


reach

SPRING EDITION

ISSUE 32



Matthew 6:21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also

CHURCH locations and programs

Central:

2/177 Beavers Road
Northcote VIC 3070
Tel: (03) 9481 6889
Senior Pastor: Victor Soo
Email: info@reachcc.org

West:

Community Hub
Featherbrook College
281 Boardwalk Blvd
Point Cook VIC 3030
Pastor: Ajibade A. Aibinu
Website: reachcc.org

CHURCH SERVICE

- Celebration Service • Sunday | Central Church 10:00am - 11:30am
Fellowship Lunch 11:30am - 12:30pm
- Sunday | West Church 4:00pm - 5:30pm
Fellowship Dinner 5:30pm - 6:30pm
- REACH Kids • Sunday | 10:30am - 11:30am

PRAYER MEETING

- Monthly Ministry & Prayer • 1st Friday of the Month | 7.30pm - 9.30pm
- Intercessory Prayer • Tuesday | 7.30pm - 9.30pm
via Zoom, please contact our office for further information.

BIBLE STUDY

- Young Adults • Wednesday | 7.30pm - 9.30pm
- University & Youth Groups • Friday | 7.30pm - 9.30pm
- Family • Monday | 8pm - 10pm
Friday | 7.30pm - 9.30pm

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- STEP Classes • Sunday 12:45pm - 1:45pm
- Mothers' Group • Every 2nd & 4th Tuesday | 10am - 12pm
- Men and Women's Ministry Events • Quarterly
- Praise Dance / Table Tennis • Thursday | 10am - 12pm
- Ukulele for beginners • Thursday | 1pm - 2pm

WELCOME

Welcome to the 32nd issue of REACH. In this issue, we have so much treasure for you. First of all, Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also; but do not forget that You have a brain as well. God's Greatness shows us that God's plan does not require a plan B; and His plan is for us to be Transformed to impact. God's Grace is in My adventure to Mt Everest Base Camp, and God's Goodness compels us to share a good meal Korean Gimbap with others.

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Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Reach / Spring 2023

Sir Ernest Henry Shackleton, an Anglo-Irish explorer who attempted to reach the South Pole, was involved in four expeditions exploring Antarctica in the 20th century. He solicited for money to fund his campaign and rallied for volunteers to join him in these very dangerous journeys. The Antarctica is recognised as a very hostile environment, and no one had yet conquered that Continent. It was claimed that he advertised for crew with these words, "Low wages, bitter cold, long hours of complete darkness. Safe return doubtful. Honour and recognition in the event of success." His candid approach attracted 5,000 applications, which Shackleton sifted into piles labelled "mad", "hopeless" and "possible" before selecting his 27 strong crew. This illustrates that people are most willing to make the sacrifices to the extent of possible deaths for a small chance of recognition or glory.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 *Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.*

Godly vs worldly race

The athlete's aim is to go faster, higher and stronger to achieve a personal best and to win the gold medal. He enters his competition to seize the opportunity that comes only once every four years. He puts away all other priorities for this one race. Contestants train from years to decades to win. Some return home after the event with a medal but most with nothing. Regardless, all shall soon be forgotten. All these glory for his country and himself, and even if he wins, it is for a corruptible crown. The world watches.

Christians have more reasons to run the race. We need to be wise and make use of each day to touch an increasingly needy community around us. Utilise the daily routine at work or school where God has placed you to make incremental differences. Your seemingly small acts of random kindness or compassion go a long way. People do not care until they know you care. Each day, radiate your light to dispel the darkness. To the mundane of the daily grind, add the salt of faith, hope and love.

Christians are sent into the arena of life to win the world. Whether you are a retiree, a pastor, a Christian organisation leader or a student, God sends you into the harvest to die for Him if needed. The enemy rages because you are exposing his plans to steal, kill and destroy. Let every stride or every punch be as a pleasing service for our King and Kingdom. Let us be focused and represent Christ as disciples who are gentle as doves and wise as serpents. At the same time, be bold as lions with a faith like flint to start the fires of revival through our godly witness in our office. The world may mock you, accuse you and you may pay the ultimate price. So was our Lord but God vindicated Him and His Legacy lives on for all eternity.

