

Come join us on one of our services:

- First Sunday Morning Worship Service
9:00 AM
- Second Sunday Morning Worship Service
11:00AM
- The CABC Children's Church
11:15 AM
- Sunday Evening Fellowship Hour
5:00 PM
- Wednesday Morning Prayer Hour
9:30 AM
- Wednesday Evening Prayer Hour
7:00 PM

2008 Church theme:

Let His Voice Be Heard

The mission of Commonwealth Avenue Baptist Church is to be a community of believers that faithfully reaches upward to God in worship and prayer, inward to one another in fellowship and encouragement, and outward to the lost through evangelism and missions.

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Connecting with God and others

Volume 1, Issue 1 March 2008

O LORD, you are my God; I will exalt you and praise your name, for in perfect faithfulness you have done marvelous things, things planned long ago.
Isaiah 25:1



Pastor Elbern Latorilla, CABC

Flashback...

Senior Pastor's Report 2007 Summary

- Church theme: At Home and Abroad, Making a difference (Matt. 5:16)
- January 7 - Urbana in St. Louis, Missouri; 22 young people attended
- Friends Sunday in February drew 11 friends to both services
- Beta Course: The Next Step in Your Journey with Christ; January to April; regular attendance 25-30
- Beta Course 2: Nicky Gumbel's A Life Worth Living; September to December; attendance 30
- March - Toronto Mission Fest; many volunteered their services
- Annual Missions Conference led by Mike Steinborn and Peter Toy from Wycliffe, Po Wan Yeung of ABWE and Joe Boot of the Ravi Zacharias ministries
- Gospel Flipper Flapper - valuable witnessing tool for Jesus
- May - Just Walk Across the Room training, about 30 attendees
- Short term mission trips: Rosie Wang to India, Grace Allison to Tanzania
- Perspectives Course; 50 registered attendees, 45 completed the course, according to Perspectives Ontario Course Coordinator, we had the highest attendance from Church members and lowest drop-out rates compared to other classes
- May 27 - 8 were baptized, 9 new members from transfer
- CABC's 23rd anniversary of June 3 highlighting the Ground Breaking Ceremony for the building extension, building permit finally received in September.
- Missionaries Ruth Copsey and Anita Bertrand with their respective families visited in summer
- 2nd Children's Missions Conference, 14 volunteers led by ABWE missionaries Wally and Jeannie Stephenson, Karen Weitzel and Edie Cunningham; 60 children attended
- Children's Sunday school led by Wally Damian supported by 46 teachers and assistants; 68 regular attendance

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07 Doxa Mission Vision Trip

Pastor Jim Wright joined five other youth pastors and youth workers from the Scarborough area in a mission/vision trip to the Dominican Republic last Aug. 19 - 24.

The Doxa leaders from Scarborough have a vision to help motivate and train young people with a vision for missions and ministry through short-term mission's opportunities. This vision is in line with our CABC vision for missions, and with our YW 24/7 vision statement to inspire

young people to obey the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.

The purpose of the vision trip was to meet the contacts in the D.R. who are prepared to help lead teams of Scarborough youth on short term mission trips, and to see and discuss the ways that the youth could be challenged and involved in the missionary experience, and to work out more details of the plans for such trips.

Continued on page 4...



HOME Bible Study Groups

Continued on page 3...

The **Potter's Clay**, which started in 1997, is composed of 6-8 members targeting the 40 years and above age group. Led by Delores O'Connor and Bert Laserna, they meet either at the Church Resource center or at Ima Watkin's residence between 7-9 PM every Tuesday.

The group aims to continue their pursuit of spiritual growth and transformation and has committed to include in their weekly prayer time those listed on the CABC Sunday bulletin. Presently, they are using Bruce Wilkinson's "*Secrets of the Vine*" as reference book, combined with a study guide on "*How to live a Fruitful Christian Life*". Plans for the year 2008 include at least one home visitation for sick brethren, an outdoor meeting in the summer and a joint fellowship with another bible study group. Contact persons are Delores (416-283-6426) or Bert (416-439-0854)

The **Sunday Friends** is facilitated by Ed Chan and Terry Delos Reyes.

Existing for 7 years, with 20 active members, the group aims to mould professing Christians into Christ-centered disciples, living and maturing as a regenerated body of our Lord Jesus.

As part of their ministry, they have recently extended financial assistance to a church (Apostolic Christ-Centered Faith ministry) in Batangas, Philippines. Current study is based on Joel Osteen's book "*Your Best Life Ever*". Sunday Friends target age group is 25 y/o and

above. They meet every first and third Sunday of the month, 2:30 – 4 pm after lunch together at varied places. If interested in joining, please contact Ed at 416-696-2490.

The **Seed** is led by Lawrence Camaya. Almost in two years of existence, the group aims to grow maturely in their faith and spiritual walk with God. They are currently studying "*The Life and teachings of Jesus*", focusing on the cores of discipleship and leadership.

With 12 members, the Seed's age bracket is from 24 to 40 years of age. If interested in joining, please contact Gielyn Dancel at 416-669-4598 or Freda Facun at 647-346-5562. They meet every 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month; at 1:00 pm., Meeting place varies, rotating among members' homes.

The **Monday bible study group** facilitated by Elaine Vaughan is composed of about 6 members. The group started meeting about 5 years ago but this had to be on hold temporarily due to some members' health-related reasons. They plan to resume meeting every Monday at 1:30 PM at the church resource center this April.

Their study will focus on the life of David using Jack Kuhatschek's "*Developing a Heart for God*" as reference. They aim to minister to the senior age group. If interested in joining, please contact Elaine at 416-267-2340.

