value of meeting my friends' needs. This ministry has opened opportunities to minister to our church congregation and beyond. I am so thankful to our church for giving me and the choir members the privilege to be a part of this ministry. I also want to thank the church for giving so much importance to this ministry.
- THEJANO NEIKHA

Church Music is art of JOY. To the composer, it's the joy of ensembling; to the conductor, it's the joy of directing; to the accompanist, it's the joy of bringing out the melodious sound from the instrument; to the congregation, it's the joy of listening and to the singer, it's the joy of singing and feeling the pleasure of God. It is an honour and privilege to be a part of music ministry and I am immensely blessed.

Singing or playing an instrument is not merely performance, it encompasses all the preparations that goes into the singing or playing a song; from reading and listening to the notes to be sung/played to memorizing the lyrics, listening to devotions and prayers. To be put in one word it is COMMITMENT. Being in the choir and worship team has helped me to experience the beauty of "the body of Christ". Everyone has a part to contribute and when these are synchronized, I believe, is a sweet smelling fragrance of praise to God, the creator of MUSIC.
- ROKOPHENO CHASE

Music ministry has played an integral part in my spiritual growth as a Christian. From singing in the children's choir, the teens choir, the sanctuary choir, to singing with and eventually joining the worship team, singing songs and hymns in the church, God has undoubtedly used the Music Ministry in bringing me closer to Him. There is so much to be thankful for and I hope and pray that the Music Ministry continue to grow and help others connect with our Loving Almighty Father.
- PEZET NEWMAL



Sometimes I ask, "Do I help God when I play piano? Does it expand His kingdom at all?" I do not suppose I have given to God anything He needed from me. It is I, needing Him constantly.

I came across this piece of writing that threw light on my thoughts. Recalling Dr. Parker's words, J.H. Jowett (England's widely acclaimed pastor and preacher of the early decades of the 20th Century) writes, "...As if He needed anything...He may not need us, but does He want us?" Such was the question Dr. Parker asked, about the flowers gathered for him by little hands. "Did he need them? No. Did he want them?...Your little girl kissed you before you left for business this morning. Did you need it?...Did you want it?"

I don't know how much I contribute or if I even contribute anything at all to God's kingdom – but this I know and can confidently say – He fills, He expands (my life), He favours, He restores, He forgives, He redeems, He watches, He loves...He does all the work. And the small part I play is an opportunity to participate in His divine plan!

This is my testimony on being part of Music & Worship Committee, UBC. I conclude with Jowett again "...And so, Almightyness may not need our weakness, but the loving Father wants His children."
- NOSANO KIKHI

Life with music has been amazing, with some serious and humorous memories, memories that I can think back and laugh heartily even when alone. Though I haven't excelled as much as some musicians, I have truly learned and gained so much.

Most of the fond memories have come from the Church Music Ministry that I've been part of for over 10 years now. Music takes many forms but I am grateful and richly blessed to be part of the Gospel music arena which does not look towards fame but towards a changed heart and humility to our Almighty God. I learned not only music but also many life lessons. I've also met wonderful people who love music. The Ministry being a closed knit one, I certainly feel so much at home to the extent where I don't feel awkward even when I make mistakes, like singing my part wrong. (which otherwise seems embarrassing also ehhh!). But apart from all other learnings, the best is the opportunity given to me to be able to minister of His Greatness and Majesty in front of people, which in turn allows me to reflect where I am or where I stand in my life's journey with God. I don't exactly know where I'd fit in Church's many Ministries but I certainly feel refreshed and alive being part of the Music Ministry.
- MEGOSA MOR

'I am not a performer but I am a worshipper' this line changed my whole perspective about my singing. Singing is undeniably one of my passion yet I still struggle to keep it together, stumbling every now and then. But when I am reminded of my identity as a worshipper, I am reminded of its true purpose. I love singing to HIM and for HIM and what a privilege to be able to do so!

