

Combined Youth Conference 2022 **(21-24 June 2022)**

Reported by Thessa Lagapa

After two years of not being able to have a physical Combined Youth Conference (CYC), the Lord finally opened the way for one this year. Though it was not a stay-in, overnight conference as before the pandemic, it was still a blessed regathering and time of studying God's Word. For this 18th CYC, the theme was "Bear Ye One Another's Burdens" based on Galatians 6:2 with Rev Dr Prabhudas Koshy as the main speaker. It was held from 21 to 24 June 2022 (Tues to Fri), 9:30am to 5pm in the premises of Calvary Pandan BPC. The daily attendance varied from 37 to 41 youths throughout the four days.

The conference was packed with spiritual blessings as God's Word was preached and taught faithfully and clearly. On the first day and the morning of the second, Rev Koshy gave four messages based on the conference theme with the following individual topics:

1. Restore One Another from Sin (Gal 6:1)
2. Bear One Another's Burdens (Gal 6:1-2)
3. Consider Others More Important (Gal 6:3-5)
4. Share with One Another (Gal 6:6-10)

In a society where individualism is promoted, and self-confidence and independence are some of the most sought-after attributes, burden-bearing in the church has somewhat been pushed into the shadows. Christians go to church, sit through the whole worship service, and then leave to go back to their own lives. They have fulfilled their Sunday duty, and can tick it off as a completed Sunday routine. Where has the fellowship gone? Not even a simple enquiry like: "How are you, brother/sister?" Have we noticed those who stood by themselves alone? Or do we notice only after they have disappeared from church for good? Rev Koshy touched on the different aspects of what burden-bearing is and how we can be a burden-bearer to each other as a service to God.

In the afternoon of the second day, Pr Joshua Yong gave an exhortation on evangelism based on John 1:42 which shows how we can bring others to Jesus the way Andrew brought his brother Peter to the Messiah.

On the third day, we had two forums. The first was on "BPism and Church Governance" led by Rev Dr Jeffrey Khoo and the second was on "Bible Versions" by Rev Dr Quek Suan Yew. After their thorough explanations on each topic, time was given for questions to be asked and answered. Both topics sought to strengthen

our faith on why we believe what we believe. It is often a common scenario that a person growing up in the church knows the basic doctrines but may not exactly know how to explain the why's. The forums have given us answers to questions people may ask us or even questions we ourselves may have.

On the fourth day, Bro Samuel Joseph delivered the concluding message that tied up all that had been taught in the conference: "God's Plan for the Church" based on Romans 12:1-2. This truth helped to demonstrate the need and importance of bearing one another's burdens, the commission to go out and evangelize, the blessing of being in a church that seeks to follow the doctrines and practices that are obedient to God's Word, which can only be acquired when one uses the most faithful English translation of the Bible.

Not only did we receive spiritual blessings from the speakers, we also gave and received from one another as participants – an application of what it means to be burden-bearers. Through each discussion session among different groups, we reflected, discussed, encouraged, sometimes corrected, asked, answered, and most of all, prayed for one another.

A special activity on the last day made way for us to get to know one another through fun yet meaningful ways. The lunch times allowed us to see one another's full faces without our masks and we had warm and wonderful times of fellowship.

May the Lord God be praised for the labour of love of each committee member who planned for this CYC, the speakers who made themselves available to minister to us by imparting their knowledge and wisdom, and for every participant who made the time to attend this conference. *"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ...And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not"* (Gal 6:2, 9).

