

EXCELLENT LOVE

**06
DECEMBER
2020**

ED.LXLIV.12.2020

Bethany International Church
THE HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL NATIONS

FOUNDING PASTOR

Rev Niko Njotoraharjo

SENIOR PASTOR

Ps Djohan Handojo

PASTOR

Ps Daniel Prajogo

Associate Pastor

Ps Unggul Santika
Ps Iwan Adinugroho

Next Generation Pastor

Ps Rudy Nurtanaya

Pastoral Care

Ps Lily Karto

Prophetic, Praise & Worship Pastor

Ps Hemah Demak Panjaitan
Ps Suzana Tahir

Teaching Pastor

Ps Daniel Hardjosuwito

Mission & Evangelism Pastor

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Foreword

Congratulations! You've made it through to the last month of 2020!

It has been a tough year for everyone and many of us want this year to end soon, hoping that 2021 will be a much better year. As we enter the final month of the year, let's look back on what happened throughout the year, shall we?

We started the year with a list of resolutions, a strong motivation to be better, to start strong and to finish strong. We believed that the start of a new decade would be a fresh start. However, many unexpected things happened. In the first few days, Melbourne was covered with smoke from the bushfire. When we thought it's over, a few months into the year, we were forced to stay home because of the pandemic. We lived in isolation for two months before the restriction relaxed and we started to meet our friends again, still with a safe distance. But then the second wave started after less than two months of freedom, with another extended lockdown until recently.

Our expectations for the new decade crumbled down early in the year and we end up losing a lot of things. We may feel hopeless, lonely, and anxious. But throughout the year, I learned to change my focus. Our situation may be helpless, but it's our choice to be hopeless. We may be alone and isolated, but it's our choice to feel lonely. Our plans may not work out, but it's our choice to be anxious. The situation is far from being good, but we have a good God by our side. He is our source of hope. He never leaves us nor forsakes us. He knows our needs and He has great plans for our life.

So, whatever happens next, let's make the right choices. Let's reflect more on His goodness rather than on what we're facing and let His peace guard our hearts as we finish this tough year in His gracious, loving hands.

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."
(Philippians 4:6-7)

HELLO *new comers!*

Welcome to Bethany International Church Melbourne.
So glad that you are here with us. We want to help make your
first experience at BIC Melbourne a great one!



GET CONNECTED

Christian journey shouldn't be alone because it is a community project. Join our Community of Love (COOL) every Friday 7PM!

LET US CONTACT YOU



Lastly, please enjoy a cup of coffee on us! 



COOL LIST



MAIN

Canaan	Kezia, Freddie
Ephratah	Steven, Henry
Berea - Bethesda	Romy
Bethlehem	Felix, Fransisca
Jordan	Sony, Wilfred
Horeb	Ferry, Febria
Bethany	Paulus, Erina
Bethel	Christy, Elvina
Cana	Bobby
Philadelphia - Pniel	Dwi, Vero
Moriah	Elve, Calista
Ephraim	Kevin L, Sonia
Ekklesia	Edo, Ica
Emmaus	Fabian, Priska
Galilee	Kevin Y, Corine
Gennesaret	Reinetta, Albert
Gilgal - Carmel	Erika, Mike
Hebron - Philippi	Yoseph, Rian
Zion	Monica, Raymond
Eden	Jennifer

FAMILY

Antioch	Andy, Iwan
Tiberias	Andre, Albert
Gethsemane	Michael, Rudy
Jerusalem	Hestu
Mt Hermon	Lily, Unggul
Phillipi	Hariyanto, Ivan
Shekinah	Alice
Tabernacle	Sandi
Westal	Michael

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Macedonia	Eric, Alicia
Shiloh	Daniel, Clarissa

NEXT GEN

Judea	Valentina, Sylvio
Judah	Aldo, Kezia M.
Israel	Catherine, Jerry
Jeremiah	Sinta, Kevin W.
Heaven	Pauline



COOL REFLECTION

Striving for unity

BY COOL GENNESARET



Our COOL, Gennesaret, is a product of God's grace in the multiplication of COOL Galilee. We are a (new) family, born out of God's sheer grace and bound by the love of Christ. In this opportunity, we want to share a little bit of our COOL reflection for this year. We want to share some of our challenges this year, God's grace, and future hopes.

