

The Season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, 22 February, and ends on 6 April (Maundy Thursday). As Christians prepare for Lent, we share with you an Ash Wednesday message from Rt Rev Dr Titus Chung:

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Grace and peace to you and your family from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ!

The season of Lent is just round the corner. Lent is a period of 40 days (not including Sundays) starting from Ash Wednesday (22 February) and ends on the Saturday (8 April) before Easter Sunday.

Traditionally, Lent has been the season where Christians are encouraged to engage in soul searching and repentance. In the early church, the season was also meant to be a time of preparation for Easter, when Christians re-dedicated themselves to the Lord and for new believers to be baptised.

In the season of Lent, it would be appropriate to take a good look at ourselves and the life that God is calling us to with the help of the Holy Spirit. The purpose is not to make us feel bad but to really see where we are and then to come to Jesus; to honestly lay our sinful desires and behaviours before the Lord and ask the Lord for forgiveness and the grace to live differently.

The following scriptures invites us to come to Jesus just as we are, depending on him to save us and to supply us with all that we need all the days of our lives and not just at the moment when we believe in Jesus.

*²⁸ Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light." **Matthew 11:28–30 (NLT)***

*⁶ And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns. **Philippians 1:6 (NLT)***

In the words of The Book of Common Prayer 1979...

"I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word. And, to make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us now kneel before the Lord, our maker and redeemer."

NCCS Welcomes New Members: On 26 January, the General Committee welcomed two new congregational members to the NCCS family. They are:

- Bethesda Church Bukit Arang (BCBA), a Brethren Church led by Senior Pastor Ivan Chow. Founded in 1977 and registered in 1981, BCBA was an outreach of Bethesda Church Bras Basah. It holds three services in English and one in Mandarin and weekly attendance is

about 1100 with a registered membership of 700. BCBA has a young leadership team with several senior Elders providing guidance. It also carries out social work programmes which includes ministry to older people with disabilities. BCBA believes that joining NCCS enables it “to be connected to the wider network of local churches and staying informed on the local issues in Singapore”. For more information about the church, please visit this [LINK](#).

- Covenant Vision Christian Church (CVCC) was founded 14 years ago. Led by Rev Dr Francis Khoo, a former lawyer, it seeks “to equip, enhance and empower believers to fulfil their Godly potential as Word-based, Spirit-led and Faith-filled disciples of Jesus Christ”. CVCC holds two services in English on Saturdays and Sundays and one in Chinese on Sundays. It has a relatively young membership of 150 with a weekly attendance averaging 250 persons. CVCC wishes to network with other churches through NCCS membership. For more information about the church, please visit this [LINK](#).

NCCS Annual Membership Fees 2023: We thank NCCS members for their faithful remittance of annual membership fees which have helped to meet the 2022 budget. Member churches will be receiving a request for membership fee payments based on \$1 per member. NCCS does not require verification of membership as we believe in practising trust within our family of churches.

Members may wish to know that since 2017 (after the increase in annual fees to \$1 per member), our budget has been sufficient to meet annual expenses without having to draw down on our investment income. The core investment comes from the sale of 14 Dalvey Estate in 1990. NCCS inherited the said property from the early mission agencies of the founder denominations. Therefore, it is incumbent on NCCS to be responsible stewards of the inherited core investment as well as the annual funds from member churches.

Revised Code of Governance: The Charity Council intends to launch a revised Code of Governance for Charities and IPCs sometime in May 2023. To help charities (such as churches) familiarise themselves with it before the new reporting requirements kick in, the Charity Council will organise training sessions to bring charities through the key changes to the Code, and to address any further queries. NCCS has agreed to co-organise a physical engagement session with the Charity Council and Commissioner of Charities. At the appropriate time we will invite churches and Christian organisations to participate in the training sessions to be held at St Andrew’s Cathedral.