

Sydney Chinese SDA Church Newsletter

Issue 5 August 2020



Church Update

Our church is preparing to reopen in 3 phases, however, the dates for reopening are not yet confirmed due to the recent second wave of covid-19 cases. The three proposed phases are:

Phase 1

In-house church worship + live broadcast for first 2-3 weeks, only Online Worship team and board members attend church, and evaluate Phase 1. Once everything has been smoothed out (including live broadcast, trial temperature taking, registration, cleaning, etc.).

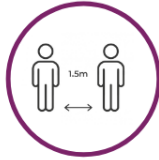
Phase 2

Church open for members to come, limited to a total of 60-80 people (including Children SS class if preferred) using all actions plan from Phase 1.

Phase 3

Open church publicly with max 100 people.

COVID-19 Safety Plan



Physical
distancing



Hygiene and
cleaning



Record
keeping

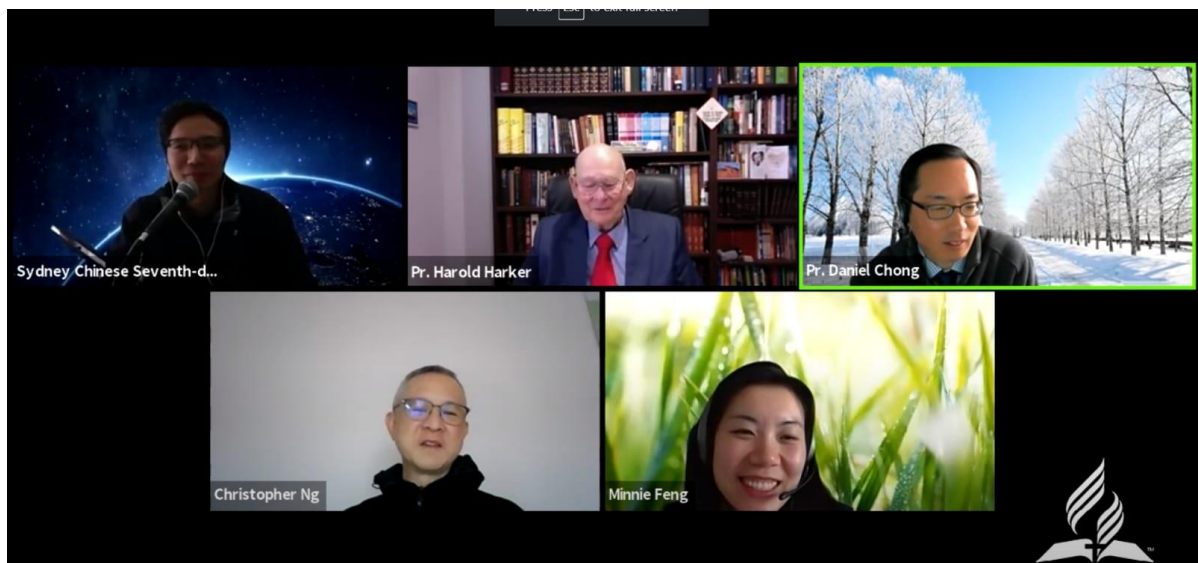


Wellbeing of staff
and customers

We're still looking at government updates to decide on a new date to reopen publicly, but this does not seem possible in the near future. If we reopen now, with the current government restrictions, we're limited to classroom capacity with social distancing measures, and Sabbath school classroom sizes. We're currently looking into broadband plans to ensure our church has consistent and stable live broadcasting experience for those unable to attend.

Behind the scenes

Our worship team is working hard each week. With a test run every Thursday, to ensure everything runs smoothly before the live worship on Sabbath morning. Behind the scenes we have George and John running the PA, and our worship team who organises and delivers our content, including song service, prayers, chairing, interpreting and the sermon.





Our services have been attended by audiences from worldwide since the introduction of live worship on Facebook, YouTube, church online platform and our church website. We've had a steady viewership count on each platform, with the majority on YouTube (an average of 45 viewers), and a total average of 65 viewers over all platforms. That's 60+ views from unique devices, where families join together to watch our service. We've since received followers on Facebook from other countries, mainly from Malaysia, Thailand and Hong Kong.

