

# COVENANT BAPTIST CHURCH DIMAPUR

# ANNUAL MAGAZINE 2023-2024

*"Doers of the Word"* James 1:22



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COVENANT BAPTIST CHURCH DIMAPUR

*Annual Magazine*

2023-2024



# Editorial Desk

**DR. KINDY NEWMAI**  
Chairperson, Editorial Committee

There is a time for everything, the author of Ecclesiastes writes, a season for every activity. As we navigate our way into the new year and 2024 becomes a collection of memories and lessons that stay with us, it is a good time to reflect on how we can strengthen our walk with God this year. How we, as a church, can be more impactful this year. How we, as individuals, can be more present for one another this year. This edition has interesting articles on how secularism has hijacked our traditional Christmas celebrations and reduced it to a counterfeit Christmas. Another article sheds light on the alarming secularism and traditionalism that is seeping through Christianity and how we can rise to be a counterculture. We read about how one scientist's faith stands when it is questioned by science. I am confident that the reader will be edified by all the articles in this issue.

I am grateful to the Editorial Committee- the backbone behind every publication- Dr. Avilie Nisa, Imtinukshi Jamir, Neipekreizo Kesiezie and Tiaba Pongener.

The author of Ecclesiastes writes further, "a time to be silent and a time to speak". I believe it is time for the church to wake up and take a stand for Christ- in our families, in our workplaces, in our church. It is not time to play safe and be politically correct. It is time to find our voices in Christ and offend the world that rejects Him.

May we find our boldness in Him.







# Keeping Christ in Christmas

PASTOR YABANG LONGKUMER

Imagine this...it is your birthday party, hundreds of guests have come for the celebration that you have painstakingly organised. Everyone on the guest list shows up and seemingly appreciates the grand decor, the scrumptious food spread and not to forget the impressive entertainment lineup. Everybody is having a splendid time except you. All your guests have chosen to ignore you and your efforts. In fact they don't remember how they got there? What the event is about? Oblivious that it is your birthday! What a sad depressing thought that is! Hard to imagine or is it?

To be honest, this thought is not far from reality when we think about Christmas. We all know what day of the year Christmas falls on, we look forward to it and the celebration that lead up to the big day... but how many of us know the 'True' meaning of Christmas. Imagine this from Jesus's perspective... being ignored on your birthday. I am sure that a majority of us know the answer already, but the question still remains- What is Christmas without Christ?

Christmas comes once in a year, celebrations begin a month earlier which involves gatherings, dinner parties, gifting, decorations etc. There is nothing wrong in that but as believers we should not forget the true essence of Christmas. So, how do we keep Christ this Christmas?

Sometimes I like to wonder what the Shepherds and the three wise men felt as they witnessed baby Jesus. The Bible tells us that they rejoiced and that the three wise men decided to not go to King Herod as planned. I would like to imagine that prior to them meeting baby Jesus their lives would have been very different. The shepherds were considered of low stature in society. Also, shepherding was a lonely job as they spent a greater part of their time in the fields tending the sheeps alone. On the other hand, the three wise men were regarded as highly respected and knowledgeable patrons because of their travels and discoveries along their somewhat lonely journeys. I wonder

how many of us can relate to their experience, cold and lonely, seeking answers in the wrong places with the wrong people. Must be very similar to Christmas without Christ. Many people celebrate Christmas without keeping Christ at the centre. Thankfully there is hope, allow me to take us back to the story of what happened after the shepherds and the three wise men witnessed the birth of Jesus. The Bible says in *Luke 2:20*, "The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told". And in *Matthew 2:10-11*, "When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh".

There is a dramatic change in them from hopelessness to hope, from despair to peace. Being in the presence of Jesus brought the joy of worship in their hearts. It must have been such a transformative experience for them. Friends, what the Shepherds and the three wise men experienced that day captures the rapture of Christmas, allowing Jesus to be born in our hearts. I do believe that after their encounter they must have resumed their normal lives but wiser, stronger in faith and hope because the Savior of the world reigned in their hearts.

The only way that you and I can keep Christ this Christmas and all the Christmas's to come, is to revisit the manger. Just like the shepherds and the three wise men who were filled with joy as they worshipped Jesus, we can also achieve the same. We can do so when we let go of our pride and sinful nature, repent and receive Jesus into our lives. Until and unless Jesus is born in your heart, this celebration will come and go but will have no significance to us. As a child of God, let us not be in the habit of keeping Christ during Christmas or Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Resurrection Sunday but every day till the day He calls us. "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life" *John 3:16*.

# Counterfeit Christmas

**DR. SAMUEL WATI**

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Counterfeit is inevitable. Isn't it? In fact, the more valuable an entity, perhaps the more susceptible it is to be counterfeited! Every genuine product has a counterfeit, and that is the reason we have state protection laws of sorts, including intellectual property rights, etc, in order to check counterfeits. On one hand, a counterfeit is something or someone not genuine. It is unreal, imitation, or forged. It is made or copied to resemble close to the original; if not, make it identical! Counterfeiting, in its essence, is not simply imitating, but at its core, is to deceive people. Counterfeit products are often lower quality than the real thing, and even dangerous. Counterfeit food, drink, and medicines can easily kill people. On the other hand, authentic, genuine, real, etc., comes to mind when we think of something of original value, original products, original services, etc. Original products may, at times, be defective, but this does not deter people from preferring original products.

The post-modern philosophical agenda has succeeded in areas such as questioning and deconstructing even the basic tenets of life and truths. And so, the shifting of the objective reality to subjective interpretation has its impact on the way people look at - gender, family, relationships, life, church, and the Truth itself. So then, the question is: are we more or less confused with this newfound relativist perspective of life? Like it or not, we also live in a time of "quick-fixes", "one-time-use-and-throw," and "at-a -push-of-a-button" generation. Lately, the mantra to success, especially in the post-COVID reality, is "DIY - Do It Yourself" and match that with ever-increasing, much sought-after 'Self-help books' (and Gurus). Adding on

such a phenomenon of focusing on oneself with an insatiable thirst for newer, cheaper, faster, bigger things the market can provide is, to me, a perfect receipt and compelling environment to fake and counterfeit anything under the sun.

Besides the material counterfeits, I wonder whether we have counterfeit ideas and people amidst us. Possible? I believe philosophies, religion, and god—Jesus Christ are all the more counterfeitable, given their popularity and glamour. What about the age-old, century-after-century claims made by scores of personalities to be Jesus Christ reincarnate; from Rhys Evans in the 17<sup>th</sup> century to Alan John Miller in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? In fact, 2 Corinthians 11:14 says, "and no wonder, for Satan himself, masquerades as an angel of light!". What do these scenarios leave us with?

Should all these be a fraction of the counterfeit possibilities surrounding us? How often have we tried to examine Christmas, which we celebrate with much passion and fervor, evidently weeks before (Advents) the event? How original is the Christmas content in our celebration today? John 8:31-32 says, "to the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, if you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." Hence, how true is our Christmas today?

Britannica describes Christmas as a ... "Christian festival celebrating the birth of Jesus. The English term *Christmas* ("mass on Christ's day") is of fairly recent origin. The corresponding terms in other languages are *Navidad* in Spanish, *Natale* in Italian, *Noel* in French—all probably denote "nativity" etc. However, not getting into the

nitty-gritty of Christmas Day, let us focus on the essence of Christmas and examine how close we are to the purpose and content of Christmas. It is indeed the birth of God's only Son – Jesus Christ, who came to give love, joy, hope, and peace. The Bible says that humans were separated from God because of sin, and there was no way but to have a saviour who would take on the penalty of sin. This coming of the one and only saviour God in the form of Jesus Christ to be born on earth as a man, live, die, and rise again to reconcile man back to God is the one and only significance of Christmas. Therefore, on a day such as Christmas Day, how do we as individuals, families, churches, and the Christian communities observe this supernatural event?

Against the backdrop of these considerations, let us examine three (3) contextual realities beneath the superficiality of Christmas Celebrations in our homes and churches in Nagaland:

## 1. Consumerism

Beneath the frenzy of shopping and pompous decorations is a sad reality of our Naga society: We are a poverty-stricken society. I had an acquaintance with a young administrator in Dimapur from mainland India who confided (for fear of being impolite) in me that Naga society is an extremely impoverished state. However, one has to look beyond the outer lustre to see this reality. According to him, a majority of government employees are living hand-to-mouth with no additional source of income for the family. Most families live with no safety nets financially. Deeply sucked into consumerism and all outward display. Hence, an apparently stable family is easily destabilized by just a small emergency or crisis in a family. Yes, some may still argue that it is okay to splurge once in a while –Christmas! However, splurging with all that one has is counterproductive. Still, some could argue that Nagas are a communitarian society and do not mind generous gifting and donating. But then, if we look at Associations and churches today, it is entrenched in flaunting records or gifting. So then, the very rationale behind any form of giving is at stack with such practices in the society. Or is it not so? Counterfeit Christmas is, in a way, lavishing on facades that really do not matter. So then, a counterfeit test is: Are you giving meaningful gifts or just buying things to meet expectations?

## 2. Tradition

Tradition is an indispensable part of society. Sociologists would say that it is the vehicle on which human civilization travels. Tradition is what keeps a society alive and strong if founded on age-old values and principles. Christmas, for that matter, is a wonderful tradition for the Christian community to commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ. However, the



**Counterfeit Christmas is, in a way, lavishing on facades that really do not matter.**

commercialization of Christmas has taken over the essence of tradition today. Santa Claus's visit, competitive exotic gifts – treats, Christmas tree lighting, sights of decorated reindeer sleigh, stars and cakes of all shapes and sizes, the unending slaughter of pigs, and good flow of liquor etc seem to have taken over most excitements in a 'christmas gathering'. Habit to a person is what tradition is to a society. It's the habits that make or break a person, so also, a tradition, if not appropriated rightly, will cause societal chaos. In line with what Socrates said, that "an unexamined life is not worth living", traditions also need to be examined, as it has a conditioning effect on both young and old. In order to escape the attack of the counterfeit Christmas, Christians (churches) ought to first critically examine the age-old traditions and align every step with the word of the living God. Any form of superficiality and blinded adherence to traditions should be questioned and rectified. This can begin from the outwardnesses down to the core of biblical teaching on the divinity and the humanity of Jesus at Christmas. Isaiah 9:6 says for to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. So then, a counterfeit test is: are you seeking real peace or just avoiding conflict for the sake of convenience and tradition?

## 3. Busybodies

A person who meddles in the affairs of others is called a busybody, which is in contrast to a person busy at work (minding his/her business). All echelons of Naga society seem to come alive during Christmas—sometimes using year-end as a bonus excuse, but mostly in the name of Christmas fellowships.



With bigger-the-better social events and hand-picked-people parties in the name of Christmas, a normal Christian family in Nagaland is literally tattered between church - neighborhood - association - family, and friend. It is worth examining whether relationships take deeper roots through such gatherings or if one is caught up unaware in the unceasing honors of host-guest syndrome. Being fiercely busy is sometimes good, but in the midst of such busyness, if the essence of Christmas is lost, then a default counterfeit Christmas comes into play in all such social gatherings. Matt 7:21-23 says, 'not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' Then again, a counterfeit test: Are you showing true love or merely fulfilling social norms and personal desires as a busybody?

In order to escape Counterfeit Christmas, Christmas time ought to be spent as a reminder to reflect on the authenticity of our relationships with man and God and focus on the true meaning and values Christmas brings. This thought should help us go beyond the surface level and pursue genuine love and peace through introspection and understanding of one's own condition without Christ (Christmas). It's a call to rediscover the true meaning of the season—whether through spiritual reflection, loving-kindness, generosity, or simply taking the time to connect with those who matter to us and who need us the most. This analogy of Counterfeit Christmas invites us to reflect on our own relationship(s) and Christmas celebrations. Are we truly embracing the values behind these important aspects of life, or are we merely going through the motions and relying on superficial expressions that leave us feeling empty? The antidote is to strive for authenticity in love, in Christmas, and in every aspect of our lives. Only by seeking the real thing can we experience the contentment and joy that Christmas is meant to bring. Genuine affection, love, and sacrifices among men ought not to be reduced to mere gestures or obligations.