The "**Youth Ladies**" bible study group is led by Joy Mendio and Grace Diwa-Damian. Despite being only a month old, the group already has an average attendance of 10. Current topic of study is on the essential foundations of Christian faith, which includes personal growth in Christ and certain issues that young women face. They meet every Tuesdays, 6:30 pm at 11 Brantwood Drive, Toronto. This is a fellowship young ladies ages 13 to 20, would not want to miss! If interested, please contact Joy Mendio or Grace Diwa-Damian, 416-319-1419 or 416-722-6419, correspondingly.

The **Tuesday bible study group a.k.a Ilocano group** facilitated by Dennis Facun conduct their study in Tagalog, having one member unable to speak the Ilocano dialect.

Susan Panaligan currently does the teaching. The group of 15 members has completed their study on "*The purpose driven life*" by Rick Warren and is currently on their second book "*Landmines in the Path of the Believer*" by Charles Stanley. The group meets at Ruby Alconcel's residence weekly but time and day varies due to shifting changes at work of the host. For more details, please contact Dennis Facun at 416-701-1776.

The **Branches of the Vine** just celebrated its second year in existence last February 7th. Pastor Elbern Latorilla, with Boie Paras leading in his absence, leads the group. Membership has expanded to about 30 Adults, some of which are from other affiliations. The group aims to reach out to unbelieving neighbors and friends. Present study is on the book of John. Target age group are those in their 30's and above. The group regularly meets at 150 Pinery trail #2, Scarborough M1B 6J2 every Tuesday at 7:30 PM. Contact person is either Pastor Elbern or Rick Calica at 416-293-7351.

The "**Youth Guys**" bible study group is facilitated by Wally Damian and Lendl Salangsang. They are currently using the manual on "*Growing in Christ*", focusing not only on Christian fundamentals but also on standard male issues and their effect on one's spiritual growth.

Having existed for only a month, they have an average attendance of seven. Meeting day, time and place is every Monday, 6:00 pm at 37 Ivy Green Cres, Scarborough, ON. Young men ages 13 to 20 are highly encouraged to join this group! If interested please contact Lendl Salangsang or Wally Damian at 416-737 5078 or 647-294 5390, respectively.

HOME Bible Study Groups

Continued from page 2...

The **Friday bible study group** under the leadership of Norman Bautista caters best to those who would like to have a firm foundation on the fundamentals of salvation, baptism and Christian living. Having existed for just more than a year and with 13 -15 members, their target age group is 35 to 55 years old. The group meets twice a month, every other Friday at 8:00 pm. hosted by different members of the group. For more details, please contact Fe Bautista or Renato Diwa at 416-265-5578 or 416-519-2996, respectively.

The **Cornerstone** is led by Lilian Ampaguey. Presently with 10-13 members, the group aims to reinforce their understanding of God's Word while developing Christ-like character in the process. Despite being in its juvenile stages, the group has never failed to grow and nurture its members, maintaining a healthy fellowship with each other. Current study is on "*Called to Serve*", part of a series the group is completing, as future study will be on "*Called to Share/Give*" and "*called to Connect*." Their target age group is 35 years old and above. If interested in joining, please contact Lilian at 416-286-3349 or Terry Delos Reyes or 416-615-2362. They meet every Friday, from 7:30-10:00 pm. Meeting place varies.

The **Saturday bible study group** under the leadership of Boie Paras is composed of 12 active members that meet every other Saturday at 7:30 PM in 18 McMorrow Court, Scarborough M1P 5A9. Existing for just less than a year, the group continues to encourage each other's enthusiasm, as they look forward to welcoming more members in the future, targeting those 24 years of age and above. The group is currently studying the book "*Experiencing God*" by Henry Blackaby. If interested in joining, please contact Erly Paras at 416-291-9755 or Estelle Sia at 416-431-3419.

GLORY, God Loving Ordained Flame Yielders, is a small group fellowship intended for young men, ages 18 to 28, regardless of religious affiliations. The fellowship's primary goal is to discuss neutral topics with new or non-believers before proceeding to Gospel sharing. The group is process-oriented and is currently led by Brent Emon. The group is still on its juvenile stages and is currently studying the Biblical principles of obedience and worship. They usually meet at 8 pm, every Tuesday, apartment no. 614, 3400 Eglinton Avenue East, Scarborough. If interested in joining please contact Brent Emon at 416-901-5994 or email him at brent.emon@gmail.com.

The **Saved by Grace** bible study group is led by Pastor Elbern Latorilla. With an average attendance of 12-18, Saved by Grace aims to grow in fellowship and maturity as God's Word takes precedence over each and everyone's life. The group is presently going through the entire book of First John. Saved by Grace target age group is 18 y/o and above. If interested in joining and for more details, please contact Juancho Chu at 905-831-4254. They meet every Friday, 7:30 PM at Pasco's residence, 5 Kenmore Avenue, M1K 1B3.

The **Symphony of Love** led by Willie Damian shares an evening of study, food and fellowship every Friday at 7:30 pm in different homes. They have grown in number since 2005 to 25 members from the original group of 10, which was the very first home bible study group led by Pastor Latorilla way back 1989. The group hopes to grow spiritually, build a strong foundation of faith together and share God's love among each other and to those who have not found the Savior in their lives. Currently they are going through the REGROUP small group course and eventually will study on *the Parables of Jesus*. Contact persons are Willie at 416-431-5390 or Neslea Navarro at 416-264-6014.

TNT: Timothy and Tabitha: Members of the Ladies Endeavor, which wrapped up the fellowship in February decided to start a new bible study group in lieu of the Ladies fellowship. The group now called TNT for Timothy and Tabitha is opening its membership to both men and women from 19 years old and above.

