

HARVEST Asia

The lost, the least and the marginalised: AEFI's leaders' Conference

The plight of Asia – with 65% of the world's population and only 5% who are followers of our Lord, was the main focus, prayer and challenge at AEFI's 10th Quadriennial Conference of leaders which concluded in Singapore on October 6th 2019.

As a fellowship of like-minded people who are committed to the Great Commission, AEFI leaders (all nationals from 10 nations) pledged through prayer and with God enablement to change the missions landscape of Asia in the coming years.

Rev Dr Chris Chia gave keynote devotional messages based on 2 Timothy and challenged the leaders to withstand the onslaughts of physical persecution, doctrinal confusion, church division and personal sin. He exhorted AEFI leaders in the words of Paul that "your life and ministry is to be discharged in the presence of God and Christ". "God and Jesus Christ", declared Rev Chia, "is your first audience and your final judge".

Growth and suffering

We praise the Lord for reports of souls saved, churches established and training centres being opened to equip pastors and village evangelists as reports and updates were shared from leaders of 16 AEFI ministries serving in 11 countries. "Do the work of an evangelist" was another challenge that the leaders received at the conference. It was sobering to realise that the work of an evangelist involves enduring persecution and hardship. Heart-wrenching reports of our workers who have suffered in the hands of enemies of the Gospel seemed to be the norm and the story of two who are currently in prison in South Asia was reported as delegates prayed for them with tear-filled eyes.

Blessing and entrusting of vision

Some 200 people from more than 25 churches gathered for the Friends of AEFI dinner event on Saturday. It was memorable to know that one of the noted guests, Mr S Dhanabalan (a prominent, retired Cabinet minister) was a member of the AEFI committee in the early days of the fellowship's inception. On Sunday, AEFI speakers and presenters shared in local churches throughout Singapore with opportunities to explain and entrust the vision of AEFI's founder, Dr G D James and the Gospel legacy of AEFI to some 3000 believers in 15 churches.



"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer (for Asia) is that they may be saved" (Rom. 10:1).

"I am praying for you": Jesus Christ

Whenever someone says: "I am praying for you", it will surely bring great peace and strength to your soul. And, if you happen to know the person who says that (and if he or she is a person of prayer) – the statement would be twice as meaningful and uplifting.

In John 17, with betrayal and death breathing down his neck, Jesus Christ prays for us one of the most extraordinary prayers in the New Testament. This prayer is so deep – it would take more than a lifetime to plumb the depths of all that it reveals. In essence, Jesus prays for four realities to become a part of us:

Eternal life: "And this is eternal life that they may know You... and Jesus Christ..." (vs 3).

Jesus prays that we will have eternal life, which is the starting point and essence of the Christian faith. Eternal life is God's gift to those who believe on his Son -- Jesus. It is the life of God in us. Just as a car needs fuel to run, we need the very life of God in us to give us meaning, purpose and inner satisfaction and peace. Eternal life is not only a quality of existence but life that is immortal and beyond this world.

Obedience: "...They have kept your word... I have given them the words which you have given me..." (vs 6- 8)

The word kept implies the act of obedience. It shows that obedience moves from the mind, to the heart and then to the will. The whole direction of the Christian life is a movement towards obeying Jesus Christ and all his demands on us. As someone said, "A Christian is not saved because he obeys; he obeys because he is saved".

Unity: "...that they may be one just as we are one..." (vs. 22).

Jesus could have prayed for our success, happiness, or our safety. Instead, he prayed for our unity, that we would love each other. And, as we love, we reveal to our divided, dislocated world something of the wonderful unity displayed in the Godhead (vs. 11, 21). The unity that Jesus prays for us is based on a real unity that exists in heaven between Father, Son and holy Spirit.

Mission: "As you sent me into the world, I send them into the world..." (vs. 18).

We are so intrinsically linked with God that His mission is our mission. Our mission can be summed up in one-word -- people. When we take our places everyday with people who need the message and grace of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we become part of His mission.

This is the prayer of all prayers. These words reveal the heart of Jesus in a unique way. Jesus had a much higher purpose in mind than merely taking care of our needs and wants. Reading this prayer is a truly uplifting experience. But being the living and breathing answer to this prayer is even more glorious and consequential.

