

Faith Journey

信心之旅

Welcome to FMC, Pastor Finsen!



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Editorial Team

Editor: Dr Ting Su Hie
Graphic Designer: David Sim Shi Wei
Publishing Coordinator: Ho Khee Jeem

Please email your articles to:
suhieting@gmail.com

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The Pastor's Message



Remembering and Giving Thanks

Anniversaries are usually happy occasions for celebrations as in wedding anniversaries and church anniversaries. These occasions allow us to look back at the years that have passed and we celebrate and give thanks. But anniversaries of death of loved ones can be sad occasions as we remember the loss and how much we miss our loved ones. Yet on the other hand, we look at how much progress and adjustments we have made without the presence of the deceased and again are thankful to God for His presence and grace.

This is the first anniversary since the first MCO was announced. In so many ways, it's a sad anniversary as we think of what we have lost – all our in-person gatherings (Sunday services, Sunday Schools, fellowship meetings, small groups and the list go on), our courses and classes in church, our care-free social life – going out and eating out whenever and wherever we want to; our holidays and our travel plans and many more. These are our losses and we grieve.

But on the other hand, we have gained so much, adjusted and adapted. The term "new norm" was first mooted last year and we said it without really knowing what it entails. Our initial small multimedia team has multiplied and grown and they have become very "pro" at their ministry. Pastors and many leaders are used to meeting on zoom and elections at local church level, District level and even

Annual Conference and General Conference levels have all been conducted in this one year.

We had opportunities to conduct combined online services and numerous webinars and were used by God to bless not just FMC members but others in Sarawak, Malaysia and elsewhere. It is and should be a happy anniversary celebration as we remember God's faithfulness and grace.

Paul reminded us to be thankful -

"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful." (Colossians 3:15)

"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful." (Colossians 4:2)

And so with thankful heart we celebrate this anniversary and with hope and assurance in His faithfulness we move on ahead into the unknown future with Jesus by our side.

Grateful and thankful

Rev Lenita Tiong §

Getting to know Pastor Finsen Wong

Pastor Finsen was born in 1993 in Sibu to Wong Ching Ping and Yii Lee Ching. His parents are primary school teachers. His two sisters are also teachers, in Song and Selangau. The only son in the family had admired pastors boldly proclaiming the word of God from the pulpit even before he went to primary school.

Pastor Finsen studied in SJK Ek Dee and SMB Chung Hua in Sibu. He spent about three months in Lower Sixth form before furthering his studies in the Computer Science degree programme in Swinburne University of Technology Sarawak Campus. In Year 4, he decided to be a man of the cloth. He went to Methodist Theological School Sibu for his pastoral training.

To him, serving in the church was the fun part because he could apply his theological knowledge and engage with the people. He enjoys contemplating Biblical viewpoints and analysing critical issues.



MTS Hostel ground floor buddies.



Inter-Seminary Competition at STM

However, waking up at the wee hours of the morning was tough. The days that he was serving in the morning prayer, he had to wake up at 4.30 a.m. to prepare for the morning prayer at 5.15 p.m. When the MCO started, the morning prayer was adjusted to 6 a.m. The hours in a day went past very fast with studies and gardening, and he was glad to tumble into bed at 10 or 11 at night.

When asked about his calling, Pastor Finsen said that since he was six or seven years old, he had the thought, "Maybe one day I'm going to stand at the pulpit to share and preach." He had always admired great preachers preaching at the pulpit. Three particular influences urged him towards his pastoral calling.

Firstly, Rev Dr Thomas Lau who pastored Logos Methodist Church had inspired Pastor Finsen with his biblical views and compassion.

Secondly, when his father took him to a missionary camp for Primary Five and Six children, Pastor Jessica Tiong who was serving in Cambodia at that time impressed upon him people's need for the gospel.

Last but not least, his parents were instrumental in urging him to respond to the call of God. They had earnestly served in evangelism for a long time. Since he was a child, Pastor Finsen had seen his parents preaching the gospel to Iban and other indigenous people. He also observed them doing a lot of evangelistic work in church and in school. Bible verses also spoke to him.

When Pastor Finsen was in university, he once again felt people's need for the gospel. He met international students from Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and Iran. He saw the need of lost souls



Pastor Finsen during his university days in Kuching. SENT BY Chin Daw Methodist Church

and he had shared his viewpoints about religion and faith with them.

Pastor Finsen says,

During my college years, there were many pastors who had a profound impact on my life. But one of them I have to name is Paul Washer, whose sermons have deeply impacted and touched me. Through his sermons, the fire was re-kindled in me. Therefore, I am extremely burdened with preaching. I long for God to burn and call His servants again through the holy and majestic pulpit.

He also felt that teenagers may lose their way when they are away from their homes and their parents' watchful eyes. Eventually, it became clear that it was time for him to enter seminary, and he did not wait to finish his computer science degree.

The challenges of MCO lockdowns and physical distancing did not dampen Pastor Finsen's resolve to engage with his congregation. He serves in Living Hope and delivers Holy Communion elements to the homes of about 40-50 members. It takes the whole of Sunday from morning till night as he makes his rounds of

Jalan Song, FMC area, Kota Samarahan and other areas. He found the brief contact with his congregation very meaningful as they talk about life and he has the opportunity to pray for them.

For exercise, Pastor Finsen likes jogging, and exercises like push up, sit up and squatting.

Please pray for Pastor Finsen's quick adaptation to the new FMC and Living Hope environment. The change from a Chinese congregation to an English congregation also takes getting used to. The differences surface in simple day-to-day matters like ways of doing things. Pastor Finsen also needs prayers for his health although he looks like a healthy young man. He is prone to getting mouth ulcers when he is stressed. At the time of the interview, he had four mouth ulcers!

A final question which I had been meaning to ask Pastor Finsen ever since he appeared in FMC, "Why is your English so good?" You would not believe this. Since he was six or seven years ago, Pastor Finsen has liked watching English movies and listening to English songs. When he watches a movie, he would look at the title, pause the movie, and imitate the actors. He tries to pronounce words and say things expressively in American accent. He also reads English books extensively and this is how he improves his English.

Su Hie



During Practical Ministry in Limbang