Their focus will be on Discipleship but will initially go through the REGROUP small group course for the coming months. Regular meetings will be in church, at 5 PM on the second Saturday of every month starting this April. Facilitator for each study will be on a rotation basis among members of the group. Contact persons are Bembem Bangit at 416-701-1417 or Juliet Herchenrader at 416-686-1988.

Toronto Challenge 2008, a cross-cultural program, is looking for willing participants for their upcoming event on July 19-27. Deadline of application is on May 15. For more details, please contact Willie Damian or Pastor Jim.

D*KFC: Kalualhatian for Christ (*kalualhatian* – Tagalog term for *glory*) composed of 17- 24 members meets every Friday at 7:30 PM rotating among members' homes. The present group started meeting in 1996, although some have been with the original group that existed in 1993, and has since been under the leadership of Susan Manalastas. Aside from the refreshing fellowship after an exhausting week, the time of prayer after study of God's word, enhances deeper friendships within the group. With the main goal of applying into their personal lives whatever they have studied, the group is currently doing an in-depth and comprehensive study of the book of Ecclesiastes with Charles Swindoll's "*Living on the Ragged Edge*". Contact persons are Philip Manalastas 416-289-3309 or Arnold Mendoza 416-724-4432.

- Special Guests: Dr. TV Thomas ministered on Good Friday; Ray-An Fuentes, born-again Filipino actor/entertainer, held a concert on September 16; HiMig Gospel Singers concert night on December 9
- Small group ministries growing tremendously in number; composed of 12 home-based bible study groups; about 160 attendees in total
- “The Homebuilders” led by Josh and Lyrae Limas was revived in a Valentines celebration; 12 couples faithfully meet
- “The Young @ Heart” led by Cathy Careng enjoyed an excursion in the Peterborough Lift/Lock in summer; had a Christmas dinner, 30 participants
- “J-Crew” led by Hannah San Diego with helpers Aeda San Diego, Grace Garcia, Linden Laserna and Phil Flores; 20 attendees; had an overnight camping in September at Indian Line Campground
- “YW-24/7” youth group led by Pastor Jim Wright; 30 attendees; group attended Sno-camp in Muskoka in February and “Acquire the Fire” in Hamilton in October;
- College and Career group led by Faye Salangsang had their camp in Peterborough resort in June
- Urban Street mission in downtown Toronto; joint groups of youth and young adults
- Ladies Christian Fellowship led by Grace Allison, Elaine Vaughan, Bembem Bangit and Juliet Herchenrader
- ACTS (Actors for Christ, Talents to Serve) presented the drama “Away from the Manger” on December 16, 22 and 23
- 367 Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes were given
- Other relevant information:
 - 3 weddings were held
 - 6 babies were dedicated
 - 5 made professions of faith
 - 340 total average Church attendance
 - 270 total guests visited during the year
 - 168 people received food vouchers
 - Death of Tony Caasi
- Special mentions: Special thanks to Pinky Ferranco, 9th year in the job as administrative assistant and to Pastor Jim in leading the youth and several small group ministries

(Pastor Elbern Latorilla, Jan 2008)

07 Doxa Mission Vision Trip

Continued from front page

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The group was hosted by twos and threes in the homes of Dominican Christians. They went with Pastor Elise to the “bateys” where he has planted four churches over the past thirty years; churches built were with the help of short... ..term mission teams sent from Dorset Park under the leadership of Calvin Russell.

Bateys are extremely poor communities of people who work in the sugar cane fields near the Haitian border. Today there is a thriving ministry to children ages 2-5 who are not yet old enough to qualify for help from Compassion.

There are 35 Compassion centers in D.R. presently ministering to about 400 children daily, but the visionary director for Compassion (Arturo) has a vision to build facilities, and programs to minister to about 2000 children daily. There was a VBS ministry going on that week, and the churches seating about 150-200 are full every week.

“We hope to lead two teams of ten people each to work alongside the churches in the bateys, and alongside Compassion, during the March break in 2008. They can be involved in ministries like basketball camps for the Dominican kids, helping them with their English, and other basic skills and principles of hygiene, etc.

We are preparing ways of engaging the youth for more than just the time that they are in the D.R. They will be required to prepare together for several months before and after the trip to make every effort that the things that they see and experience will have a life changing impact on the way that they live, and their values here in Canada.

With people like Shannon in the D.R., and Melissa in Scarborough, who are working together to plan and prepare the details of this trip, I believe that this is an amazing opportunity for CABC to contribute to, and benefit from, and support

this vision for involving youth in world missions.”

(Pastor Jim Wright, Sept 2007)

**Cynthia Rivera and Lester Salangsang joined the DOXA missions program to the Dominican Republic last March 7-16, 2008. We hope to share their experiences in the next issue.*



Pastor Jim (second from right, with other Doxa '07 team members)

Do you really CARE?



Telling people you care is not enough. Deeds of servitude mark a true follower of Christ; and as disciples of the Most High, we are called to live a lifestyle of service. We are our brother's keepers.

CARE ministry, Christ's Appointed to Reach out and Encourage, has been persistently extending God's love to those in need. CARE reaches out to anyone, regardless of affiliations, who are facing challenges; offering support and encouragement. Under the capable leadership of Lilian Ampaguey, their work includes encouraging and uplifting souls through visits, telephone calls, cards and prayers. With generous errands such as providing for newcomers in Canada, assisting in tax and document preparation for seniors and newcomers, providing transportation as needed and offering assistance in babysitting, CARE ministry is in dire need of additional volunteers to the 11 existing ones.

Skills and talents are not pre-requisites. An open heart willing to serve is all. If interested in joining or for cash offerings, slightly used clothes/jackets/coats and other useful items you would like to donate. please contact Lilian Ampaguey by phone at 416-908-8548, or by email, proverbs3_la@yahoo.ca.

