

TMC NEWSLETTER

September — October 1985

MC(P) 22/1/85 ISSN 0217-5673

TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH 34 SERANGOON GARDEN WAY (1955)

An interview with REV. CHRISTOPHER SMITH



Rev. Christopher Smith and his wife, Eileen, who served in TMC from 1960 — 1962 and again from 1970 — 1975, were back in Singapore recently to help us celebrate the church's 29th anniversary. The following interview was conducted on Sept. 15, one day before Rev. and Mrs. Smith returned to England:

Q: What sort of changes did you notice in Trinity Methodist Church when you first returned?

A: Well, all sorts of things. Firstly, numerical growth and a much larger congregation. It used to be full on a Sunday morning before you added the extension at the back, but now you've got it full with the extra extension. The steps that used to come down inside have also gone. So there've been changes in the building and the number of people. One of the things that's moved me (is that) so many of the people we knew and loved and worked with are still here. There's also all (the) younger lot, whom I've never seen before, who are all part of this growing family. And the building across the road (i.e. the TEC) — we first dreamt of that about twelve years ago, and it's great to be able to see it actually taking shape. There've been all kinds of changes in this place — not just numbers, not just buildings — but also there are people who were once very hesitant about sharing their faith, who are ready and able to share it now. That's a great gift of God — His spirit sets us free and stops us from worrying about that we ought to be saying, and to share what Jesus means to us. We don't need special language for that — we just need to be ourselves.

Q: How did you feel when you first came back to Singapore and saw all the changes that have taken place?

A: I get lost in the city. I know the names of all the roads, but I stand on the corner and I don't know where I am. I was saying to somebody last week that I think this must be a very difficult place to grow up in. There are a lot of pressures and everything is going at a tremendous rate. But most of all, I've been into so many shopping complexes that are full of things, most of which we can do quite well without. And I think that God would want us to see that His blessings are not just material things, but that His blessing is that we should love Him and know that He loves us. A lot of people are worried about the economic recession. It's taken you by surprise, but in some ways, I'm a little bit glad. I don't mean I'm glad that people have lost their jobs — that's a terrible anxiety. But perhaps it's an opportunity where God can say to us again — 'Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit'.

Q: How does our attitude (toward economic recession) compare with the attitude in Britain?

- A:** In our country, 3½ million people are unemployed. There's this sense in many people that nobody cares that we haven't got any work to do. And it does matter because God meant us to be workers, and we are so much less when we've got nothing to do, when we can't make a contribution to the country.
- Q:** Could you tell us a bit about the church in which you're serving at present?
- A:** We're serving now in a church at St Alban's, which is an ancient city. It's a small city by your standards, only about 25 miles north of London. Quite a lot of people live there and work in London, particularly the higher executives. St Alban was the first Christian martyr in Britain, (and the city) has been a place of pilgrimage for hundreds of years. We have pretty good church relationships there — Methodists, Anglicans, Presbyterians work very closely together. We've been very happy there. It's a small church — we have only about 300 members. But it's a very encouraging church. We've got a good cross-section of ages, except the 18-25s. (This is because) a lot of them go away to college, and when they work, they don't come back to St Alban's, they go somewhere else. At the moment, our youth group's at a rather low ebb, so pray for us there. We've got worshipping in our church in England now about 30 - 40 West Indian families (who have) come and settled in Britain. They worship with us very faithfully. The older ones have been slow to take positions of leadership, but we're hoping to work with the younger ones so that they come in and become leaders as well.
- Q:** You said during the sermon (at Sunday Worship Service on Sept 15) that coming back here has been 'a refreshing change'. In what way has it been refreshing?
- A:** It's a refreshing visit because it's lovely to see that seeds have grown, just as God always promised they would. It's also an encouragement to be able to go back and say to Christian people in England: 'You are part of a church that is growing, not dying. And if here it grows very slowly, over there (in Singapore) it grows very fast.' And it's important to be able to say that, because when the church was very small here (in Singapore), over there (in Britain) it was strong and growing. And so we're always helping one another.

PULPIT CALENDAR

CHURCH THEME : "NOT BY MIGHT, NOR BY POWER, BUT BY MY SPIRIT."