Looking back at Christmas' celebrated in my life, one that stands tall is my first experience of visiting a terminally ill hospice in Mumbai with a few church friends. The tradition was to sing carols for them as tenderly as we could since some of them were indeed very feeble. Few inmates showed interest, few were indifferent, but some had a strange look on their faces. Perhaps, the songs were never heard of! That day, I was not sure whether any souls were blessed through the carols we sang, but for me, a life-transforming thought went through my mind. A closer

look at the reality of dying. The futile reality of life and the fate we are all destined to meet sooner or later. What a meaningful Christmas I had and what sheer gratitude to have health and life. Indeed, even life forevermore- all because of Christmas. It is said that, specifically, trained people who look for counterfeit money do not keep checking for fake money. They perhaps cannot find all the fake stuff out there. Instead, they study the real money so well so that when they encounter counterfeit money, they automatically spot it right on. They know that it's a fake because they recognize the real thing very well. We cannot possibly study all sorts of counterfeit Christmas celebrations. Perhaps only our moment-by-moment, day-to-day walk, that experiential knowledge about Jesus Christ, will help us recognize the counterfeit Christmas. Jesus was comfortable with people from all socio-economic and cultural walks of life - all social outcasts - thieves, prostitutes, liars, learned/illiterate, rich/poor, but Jesus could not stand the hypocrites - the Pharisees and Sadducees - the counterfeits. May we all be blessed to be comfortable with Jesus this Christmas.



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# Hospitality at the Heart of Ministry

AR. HITOKALI NISA

**W**hen I accepted the call to be the leader of the hospitality committee, it seemed easy enough because I enjoyed cooking, making my house look beautiful, setting a polished table and procuring flourishes for my guests. I thought hospitality was all about the food, the place settings and the overall presentation. But blessedly, God has been reshaping my view of hospitality over the years. It's not about entertaining or perfection at all. It's really about creating a space where others feel loved, welcomed and most importantly—able to encounter God.

*"Hospitality as a ministry is about welcoming others into God's presence"*

In the Bible, we are told in *1 Pet. 4:9* to "show hospitality to one another without grumbling." *Rom. 12:13* instructs us to, "Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality." *1 Tim. 5:10* praises the woman who has "brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted and has devoted herself to every good work."

Jesus also gave us a glimpse of his heart of hospitality in *Matt. 11:28-29*, "Come to me...learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in heart." He shows us that the invitation of hospitality is an invitation into a heart that puts people at ease, makes them the most important person, and therefore creating a space where they can grow as a disciple. Christine Pohl says this, "Hospitality is not so much a task as a way of living our lives and of sharing ourselves...Hospitality is not first a duty and responsibility; it is first a response of love and gratitude for God's welcome to us...hospitality is simply love in action."

*"Hospitality happens as we imitate Jesus, welcoming others into a heart of gentleness and humility."*

Hospitality ministry hence is all about: laying out the "red-carpet" welcoming the people in our church as a representative of our congregation. I am blessed to be involved in one of the most enjoyable areas of the church ministry that involves meeting new people, sharing personal warmth and joy inspired by God, and enjoying a fun experience together.

One of the wonderful things I have experienced in serving others in the church is that the whole church family is involved! The excitement and anticipation of sharing good food and

interesting conversation spurs our church members/team to work together. In order to host buffets for special occasions, we organize, plan, and clean together. It's a means of working hand-in-hand towards a shared goal. While we work towards blessing others, we receive a real sense of fun and blessing ourselves.

Hospitality is indeed a wonderful gift that can be a blessing to both the giver and the recipient. When we open our homes and hearts to others, we are inviting them into a space where they can experience the love of God. I think about how God invites us to His table, how He prepares a place for us, even when we don't deserve it. Hospitality, at its core, is a reflection of that divine invitation. I am learning that when we make it a priority to practice hospitality, we show kindness, love, and genuine concern for others, relationships with our family and those we serve. It grows us in our unity as a family by working together to bless others and helps us cultivate relationships with those who we are serving.

The beauty and strength of hospitality is that, whether on the giving or the receiving end, there is potential for great growth and blessing. Community can be strengthened.

*"Hospitality is the fastest way to grow a church into a stronger community"*

Cultivating hospitality is a journey of both giving and receiving, where we are privileged to serve as the hands and feet of Jesus while also experiencing the profound joy and blessing that comes from doing so. I am reminded that our efforts in hospitality are ultimately not about our own abilities or resources but about allowing God to work through us to touch the lives of others. As we open our homes and hearts, we also open the door to transformative experiences that can challenge and deepen our faith.

As a leader, I may fall short in many areas but I am grateful for how God has opened my heart to the need for hospitality with renewed commitment, inspired by Scripture and motivated by love.

May our efforts (the Hospitality team) bring glory to God and draw others closer to Him, as we live out the call to love our neighbors as ourselves. And in doing so, become living testimonies of God's unfailing hospitality, a beacon of hope and grace in a world in desperate need of both.

# 6 Reasons Why Corporate Prayer is Powerful and Essential

A summary inspired by an article by *Becky Harling*

**T**hroughout church history, God's people have gathered for corporate prayer. In fact, many of the greatest revivals started as believers joined together in community prayer meetings. In the early church, believers met often – sometimes daily – for prayer and worship.

In our present culture of busyness, we have lost a bit of the urgency of corporate prayer meetings.

What exactly is corporate prayer? Corporate prayer is simply the church praying together as one. As the leader suggests various topics, the participants pray together for those suggested topics. When we gather together and combine our prayers as one body of Christ the results are powerful.

## What does the bible teach about corporate prayer?

“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them” (Matthew 18:20). In the book of Acts, we see the early church gathering regularly for the purpose of prayer (Acts 2:40-47). At times they gathered daily. As they faithfully prayed, God came among them and worked mighty miracles in response to their faithfulness. Corporate prayer was foundational and a core value of the early church.

## What Does Corporate Prayer Do?

### 1. Corporate Prayer Unifies the Body of Christ

Corporate prayer connects us around a common purpose; seeking God's heart. As we seek Him together there is solidarity. We're not all pulling in our own direction. Our prayers become less selfish and more focused on God's will and purpose for our lives and the lives of others.

### 2. Corporate Prayer Edifies and Encourages Those Who Participate

When we gather together to pray and seek the heart of God, individual hearts are encouraged. Life is hard and our difficulties are many. Individuals within the group may be struggling with trials too personal to mention but as they pray in unity with other believers, their hearts are re-focused on almighty God. Their faith is strengthened by remembering His grace and goodness. The Holy Spirit brings them reassurance and comfort through the prayers of others. This is why the wise writer of Hebrews reminds us to not forsake meeting together (Hebrews 10:25).

### 3. Corporate Prayer Disciples Believers in Prayer

As believers gather together for prayer, those who are newbies to the faith are able to learn from those who are mature in their faith. As those who are new to the faith listen to others praying, they will learn prayer techniques such as praying Scripture, listening in silence for God's response, interceding on behalf of others, and methods of praising and worshipping God. In essence, they will be disciplined in prayer.

### 4. Corporate Prayer Strengthens Weakened Faith

When our faith is fragile and doubt is creeping in, corporate prayer and worship can strengthen us as we lean into the faith of others. Often when prayers go seemingly unanswered for a long time, doubt creeps in. When we pray with other believers and experience God moving it strengthens our hearts to wait on Him for our own answers. Surrounding ourselves with strong prayer warriors strengthens our faith and even brings healing.



**5. Corporate Prayer Can Facilitate Corporate Repentance**

Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel all modeled repentance as part of corporate prayer (Ezra 7:10, Nehemiah 9:2, Daniel 9:11). When we engage in corporate confession, each of us as individuals are cleansed and forgiven for our sins and there is a fresh awakening to the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. As a result, often revival is unleashed.

**6. Corporate Prayer Creates a Sense of Expectancy**

Expectancy is a Biblical concept. In Psalm 5, David wrote, "In the morning, LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly" (Psalm 5:3).

As believers continue to regularly gather for intentional times of corporate prayer a sense of anticipation arises. People become excited to have these prayer meetings, expecting to

see God show up and answer. As folks witness God answering the prayers of others, their sense of hope builds and they wait with expectation for God to answer their own requests. A unified Biblical mindset of faith develops.

*"We are too busy to pray, and so we are too busy to have power. We have a great deal of activity, but we accomplish little; many services but few conversions; much machinery but few results."*

**R. A. Torrey**



**CBCD weekly prayer meeting is held at 5:00 pm on Wednesdays at church hall. Everyone is welcome to the prayer fellowship.**

# Prayer Meeting

## Testimonies

"Prayer meeting helps me to build fellowship with one another for spiritual care. I find great joy in openly sharing my personal prayer points. When I lead the prayer fellowship, it really helps me to build leadership skills."

*Shahnur Zaman (Prabhu)*

When I was younger I thought it was an "old people" habit to attend weekly church prayer meetings. As I grew older and God drew me nearer, I understood that it is our responsibility – young and old alike- to uphold the church in prayer and take part in corporate prayer. A church that doesn't pray together is a powerless church filled with superficial activities. Making time to attend prayer meetings has required making adjustments with my work timing and other activities, but it is an adjustment that has disciplined me and my husband and blessed us both as a couple and in our personal spiritual growth.

*Kindy Newmai*

Attending CBCD's weekly prayer meeting has been a profound blessing in my life. Through these meetings, I've experienced growth in my spiritual journey, and I'm reminded how important it is to share each other's burdens and pray together as believers. Witnessing how God has answered prayers in others' lives has also inspired me to live out my faith more fully and to be more prayerful in every circumstance. It's amazing how attending these short meetings can make you feel lighter, more hopeful, and reassured that I am not alone in my walk with God.

*Neipekreizo Kesiezie*

"Every Wednesday, I am reminded of God's goodness, faithfulness and love as we gather to pray and share our testimonies. I feel incredibly blessed to be part of this prayer meeting as I consider this a sacred space to feel seen, heard and loved. Personally, this meeting is a source of strength and encouragement because of all the testimonies I get to hear from other attendees. I cherish these intimate moments we share with each other. It feels like a lovely family prayer meeting at home."

*Gloria*

# Tending to Future Fruit: Reflections from Working with Youth

**MRS. KEWI PFUNO**  
ASSOCIATE PASTOR, YOUTH



**A**s I reflect on my journey with the youth, I am reminded of the diverse motivations that drive individuals to seek God. In this article, I'd like to share my observations and insights, highlighting three distinct groups of seekers.

## THE RELUCTANT SEEKERS

We encounter young people who attend church services begrudgingly, often due to external pressures from parents, guardians, or hostel rules. They may enter unprepared, ungroomed, and late, preferring to sit at the back and slip out unnoticed after the service. Their hearts seem far from genuinely seeking God.

However, I've witnessed remarkable transformations within this group. Some have surrendered their lives to Christ, testifying that initial reluctance gave way to a deepening faith. One youth shared, "I initially attended church because of hostel rules, but through the messages and fellowship, I began to seek God genuinely." Another testified, "I was reluctant at first, but the Word of God spoke directly to my heart, and now I eagerly look forward to services."

This reminds us that God's sovereignty knows no bounds. Matthew 15:7-10 cautions us against superficial faith: "You hypocrites! ... These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules." Jesus quotes Isaiah 29:13, emphasizing the importance of genuine devotion.

II Corinthians 9:7 encourages willing generosity, not compulsion: "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." Let us ponder our motivations and ensure our hearts are fully engaged in our worship.

## THE PERSONAL SEEKERS

A second group of youths attends church with a deep sense of longing. They recognize something is missing in their lives and seek answers to life's profound questions. Psalm 34:4 illustrates God's deliverance: "I sought the Lord, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears."

The story of the Samaritan woman (John 4:1-42) exemplifies genuine seekers going beyond surface-level faith. Jesus' encounter with her reveals the depth of God's knowledge and love. This woman's and the Samaritan people's transformation (v. 40-42) inspires us to look beyond mere attendance and seek a personal, life-changing relationship with Christ.

Our connection with God involves:

- Personal experiences of His presence and guidance
- Meditation on His Word
- Prayer, seeking His will and wisdom
- Community, growing alongside fellow believers

Many young people come to church because they are thirsty and seeking answers. I remember a youth sharing, "I was struggling with anxiety, but through prayer and fellowship, I found peace." Another testified, "I sought God's guidance for my career, and He showed me a clear path."

