

# CCM NEWSLINK

DECEMBER

12/12/14

## UNCOVER THE WELLSPRINGS OF TRUST IN GOD



Engage  
in the

Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth,  
led by the Taizé Community

**6th December 2014**

**( Full-Day Retreat )**

**9.00AM –6PM**

**7.00-9.00PM**

**( An Ecumenical Evening  
Prayer)**

Council of Churches of  
Malaysia,

Ecumenical Center

**With Brother Andreas of  
Taizé**

For those wishing to join the  
retreat Register at the CCM

Office, or via e-Mail to

[taizemalaysia@gmail.com](mailto:taizemalaysia@gmail.com)

## CHRISTMAS MESSAGE



*“ For He is our peace;  
in His flesh He  
made both groups into one  
and has broken down the  
dividing wall,  
that is, the hostility between  
us.”*

*(Ephesians 2: 14)*

Here was Paul writing to the non-Jewish congregation and he points to Jesus as God's messenger of peace to the world. In Christ all barriers of division in the world, be it, ethnic or religious, "has broken down". Christ came to make one family of all humanity.

Christmas is the time we bring to mind again the peace-child born into the world in Jesus Christ to herald the news; " peace and goodwill among all humanity" ( Luke 2: 14).

The CCM throughout the year engaged with the theme: "Channels of Christ's peace (Colossians 3:15)"

Amidst the many challenges faced by the churches in our country, the CCM has contemplated on how best to witness to the central truth of peace as our social witness in our nation.

We remember that two events this year weighed heavily upon the hearts of the churches. First, the 2<sup>nd</sup> January raid on the premises of the Bible Society of Malaysia by the Selangor Islamic Religious Department (JAIS) when it confiscated 351 copies of the Malay and Iban Bibles ( These were subsequently returned on 14<sup>th</sup> November on the instructions of HRH the Sultan of Selangor).

Secondly, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June we received the judgement of the Federal Court (a majority decision of four among the seven-member bench), which affirmed the earlier Court of Appeal decision to ban the Catholic Weekly Herald to use the word "Allah".

These two incidents, among others, has brought into serious doubt the provisions of religious freedom as found in our Federal Constitution Articles 3 & 11.

In September (22-25), the CCM organized an interfaith Conference with the theme:  
*“ A Dialogue for Interfaith Harmony and peace-building”.*

The resolution of that Conference was that we should commit ourselves to the movement of moderation in our society in order to give significance to the notion that the unity in our country is built on the foundations of unity-in-diversity, and Malaysia is for all Malaysians celebrating and contributing to its nationhood in freedom, justice and peace.

We celebrate the hope of Christmas as the promise of peace. We recall the birth of Jesus who comes to us as a child threatened by violence, as a refugee whose family fled due to the ambitions of the powerful.

In this season, we offer our thanks and praise to God for the hope we have in Jesus Christ, for the gift of God's love revealed in human vulnerability.

In this season, amidst the setbacks and challenges of religious freedom in our country, we return to the message of the birth of Jesus and remember the hope it has brought to our world.

We pray that the light of the Bethlehem star may shine on people in difficult situations, helping them to identify forms of resistance that promote positive change for justice and peace. We celebrate endeavours of cooperation and support among the afflicted, interfaith initiatives for peace and harmony, peoples' movements for justice and peace, and, in all of these, we see the reenactment of the Christmas story of the promise of peace overcoming injustice and division.

The good news of Christmas reminds us that God reaches out in love and calls us to a ministry of reconciliation, *“ ...in Him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.” (John 1: 4).*

Now that the Ecumenical Center is fully functional, the CCM has been able to contribute significantly to the ecumenical social witness in our country and beyond.

We end with a word of grateful thanks to all churches and individuals who contributed generously towards our Building Project which ended last year.

May the light of the Bethlehem Star shine upon all that we do together as churches for justice and peace in our country.