Zech. 4 : 6

SUB-THEME : ROMANCE OF RUTH (September 1 to October 20, 1985)

| | | | |
|----------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| OCTOBER | 6 | Ruth & Boaz : A Romance Blossomed | Ruth 3 : 1 - 18 |
| | 13 | (LAITY SUNDAY) | |
| | 20 | Ruth & Boaz : Invitation to Wedding | Ruth 4 : 1 - 22 |

SUB-THEME : CHURCHES IN CRISIS

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| OCTOBER | 27 | Message to Ephesus | Revelation 2 : 1 - 7 |
| NOVEMBER | 3 | Message to Smyrna | Revelation 2 : 8 - 11 |
| | 10 | MEMBERSHIP SUNDAY | |
| | 17 | Message to Pergamum | Revelation 2 : 12 - 17 |
| | 24 | Message to Thyatira | Revelation 2 : 18 - 29 |
| DECEMBER | 1 | Message to Sardis | Revelation 3 : 1 - 6 |
| | 8 | Message to Philadelphia | Revelation 3 : 7 - 13 |
| | 15 | Message to Laodicea | Revelation 3 : 14 - 22 |

SUB-THEME : CHARACTERS IN CHRISTMAS

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| DECEMBER | 22 | Getting Ready For The Christ-Child | Luke 1 : 26 - 38 |
| | 25 | Prince Of Peace (CHRISTMAS DAY) | Isaiah 9 : 2 - 7 |
| | 29 | JESUS: SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD | Luke 2 : 21 - 32 |
| | 32 | Promise To Live By | Psalms 128 : 1 - 6 |

METHODIST YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

| | | |
|----------|----|---|
| OCTOBER | 5 | EVANGELISM AWARENESS CONFERENCE |
| OCTOBER | 12 | BIBLE STUDY (CELL GROUP) |
| OCTOBER | 19 | SHARING |
| OCTOBER | 26 | OPERATION CLEAN-UP |
| NOVEMBER | 2 | CELL GROUP |
| NOVEMBER | 9 | SPEAKER SESSION "EFFECTIVE PRAYER" |
| NOVEMBER | 16 | PRACTICAL SESSION OF PRAYER AND PRAISE |
| NOVEMBER | 23 | INTER-CELL GROUP GAMES |
| NOVEMBER | 30 | CELL GROUP |
| DECEMBER | 7 | SPEAKER SESSION "MY GIFTS TO JESUS" |
| DECEMBER | 14 | OVERSEAS TRIP TO KUSU ISLAND |
| DECEMBER | 24 | CAROLLING |
| DECEMBER | 28 | CELL GROUP OUTING |

METHODIST ADULT FELLOWSHIP MEETINGS

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| DYNAMICS OF A FAMILY | 08 OCTOBER '85 |
| TEAMWORK FOR GOD | 22 OCTOBER '85 |
| FRIENDSHIP | 12 NOVEMBER |
| BEING AN ENCOURAGER | 26 NOVEMBER '85 |
| BEING AN ENCOURAGER | 10 DECEMBER '85 |
| CAROL NIGHT | 24 DECEMBER '85 |
| FRIENDSHIP WITH JESUS | 14 JANUARY '86 |
| BEING JESUS FOLLOWER | 28 JANUARY '86 |
| CHINESE NEW YEAR FELLOWSHIP | 11 FEBRUARY |
| "SPEAKER PROGRAM" | 25 FEBRUARY |
| FATHER AND SONS | 11 MARCH '86 |
| PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS | 25 MARCH '86 |
| MEMBERS OF CHRIST'S BODY | 08 APRIL '86 |
| RELATING ON LIFE'S WAY | 22 APRIL '86 |
| SEXUAL TEMPTATION | 13 MAY '86 |
| NEIGHBOURLINESS | 27 MAY '86 |
| "SPEAKER PROGRAM" | 10 JUNE '86 |

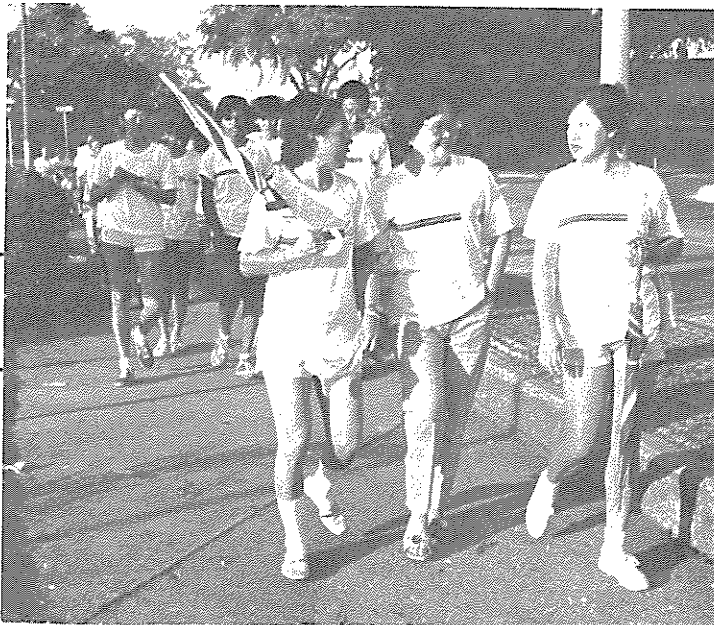
P-H-O-T-O-N-E-W-S



We're ready for the take-off!