As a new COOL, we are excited to walk the new journey. We've got around more than 30 members in Galilee before we multiplied at late 2019. So, it provides us the fresh air we need in the community to know one another deeper. It works. We got more active in the COOL discussions, more opportunities to serve, and we definitely got closer to one another. Although, it's not always as easy as it sounds. For me personally, I think we've missed some of the godly men and women around us, their wisdom and distinct characteristics. On one hand, it's a huge loss; but on the other hand, it opens an opportunity for us to grow and take more responsibilities.

Yet, the biggest blow to us (I think for others too) is the transition to online COOL. We felt it was really unfortunate for us, as we were really looking forward to growing as a newborn COOL. We really strive for unity in our COOL, as we have experienced a really strong one before we multiplied. But it is hard to be united when we barely knew each other, except from a few times meeting in COOL. Some of us also went back to Indonesia, which makes it even harder.

God sustains and gives growth

However, God has been gracious to us by adding our numbers just before the lockdown. We feared that some of them would stop joining us, but God sustains them. Almost all of them stay until today. A few new faces even joined us while we were doing COOL via zoom. It's been a privilege to witness the work of God during the lockdown period. Despite all the restrictions and limited interaction, God sustains and even grows our fellowship in COOL. What increases our joy is that all of us long to gather together, spend time to know one another and to have a deep fellowship.

Apart from that, we believe our faith grows individually through this lockdown, for various reasons. Despite the different conditions we experienced, we see each of us grow a lot in our spiritual journey. We face different challenges, but we know that God works behind the scene in each of our lives. We do our best to care, support, and encourage one another. Yet, we know our efforts are far from perfect. But eventually, we see that it is

God who sustains us. And we have the same conviction that the same God will make us grow.

Having experienced God's goodness, we want to be different people (for the better, of course) through this pandemic. People that fully depend on God. God has been gracious to allow us to experience more of Him during this season. We have heard many testimonies of God transforming our hearts to be more dependent on and obedient to Him. We praise God for that. And we hope our experiences lead us to be a COOL that is truly caring for one another, because we know God works through that. A COOL that takes the Word seriously, because only the truth that is able to unite us.

Hopes with an eternity view

Approaching the end of 2020, we've witnessed the goodness of God throughout the year. We are excited to see where God would lead us in years to come and to see more people come to know God as their Saviour. We long to have a deeper fellowship and



**We are
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stronger unity when physical COOL is allowed. We believe unity is not a mere possibility, but it is a definite assurance. For we are united not by our common interests, hobbies or social status, but by the blood of Christ. If we realise this truth; if we look at one another and see them as brothers and sisters that we will spend eternity together with, then it should radically change our relationship between one another.

In the midst of our diversity, may we always consider Christ alone as our point of reference. As Paul says in Philippians 2:1-8,

“Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God,

did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

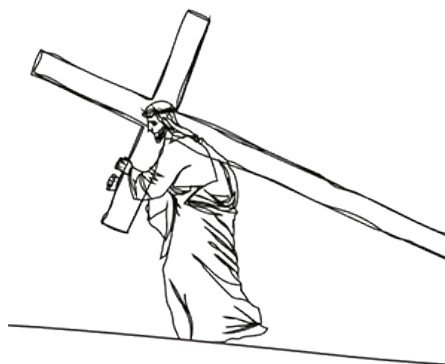
rather, he made himself nothing

by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a man,

he humbled himself

by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross!”



WEEKLY DEVOTION

06 DECEMBER

Hosea 1 - 3

Ayat Renungan:
Hosea 4 : 6

“Umat-Ku binasa karena tidak mengenal Allah; karena engkaulah yang menolak pengenalan itu maka Aku menolak engkau menjadi imam-Ku; dan karena engkau melupakan pengajaran Allahmu, maka Aku juga akan melupakan anak-anakmu.”

07 DECEMBER

Hosea 4 - 6

Ayat Renungan:
Hosea 6 : 3

“Marilah kita mengenal dan berusaha sungguh-sungguh mengenal TUHAN; Ia pasti muncul seperti fajar, Ia akan datang kepada kita seperti hujan, seperti hujan pada akhir musim yang mengairi bumi.”