Throughout my singing journey, UBC has played an integral part and still continue to do so. Frankly, I do get intimidated with the people in the Music and Worship ministry who are exceptionally gifted but 'inclusiveness' being one word which according to me rightly describes them, has helped someone like me to grow and be nurtured amidst my shortcomings. It is through the platform provided by them that, I get to do what I love to do, SING! I am truly grateful and blessed to be a part of this ministry.
- SEYIEVINUO

Growing up in a not very healthy Christian environment, I was a timid little boy, harbouring so much of bitterness. I freshly remember the times I would cry alone in self disparage. It was the songs that I learned in school and Sunday School that helped calm my inner rage. I've always loved singing. I found peace through singing and listening to music. Music kept me from pouring out my anger on people around me.

It's been thirteen years since I joined Sanctuary Choir. Being part of UBC music ministry has given me the best platform to express the form of worship I love most. Music is one the most beautiful gifts that I thank God for. Let's keep singing. Let's keep making music for His glory.
- RÜKHETUOLIE THEÜNUO



UBC GENERAL REPORT

Niepuu u kehou khrie di uko bu teicie tie puo keze kekrotho mu puo zhapu chü vorkelie la puo za tshe we. Voketa thekhrüko nu u kehou mhatho chükelie kropuo se kezashüzhie.

1. Teicie 2020-u u kehou la theja teicie puo kekreamonyü krüta mu lietho kesa ler kelie la.
 - a. January 12 duü khise kerüsuo kehou nu 2020 – 2023 la UBC Committee kekrekreikecüko la chalie di mhatho sedelie. Mia 80 kezie UBC lietho kekrekücüko (Board/Committee) cha tha mu peta baya.
 - b. January 26 duü PowerComm lietho nu Jemenremela Golmei khashülie mu puo la kecha chülie. Puo bu Ministry Assistant chüba.
 - c. February 9 duü UBC Associate Pastor la Visato Yhoshü install chülie. U kehou nu Associate Pastor se morosuo di se cha kevor nu Kepenuopfü-e puoteitou ki Visato Yhoshü bu vor lietho hau nu kekruohi la kelie la puo thezie ba.
 - d. February 16 duü PowerComm lietho nu Momo Chüsi khashülie mu puo la chalie. Puo rei Ministry Assistant chüba.

2. **January 17-19** ki ABCC Krodi Kehou teiu nu u kehou-e shükiraka kepfhü la kecüca kesepie Hotel puo se. Phichü nhicu Pete kere sie mhachükeshü la mhatho hau chü khrie selie. Hau nunu ngukelie Pete kesa Raka 3,27,370/- ngulie. Kekruohikeshü Pete pezie.

3. **January 26** nhie 2020-2023 UBC Committee tsüphrüko la Nousi Kehou puo kehoulie. U kehou la nounyü kekra kerüchülie.

4. **February 14-16** tei ki Pochury Baptist Association-e Mission Conference puo kehoukecüu nu u kehou bu vo zhapu chülie. Pastor bu khriesarüüko tsali kechü kro puo sa di mia 8 vo Meluri Town Baptist church nu zhapu chülie. Teicie kekra sie nu Mission Conference kehoukecü pu.

5. The Track, UBC Adventure Campsite nu mhathoko chüzhü zo. Ciethie morokesuothoko chülie di mia bu thechüu se sedeta morokesuo le di mhathoko chüzhie. February 22 nhie u kehoue tsu di Campsite nu mechü mhatho (social work) balie. Seibo huo dou wa, tezhie chü mezalie, nha dashü mu kikhe-kimhouko chü kemesalie. Kepekrokelie Pete theja ngu phrelie.

6. **March 27-29** ki "ACCELERATE" idi UBC Mission Conference kehouketuo la kehouchie Pete rhü se ba ru COVID-19 thepeu la mhathochie hau chülie mote. Pastor Atuo Whuorie bu diekepu teiko seketuo rei dojü se ba derei puo puoteiko selie mote. Si shierei March 29 Online kerüsuo kehou teiu nu puo bu diekepu teiu seshü, mu u kehou theja kekra ngulie.

