

FBC TODAY

UNLEASHING THE GOSPEL



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First Baptist Church Subang Jaya

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The Formulaic Church

Breaking news! Arnold Lim, renegade elder of FBC, has decided to start his own church!

He tells everyone the politically correct version of why he wants to start his own church-- he has a calling from God, he wants to start a church which is based solely on scripture, etc. But in reality, he wants to start his own little Kingdom. In fact, he has been telling himself repeatedly

that it is God's will he should start his own church, and he has started to believe his own reality.

"How do you start your own church?" he muses. Well, he decides to list down the formula to guarantee human success to his ambition disguised as a calling from God:

1) **Get an enigmatic senior pastor** - someone who can speak very well

NEW?

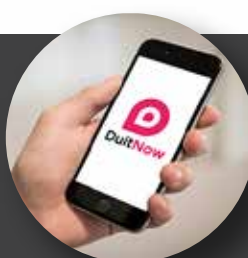
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and can persuade the masses that he is the mediator between them and God. After all, many mega churches have one thing in common. It is a distinct “face” to the church, who is usually the senior pastor with the gift of words and a talent for persuading others to do what he says.

2) **Get a really talented worship band** - one that connects emotionally with the “audience” (congregation). It should be a band that knows the kind of music people like to hear, and can lift them up to a state of euphoria, so much so that they think they are connected to God.

3) **Find out what the felt needs of the congregation are** - what sermon topics appeal to them, what kind of programs will attract them, etc. Roll out these as “ministries”.

(The above is purely fictional. Any similarities to actual persons are purely coincidental.)

The Jesus Church

If Jesus is the sacred space the tabernacles prefigure and the Holy Spirit-filled church is Christ incarnate to the world, this is the Jesus-formula to build a church:

1) **Relationships over results.** The aim would be to build a church centered on an intimate relationship with Jesus and with each other. We are to walk with people, especially when they struggle with life issues, faith issues, etc. We are to hold each other accountable as disciples, not consumers. Whether this results in more numbers coming to the church or the numbers dropping, whether it means people complain the sermon is boring, whether the worship is as great as other churches, is secondary to building

relationships. A clarification here - there is nothing wrong with a church with gifted preachers, talented worship teams, or great programs. We just need to remember that it is often tempting to prioritize these things over the less visible and much harder work of building Christ-centered relationships.

Challenge question: How much time do you spend building a closer relationship with Jesus? People say “we are what we eat”. The origin of that phrase actually comes from a French lawyer Jean Anthleme Brillat-Savarin in 1826, before the 1930’s American nutritionist Victor Lindlahr turned it into a health mantra. The original phrase wasn’t about physical eating but rather what you feed your mind and your heart, and this in turn shapes who you are. If you are feeding your own desires, your own fears, your own goals, etc., then this shapes who you are and the relationships you value. We need to feed ourselves with Christ-centered thinking and this will flow out and translate into Christ-centered relationships.

2) **Being church over doing church.** To be a church means to strive for obedience together as this pleases God. Doing church shifts the focus to programs and activities, in a false belief this will please God more, which ultimately leads to a sacrifice or works mindset. The reality is that it is so much harder to focus on obedience than sacrifice; no wonder this is repeated so much in scripture (eg: 1 Samuel 15:22-23). Doing church means to concentrate on multiple programs and avoid or minimize dealing with the harder issue of the struggle with sin. On the other hand, being church means to confront our sinful nature together. As a body, we should create safe spaces for us to confess our sins, voice our frustrations, express our doubts, etc. Then together as a body of Christ, with much grace, encourage one another in holy living.

Challenge question: Are you able to find a few people in FBC to create a safe space to express your fears, your doubts, your struggles, etc.? In turn, this safe space will help you to be more accountable in your personal walk with Jesus. If you are unable to do so, can you reach out to the leadership on this? I will endeavour to find a few brethren to walk with you.



3) A covenant community over an elitist community.

In Ephesians 2:11-22, Paul talks about how God wants the church to be a new humanity bridging all divides of color, race and backgrounds. Have you ever been at a table in the Garden Café (pre Covid-19 days) where people were talking about stuff and you felt left out? Did you feel like you suddenly became invisible? In the body of Christ, whether you are married, single, divorced, childless, rich, poor, extremely gifted and intelligent, or struggling with mental and emotional issues, we are

all sinners at the foot of the cross. In fact, for those who feel like outsiders, like second class citizens, like they don't measure up- these are the ones we should pay special attention to, and hold up and affirm as our beloved brothers and sisters in Christ (1 Corinthians 12:22-23).

Challenge question: Being part of a new humanity means reaching out to at least ONE person outside your comfort zone. Are all your relationships in FBC people you are comfortable with? What does Jesus reaching out to the leper, the Samaritan woman, the tax collectors, etc. teach us about being a covenant community?

(The above is what I hope is biblical, and I am open to correction. Any possible relationship with actual people is deliberate and intentional.)



By Arnold Lim

Arnold is an elder of FBC.

LIFE GROUP SPLASH

Featuring Stray CATS LG

Describe Stray CATS in three words.

Genuine. Generous. (Full of) Gladness.

Share with us how the Life Group came about.

Joanne: Our LG was formed in 2018 with Elder Richard Ng spearheading weekly Bible studies at CATS HQ. We grew as the Strays (what we affectionally call ourselves) in our LG started looking out for others who were also serving at church but not yet connected with an LG, and it was surprising to see how many there were.

What is the story behind the Life Group's name?