ACTS

Actors for Christ, Talents to Serve is CABC's drama ministry in its early stages. As part of the Outreach sub-committee under the umbrella of Evangelism and Discipleship, ACTS came about summer last year with the main purpose of sharing the truth of God's word through the medium of drama.

It also aims to encourage young people and adults to honor and glorify God by using their gifts/talents through the drama ministry. With about 21 members (cast and production), the group worked as a team for its first drama outreach, presented for 3 days last December with Tony Flores' one-act play "Away from the Manger." Plans for the year ahead include workshops and seminars in order to locate and train those individuals within the church possessing talents for directing, acting, stage design and other production related gifts.

The group works by the verse: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord and not for men" Colossians 3:23 (NIV).

For more details please contact Gina Montemayor at (905)-686-1890 or Arnold Mendoza at (416) -724-4432.



ACTS Cast and Crew after first drama presentation "Away from the manger" last Dec. 16, 2007

AIKIDO in Hibernation

Aikido is a form of "Japanese martial art that practitioners could use to defend themselves while also protecting their attacker from injury." However, with the high fees one has to pay for training, it is no wonder that students are willing to come from distant places to CABC to opportune themselves in learning the art at no cost.

Preferably known as the *Fitness in Christ through sports outreach ministry*, the Aikido group hopes to resume regular meetings soon as church building construction is completed allowing them ample space to use. Under the dexterous leadership of Louie Pascual and Jeff Fegarido, different Aikido techniques were being taught to about 15 attendees ages 9 and above, at the church gym since 2003 until Summer 2007 every Saturday 9 to 12 noon. Focus is on disciplines of self-defense and self-control with emphasis on learning the right responses to negative external stimuli and other methods for conflict resolution. Not overlooking the need for spiritual feeding, Cynthia Pascual facilitates devotions prior to aikido sessions reminding attendees the importance of putting God first in all that we do.

Further announcements will be made available soon as Aikido sessions will resume.

Quarterly Highlights...

Homebuilders Celebrate in Love

"It is amazing how one moment can change your life forever."

This truism was affirmed during the Love fellowship that the Homebuilders celebrated last February 14, 2008. The planned simple, Heart day celebration for married couples turned out to be a life-changing one. Barriers in relationships were broken, as emotional ties were reinforced. Most important of all, husbands and wives glorified God as they recommitted themselves to each other, in love and union with Christ Jesus.

The program started with a simple dinner, followed by games and an inspirational message from God's Word through Ms. Yoly Casim, who imparted a message regarding the biblical definition of marriage and its essence. She proceeded with practical ways of nourishing such commitment, in light of God's intentions, with endurance, sacrifice, patience and creating a pure atmosphere as main points of the study. The highlight of the night, however, was the

time of affirmation. The couples re-affirmed their love for each other with positive reasons for their love, accompanied by exchanging gifts of chocolates and flowers. It was an emotional moment...but love and romance were definitely in the air that night.

The Homebuilders ministry, composed of 11 couples, was revived last February 2006, under the leadership of Josh and Lyrae Limas. With four new couples added during the Valentines' fellowship, growth and expansion is not out of reach. The goal of the group is not only to model their homes after God's desire but also to direct husbands and wives in worshiping Him together, with Jesus as the center of their relationship. Labouring for two years, the ministry also offers advices on maintaining a sanctified and truthful commitment, while addressing issues between husbands and wives. If interested to be a part of its great work, please contact Josh or Lyrae Limas at 416-431-2277. Target age of couples is 25 years old and above. They meet every third Sunday of the month, right after the second Worship service. Meeting place is at Limas' residence, 5 Fred Bland Cres., Scarborough M1J 3L7.



CABC Celebrates First Family Sunday

Ontario's Family Day takes place on the third Monday of February. In line with this newly declared statutory holiday, CABC earmarked the Sunday before that as Family Sunday. Pastor Jim Wright's message on *"Fanning the flame of faith in the family of God that we care deeply about"* was a good wake up call. It was a blessing to hear the testimonies of what a family is from a mother, son and

daughter's perspective as Rene Diwa, Ace Abellanosa, and Bianca Navarro shared their insights for the first service, while Rose Damian, Francis Vidal and Ayl Abellanosa did likewise for the second service. The Special numbers rendered by the Cabaluna and Lambino families for the first and second services respectively, triggered tears of joy as praises were lifted up to the Lord. A Sunday worth remembering...with special thanks to the Symphony of Love family, for all the effort they put in helping celebrate this day for what it is.

"A family is when you believe & trust one another even when expectations are not met & promises are broken."-excerpt from Rene Diwa's testimony

CHOIR WORKSHOP: Making Room for Improvement



"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord"... split into three Saturdays.
but at least make it sound harmonious too.

And so...Feb 9, 16 and March 1 had about 30 choir members stretching their vocal cords while maintaining the right body alignment as voice warm-ups were taught, aside from other numerous techniques to improve singing, blending and harmonizing. Alvin "Bong" Aviola, conductor of the Himig gospel singers, the vocal ensemble that ministered to us with a mini-concert December last year, spearheaded the 9- hour workshop

With all the pointers and practical tips he taught the choir, Mr. Aviola did not fail to emphasize on having the right motive behind all we were doing for improvement: *"to enable us to impart the message of the songs we sing more clearly and be more effective in the music ministry for God's glory"*.

Fellowship with the Himig group was further extended during the hearty meals provided after each workshop by the Symphony of Love, and KFC Bible

study groups and by the Homebuilders.

"For the time, money and effort spent for this workshop, all we now have to do is consistently put what we learned into practice, to make it all its worth", choir president Alex Isip says in closing...and that's exactly what the choirs are doing nowadays.

