

VISION SUNDAY 2026

**Address by Pastor-in-Charge Rev Dr Kow Shih Ming
at PLMC's Leadership Retreat on 27 September 2025**

I. INTRODUCTION

By the end of 2025, we would have completed a three-year journey of Empowerment, Engagement, and Expansion. Each year in this journey had focused on one aspect of God's calling upon PLMC. We focused on receiving God's empowerment upon the church family. This empowerment is then released by bringing God's presence to bless the community. In 2025, we expanded to bless the nations with the presence of the Living God.

As we celebrate what the Lord has done in and through us from 2023 to 2025, and look forward to where the Lord is leading PLMC in 2026, let us affirm and declare our calling with conviction:

We are a Family Blessed to Bless the Community and the Nations.

II. CELEBRATING THE BLESSINGS OF THE LORD

As we look back to the past three years, we celebrate what the Lord has done in and through us.

1. A Church Who Hosts the Presence of the Lord

When I look back to 2023, the one thing that stood out for me is the frequent encounters of the Lord in our celebration services. Often, the presence of the Lord was so tangible that we could not but bow in worship and respond in surrender. It was a season of edging towards a full-blown revival in PLMC.

Though the full expression of a revival tarries, I praise God that many of us are still pressing in for more of the Lord's presence in our midst. Many of us are continuing to learn how to better host the presence of the Lord in our lives and in our church. My prayer is that we will have more experiences of hosting God's presence in our families, in our workplaces, in our schools, in the community, and in the nations. Let us seek the Lord for more of His reality in our lives in the coming days. May more people in PLMC become more desperate for His presence in their lives.

2. A Cell Church

In 2023, we celebrated our 20th year as a cell church with 1,750 people in 147 cells. Today, we have 2,011 people in 143 cells. With a church membership of more than 3,000 people, there are many more people yet to be connected in heart-to-heart relationships in a cell. Lots more must be done to help our sisters and brothers feel the need and have the desire to be connected in Christian community. One immediate need that we recognise is to have more cells for families with young children. Hence, we need more members who are willing to step forward to lead these cells. If you are willing, will you please tell our Cell Director, Samuel Kerk?

As pastors, we rejoice whenever we minister to someone and discover that their cell members were there with them as they walked through the valley of darkness. May we have many more such stories in PLMC. Sadly, there have been times when your pastors had ministered to people who did not have anyone else in the church who was there for them through the crises of their lives. This was one of the reasons we embarked on an effort in 2024 to reach out to members of our church aged over 65 years old who were uncontactable. No one in our church family should feel that they are alone in their faith journey. No one in our church family should die alone. We thank God that we were able to reach all but 15 of these PLMC members aged over 65 years old. Thank you for your part in reaching out to these members, helping them to feel that they are not forgotten by their church family. In particular, let us thank God for Pastor Vincent Goh, Teo Soo Hoong, and Lennard Teo who led this effort.

Besides the uncontactable members who are over 65 years old, there are other senior members of our church who are not connected in community. I appreciate that for many of these senior members, joining a cell group is a challenge, even when they have the desire to do so. There are issues of transport, mobility, and health. Our desire to have them be in *koinonia* (fellowship) must not waver. So, we must look for alternative ways to help them to be connected in PLMC. If you have ideas to bring this about, will you please share them with the pastors?

One idea of connecting them to others in PLMC is for cells to adopt a senior. A cell may commit to care for their adopted senior, just like how cells care for the residents in the blocks whom they bless. There are many ways to care for their adopted senior. These include checking in on your adopted senior now and then. Invite and arrange transport for them to join you, if not in your cell meetings, in your social gatherings. Call or text them to let them know they are remembered. Share the prayer that you prayed for them. Roster cell members to visit with them. In other words, embrace them into your cell without formally making them your cell member. If they want to be identified as your cell member, welcome them. If not, welcome them anyway. I believe that this effort will not only see more seniors connected in community,

but it would also bring blessing to both the cell and the senior as they share life with one another. Our Cell Ministry will work out the details for a pilot run before we roll it out to more of the cells.

As we seek to usher more people into cells, we also want to deepen the connections in the clusters and the Cell Ministry. With allocated budget, the clusters led by the cluster and cell leaders will be organising cluster gatherings for all cell members in the cluster. The intent of these gatherings is not evangelism but *koinonia*. Through these cluster gatherings, we want to see more connections made between people from different cells. We want to see more walls pulled down in the cluster. This will lead to a more tangible experience of being one family in a mega church like PLMC.

3. A Church Engaging the Community

The 20th year of our Cell Ministry was also the year we laid the groundwork for outreach to the Lorong Ah Soo and Bidadari communities. A bedside ministry in ECON Medicare Centre also began in 2023. A couple of months later, Christmas parties were organised by various cell groups for migrant workers, the people in the Hope Student Care Centre and St Luke's Eldercare Centre (Serangoon), and the residents of Blocks 201-210 Serangoon Central. The Wise Steward Programme (a savings programme) was launched the same year with the residents of Block 223A Serangoon Central. In the Year of Engagement 2024, a new outreach work in Buangkok Crescent and Woodleigh Link was started, with cell groups visiting the community once a month.

