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## Reflections from the US trip to the ICCC 21<sup>st</sup> World Congress June 2023

The International Council of Christian Churches was inceptioned in 1948 by Dr Carl McIntire in Amsterdam to counter the World Council of Churches in the defense of the faith. 75 years have passed and the need to contend for the faith is ever needed today as before as we see an increasingly compromised ecclesiastical world that we live in.



The 21<sup>st</sup> World Congress was hosted at Collingswood BPC, a historic church started by Dr Carl McIntire in 1938, from 21-28 June. There were about 400 delegates from about 20 countries at the opening of the Congress and a good spirit prevailed during the days of the Congress.

The Congress had chosen ***“Declare the Glory of God Among the Nations”*** as its theme, and various speakers from the US, Latin America, Africa and Asia especially Singapore, India and Philippines gave their messages on this theme, and on some other topics too. There were mission reports from the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions (IBPFM) and from missionaries and pastors who have returned to update the Congress on the work of gospel missions and Rev Yap and I presented the missions work done by our BPCs from Asia.

The American Council of Christian Churches (ACCC), IBFBPM and the Faith Theological Seminary set up booths together with Rev Hal Ricker of Guatemala and the Durands who set up book tables during the whole Congress.

The Spanish version of the book, ***Christian Perspective of the Pandemic & Related Biblical Themes*** were given out free to some Latin American Pastors and missionaries by Rev Hal Ricker. We also celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday at the Congress, the oldest serving IBFBPM missionary to Guatemala. There was special music by brethren from the Mennonite church.



Rev Dr Brad Gsell, the president gave the opening address as he challenged the delegates to declare the Glory of God Among the Nations and honour God in their ministry and to continue the work of the gospel. The theme message

assigned to me on the last day was on ***Soli Deo Gloria*** with an emphasis on the historical emphasis from the 16<sup>th</sup> century Reformation and is still relevant today in its practical application and the future expectation and anticipation of our eternal preoccupation with the worship of Go d in heaven. There was also a fruitful day of



visit to Philadelphia, a historic city for the delegates just before their Independence Day.



We had the opportunity to visit and preach at Cub Hill BPC in Baltimore on Sunday 18 Jun and had sweet fellowship with the leaders and members. We also visited Faith Theological Seminary and later met the Dean Dr Stephen Hague and Rev David Wagner, the Director of Development and the Youth Pastor Rev Aaron Finchley. We also visited some notable cemeteries to visit the graves of some notable theologians and even cult leaders. We also had the opportunity to also visit 4 renowned universities.

#### **A Tale of 4 Universities - Of Patriotism, Humanism and Theism.**

By the grace of God, we travelled over 2,205km over 9 States these 3 weeks, visiting and ministering at churches, homes, cemeteries, and top American Ivy League universities.

We visited the historic **Princeton University** in New Jersey founded in the 18th century which has rich Protestant heritage with John Witherspoon as its first President, a fine Evangelical pastor and signer of the declaration of independence and the renowned theologian, **Jonathan Edwards**, as its **3rd President** who led in the **Evangelical Awakening** of the mid-1750s in Massachusetts to the saving of souls.



**Yale University** was born out of the Second Awakening in the 19th century **where Timothy Dwight was the first God-fearing President with godly ideals of bringing up their students in the scriptural tradition and theological scholarship in the beginning.**



Then there is the renowned **Harvard College** then and now University founded in 1636 in Massachusetts by the early Pilgrim fathers where Singapore sent our nation's top scholars to study.



John Harvard was a godly puritan and his motto for Harvard university has **Veritas as the motto i.e. Truth with Jn 17:3 as its theme verse with a quest to Know Christ and His Word and be committed to biblical principles of academic excellence, but today it is sadly forgotten.**



After Sunday service on 2 Jul, our host Lay Hean drove us to his alma mater, **Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)** in Boston which was founded just before the Civil War in 1861 by William Parton Rogers as a place of learning and experiment which is an excellent in engineering and architecture and humanities.

There are many other renowned universities such as Duke University with Christian origins linked to the Methodist with the motto Knowledge & Religion and yet others in Rhode Island and Dartmouth, and many other Christian educational institutions with the ideal to train and equip Americans in biblical literacy besides arts, languages, architecture science and engineering which formed the backbone of growing economies, the spirit of enterprise and inventions that had benefitted the world at large as the largest economy and leader in the free world.

Today, many of these historic biblical principles and aspirations of the founding fathers are neglected or even publicly repudiated with a new wave of Liberalism and Selfism and Humanism which have taken over.

We are soberly reminded by Jeremiah in Jer 6:16 to return to the old paths wherein we came from and not forget them to our detriment. About 400 years have passed since the Mayflower landed in Plymouth and time has an uncanny effect of aiding us to lose precious things that has taken a long time to build up.

**Humanism, Liberalism and Pragmatism have risen in the West and taken over. Every man did and is doing what is right in their own eyes, ignoring the word and will of our Sovereign God. The belief in Theism and the serious study of the Word of God have been downtrodden as a new generation has forgotten our past and lost its rich Protestant heritage.**

**It is our prayer that this nation will be revived and restored to its original glory, the glory of Christ as its foundation and centre of the American family and churches and politics for an effective leadership in an increasingly turbulent and polarised depraved world that we live in today.**

The steady decline of the august institutions here is a testimony of the slow but sure declension in American society in its social, moral, intellectual and spiritual life as we come to these last perilous days before the Lord comes to judge the world.