(The CABC Choirs invite anyone willing to sing for God's glory. Practices are on Thursdays at 7:30 PM for the First service choir (Redeemer's) and on Saturdays at 6 PM for the Second service choir)

Perspectives Graduates Celebrate!

(From the perspective of a graduate)

After long periods of glorious waiting, graduation has come to past. At last! I finally got my long awaited diploma for the Perspectives course with 23 other graduates...

The 15-lesson credited Perspectives course accentuates the importance of the Great Commission as stated in Matthew 28. Emphasis is on the very last words of Christ on earth before He came back to the Father. It provides deep Biblical notions about God's redemptive plan that includes His initiation of global movement and His collective standpoint. Group interactions were often during class and we had different speakers for every lesson.

Graduation was held last March 15 at the CABC sanctuary; Bro. Willie Damian, who also represented the rest of the CABC perspectives crew, emceed the program. Different talents were used to glorify the Lord that day: Pastor Loel Latorilla led the praise and worship crew; Lawrence Camaya did an interpretative dance; Wendy Buchnea (from People's church) executed a wonderful violin performance entitled

"Adoration" and Dorothy Wilson, Sarah Vega and Lani Zulueta performed a mission-heartening skit. Selected students shared their powerful testimonies. There were also games with precious mission books given as prizes. Before the long-awaited diplomas were given, Pastor Elbern Latorilla, a graduate himself with 14 others from CABC, gave a challenging message to all.

The graduation celebration was truly spectacular. I can proudly say that Perspectives blew my mind especially when we came to lesson 10 onwards. Strategies on breaking through holistic barriers and cross-cultural operations that were grounded on evidence-based research and experiential history have all been outstandingly presented. The Perspectives book itself contains hundreds of strategic artillery for any missionary in preparation for the Kingdom skirmish. Overall, the course is necessary for every believer.



Wayne Matthews, national director of mobilization for Perspectives wrapped up the graduation with his closing message. *"Taking up Perspectives is dangerous. It can destroy your life"*, he jokingly said after giving an account of the past alumni that left their comfort zones and became full-time missionaries.

Marilyn Chung, Perspectives coordinator, also gave her closing remarks as she congratulated all graduates and expressed her deep appreciation for the efforts of the leading crew. A short, heart-felt fellowship was enjoyed afterwards. In retrospect, the satisfaction and fulfillment of being a Perspectives graduate is an understatement.

(by Michael Borja)

J-CREW braves the storm to Mission Fest

The J-Crew team, consisting of 19 preteens and 8 leaders, marched to the Toronto Congress Center for the Mission Fest on March 7, 2008, despite the warnings of an upcoming snow storm. By God's grace, they were all safe home before the storm actually arrived.

Was it worth it? A couple of our attendees gave their feedback:

"The Mission Fest of 2008 was a very exciting adventure. We had to get our passports and pictures taken, in order to get on an imaginary plane, and worship God. In the beginning, it was a bit boring because of having to wait for about a half hour, until we got to the Congress Centre. But when we finally got there, everyone was very nice to us, and I had lots of fun. During the presentation, I learned a lot about how other countries and people in the world don't know God. I also learned that even though some people don't

know Jesus, He will always be there for us, and He will always love us. Some things I really liked during the Mission Fest, was how all the kids and adults tried to help us in many ways. I also liked how they encouraged us to spread God's word whenever and wherever we are, and to give praise to the Lord, no matter what." --- Melanie Bautista

"I thought that Mission Fest Toronto was a very good opportunity to learn more about God and missionaries and their tasks. A thing that I liked about it was that we had passports and pictures that we had to show them just like in a real airplane. They let us do crafts or toys from the country to see what the kids that live there, play. I thought that they should have made it longer because it was quite short. If they were thinking to do this again next year, I am looking forward to going again." --- Maureen Dulay

Artist's Corner

Quarterly highlights continued...