What joy to hear how a resident in Buangkok, who had closed his door on our members when they first visited, now invites them into his home. I rejoiced that in one of the visits, a resident in Woodleigh Link asked for a Bible. When the Bible was delivered, the person committed to follow Jesus. The love and presence of Jesus, the Way, has opened a way into the hearts of the residents. Praise the Lord!

Since June 2024, our church family can be seen befriending the migrant workers in the Shaw Road dormitory vicinity every alternate Friday night. Because they have built relational bridges to these people who were far from their homes, these migrant workers willingly accepted an invitation to a fellowship event held here in our church premises. And of course, these new friends were treated to a dinner of delicious nasi biryani.

These acts to bless the community are not just good works in the name of Jesus but also expressions of hearts that desire to be a blessing to whomever God brings into their paths. One example of this desire to be a blessing wherever God sends them took place last Christmas season. A cell group, like many other cell groups, were going to bring Christmas blessings to the residents in Bidadari. However, led by the Spirit of

God, they decided to do more. The cell decided to bring the songs of Christmas to the residents by carolling in that neighbourhood. In this simple and powerful way, the cell group brought Christmas joy to the people. Another expression of hearts that desire to be a blessing was a cell that included their members with special needs to bless the residents in Woodleigh Link.

Engaging the community is God's call for all ages. Since 2022, the Outreach and Youth ministries have partnered in the Reach'In Out Programme. This programme equips a cohort of youths and sends them out to bless the community. I believe that the teaching, the experiences, and the reflections the youths received through this programme have deposited a vision in their hearts to bless the community. At last count, about 50 youths have gone through this programme. This year, Cluster 11 were sent to bless the residents in Block 223A Serangoon Avenue 4, the migrant workers in the Shaw Road vicinity, and the Hope Student Care Centre children.

As many of you know, there will be a Christmas Village from 19 to 21 December 2025 on our church premises. This is a divine opportunity for the PLMC family to engage the community with the joy of Christmas. We want to invite all the residents whom we have been building relationships with to this celebration of joy. This invitation is another step to deepen our relationships with the residents whom God has granted us favour with.

We also want to reach out to more residents whom we have yet to connect with. So, we will need more PLMC members to participate in blessing the community. Our church's calling is to reach out to the community within a five-kilometre radius of our church. We still have lots to do. I pray that each one of you will ensure that you have a part in what the Lord is doing through PLMC to bless the community. May you as leaders spur many more others in the PLMC family to join you to bless the community. As we build more relational bridges with the residents in the community, may the community experience more of God's presence through His people.

4. A Church Expanding to the Nations

The year 2025 was designated as the Year of Expansion. The Year of Expansion did not begin in January 2025. It started in October 2024, in the midst of the Year of Engagement. This is fitting as expanding to the nations is not a stand-alone directive for PLMC. It is a continuum from empowerment to engagement to expansion. We see this in Jesus' words to His disciples in Acts 1:8 (NIV):

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Jesus' command to His church is to be empowered by the Holy Spirit. With His empowerment, His church is to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. In our context, Jerusalem is the immediate sphere of influence of each PLMC worshipper. The community around 5 Boundary Road is our Judea and Samaria. The ends of the earth are the nations beyond Singapore westward towards Jerusalem, through South Asia. In other words, PLMC is to be a blessing wherever God places her; in the neighbourhood where PLMC worshippers live, in the Braddell Heights, Lorong Ah Soo, Buangkok, and Bidadari communities, and in the nations beyond Singapore.

When we think of the Year of Expansion, the many Mission Exposure Trips (METs) and Short-Term Missions Trips (STMs) come to mind. At the end of August 2025, 93 METs and STMs went to 32 communities in 18 nations. We thank God for the 935 people who went to bless the nations. We praise God that these trippers were a God-anointed blessing to the nations, and, in turn, were blessed by God in their experience. I understand that about 200 more people will be going in 20 teams in the next few months. If you haven't gone on one or would like to go on another one, please speak with our Missions Chairperson, Sim Ting, or our Missions Director, Scott Tey. They will try their best to facilitate your obedience to be a witness to the nations.

I know that much work goes into preparing for the mission trips, and some of this work is done by those who cannot go. Their work is also part of what it means to be a witness to the nations. This includes the work of facilitating the different mission trips. Besides thanking God for our Missions Director and Chairperson, the Missions Committee, and Missions Working Committee for serving us with greater intensity in this Year of Expansion, I believe it is right to honour two persons whom God has blessed us with. Many of you know that many of the trips would not have gone well and might not even happen if not for the tireless ministry of Lucy Lo. Her reward in heaven will be great. Thank you, Lucy. The other person who worked quietly behind the scenes serving us is Belinda Wee. Most of you do not know that she was planning to retire at the end of last year. But because of her love for God and for PLMC, she stayed on to do most of the backend work for the Year of Expansion. Thank you, Belinda.