Jonathan James



Executive President
AEF International



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Asia Evangelistic Fellowship International is an indigenous, interdenominational mission founded in 1960 by the late Dr. G.D. James.

AEF identifies, trains, and commissions national workers to carry out pioneer mission work in their own Asian countries. These national workers are organized, supervised and supported by national boards set up in each country under the pastoral care of the AEF International Office.

Executive President: Dr Jonathan James

International East Asia Director: Dr Met Castillo

International South Asia Director: Rev Edwin Ponniah

International Training Director/Australia: Pastor Matt Hall

Chairman of the Board: Dr Ray Dallin



"I was very blessed by the evening. From all the testimonies I saw the ministry of AEFI is clearly guided by our Lord. May the God of mission carry on His good work in this ministry and empower you and your team to respond to the ever-challenging times". Dr Clement Chia, extreme right – Principal of Singapore Bible College at the AEFI dinner with friends.



21 September 2019

Beloved AEFI family,

Greetings in Christ our Lord!

I just wanted you to be aware of some changes in our plans for the leadership of AEFI moving forward.

As you know, we recently commissioned Pastor Matt Hall and Rev Edwin Ponniah as International Director Designate and Assoc International Director Designate respectively.

Following discussions and prayerful reflection, the AEFI board and our leaders have come to the realisation that the role of the International Executive Director (IED) is too broad for two individuals to carry. Therefore, the AEFI board has reorganised the organisational structure to accommodate three directors to carry the load of the IED's duties.

Therefore, Pastor Matt Hall will assume the position of International Training Director and Australian Director; Rev Edwin Ponniah will be the International South Asia Director and Development Director and Dr Met Castillo (who was honorary President), will assume the position of International Consultant Director (East Asia).

The board has also invited Dr Jonathan James to assume the role of Executive President to guard and guide the AEFI vision and give overall oversight to the organisation.

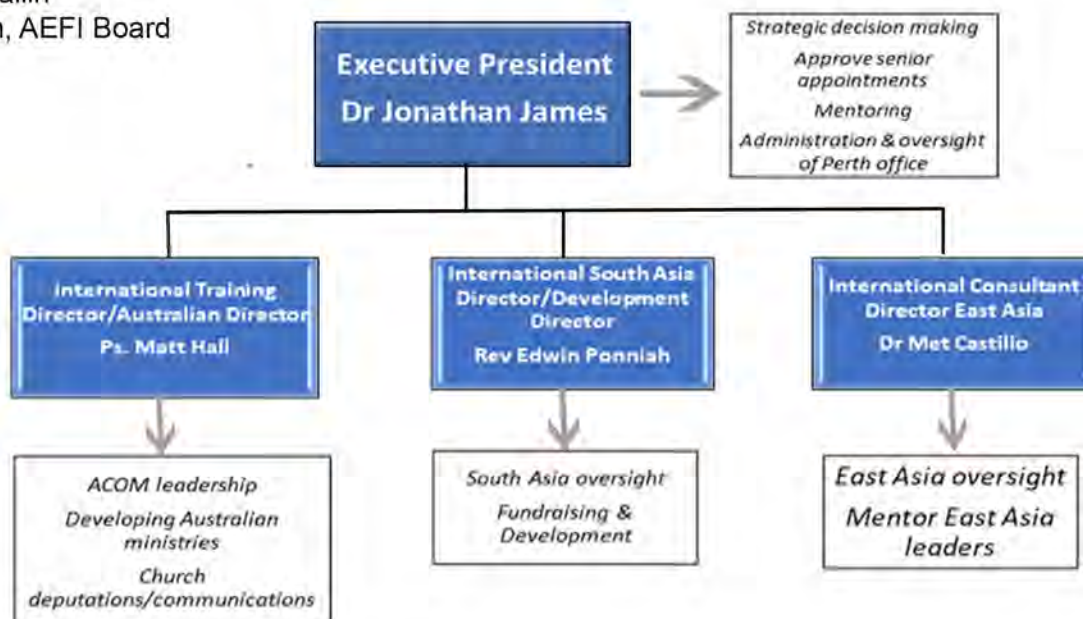
The new organisational chart is enclosed for your information.

Please be in prayer for our leaders and that the Lord will continue to guide and undertake for AEFI as we move into its next phase of ministry.

