



新加坡长老会伯特利堂
BETHEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
12 Jalan Latch Singapore 359110 | Tel 63835700 | Fax 63835708



1st May 2020, Friday

To: Pastors, EDC and worshippers of Bethel Presbyterian Church,

Dear brothers and sisters, shalom!

One of today's lectionary reading is taken from Psalm 23. It is the most beloved and quoted passage in the bible. And we often see ourselves in its imagery.

He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. (Ps 23:2-3b)

As the verses begin to flow pass our eyes, we find ourselves very quickly in a realm of peace and tranquillity, mimicking the steady flow of stream and resting on the soft, lush green. If you have lived long enough, or ever experienced God's goodness, we will find resonance with Psalm 23. It is a stark contrast, however, to the busy and cut-throat society we are more acquainted to today.

Have we, for once, put others in the picture of Psalm 23 instead? Someone who may also be longing for and seeking the same we so fondly find in Psalm 23? The peace and solace, refuge and protection, safety and relief, comfort and help, goodness and love. Perhaps in Bethel (House of God), we may have a realistic opportunity to "prepare a table" to, respectfully, host the homeless and the needy. What glory it would be to God when the lips of destitute and displaced give thanks in His name!

Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor. (1 Pet 2:17)

This past week, Ps Mui Kiang has been working tirelessly with the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) to evaluate if Bethel fulfils the criteria to set up a shelter for the homeless in our vicinity. MSF will be the main referral of stayers, whom will be screened by them. This model of shelter is known to MSF as S3P, meaning Safe Sound Sleeping Place. Ps Mui Kiang has also shared this need with the Pastors, Elders and Deacons. We are in the process of endorsing this transient ministry. Should the stars align and receive all the internal and external approvals, we will be making necessary arrangements to receive the first batch of stayers soon.

Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. (Rom 12:13)



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According to some, it may be easy to extend a helping hand when we are in peace time, but during crisis, we think more than twice over. Is God giving Bethel an opportunity of a life time to serve the community in unprecedented ways? As shown in our Vision 123 mooted in 2013, if this is indeed God's calling for Bethel to reach out to the needy among us, will you in all ways and facets contribute towards it? Will you participate in a manner that God has led you to, or you are blessed with? Your love and compassion for the poor, your prayers for the needy, your actions for the displaced. Imagine the possibility of our simple obedience to live a life God has called us to live, we may hear Him say this to our ears,

'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' (Matt 25:40b)

We are acutely aware of the constraints, concerns and checks required. Responsible leaders have raised them; creative leaders have counter proposed with relevant measures. I am not sure if we would ever come to a point when we will only embark after all bases are covered. We acknowledge no ministry is without risk, but we will proceed cautiously, faithfully and prayerfully. At the same time, we do not have to be inundated with these challenges, for we are following Christ.

Remember what Jesus says to the man sitting at the tax collection booth?

"Follow me," Jesus said to him, and Levi got up, left everything and followed him.
(Luke 5:27-28)

No question asked. That is a story of faith. In your context, how is Jesus calling you to follow Him? Jesus says this to the young rich man seeking eternal life,

"If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." (Matt 19:21)

God is not asking all of us to sell away our possessions but we can share what we have with the poor, the needy and the destitute. There is freedom in such acts of love and compassion. There is joy in practising hospitality. You and I have tasted the goodness of our Lord and Psalm 23 reminds us so, again and again.

Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. (Ps 23:6)

So dear brothers and sisters, let's follow Him. Humbly yours, Rev Lim Tau Wei.