7. **March 24** nhie thepeu la lockdown sedete mu süsie u kehou nu, kehou kekreiko mhie di, mhathochie kekra chülie mo vorte. Sunday Kerüsuo kehouko online nunu keseshü di kikruko bu u kitiekinu nu Niepuu rüsuolie ba. Kemeduo nyako se di morokesuoko chüliekeba la Ukepenuopfü pezie. U kehou nu Audio Visual Team-e puotei hau nu miarhi kepetako keseshükeba la uko pezie. Kehouu la vor keze krodi chü kehoualie kemochie haizo votuo süla Team-u la cha bacie.

Teicie 2020 sedekelie nunu vor thie ketso kijüu nu mha kevi-kesuo kekra seüdzü vorte. Hako Pete nu Khrista kehouu-e hieliezhü zo. Jisu Pitor ki pukeshü die: "A ketsie hau geinu a kehou chütuo; siro Hades kharuko puo penyülie Iho", ikeshüu ketho sekecü si pevi miemieliezhü zo. Kepenuopfü bu khruoshü di UBC-e Khrista kehou puo chü, puo zhapu chüzhü zo moliekenjü we. Niepuu bu puo mhasi mu chatha se u kehouu tsü di puotei kreisekecü ze kese sa voketuo Pete nu puo gei dietho mu puo dieze chü zo tha, puo ze kese üthienyü.

THEPFUKO KROTHO REPORT

January 15: Hanhie 2020 nu thepfuko krotho kehou keriethe-u kehoulie. March 2020 ketso va pengou (5) kehoulie.

January: Ciethie u kehou nu thepfumia u kiya chütuoükeba mia kenie ze keseshü mu keze kecha chülie.

January 17-20: ABCC krodi kehou teiu nu UBC hotel keseu nu mha cha kekruohishülie.

February: U kehou nu ketsakechiemiako mu kechükenyümia mia sorou (6) vasishü mu uko ze kecha chülie.

March 6: ABCC ki kechü-u nu tsu kekruohishülie.

March 21: Kinyi kepfhü la krotho-ue kho Viswema nu thevo biepie zelie.

Mhatho chükelieko Pete la Kepenuopfü thezie bawe.

Keriho Kiso
Chairman, Thepfuko Krotho

THENUKO KROTHO REPORT

1. Teicie mharhü medzi di thenuko krothoe March zha 28 nhie mia 50 mese ki puo tsu Tuophema Baptist Kehou nunu kekrotholie.

2. Vor kesekengulie motaü rei Thursday thenuko kehouteiu nu, kecha nounyüko mu ketholeshü kephrü thupie UBC group nu khashü vorliezhü.

Covid-19 thepeu la teicie mharhü kekreiko chülie mo vorte.

Nino Phizo
Pastor, Thenuko Krotho

UBC MISSION REPORT

JANUARY TO JUNE 2020

1. JANUARY 22: UBC group attended the Chankholagaon Iswar Namghor Baptist Church 25 years Jubilee at Golaghat. The Team was hosted by Nabin Bora's church.



2. JANUARY 23: UBC Group including Mission board members attended the farewell program of Headmaster Mr. Tekaba Ao at Shalom Mission School, Doyapur.



3. JANUARY 25: 4 Members from Dimasa Baptist Church, Doyapur attended the Jubilee program at Nilendra Church in Silchar on behalf of UBC.



5. FEBRUARY 14-16: Pastor Rachulie along with a singing team from UBC attended a Missions Conference organized by the Pochury Baptist Church Council at Baptist Church, Meluri Town.



4. FEBRUARY 2: UBC Mission Board members comprising of Akho Savino, S. Among, Keriho Kiso and Chozule Kikhi attended Pastor Lanuakum Ozukum's ministry licence program at Nagamese Baptist Church, Kevijau.