Godly vs worldly reward

Remember, in this race that we are in, we receive an eternal crown. Every service, every ministry, every blessing, every sharing of the Good News does not go void. God honours all our selfless deeds that render Him the glory. Jesus brought His Disciples to the Gates of Hades at Caesarea Philippi. There, all the gods of the region were assembled to be worshipped and celebrated with orgies; child sacrifices and all kinds of immorality and blasphemies were practiced. There, Jesus called His Disciples to build His Church against all these false gods. The Lord is seeking for rocks to build His Church. Fame and fortune do not last but investments into the Kingdom of God is for eternity. Today, are you putting your time, talents and tithes as good stewards of what God has blessed you with?

Matthew 16:18-19 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

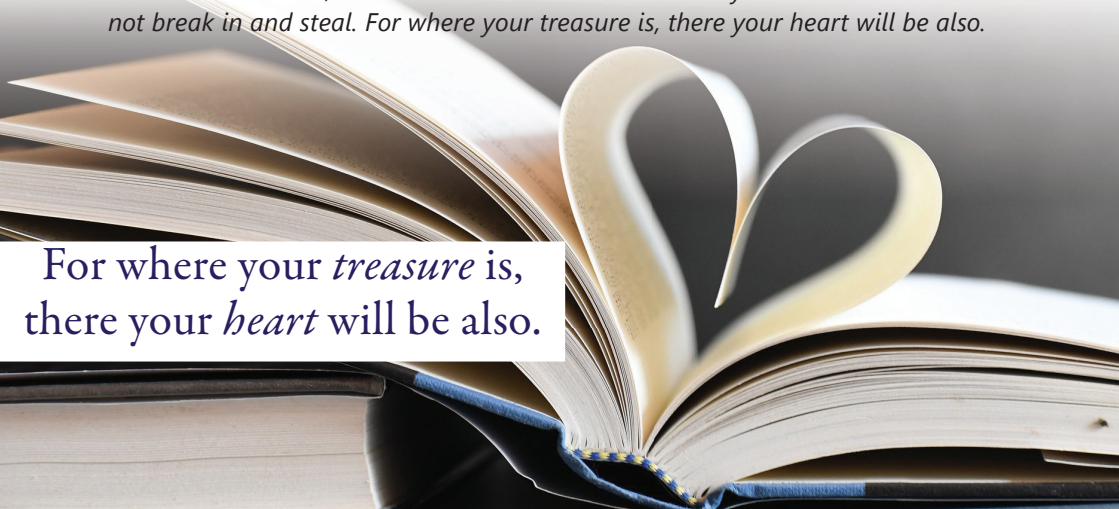
Godly vs worldly kingdom

We also stand at our Gates of Hades where the manifestations remain unchanged in the form of abortions, euthanasia, promiscuity, genderisms, WOKE-ism, narcissism, ideologies over truth, the worship of creations over the Creator, and materialism. All the gods roar in anger against not you but Christ. Be courageous for greater is the God who is in us than all those that are in the world. Our Messiah has triumphed and the enemy, and the sore loser is most angry! He could not touch God, so he threatens His Church.

Today, be a Daniel whose faith, along with his three friends as believers, stood against the antagonism of their times. These followers of God did not merely conduct themselves privately as believers but as witnesses of the power of God and His Provision. Their courage deeply moved the greatest king of their times. Queen Esther was prepared to forsake the comfort of the palace as well as her position to save her people, the Jews, from the tyranny of political corruption. Nehemiah was a man after God who was touched with a burden for Jerusalem. All of them in their daily service and areas of responsibilities lived out their faith. None waited for the opportunity but created the opportunity to live lives that changed the destinies of the multitudes. Their exemplary acts of selflessness leave legacies for generations upon generations to repeat the same.

I ask that you also become one. Build the Kingdom of God not your own kingdom. The former is sown on earth but produces fruit for now and eternity whereas the latter perishes. Where are you investing your life?

Matthew 6:19-21 *Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*



For where your *treasure* is,
there your *heart* will be also.

God's plan does not require a *plan B*

By Eric Ko

Matthew 6:31-34 "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

Nowhere has the words of Matthew 6:31-34 been more accurate than what has transpired in my life over the last few years. To truly appreciate my testimony, I must lay the premise for you to truly grasp the awesomeness of God.

During the pandemic of COVID-19 and its long lockdowns that we had to endure, I had depended on God's providence and was blessed to be supported through it. I had the time to reflect on my life and thought about what would be the next steps for my wife Janice and me. The pandemic had certainly turned everything upside down and as I was working shift work in a hotel, the hours of work were certainly not ideal.

However, in late 2021, God had blessed me with a new role as a hotel reservation agent which had normal business working hours. This was perfect timing, as Reach Community Church had launched a Western church campus in Point Cook in March 2022, and finally having weekends free and no more shift work, I could fully devote myself to this new endeavour in the West.