Though much emphasis has been placed on sending out mission trips, that is not the goal for The Year of Expansion. The goal was to cultivate God's heart for the world, that blessing the nations is a lifestyle of every PLMC member. If PLMC worshippers go on a mission trip and come back saying that they had been there and done that, we would have failed in the Year of Expansion. Thankfully, there are many members and cell groups that have caught God's heart for the world. They are planning more blessing trips to the nations. Looking forward, we want to encourage more cells and more members to go on mission trips. For those who have gone on a mission trip,

we pray that in the coming year, they will move from one MET, Missions Exposure Trip, to another MET, Missions Extension Trip. Jesus' call to us to be a witness to the nations does not end with one blessing trip to the nations. Jesus' call to us is for life. Till the end of our days on earth, we must continue to go forth to bless the nations.

A number of our seniors have caught this vision. Let me mention just one of them. For many years, Victor Koh has led teams to bless the nations. He is now 85 years old, and he walks with a cane. The last time I spoke with him about missions, he was planning to lead another team to bless the nations. If you are older than Victor and you cannot walk, you may have a possible excuse not to be a witness to the nations. Even if you are older than Victor and bedridden, you can still be part of God's blessing to the nations. You can do the most important part of blessing the nations, which is to pray. You can pray for the teams that are going and pray for the people that the teams are going to.

Nevertheless, there are some cell groups who have some inertia when it comes to blessing the nations. So, more needs to be done in praying, encouraging, and equipping these cell groups to go and continue to go to the nations. Certainly, there are many more people in the church who have yet to go on a mission trip. I thank God for those who could not go this year but are planning to do so next year. At the same time, let us pray for the many more people where mission trips do not feature in their calendar for 2026. More work needs to be done to help these sisters and brothers step out of their comfort zone to bless the nations.

Mission trips are not all that our Missions Ministry does. On 9 March 2025, we commissioned Yutaro and Sara as missionaries to Japan. We look forward to commissioning more missionaries, perhaps at least one commissioning every year henceforth. As part of the process of discerning God's call on PLMC members to serve as missionaries, the Missions Ministry developed a Missions Attachment Program that sends PLMC members to experience life in the mission field for a short period. Let us pray that these people will be among those who will be commissioned in the future.

As a church, we are committed to serve with nine mission partners and four missionaries in nine nations in South-East Asia, Central Asia, and South Asia. Through these partnerships, we participate in their ministry to the least-reached people in the world. PLMC's contribution is to provide resources, training, and ministry in the field with them. Our partnerships have seen 549 pastors and leaders trained, 33 churches planted, and five new fields of ministry established in some of these countries. In the coming years, we may have more mission partners. We will certainly have more engagement with our mission partners to serve them that they might advance the Gospel in their community.

Whilst we encourage PLMC members to respond to the call to the mission field, we also want to encourage more PLMC members to serve in the local church. We thank God that presently, there is one PLMC member who is studying at Trinity Theological College in preparation for a life vocation in God's church. We have another studying at TCA College preparing to serve as our church staff upon her graduation. Let us pray that more will take this step of preparation.

In 2026, may we see more people go as God's witnesses to the ends of the earth. May we see more people catch the heart of God for the nations. May we see more people preparing to serve as missionaries, church staff, and pastors. May we see more collaboration with our mission partners to reach their people with the Gospel of the Kingdom.

5. A Church that is a Safe Place

Since the days when my predecessor called us to establish cities of refuge, PLMC has made steady progress to be a safe place for all. Faith and Sexuality forums and dialogues were held for leaders, youths, young adults, and the general church congregation including our Mandarin-speaking sisters and brothers. A guide on how to respond pastorally to persons with same-sex attraction has been adopted by the church leadership. A team guided by the paper, Embracing Inclusivity, was formed to help our church family to not only receive people with disabilities but also to include them in our lives and ministries. On 29 August 2025, the team organised the inaugural Inclusivi-TEA to connect with friends of our members and members of our congregation with disabilities or special needs and their families. May this small step lead to more inclusion of persons with disabilities or special needs in our church family.

6. An Intergenerational Church

Since the 90th Anniversary of PLMC, the Lord has led the church towards becoming an intergenerational church. Having people from different generations come together to organise the Church Camps and having Young Adult Observers in the LCEC are two efforts for us to learn how to serve and be together as an intergenerational church.

Another effort in building an intergenerational church is the integration of cells made up of younger adults into the clusters of cells with older adults. This necessitates the cluster and cell leaders learning how to relate with people from different generations. At the time of writing, reports coming out of the five clusters we began with are very encouraging. We look forward to more clusters with cells of different generations. The adoption of seniors by the cells that I talked about earlier is another

expression of PLMC becoming an intergenerational church. Please pray for wisdom and creativity to see this effort come to pass.