The Personal Seekers go beyond church gatherings, beneficial podcasts, and motivational speeches because they are genuinely hungry for a deeper connection with God. They:

- Attend Bible studies and small groups
- Participate in prayer meetings
- Seek mentorship from spiritual leaders
- Engage in personal devotions and reflection

Psalms 42:1-2 expresses the longing of the Personal Seekers: "As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God." May we cultivate this depth of desire in our pursuit of God.

### THE CONCERNED SEEKERS

The largest and most encouraging group consists of young people who demonstrate selflessness and concern for others. They pray for their loved ones' spiritual lives, often seeking guidance and support. Epaphras's example inspires us (Colossians 1:7, 4:12-13):

- *Faithful servant and fellow prisoner*
- *Hardworking and passionate intercessor*

We have Epaphras in our midst today, who intercede for their loved ones, demonstrating the selfless nature that comes from God. I recall a youth sharing, "I pray for my parents' spiritual growth, that they may know Christ personally." Another testified, "I was moved to pray for my siblings after experiencing God's love."

My father's testimony also resonates with me. He shared in one of the services at my local church, "I regret wasting years living my life my own way, failing as a father. But now, I urge fellow parents, especially fathers, not to live a life of regret. Let us set good examples for our children, that they may follow Christ." His words remind us that it's never too late to make amends and start anew.

As parents, guardians, and elders, we must set good examples for these young seekers. Luke 15:20-24 assures us of God's compassion and second chances. The parable of the prodigal son reminds us that it's never too late to return to our Heavenly Father.

AS WE NURTURE  
OUR YOUTH, LET'S  
REMEMBER THAT  
OUR CHILDREN  
ARE OUR ETERNAL  
HERITAGE  
(MARK 8:36)

”

As we nurture our youth, let's remember that our children are our eternal heritage (Mark 8:36): "For what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world, and forfeit his soul?" The concerned seekers give us hope for a brighter future.

Let us continue striving for eternal goals, investing in the next generation, and trusting God to bring forth a bountiful harvest.







## Good Shepherd OM BOOKS



# A day in the life: Mr. Buruga Vijaya Sridhar

### 1. How was the journey that led you to become manager of OM Books, Dimapur?

> When I joined OM Evangelical team along with the outreach ministry we also had a small bookstore at my home town in Vijayawada. After sometime our head office main branch bookshop which is at Logos Bhavan was organising 'book fair' or 'book exhibition' quite regularly. During that time I got the opportunity to help within Andhra Pradesh. That's how and slowly my journey begun with the literature ministry of OM India. A month later and with the support of OM AP leadership I got the opportunity to join as 'a job' as an assistant manager at our OM Head Office in Secunderabad. But this was for training time of one year and after that I was supposed to go to another state. I gave commitment to do literature ministry anywhere in India. After few months our Director of 'Retail Department' called and asked me to come to North East part of India which I took up with prayer and after much talks with my family. I came along with some carpenters in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of January 2004. We started book shop works (arranging furniture and stock arrangements.) And on 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2004 OM Books Dimapur branch was dedicated by Rev. L. Kari Longchar. This is how was my humble journey from south part of India to North East India began.

### 2. What does a typical working day in your life look like?

> A typical day involves a mix of administrative and operational tasks. Arranging stock, checking the inventory, ordering the new and old titles and Bibles from our Head Office, giving information to the customers and to the social media, planning for book exhibitions and doing all the practical arrangements and needed publicity for the exhibitions that are planned / scheduled. A significant part of the day goes with my team to strategize on improving the book shop outreach and ensuring we meet our set targets / goals.

### 3. What is the most rewarding aspect of your line of work?

> The most rewarding aspect is seeing lives being touched and transformed by the books that we sell / distribute. Hearing some testimonies of how a particular book encouraged someone during a tough time or brought them closer to God fills my heart with joy and it reminds me that this work is a part of a greater mission to share God's love and trust. The relationships we (OM Books) built with the local churches and organizations over the years are also incredibly rewarding. Praise God for the continued partnership that OM has with all our people here and surrounding places.

### 4. What are some challenges you face at work?

> Challenges often reminds me to rely on God for wisdom and patience. Whether it's managing the demands of the business, competing with modern trends or addressing customer's needs,



I have learned to see these challenges as opportunity to grow and trust in God's provision. I believe that every difficulty is a chance to strengthen our faith and live creatively in serving others better. Since Nagaland has many Bible colleges, schools and short-term study centres, we want to make sure that we do our best for fulfilling their requirements and having books / titles that are made available, which is quite challenging.

**“ I believe that every difficulty is a chance to strengthen our faith and live creatively in serving others better.**

*5. What is your best memory of working OM Books?*

> Although there are many that I could share, but one 'best memory' that comes up to my mind and my team is the fond memories to have organized 'A book Exhibition' with local churches and Bible colleges. Seeing the enthusiasm of the people as they browse through the collection and the meaningful conversations at the organized event makes it truly special moments. In fact memories like these reinforce the importance of what we do. Since our state Nagaland has many

churches, many God's servants, social organization leaders and the Chaplains are visiting the book shop and it's a great opportunity to serve them and most importantly opportunity is reaching them through literature. And but for the past twenty years serving to the Naga churches is a great memory for me (and my family) and my team here at the Dimapur bookshop.

*6. What are your favorite books in the book shop?*

> Since I am Evangelical church background I like Evangelical authors like Dr. Billy Graham, John Stott, N.T. Wright, Max Lucado and John Piper and a few others.

I enjoyed books that provide practical wisdom, inspire, faith and offer insight into the lives of people and titles that challenge and resonate deeply with our customers also hold a special place for me as they represent the impact of good literature. I would like to share the quote by Dr. Billy Graham, "The Bible is not an option; it is a necessity. You cannot grow spiritually strong without it".

*7. How would you like to see OM Books grow in the future in Dimapur?*

> I envision OM Books become a beacon of light in the community. A place where people not find just books but also find encouragement, fellowship and inspiration. My prayer is for bookshop to grow as a ministry that continues to glorify our Lord Jesus and to draw many people closer to HIM. Thank you.



Galaxy A51

# Counterculture: Following Christ in an anti-Christian age

**DR. TEMJEN LKR.**

**C**ounterculture applies to a group of people who oppose mainstream values and norms, and instead embrace unconventional lifestyles and ideologies.

Here, I would like to point out that every age has been "anti-Christian" in some sense. Even Jesus said in *John 15:20* that *'...If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you...'*

It will be more appropriate for Christians of the present age to understand the culture in which we live and find ways to present the unchanging message of Christ in a way that is relevant and relatable.

To follow Christ means to be a Christian literally. And doing so has been unchanged and is as simple a step as when Jesus showed it Himself. He being the first fruit, our work is to follow His lead. The problem arises when we, as finite beings living in a time and place, carry our cultural baggage along which obscure the truth sometimes.

Until the new earth (*Rev 21:1*) is revealed, this present earth will always be under satan (*2 Cor 4:4*). This is the reason why we as a Christian should always be in a war footing (*Acts 13:1-13*). The enemy's goal is to steal, destroy and kill (*John 10:10*, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy").

Considering that we live in a fallen world, one which is ruled by the devil whose goal is to destroy us, we may sometimes ask as a Christian if we are allowed or even have to be involved with the 'fallen world'. The straight answer to this is an absolute yes. Christians are supposed to engage and address societal issues. We are to actively promote our views and spread the gospel and not just be a mere observer. (*Matthew 28:19* 'Go ye therefore, and **teach** all nations, **baptizing** them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost')

Coming to the context of Nagaland and India, I see few challenges that hamper in presenting and living out the gospel.



1. Syncretism: With traditional beliefs being mixed and confused with Christianity. Although Christianity has penetrated all aspects of Naga life, still the old belief has not completely disappeared and sometimes manifests itself in the form of spiritualism, the mushrooming of prayer centres and faith healings.

No doubt we battle with powers and principalities, not just physical observable things (*Eph 6:12*) but then we should not bend Christianity in a distorted way in order to accommodate our traditions.

Although understandable but in an attempt to remain relevant and attractive in a fast changing world many a time we as Christians imitate the patterns and modalities of the society at large. We should be contemporary but not be 'the world' to 'save the world.' Only when we become the image of God and not the image of Adam will we be able to be the salt and light of the world.

2. Post-modernism: The influence of postmodern thinking has reached our land also. The youth no longer believe in anything absolute. They are encouraged to question everything and not be confined by any laws because everyone has their own reality. One's own feelings are more important than the truth because there is no absolute truth anymore. This can



**Only when we become the image of God and not the image of Adam will we be able to be the salt and light of the world.**

be seen from the kind of music and songs that the youth plays and listen to these days. Even gospel songs reflect the same thought process. They are more about reflections on oneself rather than God Himself.

How the 'self' is given more importance can be seen even in relationships. Many couples think more about one's comfort and feelings and blame the other for not understanding him/her. Today with the influence of postmodernism, many ridicule Christianity as intolerant, egotistical, and arrogant because of our exclusive claims about God and morality.

Paul reminds us in *Romans 12:2*, "not to be conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

3. Influence of social media: In a world of social media and influencers, most people especially the youth, want to be noticed, accepted, and admired, which many a time lead them to be loud and have a defiant behaviour. This can often lead to social disorder. There is hardly respect for the elderly or the weak. Many people live in a cocoon and a sheltered life without being able to empathize with people who are more disadvantageous.

A good principle of social media is given in *1 Corinthians 10:31*, 'Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God'. Social media is a double edged sword. It can have its ill effects but surely can be used for good.

4. One of the great misconceptions among many Naga Christian is 'Work for salvation'. We are saved by grace and not by work. Our good works do not earn us salvation but rather good works are an outcome of being saved. By offering our tainted and corrupt money to God, we do not wash away our sins (*Romans 11:6*).

5. There has been a concrete effort by the majority Hindu in India to appropriate indigenous culture into itself. On one side there is increasing hatred, discrimination and prejudice against Christians and Christian organisations but on the other hand there is a false narrative being promoted that the tribal culture was and is part of greater Hindu culture. These indigenous tribal religion and practices are being absorbed into Hinduism eg: Heraka and Dony polo - promoted by Hindutva organisations.

Many Christians live in fear in many parts of India. The governmental machinery is used to harass and wrongly accuse Christian and Christian institutes.

eg: 1. Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FRCA) used to close down World Vision in India.

2. Assam Magical Healing (Prevention of Evil Practices) Act, 2024.

We live in a secular country with a religious population, so as a Christian we should be sensitive to others but also stand for the truth (*John 8:32*). We should make our voices and opinions be heard instead of just being a passive observer.

Coming to a conclusion, we may say that living a Christian life is a counterculture in many senses. On the other hand, God's love for us is strong and powerful enough for us to maintain our loyalty and not be tempted by the norms of mainstream society. Christians should be a part of this world and society but stay true to the gospel of Christ Jesus. This I believe will allow us to stay relevant to the different cultural norms while also staying true to Christianity counter-culture core.

# 'Little Seeds, Big Harvest'

**Matthew  
13:31-32**

**MRS. ZUTHUNGLO EZUNG**

Associate Pastor, Christian Education



Often, it is little things in life that make a difference. Little Bible stories, little memory verses, little conversations, little prayers, little recreations, little hugs and little children that may appear insignificant. It is, but imperative to view beyond the littleness. As we strive to nurture, appreciate and commit to train children, these little acts help yield a great harvest.

CBCD Sunday School maintained the World Sunday School Day theme selected by All India Sunday School Association [AISSA] 'Little Seeds, Big Harvest' on November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2024. The theme was based on **Matthew 13:31-32** where the Kingdom of God is compared to a mustard seed which a man took and sowed in the field.

Although being the smallest seed, when it grows, it becomes a tree where birds of the air come and nest in its branches.

Easier said than done, reaping a great harvest is tedious and time consuming. It requires both Commitment and Cooperation at various levels.

First, Parents and guardians are primary care-givers and remain as timeless-educators.