Country	Your Fans		
Australia	116	United States of America	7
Malaysia	41	China	5
Thailand	38	New Zealand	5
Hong Kong	11	Taiwan	4
Singapore	9	United Kingdom	2

We thank God that we continue to have our church members worship together during this confusing time, even with our many elderly audiences, and other challenges when adapting to online worship. Aside from live worship, we've had success with our Sabbath School on Zoom where all of our church members are able to attend virtually.

Ongoing Events: Care groups, prayer groups and Bible study

- 1) **Sunday Care Group:** Every Sunday, 7:00pm. On Zoom. Meeting ID: 928 536 167, Password: 123456.
- 2) **Cantonese Care Group:** Every 1st & 3rd Tuesday of the month, 7:00pm (Cantonese only). Contact Pr. Daniel or more information
- 3) **Eastwood Mid-week Prayer Meeting:** Every Wednesday, 7:30pm, (Mandarin only). Zoom meeting ID: 8758729240.
- 4) **Youth Care Group:** Every Thursday, 7:00pm (English only). Zoom meeting ID: 331 956 0396, Password: 046605.
- 5) **The Study of the book of Daniel:** Fortnightly (English only). Zoom meeting ID 606 856 3977. Contact Mr Weng Leong.

Recent Events

Jane's violin concert



On the 12th July 2020, Jane held an Online Thanksgiving Musical Concert to show her gratitude to those who donated for her to be able to stay in Australia and continue to study music. Jane's family was facing financial issues due to the corona virus, making them unable to pay for her tuition fees and living expenses, and forcing Jane and her grandmother to return home. If she returned to China, Jane would have to stop her music studies. Many church members stepped in to help and provided enough financial relief for them to stay in Sydney for the rest of the year.

The concert was held on zoom, hosted by Pr. Daniel, with translations by Angela Lo. It consisted of live music from the hymnal, some classical pieces, and two recordings of Jane's performances in past competitions. The event concluded with an interview with Jane about her experiences and expectations for accomplishing her musical dream. Jane played very well and we're excited to have her with us. We hope she can successfully finish her studies here and accomplish great things for God with her music.

Tom's Baptism



On the sabbath of 18th July 2020, Tom Yu was baptised into our church. He was joined by a small physical audience, and the event was also streamed live on Facebook and YouTube.

Tom's parents (John & Linda) attend Sydney Chinese SDA church, and Tom intends to come back to worship in our church in the future. He is currently in his 3rd year of study at Avondale College. Pastor Daniel is his spiritual friend, and had been studying the 28 fundamental beliefs with him prior to the baptism.



The baptism was organised quickly and efficiently by our deacon and deaconess team, preparing the church for the event. They took the initiative to keep coronavirus at bay with prevention measures such as pre-cleaning the church, temperature taking, socially distanced seating, and face masks. Additional bottles of hand sanitizers have also been added to church to be used by church members and church guests throughout the day.

We welcome Tom to the church family, and look forward to being able to worship with him in church in the future.

Pathfinder and Adventurers

Our Pathfinder and Adventurer clubs remains strong with fortnightly online meetings. Thanks to the efforts of the parents, we've had a consistent meeting schedule and are keeping up to date with our class requirements and honours.



While Adventurers have opted for a combined start on WhatsApp, Pathfinders are working in their separate classes to concentrate on their individual classwork. This year despite many cancelled events, the Adventurer's camporee, run by the conference, will be continuing in November. This event will be online and our church will be participating.

We are considering the possibility of returning to church on Sabbath afternoons to finish practical Pathfinder requirements. A small number of Pathfinder clubs around Sydney have reopened their church doors with success and we hope to return soon.

Youth Care Group

The youth care group has been running each Thursday at 7:00pm – 8:00pm, led by Jariya, with Bible study and spiritual guidance from Pr. Daniel and Pr. Robert. Everyone is welcome to join.