This vision of an intergenerational church received a welcome boost with the formation of the Bridge Building Team, an initiative by our young adults, to facilitate the learning and understanding of one another across the generations. The first workshop the team organised to facilitate this learning was very well received and was a step in the right direction. More workshops are being planned. We look forward to more positive experiences of different generations serving and being together as one church under one Lord, Jesus Christ.

7. A Church with a Renewing Leadership

In the revised Code of Governance that is applicable on and after 1 January 2024, PLMC as a Tier 2 Charity is required to set the term limits for all LCEC members at 10 consecutive years or less. Any extension beyond 10 years should be deliberated and approved at the Local Conference where the LCEC member is being re-elected to serve for another year.

Led by the Lord, we began the renewal of leadership in the LCEC some years before 2024. Hence, in this church year, we have all but one LCEC member who have served for less than 10 consecutive years in the LCEC. The exception happened because the designated successor responded to God's call to prepare to serve in full-time Christian vocation.

Last year, the youngest member in the LCEC was 38 years old. This year, the youngest LCEC member is 29 years old. I am not suggesting that the average age of our LCEC should gradually decrease. Rather, this indicates that we are moving towards an intergenerational leadership in PLMC. With the 10-year term limit for LCEC members, more of you must prepare yourself, younger and older, to respond to the call to serve in the leadership of the church.

8. A Church with a Renewed Lease

Moving from leadership renewal to a different kind of renewal, we praise God that we were able to renew the land lease on which most of our buildings stand from 8 January 2025 to 7 January 2055 for a considerably lower amount than had been previously expected. With this lease renewal, work has begun on how to steward this gift of God at 5 Boundary Road for His glory. My prayer is that whatever developments we make in our church premises will result primarily in more blessings to the community and the nations.

9. A Praying Church?

Since we began having Corporate Prayer Meetings from September 2021 (online) and from January 2023 (onsite), it has been a roller-coaster experience of PLMC being a praying church. We thank God for the many times when we gathered and experienced His presence that leads and heals. We thank God for the faithful regulars and those who attend occasionally. My lament is that not more of our leaders are at the prayer meeting. I wish I was wrong but some of you have never attended any of the Corporate Prayer Meetings. I point this out not as a rebuke but to encourage more of you to commit to at least one Corporate Prayer Meeting in the new year. To help you and others be available for the prayer meeting on the first Wednesday of every month, please work at not organising any other competing event or programme on that day. The leaders from other ministries, who may have your own organised prayer meetings, should also be present in at least one Wednesday Corporate Prayer Meeting in the new year. After all, the monthly Wednesday prayer meeting is THE prayer meeting of the PLMC family. Where there is visible and expressed unity, that is where the blessing flows.

Not only do we want to express unity in prayer as a PLMC family but let us also express our oneness as a TRAC family by coming together with our sister churches at the TRAC Prayer Conference on Saturday 14 March 2026 to pray. It will be held here in PLMC. Let us seek for more of God's presence in our churches and in the conference. Let us pray as well as commit to have more members gather as one PLMC family and one TRAC family to pray.

These are merely several of the blessings of God in and through PLMC in the past years. Many of the works of blessing will continue in the years ahead, although the approaches may be renewed with the changing times and needs of the people. What must never change is our dependence on the Holy Spirit in leading and empowering us to become a blessing movement to the community within, the community without, and the community beyond. Keeping this in mind, let us consider where the Lord is leading us in 2026.

III. DIRECTIONS 2026

As we celebrate the past, you may have noticed a word that I used repeatedly concerning the year to come. Before I get into that and articulate the directions for 2026, let me take several steps back.

The words of the prophet recorded in Isaiah 43:18-19 (NIV) are most relevant at this juncture of our church life,

Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.

As we celebrate the marvellous work the Lord has done in and through us in the past years, we are not to dwell in it. God is continually doing a new thing in our world. Hence, we must press on to receive this future God has for us. However, what the Lord is doing may not be obvious to our eyes. We must be attuned to the Lord's movement in our midst and in the world to perceive it. This need to be attuned to His voice to discern His directions for PLMC was my experience. Hebrews 1:1-2 (NIV) says:

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, and through whom also He made the universe.

God spoke to His people many times in various ways through various means. This was my experience in receiving Directions 2026. I received the directions in various ways, through various means, and many times; each time bringing an increased focus on what the directions for 2026 are to be.

I began seeking for God's directions for PLMC in 2026 soon after our last Leadership Retreat. In the ensuing months, I was constantly led to Isaiah 54:2-3 (NIV):

Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes. For you will spread out to the right and to the left; your descendants will dispossess nations and settle in their desolate cities.

From these verses, I gathered that the directions for PLMC are to extend her influence. The idea of spreading out to the right and left is to go beyond our immediate vicinity. That we are to dispossess nations and settle in cities is to establish the kingdom of God (the kingly rule of God) in the nations. In other words, we are to courageously reach out to more people, not only in the community around the church building but also to more communities in the nations beyond Singapore.