Introducing Jesus early in our homes and getting involved in our children's lives create affectionate respect that helps to understand personality traits, mutually and intimately. With godly discernment, we bridge a gap that perhaps if overlooked in the initial years of a child become a lifelong vacuum that will be filled by wrong relationships and decisions at later stages of life. It is an urgent call for parents and guardians to invest time with children and reap big harvest for the future.

Another critical level is the role of educators, particularly Sunday school teachers who pick the baton from the parents to nurture seeds and prune branches. Identifying if there could even be need for sowing will be a life-changing responsibility that calls for attention. Teachers fill in the roles of mentors, role models and friends. This opens up a plethora of opportunity to

bring out the best in each child who is '*fearfully and wonderfully made*' [Psalm 139:14]. Recognizing that each child has a God-given purpose inspires us to take up the challenge to disciple the child.

The church is another level that contributes to children's progressive discipleship. It is a community where a child will witness Christian lifestyle. This in turn will encourage them to live out in faith. This is also where corrections and celebrations take place in a God-honouring manner.

All three levels require utmost commitment and humble cooperation inter-changeably, and not in isolation. We lift up one another to pursue the same path with one common vision- '*To train up a child in the way he/she should go, and when he/she is old they will not depart from it*' [Proverbs 22:6]

Thus, Children and teenagers at Sunday school are compared to little mustard seeds- looks little but has potential for growth. What we strive to teach the children will help nurture their young, vulnerable but budding minds so that they inherit godliness and contribute towards the Kingdom of God. As adults it is required to recognize the great ability our children have to respond to the Gospel as well as share the Gospel to those around. We sincerely pray that the Bible lessons and the relationships formed and built at CBCD SS will contribute towards that goal and reap great big harvest for the Lord.

## TESTIMONY

# Confliction to Conviction

## Exploring Faith and Science

MR. NEIPEKREIZO KESIEZIE



The relationship between faith and science has often been perceived as a battleground, where belief in the divine is pitted against empirical scientific inquiry. For many Christians, such as me, working as a geologist, this conflict has oftentimes manifested as an internal struggle, leading me to question my beliefs in the light of any scientific knowledge I have come to learn thus far. I want to try to draw some few examples from my subject where some stark conflicts are observable and debated and I will not intend to discuss science in any way whatsoever. This article is somewhat of a testimony, a personal indulgence to share my journey from a personal confliction with established sciences to my conviction in my faith in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. I intend to illustrate how faith in Jesus Christ can and should coexist with a scientific worldview, and how our conviction in our risen Lord, should overcome any confliction that can and will arise while working in various fields, not necessarily exclusive to science, but in every field of study.

### The Initial Conflict

At the heart of the conflict between my faith and the subject I chose to study, lie the differing methods of understanding reality. Science relies on observation, experimentation, and reproducibility of scientific experiments. On the other hand, faith is often correlated with, and embraces the unseen and the spiritual side. For many Christians, the rise of scientific theories - particularly those regarding evolution, the origins of the universe, the big bang theory and the age of the Earth, can trigger doubts about biblical narratives. When I was a student pursuing my Master's Degree in Applied Geology at IIT Bombay, I came across many brilliant professors and students from the departments of Earth Science, Mathematics, Computer

Science and Physics and during the course of my interactions with them, we discussed about our faith and religion. Many of them were atheists or agnostics, and scoffed at the very idea of a Christian God. None of them were rude to me, every one of them still remain good friends of mine but me back then, in a very infant stage of faith, had very little input or opinion in those discussions about how we can believe in a Creator God when everything seemed to be provable by science; and many times, I really doubted my own faith. They would suggest to me that if I really was a student of science, how could I believe in an Almighty God who created everything and how could I pray to that God and expect Him to answer my prayers.

In Geology, the age of rocks and minerals bear immense importance as we use it as a guide to search for mineral deposits and to understand how our planet was formed. While renowned Christian apologists such as Prof. John Lennox, make statements such as, "What does the Bible say about the age of the Earth? Nothing! Absolutely nothing! Full stop!", the age of the Earth does matter for geologists as it has far reaching consequences in our attempts to explain how and when our planet was created and where exactly to search for valuable mineral deposits. Many scientists get a good laugh when they hear about Noah's Flood but what they do not realize is how they cannot explain occurrences such as polystrate fossils, (fossilized tree trunks cutting across multiple sedimentary layers), or, how they cannot explain the folding, faulting or any form of deformation occurs within any rock layer, and those topics are conveniently ignored to this day.

We Geologists have this fancy approach to every rock formation based on a phrase "The present is the key to the past",

also known as the principle of uniformitarianism, popularized by Scottish Geologist Sir Charles Lyell in 1833. Therefore, our minds are hard-wired to deduce all present observations and relate them to past events, and that dinosaurs went extinct 65 million years ago. But, ironically, with the discovery that many dinosaur bones still contain soft tissue, the whole scientific base has been shaken to its core. In that sense, we just might have gotten the age of the earth wrong! Here, it is relevant to remember that the whole concept of time is man-made (2 Peter 3:8).

As students of science, if not careful, one can start to grapple with such conflicting ideologies between what is readily, scientifically provable and what requires faith to concede to what is not provable (2 Corinthians 5:7) and feelings of anxiety and uncertainty often emerge, and they do lead to many conflicting thoughts; thoughts that may lead one to live a life as they wish, with no consequences or judgment at the end, whatsoever. The perceived dichotomy can lead to a crisis of faith, where believers feel compelled to choose between their spiritual beliefs and the scientific explanations of the world around them. This phase of conflict can be deeply unsettling, as it was for me, and challenges the foundational aspects of one's identity and beliefs. But now I realise, that need not be the case.

So, my conflicts were these: (i) It seemed a lot easier to believe in science with all the repeatable experiments and proofs, than to believe in an invisible, inaudible God (ii) How could I ever know that there is a life after death? Because, just as I have no memory before birth, I may have no memory after death. (iii) What if all the religious construct was a way to comfort the weak, the sick, the poor, of an eternal reward after death? (iv) What if the age of the Earth is not 6000 years as the Bible suggest, but it is actually 4,500,000,000 years as science has established based on experiments done on rocks?

### The Journey to Reconciliation

Regardless, I had a desire for deeper understanding of faith because I was never confident with my own understandings, and I always knew there has to be more. Comically, I realized that struggling with faith is the surest sign of having faith regardless

of how misplaced or weak it was. Tim Keller said, "Weak faith in a strong object is infinitely better than strong faith in a weak object". Many Christians embark on this path by engaging with both science and theology. While I have no understanding in the subject of Theology or, as mentioned earlier, for that matter, Geology, I know there is a greater force and power beyond science. A very wise Pastor, with whom I have consulted with while writing this article, after patiently listening to my ramblings told me, "*Do not let your work overshadow your faith.*", which I agree and will live by for the rest of my life.

A crucial step in this reconciliation for me personally, was the recognition that science and faith answer different questions. Science seeks to explain how the universe works, providing insights into physical processes and natural laws answering the 'what' and the 'when' aspects of the questions. In contrast, faith addresses the "why" of existence, offering a narrative of purpose, morality, and relationship with the divine Creator, God and how God created the infinite, incomprehensible universe, and I choose to go with my faith in God. This distinction allows me to appreciate the contributions of both realms without feeling compelled to dismiss one in favour of the other.

### Embracing a Holistic Faith

As I moved through my personal conflicts, I discovered a more profound faith that embraced complexity. This faith recognizes that God's creation is intricate and that science can only so much as reveal the beauty of that creation. The "awe inspired" scientific discoveries - whether the vastness of the universe or the complexity of cellular processes, can and should deepen one's appreciation of a Creator.

A holistic faith, so to speak, also acknowledges the limitations of human understanding. The Bible encourages believers to have faith in the midst of uncertainty, reminding us that not all questions can be answered, nor should be answered at all. In Hebrews 11:1, faith is defined as "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction/assurance of things not seen." This perspective allowed me to embrace scientific findings without feeling threatened, viewing them as part of God's ongoing revelation.

**“The Bible encourages believers to have faith in the midst of uncertainty, reminding us that not all questions can be answered, nor should be answered at all.”**



## From Conviction to Action

Ultimately, the journey from conflict to conviction empowered me to live out my faith in unexpected transformative ways. When faith and science are no longer seen as adversaries, we can engage with the world more fully. Christians are called to be stewards of creation, and an informed faith can drive meaningful action in these areas. Furthermore, I think, this reconciliation fosters a sense of community among believers and scientists alike. For example, in one of the papers I am currently working on, me and my team are discovering, for the first time, that the sand grains of the rocks at Mt. Saramati, the highest peak in Nagaland, is sourced from the Australian continent and it is roughly 450,000,000 years old. But now I am convinced that even if we do publish our work, none of the finer details will matter except my conviction that God is the Creator and that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is the only way to God the Father, and that conviction should convict me that there shouldn't have been a conflict in my faith in the first place.

I personally believe that there can be no greater evidence of God's love for us than Him sending His Son Jesus to die for us, but two other evidences of His love for us stands out to me: (i) Him creating us in His image, the only reason why we can think, create the most beautiful art, compose the sweetest music, make the most advanced scientific discoveries, the ability to feel all emotions and (ii) Giving us free-will, just so we don't turn into robots, that we are given the gift and freedom to choose, and decide, to the extent of questioning His existence.

## Conclusion

This journey of mine from "Conflict" to "Conviction", was not just a personal struggle. I now realize, it was God who was behind this and He knew how best to lead me to Him. By embracing the complexities of both realms, I found a faith that is robust, informed, and deeply connected to the realities of this world. This journey, I believe, led me to a deeper reverence of God and His creations and also to a richer and more fulfilling life of faith, while realizing that man-made time scales, scientific principles, while it may matter here on Earth, will count for nothing without a conviction to live my life for Christ.

Georges Lemaître, the Belgian astronomer and cosmologist who developed the Big Bang theory, had a number of quotes about religion and science, one of my favourite and most notable quotes was this: "Once you realize that the Bible does not purport to be a textbook of science, the old controversy between religion and science vanishes"

To finally conclude, my experience with the conflict between science and my faith began as I studied science, but,

**I personally believe that there can be no greater evidence of God's love for us than Him sending His Son Jesus to die for us...**



ironically and wonderfully, it was science which led me to my conviction of God's existence (first conviction) and ultimately my conviction that Jesus Christ is THE only way, the truth and the life (John 14:6), and that none of us can ever remotely hope to come to God except through Him (second conviction). Regardless of it all, there lies the issue of me not reading God's Word closely enough to avoid these conflicts in the first place, when verses such as Isaiah 55:8-9 and Job 38:3-41 should make me shudder to even have the audacity to have such conflicts.

Therefore, in my case, I'd like to think that the final imaginary equation goes something like this:

*"Conflict = Conviction?"*

Hence, proved.

## Recommended reading:

1. "God's Undertaker: Has Science Buried God?", by John C. Lennox
2. "The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism", by Timothy Keller
3. "The Case for Christ", by Lee Strobel



# CBCD 2024 Conference Notes

## Theme: "CONSIDER YOUR WAYS" Study Notes

- I. THE COMMAND OF GOD – Haggai 1:1-11
- II. OBEDIENCE – Haggai 1:12-15
- III. GOD'S GLORY – Haggai 2:1-9
- IV. FROM BEING DEFILED TO BECOMING A SIGNET RING – Haggai 2:10-23

Prophet Haggai played a crucial role during this period. He delivered his prophecies in 520 BC, about 18 years after the first return.

Haggai's main message was to urge the people to prioritize rebuilding the Temple, which had been neglected due to opposition and discouragement. His prophecies were direct and timely, encouraging the Israelites to refocus on their spiritual duties and the importance of the Temple in their community.

Haggai's influence was significant because the people listened to his message and resumed the construction of the Temple, which was completed in 516 BC. His work, alongside other leaders like Zerubbabel and Joshua the high priest, helped restore the religious and communal life of the Israelites after their return from exile.

Ezra 5:1-2 Then the prophet Haggai and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophets, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them. So Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak rose up and began to build the house of God which is in Jerusalem; and the prophets of God were with them, helping them.

### Ezra chapter 6:1-18

First Return (538 BC): Led by Zerubbabel, this group focused on

rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem.

Second Return (458 BC): Led by Ezra, this wave emphasized spiritual and religious reforms.