CABC Choirs worship through music on Easter Sunday

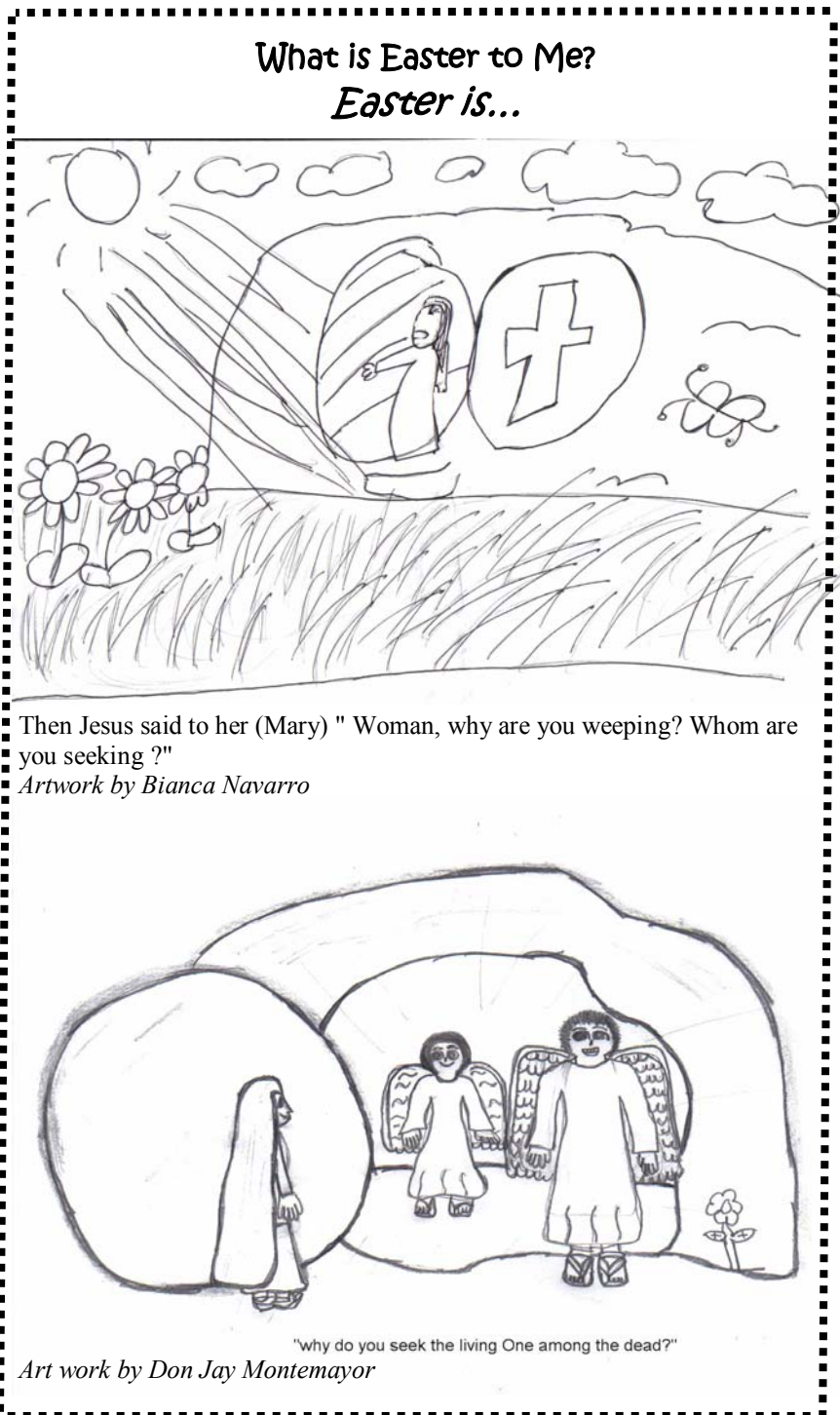


The combined choirs of CABC (first service Redeemer's and Second service choir) offered seven songs in line with the message of Easter during the two worship services. With Bay Caasi conducting, a couple of songs were sung with Lydia Arcenas' celestial accompaniment at the piano. Lawrence Camaya effectively conveyed the message of the song "Broken and Spilled Out", with his interpretative dancing, leaving the congregation in deep contemplation. More life was added to the song "We Cry Hosanna, Lord", as the Pre-teens skillfully waved palm leaves with their pageantry. The special number by the harmonious blending of the voices of Jojo Delos Reyes, Mon Tahamid and Romeo Villamor, with their interpretation of the song "Then came the Morning" nailed the message of Easter even further.

Wrapping up the musicale, soloist Ariane Mauricio's lovely rendition of the song "the Promise", reminded each of us that our singing here on earth is just a rehearsal of the glorious choir we will all be part of someday when Jesus returns. To God be the Glory!

" 'cause you know I made a promise that I've prepared a place, and someday sooner than you think you'll see Me face to face and you'll sing with the angels and a countless multitude, this is the promise, I've made to you... "

The choir also ministered to the seniors at Shepherd Village on Maundy Thursday, with the same line up of songs they sang during Easter.



On Love...

Hearts' Day Insight

One thing I have learned in my 5 years of being with the Lord is that love is based on His truth. One of the biggest lies of the world today is to "trust your feelings." It is true that God created emotions to enable us to define sadness or gladness. However, this does not mean that emotions can be a basis for decision-making. Even when I knew the Lord, I still based many of the things that I did on "what I felt was right." There were successes and failures yet deep inside, I knew that the Lord wanted something much different for me. The Lord does not want us to be devoid of emotions; But He does want us to have faith in Him, trusting Him completely in every decision that we make. He does not require us to be smart in making decisions as the world says. All He asks from us is a faithful and trusting heart.

I believe that one of the reasons why a lot of relationships fail nowadays is because couples rely on their emotions instead of the truth. How many stories have we heard of sweet, happy couples ending in separation, divorce or worse, adultery? The problem is not really the lack of love but the failure to recognize love.

One of my favourite love stories is the story of Mary and Joseph in the Bible. I know what you're thinking:

"Hold on! Is that even a love story?" You might not feel the goose bumps while reading the story of how the Lord's earthly parents got together, but that doesn't make it less of a love story. To tell you the truth, it is one of the best love stories ever. Do you know why? It is because their emotions did not get the best of them. Although the Nativity story is not an accurate basis for analysis, watching it or just reading the passages of the evangelist Luke will tell us that it is really God who makes a love story, a love story.

Mary and Joseph willingly placed themselves in God's hands. They did as they were told, despite their doubts and feelings of uncertainty. Even though they were not "madly in love" as the world would put it, they just believed and did what they can to help each other. Joseph, a respectable man, took care of Mary and stood with her despite the shame and ridicule. Mary did the same thing, submitting to the husband that God gave her and bearing the Lord Jesus until the appointed time. They trusted the Lord completely and they ended up being one of the happiest couples on earth, not to mention that they are proponents of the Lord's earthly family.

This is what happens when you place yourself in the hands of the Lord. For singles out there, be patient, wait for



"I believe that one of the reasons why a lot of relationships fail nowadays is because couples rely on their emotions instead of the truth. How many stories have we heard of sweet, happy couples ending in separation, divorce or worse, adultery?"

His timing and trust in His will. There is a right time for everything, as said in Ecclesiastes. The question is not whether you will fall in love with the right one. The real question is: will you place yourself willingly in the hands of our Lord? Believe and you will succeed. Faith is the key.