Contact Jariya for more information, or join the zoom meeting:

Zoom Meeting ID: 331 956 0396

Password: 046605

Keeping Spiritually Engaged in times of confusion

Although things are always changing, making them confusing and hard to understand, we should keep our faith in God's promises.

A good promise to remember is in Hebrews 13:5 (NIV), *"Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'"*

Another one is in Matthew 6:25-26 (NIV), *"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?"*

This verse reminds us that as long as we have faith in God, follow His word, and keep our spiritual relationship with Him, He will take care of our needs. We don't need to worry about what will happen in the future, or how we will survive. By living our lives in a way acceptable to God, He will ensure that He will be with us, supporting and guiding us every step of the way.

Keeping spiritually engaged can be a struggle through all the stages of life. Firstly, it requires a personal connection with God. This can be hard to maintain as we go through life with many priorities and requirements. Often, we lose sight of God, buried under chores and other work. We should always set time aside to remember our roots.

In Revelations 2:1-4, the church of Ephesus lost their first love despite their ongoing efforts in deeds, labour and perseverance. Are we falling away because we have too many things in our lives? Are we tired of church work, putting in our time and labour while forgetting our relationship with God? We should always take the time to take a look back and see if we have strayed.

Ways to keep spiritually engaged:

1) Keep the Sabbath day holy. In Exodus 20, God gave us the 10 commandments as the law we should follow. Out of the 10 commandments, the first 4 are about our behaviour towards God. The 4th commandment is one that helps us to remember and appreciate God by giving us a command to take the seventh day off the week to rest.

[Exodus 20:10](#) states, *“But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.”*

The Sabbath is a time which should be set aside and sanctified for God’s purposes. Rather than rushing to finish that last assignment or make work calls, perhaps it would be better spent catching up with family or engaging in Bible study.

2) Have a time set aside for Bible study. Even if we know our Bible well, over time, memories will fade. It is important to constantly think about and refresh our memories of God’s word when we can. In the last days, we will likely be without the Bible. Although it may not be possible to memorise the whole Bible, we should still be prepared to remember and hold fast to our beliefs when the time comes. Therefore, it is important to keep searching for the truth and setting its principles to memory.

It is also important to understand where your beliefs come from, and be able to back up your claims with your understanding of what and why you live your life the way you do. By doing personal Bible study, you better understand the Bible and why you trust what it says. You will also be able to persuade others better when your own beliefs are well grounded.

3) Set a time to reflect, and plan the next step. Where are you on your spiritual journey? What aspects of the Bible or of your life have you not yet understood? How could you have managed a recent conflict better? Is your character ready to meet God in heaven?

There’s a lot to account for when it comes to our spiritual lives. However, Jesus made an example when He came to Earth to die for us. His sacrifice showed us that through close communion with God, it is possible to lead a holy life on Earth, which we as Christians should always strive to do. Although it will be difficult, let us remember and be ready for His second coming together.

Recipe: Sweet Potato Brownies



Recipe from Sanitarium. Serves 12

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup So Good™ Unsweetened Almond Milk (60 ml)
- 1 cup cooked sweet potato, mashed (250 g)
- 1/2 cup brown sugar or coconut sugar (60 g)
- 1/4 cup light flavoured olive oil (60 ml)
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup oat flour – see note (55 g)
- 1/2 cup cocoa powder, sifted (40 g)
- 1 tsp baking powder

Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C. Line base and two long sides of a loaf tin with a strip of baking paper.
2. Combine So Good almond milk, sweet potato, sugar, oil, vanilla, and salt in a large bowl. Mix well.
3. Add oat flour, cocoa powder, and baking powder to the bowl. Stir to create a thick batter.
4. Spread mixture into prepared tin and smooth surface. Bake for 40 minutes, until edges have pulled away from the side of the pan.
5. Cool in pan for 10 minutes. Transfer to rack and cool completely before cutting. Store extra brownies in a container in the fridge.