As we stretch out our tent and lengthen the cords of the tent, we are also to strengthen our stakes. Strengthening our stakes is to ensure a strong foundation from

which the church enlarges the tent. A strong foundation will not only allow for a bigger tent but will also secure the church when the winds of opposition come.

From the above, one way to frame the directions for 2026 is 'Strengthen our Stakes, Enlarge our Tents'. Even as I articulated this to the staff management team to begin praying about what this means for their ministry, there was a nagging uneasiness about this. Going to the Lord, the phrase that came back to me was 'Deeper and Wider'. I said, 'came back' because early in seeking the Lord for the directions, the words 'deeper' and 'wider' had resonated with me but I had not been sufficiently attentive to embrace them.

On deeper reflection on the phrase 'Deeper and Wider', my eyes were opened to see that these two words were described in Ezekiel 47:1-5 (NIV),

The man brought me back to the entrance to the temple, and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was coming down from under the south side of the temple, south of the altar. He then brought me out through the north gate and led me around the outside to the outer gate facing east, and the water was trickling from the south side. As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off a thousand cubits and then led me through water that was ankle-deep. He measured off another thousand cubits and led me through water that was knee-deep. He measured off another thousand and led me through water that was up to the waist. He measured off another thousand, but now it was a river that I could not cross, because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in—a river that no one could cross.

You may remember these verses from Ezekiel's vision were the words that the Lord gave us to set the directions for our church for several years. Even when they were not the key verses from 2022 to 2025, they continued to be foundational verses on which the directions rested. Verse 5 is where I have often stopped. Prompted by the Spirit that there is more, I continue to read, Ezekiel 47:6-12 (NIV):

He asked me, "Son of man, do you see this?" Then he led me back to the bank of the river. When I arrived there, I saw a great number of trees on each side of the river. He said to me, "This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, where it enters the Dead Sea. When it empties into the sea, the salty water there becomes fresh. Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live. Fishermen will

stand along the shore; from En Gedi to En Eglaim there will be places for spreading nets. The fish will be of many kinds—like the fish of the Mediterranean Sea. But the swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they will be left for salt. Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing.”

In Ezekiel 47, the Spirit led the prophet further and further out, more and more distant from the Temple. In so doing, the prophet was immersed in more and more water. When the prophet returned to the bank, he saw a lot more trees on each side of the river. More living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be more fish and more kinds of fish because the salt water was made fresh. There will be more places to fish. There will be more kinds of fruit trees on the banks of the river. There will be more seasons when leaves will not wither and fruits do not fail; more seasons when trees will bear fruit.

Remembering that water is a metaphor for the Holy Spirit, these Scriptures tell us that there is more wherever the Spirit is. There is more in the presence of God. With that revelation, I received the directions for 2026. The coming year, 2026, is to be

THE YEAR OF MORE

2026 is the year when our tents must stretch out more even as our stakes are strengthened more firmly in Christ. In the coming year, we must go deeper (having more experiences of God’s love leading to more love for God by us and by those whom we reach) and we must go wider, reaching more people and communities for Christ.

Besides the Scripture from Ezekiel 47:1-12, you would not be surprised that a key Scripture for 2026 is Ephesians 3:20-21 (NIV):

Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

We can have the Year of More because God is the God of more. He is able to do more than we can ask or imagine, and not just more, but exceedingly, abundantly more. The ‘more’ we receive must result in more glory rendered to God in Christ Jesus in more and more generations into eternity.

Specifically, what does 'more' look like in our church family? What does 'more' look like in our ministries? What does 'more' look like for each member? I had talked about many of the 'more' that we can step into as I recounted what the Lord had done in and through PLMC in the last few years. Below, I want to highlight a few of the 'more' that I believe the Lord wants us to receive from Him.

1. One More Disciple of Jesus

I believe that God wants to bless more people through the PLMC family. This call is not just for PLMC. This is a call to all churches in Singapore. To frame the context of this call, please watch this video by Pastor Edric Sng, whom many of you know as an editor of *salt&light* and *thir.st*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JdrXCOZaqjU>

A 10 to 20 percent growth in the Singapore church by 2030. Is this God's will? 2 Peter 3:9 (NIV) says,

The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Yes, it is God's will for everyone to turn to Him in repentance. Is it possible to see the Singapore church grow by at least 10 percent by 2030? Is it possible for PLMC to have a net growth of 10 to 20 percent in the next five years?

From 2021 to 2025, PLMC has grown in membership from 3,243 to 3,465 – that is a net growth of about almost seven percent. To see a growth of 10 percent by 2030, an additional 347 members must be added to our church. That would mean an average of an additional 70 members to the church annually. If we have faith and willingness to see a net growth of 20 percent, we will need to have at least an additional 140 members annually. To increase the Christian population in Singapore requires that these additional 140 members annually are not transfers from other churches. These additional 140 members annually must be people who are not yet Christians today.