God bless and belated hearts' day!

(Michael Borja /Feb 19, 2008)



CABC Summer Camp
 @ Upper Canada Camp
 July 3-5, 2008
 Thurs 3 pm to Sat 10 am
REGISTER NOW!

For more information contact:

Faye Salangsang (416) 315-4074
 Rick Calica (416) 293-7351
 CABC (416) 267-8073
www.uppercanada.com

The Sunday School Department
 is in need of Teachers and Assistant teachers who will be teaching 3 months/year, with a rotation every month, for the term February 2008 - February 2009. If interested, please contact Faye Salangsang (SS superintendent) at faye.sal@gmail.com.

On affliction:

“Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me”

-Matthew 10:38

It is a curious note that Scripture peppers its message with reminders of the reality of tribulation. These come in intermittently, like little rain showers, able to soothe, but if we are not perceptive, will likely fall down to the ground unnoticed. The little rain showers beckon us to come out, and allow ourselves to be soothed by it. As with heavy rain, Scripture does not overwhelm us with constant passages about affliction to keep us shut in our realm of comfort; it seduces us by intermittently beckoning us, almost promising us that the life of affliction is soothing.

God does not seek our suffering; He seeks our salvation. In our suffering, he waits for us to call out to him and ask for salvation. He allows us to suffer so that he can teach us more about his gift of salvation. In an act of gratitude, we then teach others and encourage others to the truth that it is God himself, who saves us from suffering. What is suffering? What is man? Man is a bundle of God and flesh. As divine, man can create beautiful songs of praise that lilt to the heavens; as flesh, man can resort to all disgusting forms of evil. The bundle seeks satisfaction, but tension occurs, as the God-aspect desires one kind of satisfaction, and the flesh another, opposite to what the God-aspect desires. It is when the flesh does not get what it wants, that the bundle (still God and flesh) be afflicted. This is the secret of the affliction's nobility. At the lowest level, man becomes stronger because of the pain he has been through; at the highest level, man becomes more God-like because of the affliction.

Some may ask, “Why must we volunteer to take up the cross when we endure trials and temptations everyday?” When we act with a willingness to suffer, we are graced with the gift of reflection. When we act with a willingness to suffer, we are graced with the gift to control and make sense of our suffering. Many people today experience suffering, but because they did not volunteer to suffer, they cannot reflect on it, they cannot make sense of it, and thus cannot control it. They have no confidence in life, only because they see existence as a relentless menace, and see no power beyond existence.

No, we do not seek suffering like holy masochists; as we walk our narrow path, we act with a willingness to suffer and with a willingness to learn from our suffering. This is what it means to take up the cross. It is our mandate, as Christians, to introduce God and salvation in a sufferer's life. In as much as we were graced with the gift of reflection and obedience in suffering, when we encounter a sufferer, we become the beacon of grace for them. Nevertheless, why is it that we cannot teach others about God and salvation? It is because we spoil the flesh. We walk about circumspectly in life, hoping that we will evade suffering. At times, we spoil the flesh so much that we forget about God. This leads to the point of idolatry, where we worship the very thing that gives our flesh satisfaction. We allow this 'idol' to validate our existence. In the day of evil, when you are stripped of all your own, your crowns shattered, your



body broken, ideals destroyed; your spouse has deserted you, a storm sweeps your home, your child is run over by a car, or bullets whiz by your head, will you be able to stand confidently? Nay, for the idol you have constructed for yourself is not a real God. It cannot bestow upon you true confidence to enable you to stand ground on the day of evil. In that case, the flesh lies to us about 'reality'. For us Christians, of course, what is tragic must turn into the comic. We go through hell, but because God is in our favor, we can experience heaven even through our period in hell.

Disturbingly, there are yet others not aware of this seed of truth. Without mention of what validates their existence, if the truth is not in them, then what validates their existence is not the true God. Our task as Christians then is to show the downtrodden, the oppressed, and the poor that they can stand confidently even if existence is a relentless menace. However, if we remain free of affliction and eternally avoid it, we have no 'doctrine' to teach to them. It is only when we experience affliction and the shattering of our confidence thereof, that we realize what true confidence is and is not. We learn to stand on our ground with this new confidence, and to finally share, this 'knowledge' with others who are without this confidence, unrelentingly reminded by a minacious existence that they have no worth.

(by Lorel John Latorilla, Nov. '07)

** LJ Latorilla is currently completing his 3-year contract as an Asst. Language Teacher (English) since August 2007, in Takasago, Japan*

A Modern Canadian Christmas



T'was the month before Christmas, when all through our land,
Not a Christian was praying, or taking a stand.
Why the "Politically Correct Police" had taken away,
the reason for Christmas -no one could say.

The children were told by their schools not to sing,
About Shepherds, and Wise Men, and Angels, and things.
"It might hurt people's feelings", the Teachers would say,
"December 25th is just a "Holiday."

Yet the shoppers were ready with cash, checks, and credit
Pushing folks to the floor, just to get it!
CDs from Madonna, an X BOX, a video I-pod,
something was changing, something quite odd!

Retailers promoted Ramadan and Hanukah,
in hopes to sell books, by Rowlings, and Fonda.
Department stores were hanging their trees upside down,
and nowhere in the malls was the Word "Christmas" to be found.

At Zellers, and Staples, and Wal-Mart, and Sears,
The word "Christmas" won't even reach your ears.
"Inclusive", "Sensitive", and "Di-ver-si-ty,"
Are the words they used to intimidate me.

Now Dasher, Now Dancer, Now Rex Murphy, Now Lloyd
Robertson, On Comet, on Cupid, On Mike Duffy, On Wolf Blit-
zer!