Third Return (445 BC): Led by Nehemiah, this group concentrated on rebuilding Jerusalem's walls.

The second year of Darius – sixth month – the first day of the month (1:1).

The Twenty-fourth Day of the month (1:15).

Seventh month – The Twenty-first Day of the month (2:1).

Ninth month – The Twenty-fourth Day of the month (2:10; 18; 20).

## I. THE COMMAND OF GOD – Haggai 1:1-11

The second year of Darius – sixth month – the first day of the month (1:1)

### The three roles in the church

The prophet, priest and the prince – All of us have all these roles – **I Peter 2:9**, "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light".

### Consider your ways – 1:1-5

**Haggai 1:4-5**, "Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your panelled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins?" Now therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts: "Consider your ways!"

They came back from exile in 538 BC. The prophecies of

Haggai began in 520 BC, 18 years after their return. They had forgotten why they had come back to Jerusalem. Yes, there was opposition and discouragement but the fact that they were living in panelled houses shows that they have become inward-looking and thinking only for their own comfort and well-being.

**Does this not apply to us?**

**We have forgotten to a large extent why we are church – John 17:15-18 (Reconciliation)**

**Haggai 1:8** "Go up to the mountains and bring wood and build the temple, that I may take pleasure in it and be glorified," says the LORD.

**Hard work & church community pleases God. It glorifies God.**

**Isaiah 56:7** "Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices Will be accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations." (Ref. Isaiah 2:1-5)

**Drought on the land**

**Haggai 1:9-11** "You looked for much, but indeed it came to little; and when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why?" says the LORD of hosts. "Because of My house that is in ruins, while every one of you runs to his own house. Therefore the heavens above you withhold the dew, and the earth withholds its fruit. For I called for a drought on the land and the mountains, on the grain and the new wine and the oil, on whatever the ground brings forth, on men and livestock, and on all the labour of your hands."

## II. OBEDIENCE – Haggai 1:12-15

The second year of Darius – sixth month - The Twenty-fourth Day of the month (1:15)

**Haggai 1:12**, "Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him; and the people feared the presence of the LORD."

**I Peter 2:6-8**, "Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHIEF CORNERSTONE, ELECT, PRECIOUS, AND HE WHO BELIEVES ON HIM WILL BY NO MEANS BE PUT TO SHAME." Therefore, to you who believe, *He is precious*; but to those who are disobedient, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED HAS BECOME THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE," and "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were

appointed."

**The Israelites obeyed the voice of the Lord ;they feared the presence of the Lord which indicated that they were coming back to reconciliation; they were coming back to Shalom.**

**Haggai 1:13**, "Then Haggai, the LORD's messenger, spoke the LORD's message to the people, saying, "I am with you, says the LORD."

**Acts 17:28**, "for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.'"

**Haggai 1:14**, "So the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and worked on the house of the LORD of hosts, their God."

**John 7:37-39**, "On the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet *given*, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

**2 Cor 3:17**, "Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

## III. GOD'S GLORY – Haggai 2:1-9

The second year of Darius - Seventh month – The Twenty-first Day of the month (2:1)

**Haggai 2:2-3** "Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, saying, 'Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? In comparison with it, *is this* not in your eyes as nothing?'

What are we seeing? We go by what we see. What we see affects us. Whereas we must live by Truth. **2 Cor 5:7**, "For we walk by faith, not by sight." **Hebrews 11:1-2**, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a *good* testimony."

**Haggai 2:4** 'Yet now be strong, Zerubbabel,' says the LORD; 'and be strong, Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and be strong, all you people of the land,' says the LORD, 'and work; for I am with you,' says the LORD of hosts.





### Be strong – for I am with you.

Being strong in the Lord is not an advice; it is a command to obey.

**Joshua 1:9**, "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God *is* with you wherever you go."

There is God's blessing in living in the strength of the Lord. **1 Chr 22:13**, "Then you will prosper, if you take care to fulfil the statutes and judgments with which the LORD charged Moses concerning Israel. Be strong and of good courage; do not fear nor be dismayed."

Be strong knowing who our God is— **Ephesians 1:18-23**

**Haggai 2:5**, "According to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remains among you; do not fear!"

**Matthew 24:35**, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."

**Zech 4:6**, "So he answered and said to me: "This *is* the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts."

**John 14:16-17**, "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever- the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you."

### God's word and His Spirit are with us

**Haggai 2:6-8**, "For thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,' says the LORD of hosts. 'The silver *is* Mine, and the gold *is* Mine,' says the LORD of hosts."

### Ref. Hebrews 12:18-29

**Haggai 2:9**, "The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,' says the LORD of hosts. 'And in this place I will give peace,' says the LORD of hosts."

### IV. FROM BEING DEFILED TO BECOMING A SIGNET RING – Haggai 2:10-23

The second year of Darius - Ninth month – The Twenty-fourth Day of the month (2:10; 18; 20)

**Haggai 2:12-13**, "If one carries holy meat in the fold of his garment, and with the edge he touches bread or stew, wine or oil, or any food, will it become holy?" "Then the priests answered and said, "No." And Haggai said, "If *one who is unclean because of a dead body* touches any of these, will it be unclean?" So the priests answered and said, "It shall be unclean."

**Haggai 2:14**, "Then Haggai answered and said, "So is this people, and so is this nation before Me,' says the LORD, 'and so is every work of their hands; and what they offer there is unclean."

### Ref Isaiah 1:11-20

**Joel 2:12-13**, "Now, therefore," says the LORD, "Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He *is* gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm. **1 Chr 28:9**, "As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever."

**Ezekiel 14:3-7** speaks on idols of the heart and the process of healing that the Lord was doing. Moving people from the state of defilement to the state of becoming His signet ring.



**Haggai 2:15-17**, "And now, carefully consider from this day forward: from before stone was laid upon stone in the temple of the LORD— since those *days*, when *one* came to a heap of twenty ephahs, there were *but* ten; when *one* came to the wine vat to draw out fifty baths from the press, there were *but* twenty. I struck you with blight and mildew and hail in all the labour of your hands; yet you did not turn to Me,' says the LORD.

**Jeremiah 2:13**, "For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, *And* hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water.

**Haggai 2:18-19**, "Consider now from this day forward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from the day that the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid—consider it: Is the seed still in the barn? As yet the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree have not yielded *fruit*. But from this day I will bless you."

**Isaiah 32:15-18**, "Until the Spirit is poured upon us from on high, And the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, And the fruitful field is counted as a forest. Then justice will dwell in the wilderness, And righteousness remain in the fruitful field. The work of righteousness will be peace, And the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever. My people will dwell in a peaceful habitation, In secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places,

**Haggai 2:22-23**, "I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms; I will destroy the strength of the Gentile kingdoms. I will overthrow the chariots And those who ride in them; The horses and their riders shall come down, Every one by the sword of his brother. 'In that day,' says the LORD of hosts, 'I will take you, Zerubbabel My servant, the son of Shealtiel,' says the LORD, 'and will make you like a signet *ring*; for I have chosen you,' says the LORD of hosts."



CBCD 2024 Conference Committee



# CELL GROUP REPORTS

## 4<sup>th</sup> Mile and Beyond

Our group is consisted of five families and a young gentleman. So our attendance is around ten in every fellowship.

During this year we had almost 100% monthly fellowship on rotation basis in every house.

The last meeting for this year's cell group was held on the 12<sup>th</sup> of November with another cell group, Viz Purana Bazaar cell group for a combined fellowship.

During the year long meetings we had a detailed Bible study on the book of James and we could cover chapters 1 and 2. We decided to continue the rest of the portions of the book during next year's meet. We all had a great and experience sharing and praying together as a team. We experienced the growth in our biblical knowledge and spiritual aspect as well as we poured out our hearts to the Lord during these meetings. We also discovered that the cell group families, being small in number, came to know each other more personally and a great attachment to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ has been experienced.

We look to forward incontinue with this meet even in the years to come.

Amen & Praise the Lord!

## Notun Bosti

We have around 6 families in our cell group. We meet once a month in one of our members house, though this year we missed a few monthly fellowship due to scheduling problems. Attendance averages 5 members per fellowship. Though we are few in numbers we love our time together studying the Bible, praying for one another and not forgetting sharing a meal together.

## Midland-Nepali Basti-Fellowship Colony

The year 2024 has been a memorable journey as we ventured into the Old Testament Book of Joshua for Bible-Study. There are 7 families and 3 individuals who are part of the cell-group. On an average 4 families and 3 individuals are regular. This year we are blessed to have Miss Sorenbeni Ngullie and her sister Miss Gracy join the cell-group. Bible-study roster for leaders, homes and scripture portions is set where we meet every Friday at 6pm. This Bible-study has resulted in meaningful interactions, fresh inspiration for the Word and self introspections. Readings on the conquest and occupation of the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua has felt more realistic when we browsed the map, spent time in discussions as well as raised difficult questions. With another 2 chapters to go till we cover the book of Joshua, we will have further personal sharings to review the book. The last day of cell group is reserved for a short-film on Joshua and a potluck fellowship. Another big blessing is the edifying prayer support we have received through one another. We praise God because the desire to learn the word has brought us together. To all the families and friends who have been part of the cell-group, thank u for your hospitality when u welcomed one another into your homes. God bless you and we look forward to see you all in the following year.

Shalom!

Mrs. Zuthunglo Ezung, Cell-Group Leader.

## Naharbari and adjoining areas

Greetings from our cell group in the blessed name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! It has been another year of experiencing God's blessings and witnessing His faithfulness.

We are 7 families from Naharbari and adjoining areas.





Duncan 1 cell



Notun Bosti cell



4<sup>th</sup> Mile and beyond



Midland cell

Our members are :  
 Mr. & Mrs. Akrei Kesiezie  
 Mr. & Mrs. Vivito Yeptho  
 Mr. & Mrs. (Dr) Imtinukshi Jamir  
 Mr. & Mrs. Mark Medom  
 Mr. & Mrs. Adu Shupao  
 Dr. & Mrs. Temjen Lkr  
 Drs. Noktang Jamir & Michelle Kamei  
 And all the children.

We all come from different backgrounds, experiences and walks of life, yet we find beauty in the diverse relationship and oneness in Christ.

We meet once a month in the homes of our members. Coming together in fellowship, studying God’s word and praying together has helped us discover the richness of sharing life with one another, learning from each other and walking side by side in our journey of faith. Sharing our joys and challenges, victories and defeats and finding support and encouragement from one another and fellowshiping with members of different age groups with varying life experiences has been truly valuable



Naharbari, Thilixu, Padumpukhuri cell

and enriching.

Shared meals over potlucks/refreshments are other times of bonding. We often take these opportunities to connect, converse and build genuine relationships while the little kids play around in joyful noises which adds to the sweetest of our fellowship.

As we stand in the threshold of another year, we look forward with open hearts and eager expectations knowing that God will continue to bless and guide us in growing together in Christ.

**Dr. Michelle Kamei**

# COMMITTEE REPORTS

## ANNUAL YOUTH DEPARTMENT REPORT FROM NOV. 2023 – OCT. 2024

**MRS. KEWI PFUNO**  
Asso. Pastor, Youth Dept.

**O**ur youth ministry caters mainly to a floating population of students and young professionals. Recognizing this transient nature, we've embraced a mission-focused approach, seeking to make a lasting spiritual impact during their stay. We rejoice in seeing former members flourish spiritually after relocating.