If every PLMC member reaches just one person for Christ in the next five years, our church will double in size. If every one of us in this room reaches two persons for Christ in the next five years, we would have at least an additional 500 people added into the kingdom of God. If the parity rule applies, that 20 percent of the church does most of the work, reaching one person in five years, we will have an additional 693 people in the kingdom of God, a growth of 20 percent. In other words, to see the church membership grow by 20 percent in five years is very possible.

Hence, in the Year of More, we must have every PLMC member reach One More for Jesus. Besides God-anointed tools like the Alpha Course and the outreach to the community, we want to equip our church members with skills to reach one more for Jesus. Besides general disciple-making skills and tools, we want to have targeted training, like making disciples of the elderly, young adults, youth, and children. We want to equip our members in the marketplace and in the schools with kingdom-building resources and training.

Notice that I did not use words like witnessing and evangelism. Those are good words, but they have often been reduced to converting someone to identify as a Christian or getting them to pray to receive Christ. To reach one more for Jesus is not to convert one more to Christianity. In the Bible, one more for Jesus is one more person surrendered to Christ, not just by saying the sinner's prayer but also living under the leadership of Jesus through the Holy Spirit. When a person lives in accordance to the Word of God under the direction of the Holy Spirit, they are disciples of Jesus. The more they live their lives led by the Spirit and instructed by the Word, the more mature they are as disciples of Jesus. Hence, our goal must not be one more convert to Christianity, but one more disciple of Jesus.

2. More Children in PLMC

When I think of being a disciple of Jesus, I am often reminded of Jesus' words in Matthew 18:1-4 (NIV),

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a little child to Him, and placed the child among them. And He said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

To be disciples of Jesus is to learn to be like children, willing to take the lowly position to serve. May there be more 'children' (disciples) in PLMC in 2026.

May there also be more children as defined by age in PLMC. The Bible records in Matthew 19:14 (NIV),

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

When Jesus said to let the children come to Him, He is telling us to open the pathway for children inside and outside the church to come to Him. Research in the USA has

shown that more than 80 percent of people who became followers of Jesus do so between the ages of 4 and 14. That means to have more spiritual children, we must do more to reach physical children for Jesus.

We thank God for the life-transforming ministry of the Sonshine Kids. They serve quietly every Saturday afternoon making an eternal difference in the children and parents. Will everyone here who has gone through the Sonshine Kids programme please stand? Will everyone who had served or are serving in Sonshine Kids today please stand? Thank you for your loving service to the kids and their families. Great is your reward in the Lord! As impactful as the ministry of the Sonshine Kids has been, we must do more. More of us need to avail ourselves to share in this ministry to reach even more children for Christ.

We must also do more to reach the students of Paya Lebar Methodist Girls' School. The relationship of the school and the church go back to the beginning. Many of our church members or their family members are alumni of the school. Your pastors are chaplains of the school. The chairperson and several members of the school's Board of Management come from the PLMC family. All these appointments are divine appointments, telling us that we as a church have a divine commission to reach the children in PLMGS for Jesus. We thank God for the WSCS ladies and others who serve by sharing devotions in the PLMGS Girls' Brigade and Christian Fellowship. We thank God for those who give of their time to follow up with the girls who committed their lives to Jesus following the Religious Emphasis Week. We constantly need more of you to step forward to serve in these and other opportunities to make a difference in the girls' lives. When God puts this burden in your heart to reach the students in PLMGS, please connect with Pastors Jacob or Joey, our lead chaplains in the primary and secondary schools respectively.

As we thank God for these and other outreach ministries that reach children for Jesus, let us not forget the children in our Silver Boxes. The co-workers, led by Carolyn Lee, Chia Shi Ying and Elsie Ng, serve the children every week, seeking to make them disciples of Jesus. The reality is that these children are in our care for only 90 minutes a week. If the children are to become disciples of Jesus, every parent must do their part in discipling their own children. Every parent must seek to live as a disciple of Jesus. Every parent must learn how to disciple children. A good way to learn to disciple children is to serve in the Children's Ministry. Another good way is to participate in training, taking courses, and attending retreats like Navigate that help parents better disciple their children.

It is estimated that there are half a million children in Singapore. If only one percent of them come to follow Jesus, imagine the impact it will make in the world. So, we must equip our children to bless their family and friends. We must teach our children

age-appropriate ways to disciple their family and friends to follow Jesus. Like the adults, we must envision our children to make one more disciple of Jesus in the next five years.

3. More Seniors in Ministry

At the other end of the age range are our seniors. In 2026, Singapore will attain super-aged status, with one in five persons aged 65 years old and older. We thank God for our ministry to the seniors. Their many activities not only connect seniors with one another but they also equip seniors to face some of the challenges that ageing brings. Most heartening is that some seniors are going on regular mission trips to bless the nations. They may have challenges physically, but that has not stopped them from serving others.

In 2026, let us have more seniors active in ministry. The ministry may look different from what was done when they were younger. Nevertheless, no senior who follows Jesus should merely retire and fade into oblivion. With the passing years, every senior must experience more of God's love, grow to love God more, and share God's love to more people. Let us serve our seniors so that the rest of their lives will be best of their lives.