***May you have a Blessed Christmas this year and a  
Happy New Year***

Rev. Dr. Hermen Shastri  
General Secretary



**CFM CHRISTMAS HI TEA  
RECEPTION WILL BE HELD ON  
25TH DECEMBER AT 4PM**

**CO HOSTED BY**

**REV. DR. EU HONG SENG  
( Chairman of NECF)**

**At Full Gospel Tabernacle,  
Wisma Eagles, Subang Jaya**

**Attendance by invitation**

**COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF MALAYSIA**

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## CHRISTMAS EVENTS AROUND MALAYSIA

### PENANG CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE



**THEME:**  
**JESUS PRINCE  
OF PEACE**

Featuring WATOTO Children's Choir  
Will be held on 14th December 2014  
At Fort Cornwallis, Esplanade, Penang  
From 7pm-10pm  
Light refreshments will be served  
**ALL ARE WELCOME!**

### 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF GAYA STREET CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION



**THEME:**  
**THE STAR OF  
GREAT JOY**

Will be held from  
**9 – 12th December 2014**  
At Gaya Street

Organized by Sabah Council of  
Churches and co-hosted by  
Mayor of DBKK

**ALL ARE WELCOME !**

### CCM ECUMENICAL CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

**THEME: "ARISE! SHINE !"**



**SPEAKER: Msgr James Rajendran**  
( representing Bishop Paul Tan  
-Roman Catholic Church)

Will be held on **20th December 2014**

**At 8.00pm**

(Dinner will be served from 6.30pm-7.45pm)

At Church of Good Shepherd 2,  
Jalan Kijang 1, Taman Scientex,  
81700 Pasir Gudang, **JOHOR**

**kindly call for further details to**  
Rev.Thomas George 016 3487414

## THE FINAL LAP — APPEAL FOR BUILDING FUND



At the recent Executive Meeting of the CCM there was a discussion about fund raising to meet the shortfall in our building Project. Here are the details:

- 1.Total Cost of Building Project as budgeted was 12 million.
- 2.We managed to raise 10 million.
- 3.We received generous interest free loans from our Member Churches:

- i. The Methodist Church of Malaysia: RM 1.5 million
- ii. The Anglican Diocese of West Malaysia: 1 million
- iii. The Presbyterian Church in Malaysia: RM 500,000

In the memorandum of Understanding with these churches we have agreed to repay loans by 2015. It is our ecumenical duty to honor the loans and ensure that our repayments are right on schedule. With this in mind, the Executive Committee has requested that a final appeal goes out to our member churches, associated organizations, ecumenical partners and well wishers to solicit for donations. Since the dedication of the Ecumenical Center on April 28<sup>th</sup> 2013, the activities conducted in the Center has picked up. In the span of one year it has become self-sustaining.

We have attracted all kinds of people, organizations and churches to hold their programmes in the Center. The feedback from all has been positive. We have invested in the Kingdom's work and it is proving to be fulfilling all our expectations. Consider this appeal to be part of commitment to ecumenical witness and mission in our country. In view of all the political developments emerging in our country, the Ecumenical Center is poised to play a crucial role for the churches. **So, on behalf of the CCM, I make this humble appeal to you and your church to consider making a final donation so that we can meet our final commitments in**

**regard to our building Fund.**

God has been faithful with our step of faith. We have risen up to build to God's glory, and God has blessed our work. With our firm prayers for a positive response on your part, we now turn to you/your church/ your organization to help us complete an ecumenical legacy for the generations to come.

With our deepest appreciation for your prayers and support.

Cheques to be in favour of

**Council of Churches of Malaysia-  
Building Fund.**

Yours sincerely in Christ,  
REV. DR. HERMEN SHASTRI  
General Secretary

## THE WEEK FOR PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

**THEME: JESUS SAID TO HER "GIVE ME TO DRINK"**  
JOHN 4: 7

**18-25th January 2015**  
**Further information on**

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-commissions/faith-and-order-commission/xi-week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity/2015/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2015>

It is *jointly prepared and published by*  
The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity  
The Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches

## PLEASE BE INFORMED

**That CCM Secretariat will be closed  
on 26th December 2014.**

**Office will resume on  
29th December 2014**