6. FEBRUARY 19-22: Mission Board members comprising of Akho Savino, Visato Yhosu, S. Among, Keriho Kiso, Medovino Phizo, Ravikhoii Kera, Chozule Kikhi, Megozeno Savino with our evangelist-at-large Rev. Simon Kempfrai including a youth member Kenilezo Kehie conducted a mission field survey trip to Dimasa area, Assam. A total of 7 districts were covered- Peren, Dima Hasao, East Karbi Anglog, West Karbi Anglog, Hojai, Nogaon, Golaghat.

7. MISSION MONTH (MARCH 2020): UBC commemorated the month of March as Mission month under the theme MISSION ACCELERATE 2020 with a line-up of speakers speaking on the subject of Missions in all the five Sundays.

8. March 12-13: Mission Board members comprising of Medovino Phizo, Chozule Kikhi, Keriho Kiso, S Among, and Akho Savino attended the 14th Foundation Day of World Healing Prayer Centre, under the leadership of Pastor Ronjon Chutia at Doomar Dolong, Moranhat, Dibrugarh, Assam.



9. March 29: Although our Mission Conference from March 27-29 had to be cancelled due to the lockdown, Pastor Atuo Whuorie from Baptist Mission Church Kohima was still able to come and deliver the online service message on March 29 (Sunday).



10. April 31: UBC contributed and donated ration supplies to the most needy families in Kevijau Baptist Church. This was carried out again on June 11.

11. June 23: UBC contributed and donated ration supplies to the most needy families in Dimasa Baptist Church, N D Raji, Haflong.

13. CAMBODIA - Adono Krose serves in Pnohm Penh, Cambodia through education, community service, evangelism and running a children's home (Agape Home). She is mainly sponsored by her local church (Baptist Church "A" Medziphema Town) and family, but beginning this year, through ABCC, we are happy to come alongside and play a small role in strengthening her ministry. Since March the government in Cambodia has shut down schools and churches due to COVID 19, and the pandemic has disrupted much of the daily activities and regular ministry activities. The children in Agape Home have all been sent back to their families. Once every month they are called back for fellowship, worship and a meal.





12. KYRGYSTAN - After a long break due to the pandemic, Fountain of Life (FOL) where Adze is volunteering has resumed. FOL ministers to the homeless in Bishkek. It has been a challenging season for our missionary Adze with the death of their homeless friends and another friend getting tested positive with COVID-19.



Dear prayer partners,

Philippians 4:8

"Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things."

And Romans 12:12 *"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer."*

These verses have been a reminder for me to hope, rejoice and be faithful in prayer in moments like this, when every thing seems to be in chaos.

I value all your prayers and I want to encourage you all to hope, rejoice and remain faithful in prayer.

Your prayers are not in vain. They are always with me and I want to testify that in and through your prayers I am always strengthened and encouraged to do what I am doing today. I am not alone. You are with me in this work.

Please continue to pray:

- For FOL day center. The process of getting license for the hospice (for the homeless cancer patients) is taking longer than expected. Please pray that without further delay it will be granted.
 - It is sad that some of our homeless friends died last month. Please pray for the homeless and those in need. Pray that God would provide for them especially at this time.
 - Pray for the Kyrgyz medical professionals and those who are sick. Please pray especially for my friend Aidana who has tested positive with COVID-19 last week and is in the hospital.
 - Pray for God's people in Kyrgyzstan to find strength, hope, love and joy regardless of circumstances in Christ. For comfort and rest in Christ for all believers.
 - After a long break, our work at FOL has started again. Please continue to pray for all the staff and volunteers. For His divine protection and strength over all of us and our families.
- Thank you. God bless!!
In Him,