### Lessons from the Grave - A Most Eloquent Silence

During this trip, we also visited a few notable cemeteries here. Nestled quietly in the serenity of a historic cemetery in Watertown, Boston was a notorious cult leader, Mary Eddy Baker who founded the Christian Science cult in the 19th century. She was from a congregational church before but was searching for more - she believed in mesmerism and curative metaphysics and the ability to heal apparently by understanding God and His love. She had strange unsound convictions and later wrote a book on Health & Science with Key to the Scripture to prove her new theory of healing which is questionable. She also founded Christian Monitor a popular newspaper in her days and had many followers in its unsound teachings and practice.



Today there are about 400,000 followers worldwide of the cult, Christian Science and cult leaders continue to mislead and deceive many unsuspecting adherents in a vulnerable world when many have a profound lack of spiritual discernment.

In the same cemetery, there is a lesser-known mid-19th century man who wrote O Little Town of Bethlehem, a beloved carol we sing at Christmas. Philip Brooks was a graduate of Harvard university, a powerful preacher who became the Rector of Trinity church, Boston and later the Bishop of Massachusetts. There is yet another man called Rev Charles Torrey buried here who was a Unitarian minister (who do not believe in the Trinity) and fought against Abolition and there are others with mixed conviction too which we need to be vigilant.

There are others including the famous poets, artists, writers and politicians buried here, and some though dead continue to influence and impact the living through their writings and teachings.

### Personal Family time and Friends

We thank God for a good time with my sister and brother-in-law, Lydia and Edwin in Maryland in their home and who also kindly provided a car for our use throughout the 3 weeks of stay in the US.



We also thank God for the kind hospitality and sweet fellowship with old friends Lay Hean and Fong May in Boston.



As we were in New England, we visited the historic sights of the Pilgrim Fathers in Plymouth, Massachusetts. We had a fruitful time to retrace the footsteps of the Pilgrim Fathers and their 66-day treacherous

journey across the Atlantic Ocean from Leyden, Holland to this new land more than 400 years in 1620 in search of a new world of religious freedom. We also visited the recreated Plymouth Plantation, the Mayflower and the historic Mill too with rich lessons learnt of the sacrifice, devotion and perseverance for the sake of true religion.



### Conclusion

**It has been a most fruitful and edifying time of fellowship and learning and with Pastors, leaders and missionaries from like-minded churches. It is our prayer that as the delegates return home to our respective churches, we will continue steadfast in the propagation of the pure gospel and in the vigilant defence of the faith in these perilous days of these end times.**

*Jack & Angie Sin*

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LORD'S DAY PROGRAMME FOR JULY - SEPTEMBER 2023  
DISCOVERING AND APPLYING THE JOHANNINE EPISTLES  
- STUDIES IN THE EPISTLES OF 1, 2 AND 3 JOHN

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**JULY**

- 2/7 **MISSIONS SUNDAY:**  
Fellowship with God in the Light (1 John 1:1-10)
- 9/7\* Christ, the Propitiation for Sinners (1 John 2:1-11)
- 16/7 Beware of a Secret Affair with the World (1 John 2:12-29)
- 23/7 Hope & the Purification of Life (1 John 3:1-10)
- 30/7 Loving God from the Heart (1 John 3:11-24)
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**AUGUST**

- 6/8 Warning to Falsehood & Deception (1 John 4:1-6)
- 13/8\* The Supreme Love of God & Our Response (1 John 4:7-13)
- 20/8 The Victory of Faith over the World (1 John 5:1-9)
- 27/8 Knowing God & the Practice of Prayer (1 John 5:10-21)
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**SEPTEMBER**

- 3/9 Walking in Love & Truth (2 John 1-6)
- 10/9\* The Doctrine of Christ & Biblical Separation (2 John 7-13)
- 17/9 A Case Study of 3 Characters (3 John 1-12)
- 24/9 **GOSPEL SUNDAY:**  
In Search of Peace with God (Rom 5:1-8)
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## Memory Verse

1 John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

## Announcements

1. Welcome to our Lord's Day Sunday Worship Service! If you are here for the first time, do leave us your contact numbers in our guest book before you leave. Those who share the church vision to acquire a place of worship in due time, may designate your offerings to the SHBPC Church Building Fund.
  2. Bro Joseph Wee brings us God's Word this morning on "**Beware of a Secret Affair with the World (1 John 2:12-29)**", commencing a new quarterly series on "**Discovering and Applying the Johannine Epistles – Studies in the Book of 1, 2 and 3 John**". Pastor is preaching and administering the Lord's Supper this morning at Gospel Light BPC.
  3. Pastor will preach on next Sunday on "**Hope and the Purification of Life (1 John 3:1-10)**".
  4. Sunday School classes will follow the after the worship service:
    - Westminster Confession of Faith – Pastor
    - Studies in 1 Chronicles – Dn Kwong Leen
  5. Chinese Fellowship meets on every Sunday night at 7pm via Zoom with both local and overseas brethren. We have systematic studies on Basic Theology, and the Parables of Jesus. Join us for a time of profitable learning. [Zoom ID:883 9662 4157 Passcode:625551]
  6. Do send your prayer items to Pastor and join us for Church Prayer Meeting on Wed at 8pm via Zoom. The prayer list is available in church. [Zoom ID:863 7527 5431 Passcode:218178]
  7. We need willing hands and hearts to assist in the weekly cleaning of the premises. Do let Dn Yue Kay if you are available to serve in this area.
  8. Love gifts, Offering and Tithes to the Lord can be given in the following ways:
    - **Cheque** payable to **Sovereign Hope Bible Presbyterian Church** and mail to church address. (Kindly write the full name of the church as indicated.)
    - **Fund transfer** to Church **UOB** Account **392-308-825-1**
    - **PayNow** to Church UEN: **T19SS0116FSOV**
- Kindly indicate "**Church Building Fund**" if you would like to designate towards this cause.

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