



# Becoming ALL THINGS TO ALL People

"I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some."—1 Corinthians 9:22b (ESV)



Our world is an incredibly complex and diverse place—249 countries and territories<sup>1</sup>; 7.6 billion people; more than 7,000 living languages spoken. To bring forth God’s Word to the nations, the United Bible Societies (UBS) Fellowship, comprising of 148 national Bible Societies, adopts the approach of the apostle Paul in becoming “all things to all people”, reaching out to various people groups at their respective levels. As part of the UBS Fellowship, The Bible Society of Singapore seeks to do likewise in its outreach efforts in our home country of Singapore.

## A multi-faceted society

Much like our world (though on a smaller scale), Singapore is an ethnically, culturally, socially and economically diverse country. Our “Little Red Dot” is home to people of various ethnicities with their own distinct cultures. The country is also one of the most educated in the world, a thriving centre for arts and culture and a world-class business hub.

Such diversity underscores the differences in the worldviews, interests and experiences of different peoples. With increasing exposure to these differences amid this multi-faceted environment, questions also arise as to how upcoming generations will be affected in their own worldviews and ways of life.

Therefore, sensitivity to various needs and challenges must be present in our efforts to make God’s Word known in our local community.

## A multi-faceted approach

To address such concerns more directly, The Bible Society of Singapore has been exploring new outreach avenues in recent years.

One such avenue is the use of the creative and performing arts to express Scriptural stories and truths. Such depictions help to stimulate the interest of both believers and non-believers in God’s Word. They also enable people of different ages, countries and cultures to engage with the Word in a more interactive and lively way.

Our most recognised programme in this avenue is the annual **Colours of the Bible** art competition and exhibition. It has been running for four years now in collaboration with the Embassy of Israel, and has seen participation from countries such as the Philippines, Myanmar and Israel.

In 2017, two new programmes were also launched. **DECLARE**—an arts worship project initiated by Arts Collective, a new ministry of the Bible Society, and supported by the Elijah7000 fellowship of fathers—united Christians of different nationalities and denominations in a corporate 72-hour-long reading and artistic expression of the whole Bible. **The Bible and Chinese Cultural Festival** showcased an expression of God’s Word through traditional Chinese painting and calligraphy and had an indelible impression on many.

“It’s the first time I have seen Chinese paintings and artworks depicting the Bible. I’m heartened that we can create more awareness about Christianity among the older, senior Mandarin-speaking citizens in a language they are familiar with.”

—Wee Bee Hua,  
a viewer of the Bible and Chinese  
Cultural Festival 2017

This year, God willing, we not only hope to continue running these events, but also to collaborate with internationally-acclaimed singer-songwriter Don Moen and his ministry, Worship in Action, for an upcoming Unity in Prayer Musical.



Stirring melodies from instruments like the shofar can be heard along with the reading of the Word at DECLARE.

“...sensitivity to various needs and challenges must be present in our efforts to make God's Word known...”

<sup>1</sup> According to the ISO 3166 country code list

Increasing efforts have also been made to foster inter-generational discipleship—a vital need today in the face of increasing confusion, scepticism and suspicion of authority claims. In the last two years, events such as the [NextGen seminars](#) and the [D6 Family Conference](#) have been well-received as participants learnt how to winsomely engage and mentor their children and youths in a variety of family and ministry contexts. Following their success, the inaugural [Chinese D6 Family Conference](#) was also held in 2017 for the benefit of Mandarin-speaking Christians and their families.

“ I thoroughly enjoyed [Brian Housman’s] sessions and his honest and open sharing of his personal experiences. The family topics are also varied and diverse.”

— Anonymous participant at the D6 Family Conference 2017

Alongside these endeavours through the arts and in bridging generational gaps, a variety of initiatives have also been taken up to meet the needs of other demographic groups. These include:

- Engaging the well-educated on contemporary issues with a Biblical perspective through the [ETHOS Institute for Public Christianity](#)
- Reaching out to the marginalised such as partnering with Prison Fellowship Singapore in the printing of special Free on the Inside Bibles for prison inmates
- Serving different ethnic groups such as printing the Peranakan Bible for Peranakans, and serving the Indian community through the new [Alliance of Indian Ministries](#) (see page 20)

### That some may be saved

As the apostle Paul sought to “become all things to all people”, he had one

clear goal in mind: “that by all means [he] might save some”. As the Bible Society follows in his footsteps, we too pursue the same goal: that people may know God through His life-giving and life-transforming Word. Our outreach efforts and their impact would not be possible without the help of our supporters and donors.

As we strive to do more this year, we pray that God would be pleased to raise up more labourers, that together we may reach even more people with His Word through various avenues, to the praise and glory of His grace!

“

...that people may know God through His life-giving and life-transforming Word.”



Members of the public joining in a discussion with religious and societal leaders at an ETHOS Conversation.