Adze Nakhro

NHICUKO KROTHO REPORT

UBC Nhicuko Krotho tsie ketso chü vor kelieko



1. **Doshü (January) zha 17-19** ki ABCC Krodi kehou teiu nu nhicukomia 22 vo tsali nu zhapu chülie
2. **Doshü zha 25** nhie Angami Baptist Nhicuko Krotho (ABNK) keseko keseshü di kicha keseko mu rüna nu nhicuko krotho mehoyakezhako vor UBC nunu nousi kehou balie mu Kepethako ruopfü kitsa chatha huo khapie uko chülie.
3. **Kezei (February) zha 2** duü UBC nhicuko khadou sedelie
4. **Kera (March) zhadoudo kerieu** nu khadou 10 mu 11 kephrü khashütoü keba nhicuko mia 24 ki vo uko ze kecha chülie.
5. **Kera zha 8** duü nhicuko mia 22 chü kerükrie pie Khriesarüü krotho nu khashülie
6. **Kera zha 13** nhie kepetha kechü zho mu si ba morokesuo chatha huo pie nhicuko kepetha miasako tsüshülie.
7. **Ketshü (April) zha 5** duü nhicunomia kropuo bu kehou-u kelu, huonihuo hü mu chü kethepfukecü die huo mirhi kepeta nu pekieshülie.
8. **Ketshü zha 12** duü nhicunomia 8 bu "Because He Lives (Amen) tsaliu mirhi kepeta nunu zhapu chülie.
9. **Cacü (May) zha 3** duü nhicunuoko Sunday nhie Kethoeshü dsesikelieko nunu uko dzie mhathoko mirhi kepeta nunu pekieshülie.
10. **Cacü 17 mu 24** duü nhicunomia kropuo bu khise kerüsuo teiu nu "Stand Still" mu "Joshua" tsali hanie se zhapu chüshülie
11. **Cadi (June) zhadoudo kenieu** mu seu nu kepethako nhicuko ze kese di class balie mota zorei fon chüpie UBC nu vorlieyakezha nuonuo petekhre ze kerüchüshü mu uko ze kecha chülie.
12. **Kera zha 22** nhie nu sede di u khapfü baketa tei hau nu Sunday School kephrücako (lessons) whatsapp nunu ketsepie nhicuko tsüshülie.



DANIEL



ISAIAH



THE ROAD TO EMMANUEL





COMPASSION MINISTRY REPORT

January 03: Nutritional Support Program (monthly ration distribution) resumes. Total number of beneficiary families as of 2020: Twenty-three beneficiary families (Five families being newly included under this program).

March 05-13: First quarterly home-visitation to the Twenty three-beneficiary family's home.

March 15: UBC Compassion Sunday observed in the morning service.

Seyievinuo



PowerComm.

...for every nation, tongue and tribe

February: Full Time staff

Mrs. Jemenremia (Arem) LongcharGolmei and Mr. Tamreimung (Momo) Chüsi joins PowerComm. as full-time staff. Arem will lead the Crossroads Ministry and Momo will be leading the new PowerComm. Youth Ministry. A few words from the new staff:



First of all, I thank God for this once in a lifetime opportunity to serve him. Thank You also to UBC Kohima, for the privilege and the honor to serve God through PowerComm. Thank you for believing in me and trusting me with what God has started through you. It has been a major pleasure for me to be part of what God is doing in PowerComm. I also want to thank you all for making me feel at home here. I know I am not far from home but you are all new to me, however you made me feel like I belong here. I am grateful to you all for creating that environment for me. God bless you all.

~ Momo Chüsi



There's something miraculous that happens when God's Word speaks to you from heart to heart. God showed His faithfulness and compassion in my life, as He answered my prayers by bringing comfort and provision for me and my family. What a blessing to serve God who cares about each and every one. If I am being real, to serve at PowerComm. under UBC is only because of God's great mercy and grace. I am immensely thankful to God and all of you by accepting me into your family to serve, learn, unlearn and grow deeper into a relationship with Him. This is my prayer that we will all strive to become an imitator of God by walking in love as Christ loved us. That we will be a Gospel-Centered Church driven by Love for God and others which leads to joyful obedience that points back to God.

~ Arem Longchar Golmei

February 16: Installation of New Core Leaders 2020-2023

Fourteen leaders join the PowerComm leadership team as Core & Team Leaders for the term, 2020-2023.

February 25:

Prayer Night
The new core leaders and members came together for a night of prayer to pray for the 2020-year plans and ministries.