**Youth Advisor:** Mr. Yanger Longkumer

**YOUTH EXPRESS (Nov. 2023 – Oct. 2024)**

Theme for the year: *"Come and you will See"* - John 1:39

Sl. no	Particulars	Details
	<b>Youth Attendants/enrolment</b>	
1.1	Permanent members—	38
1.2	Floating members –	Around 50
1.3	Regular attendance per service	40-50
	<b>New members added</b>	
2.1	Permanent members	5
2.2	Floating members	around 30
2.3	Teens class	9
	<b>Youth Representative team – Mr. Peshia, Ms. Benda, Ms. Lijing, Mr. Belithong, Ms. Phejin</b>	
	<b>Weekly youth service</b>	
4.1	No. of youth service conducted	39
	Special services	i) Gents Night, ii) Ladies Night, iii) Friendship day, iv) Competition service, v) Advent Christmas
	Combined fellowships	i) Govt. College EU, ii) OTS- interns iii) Prodigal's Home
	<b>NB, Guest speakers:</b>	Dr. Michelle Jamir, Church elder, Pastor Yabang Longkumer, Ms. Kim Leivon-Crossover member, Ms. Kewimedanlule, Ms. Achi Imchen, Mr. Vepu Pfuno, Ms. Nutalu D. Vadeo, Mr. Ashi Konyak, Mr. Chizuknok Longkumer-Crossover member, Ms. Tovikali Shohe, YP, Sumi Baptist Church Dimapur, Mr. David Koza, Deacon.
	<b>Youth Participations - Our youths actively participated in:</b>	
8.1	Mission Month (Apr 28)	Presented a group song in the church devotional service
8.2	Attended BYFD Combined fellowships	Town Baptist church and Sangtam Baptist church.
8.3	Youth Sunday (July 7)	Led praise and worship and presented a skit at CBCD
8.4	Youth Camp Report (Oct 26)	Shared testimonies and Presented a group song at devotional service
8.5	Volunteer services	Church Buffet, Conference, VBS, and WSD

Major events		
9.1	<i>Evangelistic Week: May 24-26</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Theme-“To Make Alive” (Col. 2: 13-14, John 10:10)</li> <li>i) Speaker: Mrs. Watila Amit</li> <li>ii) Over 100 youths attended</li> <li>iii) Around 40 youths gave their lives to God</li> <li>iv) 4 youths committed their lives to full-time ministry</li> </ul>
9.2	<i>Youth Camp: Oct’ 11-14</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Theme: "Abide, Grow, Bear Fruit" John 15:1-8</li> <li>ii) Venue: Kingdom Stewards Ministry, Jalukie Town</li> <li>iii) Camp speaker: Dr. Bonik Chandra Brahma</li> <li>iv) Resource Persons: Rev. Dr. Mongzeung Mpom, Mrs. Zuthunglo Ezung, Ms. Kim Leivon</li> <li>v) Camp Director: Ms. Kewimedunlule</li> <li>vi) 44 Attended (20 ladies, 24 gents)</li> </ul>
Evangelism and discipleship		
10.1	No. of youth born again	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Through Youth service and counseling—around 15</li> <li>ii) Through Evangelistic week—around 40</li> <li>iii) Through Camp—14</li> </ul>
10.2	No. of youth discipled	i) Through Youth service and counseling—15 ii) Through Camp—14
Field visit and individual counseling:		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) House: 3 ii) Hostel: 5 iii) Personal: Around 60</li> <li>iv) Counseling on regular basis with specific needs- 7 person</li> </ul>
Speaking engagement within the church		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Preached in devotional service 4 times</li> <li>ii) Shared the Word in 20 out of 39 youth services</li> </ul>
Speaking engagement outside the church		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Tening Mai Fellowship Dmp—Mother’s Day</li> <li>ii) Zeme Baptist Church Dimapur Teens camp—3 Sessions</li> <li>iii) 2<sup>nd</sup> State Committee Members Training Camp, Manja, Karbi-Anglong-3 sessions</li> <li>iv) “Spiritual Retreat,” Hutton Bible Institute, Manja</li> <li>v) St. John’s School - Praise &amp; Worship team’s outreach program</li> </ul>
Trainings Attended		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Langham Preaching training level 2 (June 20-23)</li> <li>ii) Baptist Youth Fellowship Dimapur seminar, “Unlocking the Old Testament” (Sept. 12-14)</li> </ul>
Annual Plan for 2025		
15.1	<b>Vision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Intensive Bible study</li> <li>ii. Member care</li> </ul>
15.2	<b>Events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Weekly service and Weekly Bible study</li> <li>ii. Special Service: Gents Night, Ladies Night, Friendship day, Competition service, Advent Christmas</li> </ul>
15.3	<b>Major Events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Evangelistic week</li> <li>ii. Camp</li> <li>iii. Annual Picnic</li> </ul>
15.4	<b>Exchange programs with other churches or ministries</b>	



Praise Points and prayer points

We praise God for:

- a) Starting Bible study
- b) Touching lives through personal meetings and fellowship
- c) Church members mentoring youths
- d) Crossover members supporting youths
- e) Pray for a deeper understanding and love for God's word
- f) Pray for protection from spiritual deception



**YOUTH EXPRESS CAMP | Oct. 11-14**

Theme: "Abide, Grow, Bear Fruit" John 15:1-8

Venue: Kingdom Stewards Ministry, Jalukie Town







YOUTH EXPRESS RETREAT

## Youth Camp Testimonies

The CBCD Youth Camp which I attended at Jalukie in 2024 was a very memorable experience. I got to know and learn about different people with different stories and backgrounds and how God helped and changed their lives in many different ways. This really encouraged me to bring various changes in my life and the discernment to understand what is right and wrong and to approach various life situations.

I have been really blessed through the different activities and have learned many invaluable lessons through the teachings of the speaker and all the resource persons.

This camp has helped me to understand more about the love of God and the path to Salvation.

I thank God for the privilege to be a part of this camp,

the experience which exceeded my expectations and I would happily attend again whenever I get the opportunity.

**Moamanen Jamir**

.....  
 "The youth camp, centered around the theme 'Abide, Grow, Bear Fruit' (John 15:1-8), was a life-changing experience for me. I learned valuable lessons on the importance of abiding in Christ, growing in faith, and bearing fruit through obedience and service. The camp reminded me of God's unconditional love and mercy. I'm grateful for the opportunity to grow spiritually alongside fellow believers. The experience continues to inspire me to deepen my relationship with God and bear fruit for His glory."

**Simion Singnar**

## ANNUAL REPORT OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FROM NOV. 2023 – OCT. 2024

**MRS. ZUTHUNGLO EZUNG**  
Asso. Pastor, Children Education

### Introduction

The year 2024 began under the theme 'Fruit of the Spirit' based on Galatians 5:24-25 with a target to teach one fruit of the Spirit every month.

1. Comparison of students between 2023 and 2024 below as:

CLASS	2024		2023	
	REGISTERED CHILDREN	REGULAR CHILDREN	REGISTERED CHILDREN	REGULAR CHILDREN
Beginners 3-5 years	29	12-15	20	9-14
Primary 6-7 years	21	8-15	40	23-27
Juniors 8-9 years	53	32-41	35	25-28
Intermediate 10-12 years	45	33-38	40	30-34
Teens 13 years and above	35	20-25	30	18-21
	Total - 183		Total - 165	

2. Out of 183 registered children and teens, 100-120 are regular on an average Sunday.

#### • Teachers' Assignment & Responsibility

##### 1. SS Teachers & Class Divisions

- i. Ms. Intinula Changkiri - Beginner Saplings
- ii. Ms. Thungyani Humtsoe - Beginner Saplings
- iii. Ms. Yiphyolo Kikon - Beginner Saplings
- iv. Mr. Nokrensashi - Primary Walkers
- v. Ms. Nenti Kath - Junior Sparks
- vi. Ms. Yatetla Longkumer - Junior Sparks
- vii. Ms. Fedilia Jamir - Intermediate Bible Explorers
- viii. Mrs. Roopa Grace (and Mr. Apong Imchen, currently pursuing higher studies)- Teens- Faithful Bible Investigators [FBI]

##### 2. Adviser- Mr. David Koza

#### • Teacher's Responsibility

- i. Bus - Mrs. Roopa
- ii. Monthly SS Offering collection – Mrs. Roopa
- iii. Refreshments – Mrs. Zuthunglo. Once to thrice a year we delegate teachers to buy refreshments for the week.

### I. EVENTS UNDERTAKEN

1. **World Sunday School Day** –Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> 2023. Speaker was Mr. Vishih, Associate Pastor, SBCD spoke on the theme 'Children are God's Heritage' - Psalm 127 verse 3.

2. **Star Bazaar**- Nov. 26<sup>th</sup> 2023, last day of Sunday School. Invocation prayer by Mrs. Khonzani Merry. It was an exciting event for the children who purchased items at the bazaar with the stars they earned through the year. We thank God for Mr. Shridhar and Mrs. Roopa for donating refreshments, miniature Bibles and bookmarks.

3. **SS Teacher's Training**: The first SS teacher's training for the year took place on February 3<sup>rd</sup> at CBCD from 01:30 pm onwards. All 8 teachers attended. Invocation prayer was done by Pastor Yabang while worship was led by Mr. Peshia and Mr. Widam. There were 4 main sessions on the following topics presented by Mrs. Zuthunglo Ezung:

- i. Evangelism of Children and Presenting the Gospel.
- ii. Teaching to Change Lives: (Essentials of Lesson Plan)
- iii. Functions of a SS
- iv. Visual Presentation

• Sunday School curriculum for Teens is from '*Resource Center*' The rest of the classes are using the '*Children's Bible Ministry*' curriculum. We have opted for this curriculum as there are a variety of visual teaching aids for teachers. Thus the lower classes did not receive their own student's copy but instead were handed out various work/activity sheets.

However, teacher's feedback for Beginners, Juniors and Teens classes suggest using Resource Centre books as it contains student's workbooks. On the other hand Primary class gave a positive response on the CBM curriculum stating good



teaching content for teachers while there were no specific comments from Intermediate except that the teacher taught on relevant topics outside of the CBM curriculum.

**4. SS Reopening:** The SS resumed on February 11<sup>th</sup> by introducing the theme '*The Fruit of the Spirit*.' We were blessed to have Mrs. Flora Panmei Leivon who exhorted the children and pronounced special prayer for 2024. A total of 92 children turned up for the opening day.

**5. The SS teachers '*Connect Fellowship*'** has been planned out for almost every Sunday from 11:30 to 12:00. This fellowship is for brief exhortation as well as for debriefing/discussions. Once in a month we invite friends/members of the church.

Connect Fellowship speakers-

- February – Pastor Yabang Longkumer.
- March - Mrs. Awheno Medom, Clinical Psychologist.
- April – Mr. Odi Pongen, Missionary to China.
- June - Mrs. Aren Y Longkumer, CBCD Women I/C.
- August – Mr. David Koza, SS Advisor.
- September - Mrs. Noktila Khathing, former Sunday School Teacher, Shillong Ao Baptist Church and Shillong Baptist Church.
- October - Dr. Samuel Wati, Assistant Professor, NIT.

#### **6. PASSION WEEK**

SS Children celebrated Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday in their own classes where teachers emphasized on the Passion week through Bible Lessons, songs along with art and craft.

#### **7. APRIL-MISSION FOCUS**

Along with the church, the SS Department also focused on Missions.

- i. On April 7<sup>th</sup> Mr. Odi Pongen and Mrs. Asen, missionary couple and English teachers to China shared their mission experience. Their ministry is mainly in children's hospital.
- ii. On April 14<sup>th</sup> the SS children engaged in intercessory prayer for the 16 districts of Nagaland.
- iii. a. SS special Song and Skit was presented by the Junior Sparks on April 21<sup>st</sup> at CBCD.  
b. Outreach program to "*Neighborhood Children's Home*," Midland Colony, Dimapur was organized for the Intermediate and Teens classes.

#### **8. TEACHER'S VBS TRAINING - May 25<sup>th</sup>**

Six teachers attended the 1 day VBS training held at Resource Center in the month of May. We experienced a typical VBS day starting from action songs, Bible lessons and craft work.

#### **9. VBS - July 25<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> July**

SS VBS was held at El-Shaddai Academy under the theme 'Sovereign Lord.' 154 children in total registered. There were 9 teachers, 11 volunteers and 4 support staff who helped pull through the event. VBS speaker was Mrs. Ono Kevichusa. Through the VBS prayer station we have been able to lead many children to accept the Lord as their personal savior. Counseling and prayers are ongoing especially for the higher classes.

#### **10. THANKSGIVING SUNDAY - September 29<sup>th</sup>**

This is an annual activity the SS attempts at to encourage children and teachers to use their skills and participate with the church in the area of giving. Teachers and children put efforts to create DIY crafts for thanksgiving sale.

#### **11. ANNUAL PICNIC - October 26<sup>th</sup>**

SS along with the women group went for a picnic to Green Park where 102 children and adults attended in total. The children experienced various games and activities which helped them bond with friends and teachers.