4. More Spiritual Leaders

One of my mentors, Pastor Wayne Cordeiro, declared many years ago that 'tomorrow's church will not suffer from a lack of leaders. We will suffer from an overabundance of underdeveloped leaders.'

One of the trends in our world today is the increasing number of younger persons taking on huge responsibilities of leadership. How old was Bill Clinton when he became the President of the United States of America? 46 years old. Mark Zuckerberg started Facebook even before he became a young adult. When he was 23 years old, he became a billionaire. Singaporean Chew Shou Zi 周受资 was 38 years old when he became CEO of TikTok. This trend has entered the church with many churches seeking for younger persons to take on leadership roles in the church.

This is a good and healthy development which I support and encourage. Nevertheless, let me sound a word of caution. Younger persons often have wonderful ideals, great energy, and strong passions. Hence, they are often very active in serving in the church. That is great! But when their industry becomes the main reason they are appointed to leadership positions, we are doing them and the church a disservice. Let us ensure that those whom we bring into leadership are people who bear the fruit of the Spirit, not just fruits of the ministry.

At the same time, let us also recognise the need for wisdom in leadership, wisdom that can only come with the years. This is not to say that older persons will automatically make good leaders. I have seen how churches tend to appoint persons to leadership positions because they hold high positions in society. Though the talents and gifts that these individuals have in rising to the top of their industry are helpful in the church, the more critical need is for them to have a deep friendship with God.

We will need to raise more spiritually mature leaders as the church grows. We will need leaders of all ages. We will need more training for leaders of all ages. That is one of the primary goals of the Ezra Lay Institute. I am acutely aware that taking courses will not lead to developed leaders. But let us start somewhere. So, when the courses are offered, take them. Encourage others, especially emerging leaders, to take the courses and be equipped to lead God's church into the future.

Another course that will help develop leaders is the Companions in Christ (CIC) course. CIC is a 28-week spiritual formation program designed for gathered groups of Christ-followers to deepen their faith and relationship with God through Scripture, prayer, worship and ministry. If you have not taken this course, do so in the new year.

Also, plan to go on silent retreats. There are some spiritual disciplines that are indispensable for leaders. One of them is the discipline of silence and solitude. If you are a leader or desire to be a leader, you must schedule time for silence and solitude. This discipline is what marks you out as different from leadership in the marketplace. In the marketplace, you use your acumen, training, and talent to make good decisions for the organisation. In the church, you do use your abilities to arrive at good decisions. But because there is only one head of the body of Christ, good decisions are not good enough. As leaders in God's church, you need God's decisions. You receive God's decisions by learning to hear His instructions. You learn to hear by learning to be silent and alone with Him. That is how Jesus lived His life as He told us in John 5:19 (NIV),

Jesus gave them this answer: "Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by Himself; He can do only what He sees His Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does."

Jesus did only what He saw His Father doing. How was Jesus able to see what His Father is doing? The Gospel writer, Luke, tells us in Luke 5:16 (NIV),

But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

In the times alone with the Father, Jesus saw the handprints and footprints of God. That is why everything that Jesus did was always according to the will of God the

Father. If Jesus, the Second Person of the Trinity, needed to practise silence and solitude, we need to do so even more.

So, let us pray and work on discipling more spiritual leaders for the cells, the ministries and the church. May we see the formation of more spiritually mature leaders that will be needed if we expect the church to grow even more.

5. More Church Campers

To grow in spiritual maturity is my prayer for our church camp in 2026. In 2024, we had 830 people in the church camp. May we see even more people in the next church camp, which will be held from 14 to 17 June 2026. The theme of the church camp is Deeper and Wider. With the God-anointed speakers who have been invited to minister to us at the church camp, I believe that we will see God bless every camper with more of Himself. Will you plan to be at the church camp? Will you start praying to receive more of God and for God to have more of you at the church camp?

6. More Faith Like Ezekiel

With the lease renewal of the property at 5 Boundary Road, the Ezekiel Project Team was formed under the leadership of Soh Fong Jin to envision the future of PLMC. We expect that this process will yield a clear direction as to how and what to redevelop in our church premises to fulfil the vision God has for PLMC in the decades to come.

There are many aspects of 'more' in the Ezekiel Project which echoes many of the things I have talked about. These include more people in the church, more outreach to the community and the nations, and more ministry to children, youth and seniors.

With the impending redevelopment, we will probably need more financial resources to fund the redevelopment and the ministries thereafter. When it comes to funding the redevelopment, let me issue a challenge to you. Let us have more faith in the God who owns everything, that He will provide whatever finances we need. In other words, let us in faith look to raise the finances from the generous giving of God's people in PLMC. Let us not look to people to donate to have their names on a plaque in a room, or on the floor, or on the pews. Let us not approach wealthy individuals or foundations for funding. Let us approach our God to supply all that is needed through the generous giving of His people for the redevelopment.

When I think about the generous giving of God's people, I am reminded of Exodus 35:21 (NIV), where...