The problem was that I could not settle properly into this new role as I was constantly being asked by other departments to assist and I found myself often stressed and working overtime to complete my work. This continued for about six months before a major life changing circumstance flipped my life around.

In April 2022, I contracted COVID-19, and for me, it was not severe enough to be hospitalised but bad enough that it took me almost three weeks to recover from the acute illness. However, this was the beginning of the struggle with long COVID and it was during this struggle that both Janice and I felt it was time to move on from my hotel job.



The pandemic has a way of making one introspective and so the decision was made to take on reduced hours to help deal with the recovery and try to find a job closer to home when I became healthier. At that time, my full-time position, as a hotel reservation agent, required full time hours, I had no choice but to resign from the position. But by the grace of God, the hotel management was understanding and offered me, even kept me on part time, in an administrative position until I was ready to move on.

Throughout my long COVID recovery, we trusted God for providence, due to a reduced wage, and to open the right doors for new employment. I recall an experience in early January 2023, when I decided to start looking at what jobs were out there and I was thoroughly confused as to what I should do with my life.

It was at this point that I had an epiphany. I realised that up to now, I had lived a life for the purpose of being just a good Christian. I participated in church, helped where I can, ran ministries and did all the things a good Christian strives to do. But it was all works. I began to think what my life meant with respect to the Kingdom of God. What am I doing for the eternal kingdom?



I started to pray that God would lead me to where I can be a blessing to others, to leave a legacy of furthering the Kingdom of God wherever I am and whoever I meet. With that in mind, God provided an opening at Heathdale Christian College. I was employed as a casual receptionist, and had been able to assist and be a blessing in many other departments since I started working there. As it was a casual position, I still trusted God would provide a full-time position for me at the school.

God has blessed me with favour in this workplace where the simple things I do have somehow managed to get the attention and praise of my colleagues and managers. With this favour I was requested (specifically by name) by the principal of the primary school to work in an upcoming full-time role. This role is an eight months maternity leave cover but I trust God will provide beyond that. I praise God for His endless faithfulness.

I know God has greater things planned for my life, and I will continue to seek and trust the plans that He has for me.

Returning to Matthew 6:33, I encourage you to seek first God's plan for you, and where He wants you to use the talents He has given you to be a blessing to others, and God will do the rest. Trust in God's plan as it is ultimately the best for you. If you follow God's plan, you will not need a plan B.

Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV) says *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."*

I pray that God will be glorified by my testimony, and that you are inspired to seek your own epiphany on where God has called you to be, and what you will do for the Kingdom of God.

Korean Gimhap

By Sharon Oen



Korean Gimhap (aka kimbap) is a Korean dish made from cooked rice (“bap”), vegetables, and meat rolled in dried sheets of seaweed (“gim”) and served in bite-sized slices. Any variety of vegetables and meat can be used to suit your taste.

INGREDIENTS (makes about 7 rolls)

- 1 pack nori sheets (10 sheets)
- 500g cooked sushi rice
- Sesame oil
- Sesame seeds

Vegetable Fillings

- Cucumbers – cut into batons
- Carrots – shredded into long strips (can be raw or sautéed)
- Radish – pickled
- Lettuce (any soft type e.g. oak lettuce)
- Perilla leaves (optional – great Korean herb)
- Blanched spinach leaves
- Burdock root (very traditional Gimhap ingredient)

How to assemble a Gimhap?

Find out more:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y-Y9CXGRJPU>

Protein – choose any protein you like

- Omelette – cut into thin strips
- Roast chicken - shredded
- Beef Bulgogi (can be bought from Korean store and cooked)
- Spicy Pork Bulgogi (can be bought from Korean store and cooked)
- Canned Tuna - mixed with Kewpie mayonnaise
- Crab sticks (pan fried)
- Spam (pan fried)

METHOD

1. Cook sushi rice and season with 3 tablespoons of sesame oil while warm, allow to cool to room temperature.
2. Place a thin layer of rice onto half of the nori sheet (the shiny part down).
3. Place another half sheet of nori on top of the rice layer (optional but does help to make rolling easier).
4. Begin putting each ingredient to neatly fill the width of the nori sheet, one ingredient at a time starting with the vegetables, followed by the protein. Can be generous with the ingredients as they will compress when rolled.
5. Use hands to tightly roll (see video), use some water to join seam together. Use sushi mat if available.
6. To finish, lightly brush with sesame oil, sprinkle sesame seeds, and cut into 8 bite-sized pieces.