#### **12. SS Monthly Assembly speakers-**

- i. February – Mrs. Flora Panmei Leivon
- ii. March – Mrs. Amenla Pongen
- iii. April – Mr. Odi Pongen
- iv. May – Mr. Apong Imchen
- v. June – Mrs. Noktila Khathing
- vi. July - Teachers participated.
- vii. August – Ms. Thungyani
- viii. September - Mrs. Thejalenuo
- ix. October - Mrs. Zuthunglo

#### **II. GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. Mrs. Khonzani stepped down as Sunday School Adviser and was succeeded by Mr. David Koza from April 2024 onwards.
2. From September onwards around 15 children from Prodigal's Home joined SS for which we are thankful to the church for graciously arranging a winger van for pick up and drop off.
3. On November 11<sup>th</sup> Mr. David invited the Sunday School department teachers for a yearly review meeting cum dinner. Important suggestions on Sunday School curriculum, statistics and teacher's follow up with irregular children were discussed. It was encouraged for the department to identify children living with difficulty who the church could reach out to. It was also suggested to look out for male Sunday School teachers for more efficiency with video and sound logistics.





**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**



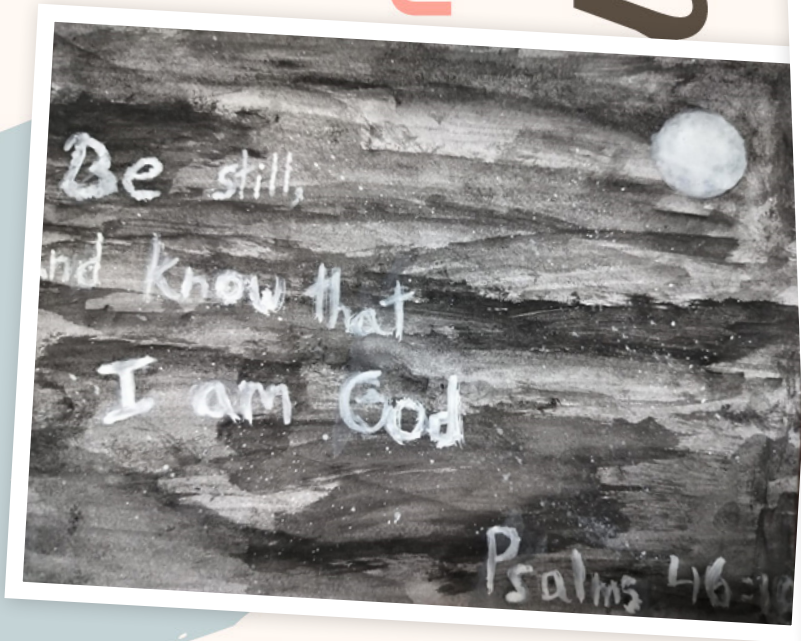
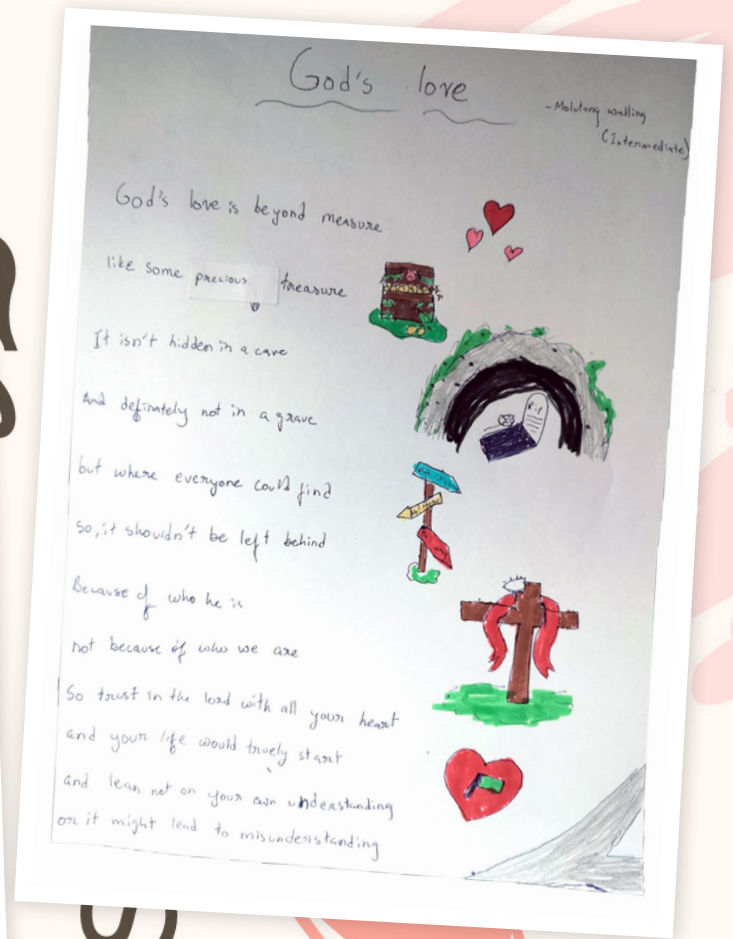
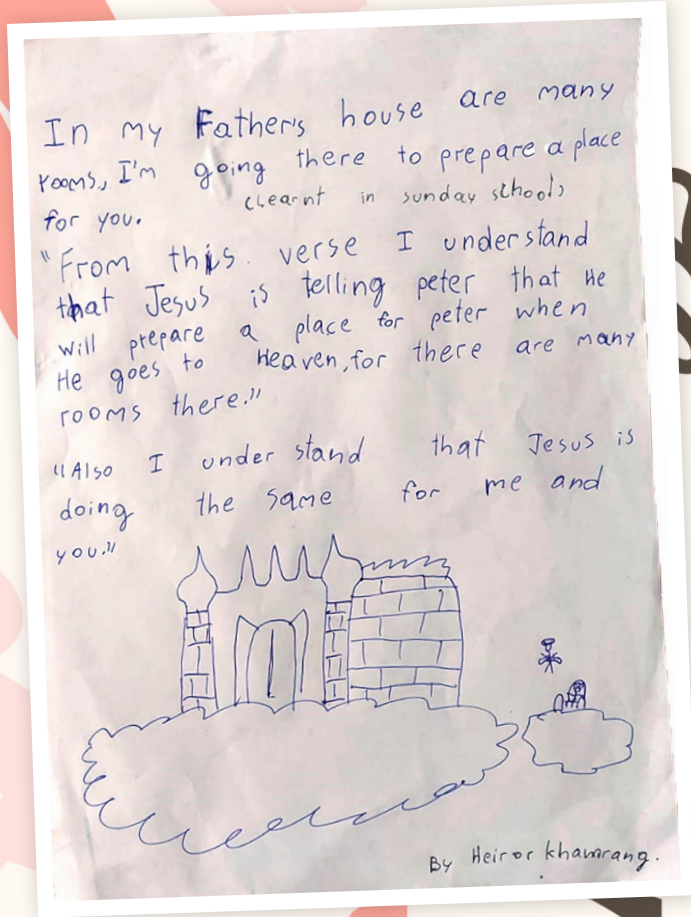
**WORLD SUNDAY SCHOOL DAY**



**SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTING**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS**





**SUNDAY SCHOOL ARTWORKS**



## WOMEN MINISTRY ANNUAL REPORT

**MRS. ARENLA LONGKUMER**  
Women Ministry Incharge

### Brief report on 2024 CBCD women activities:

- Five Bible studies series were conducted apart from various other activities, during monthly fellowship. The resource persons were:
  - March - Rev. Wati Longkumer
  - April - Mrs. Zuthunglo
  - May - Mrs. Flora
  - July - Mrs. Rongsenla
  - Ms. Esther Phom
- Women fellowship shifted from PM to AM (evening to morning) from 2024 hoping for better attendance. The fellowship is being conducted every 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month at 10am.
- Started offering collection.
- Fund Raise for Church Plot: The CBCD women folk played a vital role during the church plot fund raise proving themselves to be the "Pillars of the Church". Apart from taking charge of the buffet dinner they actively initiated and got involved in jumble sales which brought in a huge amount of money. Congratulations ladies!
- Outdoor Retreat: On 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2024 CBCD women had one day retreat at Shalom Bible Seminary. Altogether 17

women participated. The speaker was Dr. (Mrs) Buno Iralu who shared on two topics. (a) "Preparing our Children for a precarious world". (b) Who are you in Christ?

- Father's Day: Mrs. Khrienuo Moa, the Administrator of G. Rio School, Kohima was our speaker. The Youth & children also honored fathers through their various special items presentation.
- Movie Night: We planned this night to be a fun and a chilling out night. It was a movie plus potluck fellowship. We gathered at Mrs. Arenla Y. Longkumer's place. We had a great and relaxing wonderful evening.
- September 28: We combined our fellowship with the church fasting & prayer day. The women folk were given charge of the whole program. Each of us were blessed by getting involved in the program.
- October 26: Women group joint the CBCD Sunday School picnic outing both to help chaperone the children and to spend sometime ourselves with the nature. We managed to steal some time (women alone) sharing our personal experiences with each other and about the faithfulness of God in our individual lives and families. It was a different kind of fellowship which was appreciated by all of us.
- December: Our last gathering for 2024 was at Mrs. Khonzani's place. This was also our advance Christmas program. Mrs. Putoli Chingmak shared God's word followed by dinner.



Women monthly fellowship with Rev. Wati as speaker



Retreat at Shalom Bible Seminary, Zubza



Women's Group picnic with Sunday School at Green Park



Advance Christmas women's fellowship



### Committee members:

- Dr. Noktang Jamir (Chairperson)
- Mr. Yabang Longkumer (Pastor and ex-officio)
- Mrs. Ketuno Sophie Imchen
- Ms. Kim Zienreiliu Leivon
- Mr. Vepu Pfuno

### Mission Financial allocation

- Long term- 50%
- Short term- 30%
- One time- 15%
- Miscellaneous- 5%

### Activities

- The committee conducts Nagamese fellowship every alternate Sundays.
- The month of April was observed as mission month with the theme "Be ready, be willing" (1 Pet. 3:15). The speakers were Mr. Tejdor, Dr. Adela Mero, Miss Kim Leivon and Miss Temsunaro.

## HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

### HITOKALI NISA

#### The Hospitality Committee members:

1. Mrs. Hitokali Nisa
2. Mrs. Jenny Murry
3. Mrs. Sashikala Longchar

#### From the Youth Express:

1. Ms. Sida
2. Ms. Avisela
3. Mr. Zhia Achumi
4. Mr. Napem

**Vision:** We the committee members desire to help our church grow and want the newcomers to connect with members of the church.

**Goal:** To help our guests decide to return and develop new relationships within our congregation.

#### Duties of the church hospitality team:

1. Oversee the working of all hospitality program and visitor care ministries.

## MISSION COMMITTEE

### DR. NOKTANG JAMIR Chairman

- The committee made a commitment to be a support to people who are in the mission field through prayers, telephone calls and meeting them in person for fellowship.
- The committee decided to sponsor one candidate for his studies.
- Some of the committee members along with the church members visited Manja Bible college and sponsored the food and donated library books.
- The committee made a financial contribution to Hope Channel.
- The committee extended financial contribution to an orphanage home in Myanmar.
- The committee extended financial aid to a church member for education.
- Some of the committee along with church members visited an area for mission survey.
- The committee sponsored 5 students from Hutton Bible Institute, Manja, to be part of youth camp.

#### The mission committee continues to support:

- The Chaplain, District Hospital, Dimapur (partnering with Baptist Pastor's Fellowship, Dimapur)
- The Love Burma Mission (LBM)
- A Naga student at Eastern Theological College, Jorhat.



2. Coordinate the activities that involve hospitality and care ministries.
3. Be alert to the needs of the church membership and ways to serve those needs.
4. Find ways to help our visitor make new friends.
5. Church kitchen setup and service.
6. Provide hospitality arrangements for visiting pastors, missionaries and special guests.

## CROSSOVER REPORT (DEC. 2023 – OCT. 2024)

**KEWI PFUNO**



We're grateful to God for blessing our Crossover Fellowship throughout the year. Our membership has grown closer, and new friends have joined us.