...everyone who was willing and whose heart moved them came and brought an offering to the Lord for the work on the tent of meeting, for all its service, and for the sacred garments.

What was amazing is what we read in the next chapter, in Exodus 36:6-7 (NIV),

Then Moses gave an order and they sent this word throughout the camp: "No man or woman is to make anything else as an offering for the sanctuary." And so the people were restrained from bringing more, because what they already had was more than enough to do all the work.

More than enough to do all the work. May your pastors have the joy of saying this in the redevelopment of our church premises. We may have fundraising projects, but these projects are not to get the funds we need, but to provide an opportunity for the church family to participate in the redevelopment. Let me be clear. This is not a directive from me. This is a challenge to you to consider in the presence of the Lord, to have more faith like Ezekiel in Jehovah Jireh, the God who provides.

7. More for Each One

The 'more' that I have been talking about are blessings primarily related to the church, the community, and the nations. There is more. There is a personal non-church related aspect of more that the Lord has for each person in the PLMC family.

The 'more' may be different for different people. What is the same is that it comes from the same generous God who is able to do more than you ask or think. But if you do not ask, you will not have. Each person must decide what is the 'more' that they will ask from God.

The 'more' could be more children or even just one child. I empathise with the pain of couples who long for but have not received the gift of a child. May 2026 be the year where they will receive their heart's desire.

The 'more' could be financial resources. Some struggle regularly to make ends meet. 2026 could be the year of breakthrough that will see them receive more finances into their lives. For others, God will bless with even more financial resources so that they can bless others more.

Some need more capacity or capability. They have stagnated in their career development. They are struggling with their schoolwork. They need more capability, more capacity to manage the challenges at work or in school. Some need more capacity and capability to face the situations in their families. They may be struggling

to care for their elderly family members, or their child with special needs, or a loved one who is ill, or with parenting, or with growing their marriage.

The 'more' may be more healing and restoration to wholeness in their body, mind, and spirit. Seek the Lord who has begun a healing and restoring work in you and ask for more that you may be whole and complete in Him.

Many may be in need for more of God's peace (*shalom*) in their lives. You may need more of God's peace amid the storms around and in you. Some of you need more joy in your lives. Somehow, the joy of the Lord seems elusive to you.

In some situations, less is more. The Year of More may see you spending less time at work and more time with your family. You may spend less time on social media and more time being present to the people you are with. You may spend less money on yourself and more in blessing others. You may expend less energy on anger and bitterness and more on loving and giving of yourself.

The 'more' that each one desires is not restricted to receiving good gifts of children, money, capacity, capability, peace, and joy. You may give more of yourself to serve the Lord in ministry. You may set aside more time to spend with God. You may take the initiative to care more for others including your cell members.

In the Year of More, ask the Lord in faith for more. Ask trusting in His wisdom, timing and love for you. When you receive His response, remember to give thanks and give glory to Him and Him alone.

8. More Presence of God

By God's grace and mercy, the Year of More will see more people disciplined in Christ, more people connected in community, more people in ministry, more ministries to those in need in the community and the nations, more resources released for ministry, more experiences of God's goodness in our lives. We can have all these 'more' in our lives and in the church and yet miss the most important 'more' we need in our life. This need is encapsulated in our second key Scripture for 2026, John 3:30 (NRSV), where John the Baptist declared,

[Jesus] must increase, but I must decrease.

By the end of 2026, these words must be on the lips of every PLMC member. God must increase in our lives, and we must decrease. The Year of More is not only about having more blessings; the Year of More is, first and foremost, about having more of God and God having more of us. When God has more of us, we will be more of a

blessing to the community and the nations. We will experience more of God's love, grace and power in and through our lives.

The desire of Moses for God's presence recorded in Exodus 33:15-16 (NIV) must be our desire too.

Then Moses said to Him, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. How will anyone know that You are pleased with me and with Your people unless You go with us? What else will distinguish me and Your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?"

Our goal in the Year of More is to host more of the presence of God in whatever we do and wherever we go. Without more of God's presence, all the 'more' we do will not distinguish us as the people of God. We must seek more of God's presence in our lives, in our families, in our cells, in our ministries, and in our church. Let us be a church known primarily as the church where God dwells.

IV. CONCLUSION

More of the presence of God in PLMC will lead us to have more togetherness with the Trinity Annual Conference. At a recent retreat of the TRAC Executive Board, our President, Rev Reuben Ng, shared his desire for TRAC. To my joy, his desire is to have more of God's presence in TRAC. What a confirmation of the Directions 2026 for PLMC, the Year of More of God's Presence!

I believe the last words of the Book of Ezekiel, Ezekiel 48:35b (NIV), summarise the vision for Directions 2026, the Year of More,

And the name of the city from that time on will be: The Lord is there.

May these words be said of PLMC by the end of 2026.

And the name of the church from that time on will be: The Lord is there.

Amen.

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam!
For the Greater Glory of God!

~ END ~