Ironically, most of us are dog lovers. To date, we only have one cat lover. But 'CATS' is an acronym for "Children Awaiting the Saviour". The name 'Stray CATS' is a constant reminder that all have strayed away from God, but because of what Jesus has done for us on the cross, we can all be saved, and we have to constantly pursue Him until eternity.

Tell us more about who Stray CATS is today.

We are a group of young working professionals in various industries, aged 30 and above. Some of us are single and some are married. We also have one young family. Currently, we have about 20 LG members and an average LG attendance of 10. We meet every fortnight, either on a Thursday or Friday night. We used to meet at Ian and Joanne's lovely home, which we affectionately call "CATS HQ", in Glenmarie. Since the MCO, we have been meeting online via Zoom or Google Hangout.



The most unique feature of our LG is that most of us are actively serving the church together. We can be found in the Worship, AV, Ushering, and Sunday School ministries. We warmly welcome anyone who would like to join our LG, and also those who are interested in serving the church but would like to know more.

Share a significant experience that Stray CATS has had in the past year.

We are still mourning the passing of our beloved sister-in-Christ, Jennifer Kong, who went to be with the Lord in March. We were tasked with planning for the wake and funeral services, and we grieved for her passing alongside her family members. What kept us all going was the hope we have in Christ and Jennifer's faith, especially during her last days, when she continued to keep us all in prayer despite her physical pain and struggles.

What is the Life Group experience like? (Share with us your personal experiences, some activities that you have done together, and/or some happy memories.)

Ariel: Being a part of Stray CATS has been a blessing. LG encourages us to build each other up, strengthens our faith in and love for God, as well as deepens our spiritual walk with God. For example, through our Bible study discussions, we have been able to reflect on how the suffering of God's people is still relevant to us this day. We also meet for fun activities. We had an art session at the CATS HQ, where half of us painted fridge magnets and the other half made a cat-themed coaster, which was eventually framed up.

Amanda: I have not been part of a close-knit community of Christians prior to joining the Stray CATS LG. Before joining, I had been in FBC for about 6-7 years and was serving in church. However, I felt isolated. Although everyone was very friendly and kind to me, it was difficult to get to know people because it is a big church. Now that I am part of the Stray CATS LG, I can say that I am also a part of the church. As believers, it is especially important to do life together. The Strays are very down-to-earth, honest, and genuine in our relationship with one another. I am very happy with the openness we share as an LG as we grow together in Christ. I hope to also be more open and be able to serve others in God's love.

I find every member in the group (and I mean every single member) to have such unique personalities, and having everyone gather together really makes any meetup- even on Zoom- a happy memory. We could be chatting, eating, making a salad, praying, planning for an event, walking down streets, drawing, competing on the PS4, etc. These are all happy memories for me.

Join A Life Group Today



| Pulpit Program

September 12, 2021 **The Church and the Tree of Life**

(John 17:20-25)



PREACHER
Arnold Lim

September 19, 2021 **The Anatomy of Unbelief**

(Matthew 11:1-24)



PREACHER
Alex Tan

September 26, 2021 **The Yoke of Jesus**

(Matthew 11:25-29)



PREACHER
John Lee

October 3, 2021 **Genuine Repentance**

(Psalm 51)



PREACHER
Ps. Massimo Gei

| Worship with Us



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| ZOOM |

Sundays 9:00am



SUNDAY SCHOOL

for Ages 0-12yrs

| ZOOM |

Sundays



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PRAYER SPOTLIGHT



A Prayer from Romans 12

1. Praise God for His mercy and love in giving us the Holy Spirit who testifies that we are children of God.
2. Pray that God will, in His mercy, enable us to live as people holy and pleasing to Him. Pray for our feet to walk in His paths, our lips to speak the truth, our arms to embrace the lonely and unloved, and our ears to hear the cries of the distressed.
3. Pray that God will, in His mercy, teach us to look humbly and patiently to Him, and to think of ourselves with sober judgement.
4. Pray that God will, in His mercy, fill us with zeal so that we will serve Him and His people with cheerfulness and joy.
5. Pray that God will, in His mercy, give us patience in suffering and trials, faithfulness in prayer, and sincere love so that evil will not overcome us, but we will overcome evil with good.

Condolences

It is our deepest sorrow to inform you of the passing of our late brother **Don Lee Chee Fook** on 28 August 2021. Brother Don was a member of Karis Fellowship.

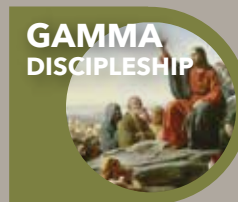
We would also like to extend our heartfelt condolences to our sister **Lucy Ong** on the passing of her beloved mother, **Madam Ng Soon Sim**, on 6 September 2021.

We pray for God's peace and comfort be with the families during this difficult time of loss.

| Upcoming Events



Romans
From Wretchedness
To Righteousness
A new Gamma series starting
22 September 2021
Every Wednesday
For more information, contact
Church Office at 03-5621 2623



**Sermon
on The Mount**
Explore the Teachings
of Jesus on the
Beatitudes
Every Tuesday
8:00pm - 9:45pm
To register/ for more
information, contact
Lammy Tan
at 012-386 8460.



**Is There More
to Life Than This?**
Every Thursday
8:00pm
[CLICK HERE](#) to register
for the next Alpha program
starting January 2022.



**Daily Prayer
Meeting**
Every Saturday
to Thursday
9:00pm
Zoom ID: 929 735 694
Password: pray



**Monthly Prayer
Meeting**
25 September 2021
(Saturday)
2:00pm to 3:30pm
Zoom ID: 869 8003 5137
Password: pray

**More Information on
Upcoming Events**