March 12-16: Mission trip to Mapao Zingtun: A short report.

The Imphal-Mapao Zingtun trip was a result of a growing realization within the church members of the need and responsibility for outreach. The opportunity came as an invitation from members of the church in the village of Mapao Zingtun, on the outskirts of Imphal, to PowerComm. to partner in their first Youth Camp. The plan also grew with the addition of a visit to one of the main English services in the city of Imphal by the Manipur Baptist Convention. This inclusion was with the intention to introduce, open and foster relationships with the church communities there so as to learn of and from each other, as well as to encourage one another.



The team consisting of 13 members participated and ministered through worship leading, sharing testimonies and sharing the word of God in the camp. One of the highlights of the camp, was on the last evening where we took the session in the open football ground and had an extended time of worship. Apart from the youth camp, the team also got the opportunity to visit and lead the morning assembly at the Needy Home Academy, an orphanage at Mapao Zingtun.



At Imphal, the team visited the Laymen's home fellowship and ministered through songs and sharing. And on Sunday, the Manipur Baptist Convention service was given over to the team to lead worship and to share the word of God. The interaction after the church service with the Pastor and the team there was meaningful and enriching.



The team was really blessed in the ways that God used all the things we learned in our journey as a community as well as our personal journeys, personalities and talents to minister to the people and communities we encountered at Mapao and Imphal. The trip was not just an opportunity to minister but the team also learned so many things along the journey. With this experience now, the church looks forward to more opportunities to go out, reach out and minister as God would lead us to. Our deepest gratitude to the team, as well as all the individuals and families that aided us in making this outreach a possibility.

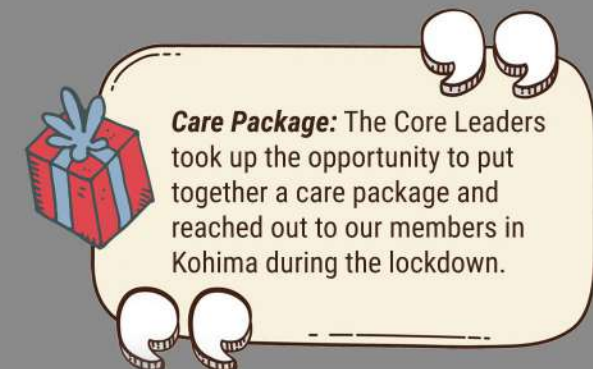
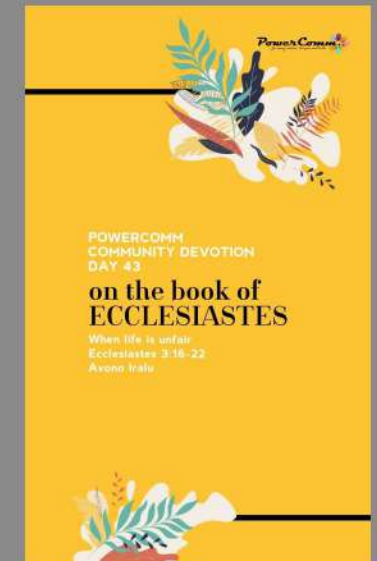


PowerComm Lockdown Church

As soon as the lockdown began, we took our worship service online. We also explored and tried to find creative ways to keep in touch with our members. Some highlights of our lockdown church:

Online Sunday Service: Every Sunday we met over YouTube and WhatsApp and other online tools to worship together. To help us feel a little more connected during the lockdown, we also invited families and members of our community to share brief greetings and updates, as well as participate in bible reading, special and worship songs and sermons from the preaching team. We are currently journeying through an exciting sermon series titled, 'God: a journey of unravelling the mystery'. Most of our members have also been participating in 'Prayer watch', chain of prayer every Sunday to pray for different needs. Another highlight of our Sunday worship is the 'Prayer Conference Call', with the core leaders reaching out to all our members to hear from them and to pray with them. Our church members' children also continue to take up their Bible lessons at home led by their parents, who faithfully stewarded and nurtured this ministry.