### Highlights

- 10<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2023: Advent celebration with Pastors Yabang and Zuthunglo Ezung. Pastor Yabang gave a powerful exhortation to the members present.
- 2024 Theme: "The Pursuit of Christian Living"

### Fellowship meetings

- 18<sup>th</sup> Feb: Pastor Yabang
- 10<sup>th</sup> Mar: Pastor Zuthunglo (Bible study)
- 7<sup>th</sup> Apr: Mr. Tejedor ("Integrating Faith and Work")
- 5<sup>th</sup> May: Mr. Tiaba Pongen (member)
- 13-14<sup>th</sup> Jul: Retreat at Benreu Village (bonding, Bible study, worship, BBQ night)
- 19<sup>th</sup> Aug: Bible study with Ms. Bendangla (member)
- 29<sup>th</sup> Sept: Bible study with Ms. Ajem (member)
- 27<sup>th</sup> Oct: Mr. Prabhu fellowship leader (member)

## WORSHIP TEAM

**VEPU PFUNO**  
Leader

### Worship Team members:

- |                       |                     |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| • Vepu Pfuno (Leader) | • Jeten             |
| • Along               | • Shikhhalu         |
| • Khuli               | • Khilivi           |
| • Peter               | • Alona             |
| • Moa                 | • Chizuk            |
| • Ajem                | • Gloria (on break) |

### Activities:

- Worship evening at Mhainamtsi local ground, Jalukie on 14<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2023 organised by Baptist Youth Fellowship, RBCM,

**Reflection**— God's grace has enabled us to experience numerous blessings. We praise Him for:

- Deeper bonding among members
- New friendships
- Meaningful Bible studies
- Opportunities for member-led fellowships

**Vision** — As we move forward, we seek God's guidance and wisdom to:

- Grow closer to God's ways
- Learn and apply God's Word together
- Mentor younger youths
- Increase church involvement

We give all glory to God and look forward to a fruitful year ahead.

## My Experience at Crossover

*Crossover has always been a refreshing and meaningful experience, with everyone being welcoming and supportive from the very beginning. It is a space where we share, learn, and grow in faith and friendship — whether through engaging discussions, shared meals, or simply spending time together. Every session leaves me encouraged and reminded that we're not alone, we're on this journey together through Christ. I feel blessed and grateful to be part of this vibrant community.*

**Imtina Khathing**

Pastor Yabang Lkr. shared the Word of God.

- Worship team participated at CBCD Fundraiser Buffet on 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2024.
- Led worship at Spiritual Retreat, Hutton Bible Institute, Manja on 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2024 conducted by Covenant Baptist Church, Dimapur.
- Participated in Worship Evening at St. John College on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2024.
- Participated in Worship Evening at LG Hall, CIHSR on 25<sup>th</sup> October.

### Future plans:

- A seminar/workshop on worship music.
- Two outreach ministries.
- Evening Sunday worship with CBCD family.
- Dinner fellowship with worship team.



# MEN'S GROUP (MPB) ANNUAL REPORT

The year started with our first MPB meet at the Church's plot on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 2024.

## Monthly meet table

Sl. no	Month	2 <sup>nd</sup> Saturday morning meet	4 <sup>th</sup> Saturday evening meet	Other days
1	February	10 <sup>th</sup> -Church's plot Exhortation by Dr. Sam		
2	March	9 <sup>th</sup> March-College bite Rev. Babu Bhat shared		
3	April	13 <sup>th</sup> April - Wazuk Healthcare Dr. Avilie shared		Mission outreach to Nsong Village, Peren
4	May	Church prayer and fasting	25 <sup>th</sup> -1 <sup>st</sup> Futsal match	12 <sup>th</sup> May-Mother's Day, sang a special song
5	June	8 <sup>th</sup> - NECU discussed on Discernment, wisdom & Prophecy	22 <sup>nd</sup> -2 <sup>nd</sup> Futsal match	23 <sup>rd</sup> led Sunday devotion worship service
6	July	13 <sup>th</sup> - NECU discussed on the topic 'Bhraman is real-but not true'	27 <sup>th</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup> Futsal match	20 <sup>th</sup> led the Sunday devotion worship service
7	August	10 <sup>th</sup> evening- Rengma Baptist Church's conference hall. Had a discussion on 'Once saved always saved' over dinner	31 <sup>st</sup> -Bible study and prayer at Church's baby room	24 <sup>th</sup> -led the Sunday devotion worship service 25 <sup>th</sup> -participated at the 'Extravagant Love series 7' organised by the Church at Powai
8	September	14 <sup>th</sup> -Social work for Church's conference 2024	28 <sup>th</sup> -Church's Prayer and fasting	20 <sup>th</sup> - led the worship on the 1 <sup>st</sup> day of the conference
9	October	12 <sup>th</sup> -NECU Prayer meeting	cancelled	27 <sup>th</sup> - led the Sunday devotion worship service
10	November	9 <sup>th</sup> -Cafe at Maple Tree School Group sharing and prayer		



## EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

**DR. KINDY NEWMAI**

### Committee members:

- Dr. Kindy Newmai (Chairperson)
- Dr. Avilie Nisa
- Mr. Imtinukshi Jamir

New members, Mr. Tiaba Pongener and Mr. Neipekreizo Kesiezie, were inducted in 2024.

### Regular Activities:

- Posting weekly Sermon snippets on the Church WhatsApp group
- Bimonthly newsletter
- Church Annual magazine
- Maintaining church library
- Church events video/photographic documentation
- New responsibilities such as publishing of The AGM Gazette and Prayer request cards were added in 2024.

- With the church website being launched in 2024, the editorial committee is in charge of maintaining/updating the website while working alongside the Tabernacle team.



## DECORATION COMMITTEE

**MRS. AREN IMCHEN**  
Chairperson



### Committee members:

- Mrs. Aren Imchen (Chairperson)
- Mrs. Kavili Pongener
- Mrs. Lucy Jamir
- Mrs. Kekhriesinuo Kreditsu
- Mrs. Achumi Caty
- Mrs. Liki D. Jimo

### Activities:

- The committee decorated the Church during the Mission month, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, World Environment Day, Thanksgiving Sunday, Cultural Sunday, Mother's Day, Father's Day, CBCD Conference, Advent Christmas, Christmas, New Year and all the other given Sundays.
- On some special Sundays, fresh flowers were donated by some families who desire to remain anonymous.
- The committee decided to continue the clean the store room where flowers are kept once every two months and whenever need arises.
- We plan to continue to plant more natural flowers for the church next year.
- Besides our responsibility as a committee, the team as a whole also had a time of fellowship and potluck on two occasions.
- 3 big floral pots and 19 small floral pots were purchased this year.




# Bible Trivia

## Guess Who

Bible Review for young children.


Match the Bible Character(s) with the Bible story. Each letter is used once.



**Characters**

- A. Mary
- B. Jacob
- C. Noah
- D. Jonah
- E. Jesus
- F. 3 Hebrew Boys
- G. David
- H. Moses
- I. Eve
- J. Solomon

- \_\_\_ 1. He builds a huge boat.
- \_\_\_ 2. He is a shepherd who used a slingshot to stop a giant.
- \_\_\_ 3. They are thrown into a fiery furnace.
- \_\_\_ 4. He delivered the Ten Commandments from God.
- \_\_\_ 5. She is the mother of Jesus.
- \_\_\_ 6. He is Esau's twin brother.
- \_\_\_ 7. She talks to a snake.
- \_\_\_ 8. He walks on water.
- \_\_\_ 9. He is a king known for his wisdom.
- \_\_\_ 10. He is swallowed by a great fish.

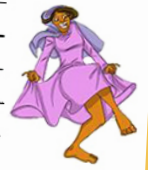


## Bible Pathway Adventures

WORKSHEET

### BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT WORD SCRAMBLE

1. XOEUDS: \_\_\_\_\_
2. EINEGSS: \_\_\_\_\_
3. TICLEVUIS: \_\_\_\_\_
4. EAEHNIMH: \_\_\_\_\_
5. HTSREE: \_\_\_\_\_
6. CTSESEECILIAS: \_\_\_\_\_
7. ASIASH: \_\_\_\_\_
8. SUOHJA: \_\_\_\_\_
9. ICAMH: \_\_\_\_\_
10. IODBAAH: \_\_\_\_\_
11. EPIZNHHAA: \_\_\_\_\_
12. GAGAH: \_\_\_\_\_
13. ZEAR: \_\_\_\_\_
14. BUMRNS: \_\_\_\_\_
15. OUMENOETDRY: \_\_\_\_\_
16. HUTR: \_\_\_\_\_



## Bible Pathway Adventures

BIBLE QUIZ

### Women of the Bible


Match the question with the answer on the right.

**QUESTIONS**

- \_\_\_ What relationship was Ruth to Naomi?
- \_\_\_ Who was Jacob's mother?
- \_\_\_ Who did Abram marry?
- \_\_\_ What was the name of Moses' sister?
- \_\_\_ Which woman was a seller of purple goods?
- \_\_\_ With whom did David commit adultery?
- \_\_\_ What was the name of Ahasuerus' new queen?
- \_\_\_ What was the name of Yeshua's (Jesus) mother?
- \_\_\_ What did Ruth do to Boaz while he was sleeping?
- \_\_\_ Which female judge described herself as 'a mother in Israel'?
- \_\_\_ Who did Yeshua appear to first after His resurrection?

**ANSWERS**

1. Deborah
2. Mary
3. Miriam
4. Sarai
5. Daughter-in-law
6. Esther
7. Bathsheba
8. Rebekah
9. Lydia
10. Mary Magdalene
11. Uncovered his feet and lay down next to him



## Bible Pathway Adventures

### WHO AM I?

New Testament Review

Match the Bible story with the Bible character(s)

1. \_\_\_ They were friends with Paul.
2. \_\_\_ He was raised from the dead.
3. \_\_\_ He betrayed Yeshua for money.
4. \_\_\_ He baptized an Ethiopian believer.
5. \_\_\_ He was the High Priest.
6. \_\_\_ He was one of the twelve disciples.
7. \_\_\_ He walked on water.
8. \_\_\_ She was the mother of Yeshua.
9. \_\_\_ He was a tax collector who was rich and short.
10. \_\_\_ He baptized (immersed) people in the Jordan River.

- A. Mary
- B. Philip
- C. Caiaphas
- D. John the Baptist
- E. Peter
- F. Judas
- G. Yeshua
- H. Priscilla & Aquila
- I. Lazarus
- J. Zacchaeus





# PICTURE GALLERY

## CHURCH PLOT FUNDRAISER | 25<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2024





### CHURCH PLOT DEDICATORY PROGRAM



### CULTURAL SUNDAY





**COMMUNION**



**GOOD FRIDAY**



**RESURRECTION SUNDAY**



**MOTHER'S DAY**



**COUPLES' RETREAT**



**FIRST ADVENT SERVICE CUM LICENSING CEREMONY OF PASTOR YABANG LKR**





**ADVENT SERVICE**



**CHRISTMAS 2024**



**NAGAMESE CHRISTMAS SERVICE 2024**



Crossover Christmas fellowship



Men's Group leading worship



**STAFF**



Church Board



Pastoral Team



Pastor Yabang Longkumer



Assoc. Pastor Zuthunglo  
(Christian Education)



Assoc. Pastor Kewi Pfuno  
(Youth Dept.)



Danganlung Kamei  
(Sound Operator)



Peshia  
(Church staff)



Alunbo Pamai  
(Caretaker)





## OUR VISION

- To glorify God and expand His Kingdom.
- To build a vibrant and worshipping community
- To preach and propagate the gospel of Jesus Christ.


## OUR MISSION

- To disciple others (discipleship).
- To reach the unreached through worshipping, preaching, teaching, fellowshiping and ministering.

### Regular Activities

- Sunday Service at 10:00 am at CBCD.
- Youth Express every Saturday at 4:00 pm (winter) and 5:00 pm (summer).
- Sunday School at 10:00 am.
- Board Meeting once a month.
- Women's Fellowship and Men's Prayer breakfast every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month.
- Cell groups and Bible study.
- Holy Communion once in a month.
- Nagamese Fellowship on alternate Sundays.

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