08 DECEMBER

Hosea 7 - 9

Ayat Renungan:
Hosea 6 : 6

“Sebab Aku menyukai kasih setia, dan bukan korban sembelihan, dan menyukai pengenalan akan Allah, lebih dari pada korban-korban bakaran.”

09 DECEMBER

Hosea 10 - 12

Ayat Renungan:
Hosea 10 : 12

“Menaburlah bagimu sesuai dengan keadilan, menuailah menurut kasih setia! Bukalah bagimu tanah baru, sebab sudah waktunya untuk mencari TUHAN, sampai Ia datang dan menghujani kamu dengan keadilan.”

10 DECEMBER

Hosea 13 - 14

Ayat Renungan:
Hosea 14 : 10

“Siapa yang bijaksana, biarlah ia memahami semuanya ini; siapa yang paham, biarlah ia mengetahuinya; sebab jalan-jalan TUHAN adalah lurus, dan orang benar menempuhnya, tetapi pemberontak tergelincir di situ.”

11 DECEMBER

Yoel 1 - 3

Ayat Renungan:
Yoel 2 : 28

“Kemudian dari pada itu akan terjadi, bahwa Aku akan mencurahkan Roh-Ku ke atas semua manusia, maka anak-anakmu laki-laki dan perempuan akan bernubuat; orang-orangmu yang tua akan mendapat mimpi, teruna-terunamu akan mendapat penglihatan-penglihatan.”

12 DECEMBER

Amos 1 - 3

Ayat Renungan:
Amos 3 : 7

“Sungguh, Tuhan ALLAH tidak berbuat sesuatu tanpa menyatakan keputusan-Nya kepada hamba-hamba-Nya, para nabi.”

COOL REFLECTION

God's providence for His beloved

BY COOL BETHEL



Bethel, house of God

"Bethel means house of God. For me, it means that every COOL member is a temple of God, that each of us will encounter God personally. But, Bethel is also a place where we can gather together as a family in the house of God," said Erika, one of Bethel's early shepherds.

It has always been our prayer to see the growth of each individual on the side of fellow believers. We enjoy the fellowship and company of our brothers and sisters, but most importantly we long to see every member flourishing in their relationship with God. We believe that the gospel, God himself, should be the foundation of our COOL, and we want to make sure that each of our COOL members understands the truth. We always try to be careful about not hiding the truth, because the power lies in the Words itself. No sugarcoating. Others (or even our COOL members) may think that our COOL is quite strict, but our aim is that everyone takes it seriously; we want to build a place where they can feel comfortable and safe, but also a place where they can grow — where they can get encouraged and convicted with the truth. As Rebecca Manley Pippert writes in the light of Romans 12:9, “Think of how we feel when we see someone we love ravaged by unwise actions or relationships. Real love stands against the deception, the lie, the sin that destroys.” It is not just another community or group of friends to hang with every week. It should not be.

“In my early days in Bethel, the shepherds have always emphasised the importance of praying for our COOL. I remember how we still have our weekly prayer meeting even though only two people can join. And I have lost count how many times God has

revealed His purpose, sustaining our COOL numbers and unity through our prayers,” Patricia remembers. We believe that prayers are very strong; not only it confesses our helplessness and dependence on God, but it is also a reminder that God is the foundation of our COOL. We, shepherds, may try our best, but as Paul said in 1 Corinthians 3:6, “I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth”; if we think that people’s salvation depends on us, we put a burden that is too heavy for us to carry.

‘2020, oh, 2020’

2020 is just something else. Who would have thought that we will be locked down for almost half a year where meeting our friends can even be a violation of rules? Obviously, nobody will ever think that 2020 will be like this. All of us must have our own plans, goals, but all get delayed or even cancelled due to pandemic. We can’t go to the church, all our gatherings must be limited to zoom meetings; not to mention the boredom, loneliness, uncertainty, depression, even death. All are messy, nobody wanted this. But, it is reality.

How then, our COOL views 2020? Do we face any challenges? Absolutely. We don’t deny how different and hard it is when we start having COOL via zoom. The silence. The awkwardness. The ignorance. We experience

it all. One by one is going back to Indonesia to save the living cost or just to unite with their family. The concern is real. What if they don't join COOL when they have arrived in Indo? What if they get lost? How can we cross the distance when it is hard enough when they are still in Melbourne? Can we stay connected? Will they get annoyed if we keep contacting them? All the worry and anxiety. On top of that, we also face some difficulties in getting some members to keep abiding by the rules.