Many thanks and every blessing in our Lord,

Yours sincerely,

Dr Ray Dallin
Chairman, AEFI Board



New leaders reflect on the conference... their roles

"The AEFI. Conference was an eye opener to my team and a real blessing to all of us. Thank you for the privilege of participating in it. **From beginning to end, God's presence was obvious. There was such unity, respect and love despite the diversity.** I want to congratulate your leadership.

I am humbled to be considered as one of the three persons who will serve under the office of the President, and in my case as International Consultant Director of East Asia. I should be packing up now for some kind of 'retirement' but it seems that the Lord is not done with me yet. I've just concluded a series of lectures about using our bonus years for the furtherance of the Gospel, using Caleb as the prime example (Josh. 14:7-14). From my own heart, I want to continue to be like Caleb who at 85 still followed the Lord fully, he was still asking for battles to fight and mountains to climb.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to continue serving with you under the banner of AEFI. By the grace of the Lord I will do what I can for the sake of the glory of God and the salvation of lost souls. Pray for me".
Dr Met Castillo, International Director East Asia.

"I praise and thank the Lord the AEFI Conference. It requires God's grace, guidance, ardent prayers, lots of planning, oneness of thought and diligence to organise a conference of such a magnitude. The core committee was guided by the presence of God and there were many people worked behind the scenes for the success of the conference. It was altogether a blessed fellowship with other national leaders, especially at the dining table where we shared one another's experiences and insights.

I strongly felt the leadership of the Holy Spirit throughout the sessions and it was encouraging to see all the delegates participating in the conference with discipline and joy.

The induction service was deeply meaningful, humbling and historic. The Sunday preaching was the culmination of the conference. Rev. Nehemiah of Nepal and I were warmly received by the Hakka Methodist Church Leadership.

I humble myself before God and pray He will help me to serve with His power and wisdom". **Rev. Edwin Ponniah**, International South Asia Director.

"As a fellowship, I sensed that we are united to Christ, and share with Him the vocation to be a light to the nations of Asia. As the Gospel moves to different Asian contexts, we must adapt the message so that we still communicate the explosive newness of God's act in Christ. **I was encouraged that these two strands of strategy were the main priority in the sharing of reports and the prayers to send out the teams afresh after the conference.**

Training for the complexity of ministry in resistant cultures was a desired need and request from many of the mission fields. We made a promise to try and make this a developing strength of the work of AEFI. We need the Lord's wisdom and equipping to do this well. Thank you for your prayers as we partner for the Gospel."
Pastor Matt Hall, International Training Director/Australian Director.





God's presence: our greatest gift

December 2019

Beloved friend of the Gospel,
Carol singing is such a great Christmas experience as all people – believers and non-believers alike sing about the greatest event in all history – God coming to earth in the form of the God-Man – Jesus Christ.

One of my favourite carols is Hark the Herald Angels Sing. One of the verses says:

Mild He lays His glory by
Born that man no more may die
Born to raise the sons of earth
Born to give them second birth
Hark! the herald angels sing:
"Glory to the newborn King!"

In coming to save us, Jesus had to intentionally lay aside his glory or divine privileges to enter our sin-sick world and experience the fear and frustration of life. What amazing good news this is! He comes into our world as one of us. The presence of God is what Christmas is all about. The Gospel and the entire record of Scripture is about God wanting to be with us in an intimate and meaningful way.

Those of us who know His presence are called to also display His presence to others. We are to take the form of servants so that we may serve others and reveal His life (Philippians 2: 5-8).

Budiani lives in a village in East Asia where most of the people do not know the presence of God as revealed in Jesus. Budiani reached out to his poor neighbour who was running out of resources. Budiani set up a self-sustainable fishery pond in his neighbour's backyard. As a result, the neighbour's dire financial needs were met, which then prompted the neighbour to ask: "Why did you do this for me?" Budiani then shared with his neighbour about how Jesus lives in his heart and that Jesus prompted him to do this act.

I praise God for the workers of AEFI -- like Budiani who have been blessed by Jesus and now they freely share His blessings in word and deed.

At Christmas we have a great opportunity to bless the servants of God in AEFI with a Christmas gift. I encourage you to give generously as He has blessed you and enter the joy of blessing the Lord himself.

May the joy, peace and presence of Christ fill your hearts this Christmas!

Jonathan James
Executive President