In addition, over on Parliament Hill, there arose such a clatter,
in the haste to eliminate Jesus, in all public matter.

In addition, we spoke not a word, as they took away our faith,
forbidden to speak of salvation and grace.
The true Gift of Christmas, was forgotten, and discarded.
The reason for the season, stopped, before it even started.

So as you celebrate "Winter Break," under your "Holiday Tree,"
And while you sip your Tim Horton's, listen to me.
Take much care in what you choose to say...
Shout MERRY CHRISTMAS.... Not Happy Holiday!

Our country was founded on the Christian way,
And this is the way that it should stay.
So whatever your culture, tradition, or personal sway,
I urge you to make room, for Jesus today!

*(This poem, written by Pastor Jim Wright was shared at the end
of his message last December 16, when most of us were hin-
dered to go to church by the snowstorm. With all its wit and
embedded truth, we thought it was worth sharing -Ed staff)*

"The Lord Jesus Reigns!"

Behind barred doors, the apostles met
Covered with fear, hiding from threat
For they will all suffer in prison
All of them are charged with treason.
And they will rot, die and decay
Nothing will be left, but ash and clay
There will be no more day or words to say
For the Lord was gone, in a tomb He lay

But at the midst of despair He emerged
Alive and well with a holy surge
His apostles were no longer lost
His glory reigns, He hath paid the cost
Our punishment He took
And in horror we look
Resurrected now, the world He shook

Now that He lives our hope is certain
No longer are we bounded by curtain
The life He gave He took back
The sacrifice was enough, nothing in lack
He sits on His throne, His rightful place
In awe and worship, in shock and daze
All Hail! The Lord Jesus reigns!

(by Michael Borja)





Connecting with God and others

Age-Related Ministries

J.CREW (“Jesus Crew”) - the preteens group meets from 7:30-9:30 pm every Friday at CABC. Current leaders are Hannah San Diego, Aeda San Diego, Grace Garcia and Linden Laserna. Preteens ages 9-12 are welcome to join the group as they learn about how *Jesus Christ Rules in Every Way* through games, songs, crafts, small group discussions and other fun activities. Current lesson theme is “problems in society” with topics on poverty and materialism.

YW-24/7 (“Youth Worship 24/7, a.k.a. Y-dub”) - the youth group, led by Pastor Jim Wright since 2003, meets every Friday, 7 pm at CABC. With the help of youth leaders Wally & Grace Damian, Joy Mendio, Lester & Lendl Salangang, the youth ministry, currently with 25 members, seeks to fulfill God’s **Great Commandment** (Matt. 22:37-40) and God’s **Great Commission** (Matt. 28:18-20), by pursuing God’s

“D. R. E. A. M.”

Discipleship: Be committed to living in obedience to the absolute truth of God’s Word

Relationships: Be committed to building godly relationships

Evangelism: Be committed to bringing our friends to Jesus Christ

Adoration: Be committed to worshipping God

Ministry: Be committed to serving and caring for other people

Activities include praise and worship time, games, bible studies (currently video messages on a series by Pastor Rob Doll).

All young people ages 13-18 are invited to join. Please con-

tact Pastor Jim at 416-267-8073.

C&C - College and Career group presently with 8-10 members meets every Saturday 7:30 pm at CABC, unless announced otherwise. Leaders of the group are Faye Salangang and Bernel Latorilla (administrative aspect), while Brent Emon, PJ Manalastas and Pastor Loel Latorilla lead the bible studies. Current study is on leadership and “*how to put on the Armor of God*”.

Target age are the young adults from 19 and up.

If interested in joining, please contact any of the leaders or Faye S. at (416)315-4074 or (905) 425- 0555, faye.sal@gmail.com.

The **Young@Heart** is one of the most persevering small group ministries of our Church, existing since 1998. With ten years of experience and dedication, this fellowship has grown in spiritual maturity and commitment. Guided by the leadership of Rita D’ Agostino, the group with 24 active members, has activities which include studying the women of the Bible, singing praises together and having Summer day trips. They continue to seek spiritual growth by inviting speakers that will discuss topics benefiting seniors while not overlooking the need for continual discipleship and concurrently strengthening the younger generation.

The group welcomes anyone age 50 and above who is definitely young, at heart. For more details please contact Rita D’ Agostino or Cathy Careng, at 905-883-4368 or 416-439-4457, respectively. The group meets every first Sunday of

NEWSLETTER EDITORIAL TEAM

Writing Editor: Gina P. Montemayor
Staff Writer/Reporter: Michael Borja
Staff Reporter: Neslea Navarro
Layout Editors/Artists: Aeda, Aira & Hannah San Diego
Contributors: Pastor Elbern Latorilla
Pastor Jim Wright
Lorel John Latorilla
Deacon Adviser: Willie Damian

Our Editorial team is **understaffed**. We need more volunteers to work with us in making our church newsletter an effective tool for information and inspiration. If you are committed to serve through this ministry, please contact Gina P. Montemayor ginarose20@yahoo.ca

We are further looking for new ideas, sources of content and feedback to our publication. We welcome your input and /or contributions to the following departments:

Quarterly Highlights – recent events worth sharing about your small group/ministry

Literary Department:

Ponderings – original devotions, reflections etc.

Expressions of the Heart –our poetry section next issue will focus on poems about a Mother’s love or Father’s love (in line with May’s Mother’s day and June’s Father’s day)

Artist’s Corner: Cartoon theme for next issue “What Does Mission mean to me?”

Issue Dates	Deadline of Submission
April-June (Spring issue)	June 1
July-Sep (Summer issue)	August 31
Oct-Dec (Fall Issue)	Nov 30

Please submit contributions to Michael Borja mike.borja@yahoo.ca or Neslea Navarro neslovely@yahoo.com