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My Adventure

By David Giang

to *Mt Everest Base Camp*

'Adventure, with all its requisite danger and wildness, is a deeply spiritual longing written into the soul of man.'

A deep sense of adventure has always been impressed upon my heart since I first started hiking the great outdoors as a young man. The multi-faceted scent of eucalyptus with hints of mint, honey and citrus is in air as you walk through the rugged forests of the Australian bush. The kindling of fire wood and watching the embers dance as you stoke the fire late in the night while chatting with friends. Pastel pink hues and sunset orange skies as the sun retreats into the horizon for another day. These are vivid memories which I cherish deeply.

Hiking as an activity has provided me not only joyful experiences of being present in the moment, but also spiritual insight when I take the time to reflect on how God is using life's moments to speak to me. I recently completed one of my hiking goals of climbing to Mt Everest Base Camp in Nepal. Let me share my journey and some of my reflections.

Day time temperatures ranged from 10 degrees in the day to -20 degrees at night. The oxygen level at Mt Everest base camp (5346m) is 50% of that at sea level. It is a 120km return trip from the starting town of Lukla to Base Camp. I can say these headline statements are true and this trek has been the most physically and mentally challenging hike I have done in my life. But having the support of a great team of like-minded people, local guides and sherpas created a sense of community and we were there to spur each other on as we battled altitude sickness, tiredness and sleep deprivation together.

In Proverbs 27:17, 'As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend'. This is a simple statement to say no one is alone. God has embedded community in the church as a means to share one another's burdens as well as to celebrate the joys and key milestones in life. And there is mutual benefit when we meet together at cell groups, corporate worship or simply having a coffee together.

I had the opportunity to bunk with a 55-year-old retiree from the UK and he impressed upon me that time is finite when he said he may only have 20 summers to go. When it came time to say goodbye, he messaged to say I was possibly the nicest and the most genuine person he came across in his life. It is amazing that we have positively impacted each other in such a short amount of time but how much more when a community of believers journey through life together.

We visited in spring time and it is a beautiful time of year to visit as rhododendrons and cherry blossoms are in bloom and set the perfect backdrop as we passed the local shops, yaks, tea houses and the sherpas. But in the last two days leading up to the summit to the base camp, it snowed heavily and our local tour guide said he has never seen snow like this before at this time of the year in the middle of spring. The guidance was if the snow persisted it would be too dangerous to hike to the base camp and we would need to seek an alternative route.



● Reach Reflection

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Reach / Spring 2023

In that moment, I was devastated because I had spent six months training, travelled halfway across the world and with only two days left to complete one of my lifetime goals, we might not reach the summit because of the adverse weather totally out of our control. I was led to turn back to my journal entry on 23/04/23 and I had written: 'The hike was beautiful and the snow fall provided an amazing landscape that we would not normally see in spring and the views were simply spectacular! This was the beauty of creation and I was reminded of the psalms, where the skies proclaim the work of His hands. With Mt Everest in the backdrop, this set the scene for one of the best days of this multi-day hike!' A serene peace swept over me when He reminded me who created these mountains, skies and snow.

'Let the sea resound, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. Let the rivers clap their hands, let the mountains sing together for joy.' – Psalm 98:7-8 (NIV)

I prayed that there would be an opening and that the weather would be favourable for the day of our summit. At Lobuche on the night before we summited, our prayers were answered and we were given the news that we would be allowed to go to the base camp. I had not slept for three days due to altitude sickness and we left at 6am the next day in order to reach the Mt Everest base camp by the afternoon. The amazing thing was during the eight hours hike to the summit, it did not snow and it provided a backdrop for the most amazing scenery we would see the whole trip. By the time we reached the base camp, took our photos and ready to descend, heavy snow started to fall.



It was a 'kairos' moment when the snow did not fall and the favour of good weather has left an imprint on my heart to encourage me that there are bigger 'kairos' moments in life to those who seek God diligently.

As I reflected on this trip, it has sharpened my outlook on how to be more purposeful with a finite resource like time and why sowing into a community is part of God's framework to build up His church. It has inspired me to pursue goals with a kingdom purpose and to utilise the gifts and talents specific to my life for His glory, such as loving my family and friends through sacrificial generosity as well as going deeper in worship ministry.

In closing, God has a purpose for every moment and we need to learn to step back and reflect on what He is saying in that moment to us. Even when I was nestled in the Himalayas, He was using this hiking adventure to speak profoundly on things I needed to hear. What is God saying to you today?