Daily Devotionals: Our daily devotionals writing began with different ones contributing from our church for more than a month and then moved on to study the Book of Ecclesiastes taken up by the preaching team.



let your light shine... LIGHTHOUSE

LIGHTHOUSE REPORT JAN- JUN 2020

JANUARY

Teicie kesau zedi youth nu teicie se thepie pfülavoketuo la themia hako kedalie-

Secretary- Tenojonü John

Publicity and Events Information Secretary- Puja Dey

Sports Secretary- Ilung Hiekha

Hospitality i/c- Elivino Kennao

Home Group Co-ordinator- Kenilezo Kehie

Club Ignite- Vitoto Sakhrie & Rokovinuo Kielienyü

Advisors- Zhapuvi Liegise (Ex-Youth Chairman),
Dr Puse Liegise (Deacon), Victor Pucho

17th -20th Jan: ABCC Krodi kehou teiu nu youth ko huomia rei sa tsu UBC hotel kesu nu kekhuohilie.

FEBRUARY

2nd Feb: Hanhie 2020 nu youth service kerietu-u kehoulie

10th- 12th Feb: Khadu 11 mu 12 board exam khashü taü ba kecü youth tsüphrüko mia 28 kinu vo u ze keseshü mu uko la kecha chülie

22nd Feb: Lighthouse Youth Alive ministry ze kekhe di youth tsüphrüko mia kropuo tsu the Track nu social work nu kepekrolie

29th Feb: Youth tsüphrüko mia 17 UBC nu Audio Visual crash course nu kedojü lielie

MARCH

8th March: Sunday school mia 22 promote chüpie youth nu chüshü

14th March: Kohima Baptist Youth Fellowship (KBYF) combined service UBC nunu kehoulie mu hanu mia 180 vor kepekrolie. Kehou sie kecükekrie kesepi kevor ko tsüshü lie

14th March: Youth Alive va kenieu piebalie. Razhü point nu footpath khie railings ko paint chü kesa lashülie siro Razhü point mu Kohima local ground nie donu kerhu ko pa mu chükemesa shü.

MAY

1st May - Bayavü, Tanquist, Keziekie area cell group ko lockdown teiu nu jü mu tsopfhü keba kikru 11 vaphishülie. Mha haiekcü kropuo pie uko tsüshü-1 plate of Eggs, 1kg sugar, 1 kg Dal, 250g tea leaf, 3 varieties of Biscuit, 6 pieces of bathing soap and 1 toothpaste

2nd May - D'block, New Market mu Daklane cell group, EDIFY-e lockdown teiu nu colony se nu (Nagabazar, New Market and Daklane) volunteers chü meri kebako la refreshment keshü lie. Siro hand sanitizers rei pie uko tsüshü.

6th May - BOC, AG ,Lerie mu New Ministers Hill (BLAN) cell group ko refreshment kesepie Khuzama Check Gate nu policeko mu medical team nu duty bakecuko tsüshü lie.

JUNE

4th June - UBC ko Quarantine centres nu kebako la mhaca kecü nu youth ko mia 30 mese mhachü kekhuohi shülie.

21st June - Youth ko mia pengu keze Meriema Quarantine Centre nu open air zhapu chülie

25th June - Lighthouse zanu mask 75 terhü pie Police Border gate duty nu kebako tsüshülie.

*UBC youth nu tsüphrüpfü puo, Kezhienuo Kulnu, Shalom Bible Seminary, Sechü-Zubza nu theology phrü tuoü zhie. Süla youth koe teicie puo puo sponsor chüketuo pepilie. Mu youth ko mia 29 kinu keneisephra raka 88,000 nguliete.

COVID 19-u la ciethie mharhü kekra chülie mote derei mha huoyo chükelie ko la rei Niepuu thezieya we. Nieko kehoupurei youth ministry la kekhuohi keshü ko pezie.

Megozeno Savino,
Asst. Pastor, Youth.

At Meriema
Quarantine Centre

KBYF
Combined
Fellowship



Youth Alive va kenieu