Blessing in disguise

Is it a bad year then? In the worldly view, maybe yes. But not in our perspective. We are holding close to this truth in Romans 8:28-29, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters." God's plans sometimes can be hardly understood. But, through this storm, we learn to walk in faith. We learn it in a hard way that we are just a mere creature, a weak one. "Yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes." (James 4:14)

Not only that, we have got extra time like never before. More time to immerse in the word of God, more time to ponder, more time to worship in secret, more time with family, more time to rest, to focus on what matters the most. Looking back, we can not thank God enough for 2020 — for the valuable lessons that we may not experience anymore.

Growth in the middle of the storm

As we go through the hard and uncertain season, God proves that He is indeed faithful. All our worries don't turn out to be true. Our members who are going back to Indonesia still come regularly to our COOL, even though the time zone is 4 hours different. Not only that, some of their family members and friends even join our COOL, which is very unexpected. We believe it is all credit to God who gives them the desire to connect and realise the importance of COOL in this hard situation. How wonderful it is to have our brothers and sisters' encouragement during those times we need it the most. Praise God we've endured a pandemic together, supported one another, maintained weekly virtual COOL and even welcomed a number of new members (who we only met in person after restrictions were lifted)!

"It's amazing to see that we've grown in the way we care for each other, build each other up and mentor others, and we have witnessed God's endless favour many times in our COOL," states Adeleine. "I can see God's works clearly visible in our COOL. The members start to step up, grow and are willing to set aside their comfort. I am amazed to see how they try to practice what we share in the COOL and even start ministering. Two of our members even give themselves to be COOL's shepherds," Sherly adds. God surely takes very good care of our COOL. We are also impressed to see that God continues to give joy in each session of our COOL meetings; and, to be able to praise and worship together and seeing everyone's happy faces is just delightful to our hearts. God has sustained our COOL throughout this pandemic in so many ways, one of the most prominent is how He has maintained our unity even though we're physically apart. Our bond gets stronger, and we learn what COOL truly is. It is surely grace after grace.

Future hopes

Moving forward to 2021, we pray that all the lessons that we have learnt in 2020 will only encourage us to pursue God further. We long to see more souls joining our COOL;

to see more people captured in God's love and grace through our community. We long to see spiritual growth in each individual; for God's mercy to open up our eyes to see more of the truth, encounter Him personally, and for us to be sanctified to be like Christ. Also, to "love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." (Matt 22:37) because of all He has done for us. We pray that Bethel can always be a place where everyone feels the love of God and grows together.

"And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him, he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." (Hebrew 12:1-3)

We can't wait to see what God has in store for our COOL next year!

MINISTRY LIST

VOCAL



Jessica Sutiono

MUSICIAN



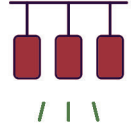
Raynaldo Ali

MULTIMEDIA



Budi Sendjaja

LIGHTING



Budi Sendjaja

SOUND



Steven Santika

USHER



Elbert Pranoto

TRANSLATOR



Elbert Pranoto

CARING



Felix Hariyadi

DANCER



Priska Sunaryo

DRAMA



Jennifer Chandra

SUNDAY SCHOOL



Reinetta Tanujaya

HOSPITALITY



Tasmin Ifah

INTERCESSOR



Monica Haryanto

MISSION



Felix Chietra

MEDIA ART



Sonia Pranatha

COMMUNITY KITCHEN



Yolanda Tjong

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms"

PODCAST



Ravello Satria

YOUTH



Rio Susanto

**We invite you to join our
online service every Sunday
from 8.30 am onwards**

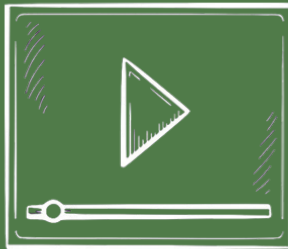
You can access it through:

Website:

<https://www.bethanymelb.org.au>

Youtube:

Bethany International Church Melbourne



**Let's celebrate the Lord's Day
together!**