Transformed to impact

By Gabriel Lee

As I reflected on my life, I have come to realise that God's goodness is not always manifested in a single grand event but rather in the accumulation of countless smaller blessings that have woven their way through my journey. It is in the little moments of joy, the unexpected acts of kindness, and the instances where everything falls into place perfectly that I see God's hand at work.

My journey has been far from a smooth, uninterrupted path. There have been and still are many highs and lows, not only in my spiritual journey, but also in various aspects of my life.

Although I accepted Christ into my life during my childhood, I did not fully grasp the depth of what it meant to follow Him. My faith was more of a surface-level understanding, and I had not yet internalised the significance of having a personal relationship with Jesus.

From young, I was quick to learn, and it was easy for me to grasp new things; however, I often displayed mischievous tendencies, hyperactivity, and struggled with maintaining focus due to my short attention span. I had many troubles with learning and many of my teachers thought I had ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder).

I was brought up in a Christian environment, and I regularly attended Sunday School in church and was involved in BSF (Bible Study Fellowship) from a young age. While I was able to learn the elements of Christian faith easily, I did not have a personal relationship with God.

Life continued and I made the transition from Sunday School to Youth Group in church. Although I still encountered difficulties in maintaining focus at school, it was not as prominent as during my earlier years. I participated in Youth Group weekly, and annual youth camps. At the time I could not see their impact on my life, but on reflection, I can clearly see how God has changed me over the years.

For me, getting closer to God was not a single moment of awakening that caused a sudden change of my life; it was a gradual change, in small ways, allowing me to change for the better.

Those little moments helped me to understand what it meant to draw close to God, and to develop a personal relationship with Him. As a result, I noticed a positive shift in my character and behaviour. Not only was I able to focus better, I learned to be more compassionate, forgiving, and understanding towards others.



● Reach Testimony

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The support and encouragement from my family and the church community played a significant role in my transformation. Having people who encouraged me, believed in me and prayed for me during my journey made all the difference.

This reflection of my life has reminded me of two bible verses:

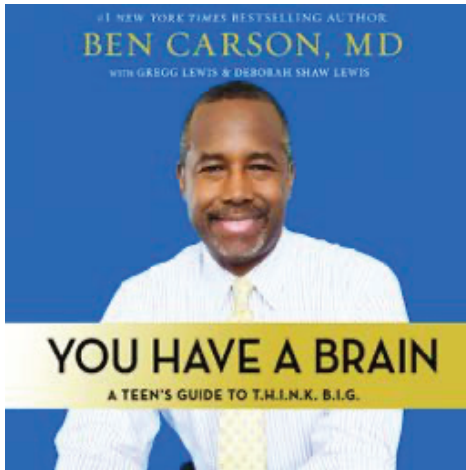
When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. - 1 Corinthians 13:11

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. - 2 Corinthians 5:17

Both these verses talk about how in Christ, we are able to grow and mature, while the old habits and behaviours are left behind, and in Christ a new character emerged through God's guidance and the Holy Spirit.

I am truly grateful for the transformation that has taken place in my life so far. My journey is still ongoing, but I know that as long as I continue to walk with God and surround myself with the supportive community of friends, family and church, I will continue to improve and positively impact the world around me.





You Have a Brain

Author: Ben Carson
Reviewed by Lumee Ngu

This book tells the dramatic and intimate story of Ben Carson's struggle to beat the odds and how through his great faith, hard work and God-given talent that made him one of the world's greatest paediatric neurosurgeons. Carson illustrates how everyone of us has the potential to achieve great things. He himself does not settle for mediocre, instead he pursues greatness and asks God to use his giftings to bless many. He encourages young people to apply his life principle which ties into the eight letters of T.H.I.N.K. B.I.G. and dare to dream bigger than they have imagined.

In this book, the author shares some of his significant experiences ("Kairos" moment) that impacted his life, in the event of his mother's prayer while he was young, in the event when he gave his life to Jesus and decided to be a missionary doctor, in the event when he lost control of his temper and so on. He also credited his mother as the single most important human influence in his life, in terms of his faith and his successful life journey.

It is inspiring how God uses Carson's life to save the lives of critically ill children around the world. The unleashing of his potential leads him to a life that is rewarding and significant, which also brings satisfaction and fulfillment.

"As a doctor and a scientist, the more I learn about creation and especially the human brain, the more impressed I am with how incredibly smart our Creator must be."

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by Lee Chyi Lam

All the bible verses quoted are in the New King
James Version (NKJV) unless otherwise specified.

