

来自天主教圣雅风索堂的Sowers教教组织义工(红色上衣者)星期天探访瑞那拉耶拿教会疗养院,与不同种族的住户一起庆祝元宵节。这场跨种族 宗教庆祝会也是住户两年来首次能在不受人数限制之下参与的大型农历新年庆祝活动。(张思庆辍)

(早报讯)约40名来自天主教圣雅风索堂的义工星期天(2月5日)与瑞那拉耶拿教会疗养院200多名住户一同 庆祝元宵。这也是疗养院住户两年来首次能在不受人数限制之下参与大型农历新年庆祝活动。

这场跨种族宗教农历新年庆祝会是由瑞那拉耶拿教会(Sree Narayana Mission),以及来自圣雅风索堂 (Church of St. Alphonsus,俗称Novena Church)的Sowers教牧组织义工联合举办。

活动主宾是内政部兼国家发展部政务部长费绍尔副教授。费绍尔致辞时说,活动再再显示,在多元种族和宗教 的新加坡,不同背景的人能一起庆祝彼此的重要节日,显示对彼此文化的欣赏和尊重。

约30名不同种族的住户聚集在疗养院餐厅观赏舞狮及歌唱表演,以及现场捞鱼生。舞狮团之后随同费绍尔探访 病房,向其他住户拜年。Sowers义工也为所有住户献上柑橘和红包。

43岁的林财兴因患肌肉萎缩症而半身不遂,须以轮椅代步。为减轻家人负担,他在2020年申请住进瑞那拉耶拿 教会疗养院。他也是疗养院民委员会主席。

林财兴忆述,2020年他刚搬入疗养院,也是农历新年期间,那时冠病疫情刚暴发,疗养院临时取消一场为住户 举办的宴席。接下来两年,疗养院严格遵循当时的社交人数限制,只能举办小型新春活动。

"今年过年气氛肯定更热烈,住户们都很开心,许多年长者顿时显得年轻几岁!"

Nursing Home hosts a cross-racial and religious lunar New Year celebration with over 200 residents celebrating the lantern festival.

Around 40 volunteers from the Catholic Church of St. Alphonsus joined over 200 residents of the Sree Narayana Mission nursing home to celebrate the festival on Sunday, February 5th. This is the first time in two years that the residents were able to participate in a large-scale Lunar New Year celebration without restrictions on the number of people.

The cross-racial and religious Lunar New Year celebration was organized by the Sree Narayana Mission and the Sowers ministry volunteers from the Church of St. Alphonsus (commonly known as Novena Church).

The guest of honor was Professor Faishal Ibrahim, Minister of Home Affairs and State Development. In his speech, Faishal Ibrahim said that the event again showed that people of different backgrounds in multi-racial and religious Singapore can celebrate each other's important holidays together, showing appreciation and respect for each other's cultures.

About 30 residents from different races gathered in the nursing home's restaurant to watch lion dance and singing performances, as well as live tossing of Yusheng (raw fish salad). The lion dance troupe then visited the wards with Faishal Ibrahim to greet other residents. The Sowers volunteers also presented mandarins and red envelopes to all residents.

Mr Eric Lim, 43, who suffers from muscular dystrophy and is half paralyzed, entered the Sree Narayana Mission nursing home in 2020 to relieve the burden on his family. He is also the chairman of the nursing home's resident committee.

He recounts that when he first moved into the nursing home in 2020, during the Lunar New Year, it was the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, and a banquet for residents was cancelled. Over the next two years, the nursing home strictly followed social distancing rules and could only hold small New Year celebrations.

"This year, with less restrictions, the atmosphere for the Lunar New Year celebration was livelier and all the residents were very happy. Many of the elderly residents seemed younger." he said.