Tips

- To make oat flour: pulse rolled oats in a food processor, for a minute or two, to a fine meal. Alternatively, replace oat flour with 1/3 cup wholemeal or whole spelt flour.
- For an extra treat, sprinkle 1 tbsp of choc-chips, or chopped walnuts, over batter before baking.
- Cooked sweet potato can be roasted or steamed. Remove skin and mash very well – or puree if preferred for a smooth batter.

Children's story



Galatians 3:23-24 • illustratedchildrensministry.com

The Missing Money

From: Spirit of Prophecy Sabbath, October 22, 2005

Who knows what a prophet is? A prophet is a person who helps us see Jesus! Sometimes God gives prophets special messages. Sometimes God tells prophets secrets that no other human being knows!

God called Ellen G. White to be His messenger, or prophet, when she was only 17 years old. For the next seventy years, she dedicated her life to revealing the truth about Jesus.

One winter many years ago, Ellen White and her husband James were living in Oswego, New York. Together Elder and Mrs. White held meetings and presented Bible studies, particularly giving the truth about the Sabbath. Our pioneers said they were preaching the third angel's message, and we still often call it that today. Elder White even published the first little Adventist paper that winter. He called the paper, *The Present Truth*.

Some of the people from another church in the town were disturbed about these Bible messages. So, with a very earnest business man leading out, these people held revival meetings, hoping to distract others from the Adventist meetings. The business man, whom we will call Mr. M, was the county treasurer. Most of the people were very impressed with Mr. M's meetings. But some were confused. They didn't know who was right—this man who upheld Sunday as God's sacred day, or Elder White, the poor young minister who had just moved to Oswego and who lived in a rented house with borrowed furniture. Mr. M was an important man in town. He said that the Sabbath was not important.

Mr. Hiram Patch and the fine young lady he was about to marry were especially troubled. How could they know which person was right? Who was telling the truth? Mr. M seemed very sincere. Yet the Whites had Bible proofs for the Sabbath truth and the third angel's message.

About this time, Ellen White was given a vision from God in which she was shown the true character of Mr. M and that he was not an honest man. And she was instructed by the angel to tell Mr. Patch, "Wait a month, and you will know for yourself the character of the persons who are conducting the revival, and who pretend to have such a great burden for sinners."

When Mrs. White told this to Mr. Patch, he said, "All right, I will wait."

About two weeks later, as Mr. M was praying loudly and earnestly for sinners in his revival meeting, a blood vessel in his stomach broke and he was carried home in great pain. As others took over his treasurer's work at the county court house, they discovered a shortage in the county funds. A lot of money was missing. The sheriff and his deputy were sent to the treasurer's home to ask about the missing money. The sheriff went to the front door while the deputy stayed out in the yard. The sheriff found Mr. M in bed. Mr. M told the sheriff that he did not know anything about the missing money.

Just then the sheriff's deputy came in the back door with Mrs. M. He had a bag of money in his hand. He got in the house just in time to hear the treasurer call on God to witness that he had not taken the money.

The deputy then held up the bag of money and asked, "What is this?"

As the deputy had stood outside while the sheriff went into the house, he had seen Mrs. M go out the back door carrying a bag, which she quickly hid in a snow bank. Then as she returned to the house, she met the deputy who had been watching her, and he took her back with him to get the bag. Just as he had suspected, it contained the missing money. The treasurer was put under arrest. The revival meetings collapsed. The people of the town were shocked.

Now Mr. Patch knew who was honest. He and the young lady he soon married fully accepted the third angel's message, joined the Sabbath-keeping Adventists, and became very faithful members. By revealing secrets about the future to Ellen White, God helped Mr. Patch believe that the Adventists really trusted God and were preaching His truth.

God's prophets will help you trust and obey Him, too!

Adapted from "The County Treasurer and the Missing Money," by Arthur L. White, in Campfire Junior Stories from the Days of the S. D. A. Pioneers (Silver Spring, Maryland: Ellen G. White Estate, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1963), pp. 43, 44