TMC WALKATHON '85

Our Church Walkathon was held on 7 July 1985. The aim of the Walkathon was to raise funds for the Trinity Educational Centre project. A total sum of \$16,000 was raised and, as you can see, the participants had a pretty enjoyable time.....



These umbrellas should keep us safe from any lurking wild animals in the vicinity



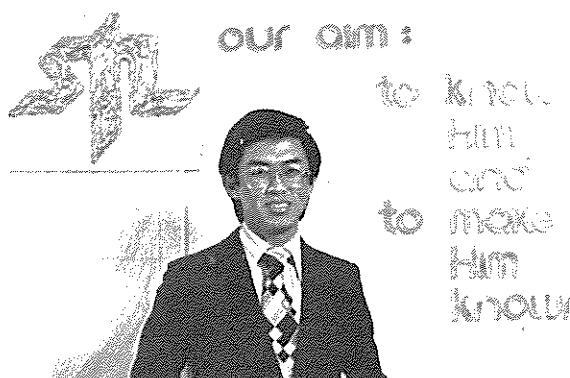
We can still walk a whole lot more!



Just a bit of rest by the roadside.....



The 'pot of gold' at the end of that long walk



Keeping up with SEAH SIOW TONG

Siow Tong left Singapore in 1983 to join Operation Mobilisation (OM) in their mission work. He returned in July this year and a group of us met him to find out more about his mission stay in the U.K.

Q: What kind of work were you engaged in over the past three years?

S.T.: I was in Zaventem, which is a small village on the outskirts of Brussels, for two years. I was working in the finance section which coordinates the finances of the 35 OM offices. You could say that I was doing a great deal of administrative work.

Q: How did you spend your third year?

S.T.: I was with "Send the Light" (STL) which is actually the literary arm of OM: STL publishes and distributes Christian literature to OM ships and land offices.

Q: Did you go on any mission trips?

S.T.: Yes, I joined the OM's "summer campaigns". (Every summer, people from all walks of life join these campaigns to help spread the Word of God.) We went around in Ford transit vans, distributing tracts and evangelising through songs, drama etc. I found these campaigns very exciting.

Q: Are Britons receptive to the Gospel?

S.T.: Not really. The English are very sceptical. Cultists are reaching out to more people than the evangelicals. People are turning more to cults and to sorcery, but not to Christianity. If you say that you're a Christian, people would think that you're a loony. It's more

'fashionable' to be a Hare Krishna follower or a Jehovah's witness in England.

Q: What is the condition of the institutional church there?

S.T.: I think that the institutional church is dying. The Church is very weak and many churches have been bought over by Hindus and Muslims.

Q: What are you most impressed with in the ministry over there?

S.T.: The young people. I am impressed and touched by their enthusiasm and their love for God. The young people in the ministry have very strong convictions and are going all out for God.

Q: Now that you're back, what are your future plans?

S.T.: I don't really have any plans as yet; I am still thinking and praying.

Q: How would you sum up your feelings after these three years abroad?

S.T.: Well, the world is bigger than I thought. My horizons have expanded.... I realise that there are many needs in the world and that wherever we are, we are missionaries for God. The cost of serving God is great, but the rewards are far greater, and I have no regrets.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHURCH RETREAT

PLAN TO ATTEND OUR CHURCH RETREAT

Date : NOVEMBER 11, 1985 (Deepavali Holiday)

Place : Metropolitan YMCA
60 Stevens Road
Singapore 1025

Time : 8.15 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.
(Bus leaving church at 8.15 a.m. sharp)

Speaker : Mr Chan Chong Hiok

Cost : \$8.00 per person

Closing

Date : 31st October 1985

MAY WE INVITE YOU TO SIGN UP FOR THE RETREAT
BY FILLING THE FORM BELOW OR TELEPHONE THE
CHURCH OFFICE 2824443.

Come for a time of sharing, fellowship, planning and
prayer. More information in our Church Bulletin.

CHURCH RETREAT REGISTRATION FORM

Name : _____

Address : _____

Telephone : _____

Please tick against the group which you would like
to join for discussion and sharing:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> EVANGELISM | <input type="checkbox"/> CHRISTIAN EDUCATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MISSIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> WORSHIP & MUSIC |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL CONCERNS | <input type="checkbox"/> MEMBERSHIP |

INFANT & CHILD BAPTISM

Pastor will administer infant/child Baptism in
December 1985. Parents who desire to have their
infant/child baptised should register with Pastor. Please
fill the attached form and return to Pastor immediately.

Name of Parents _____ Father's

_____ Mother's

Name of Child _____

Date of Birth _____

Birth Certificate No. _____

Address _____

Telephone No. _____

CENTENNIAL CHRISTMAS CARDS

Share your Christmas Joy. Celebrate the Centennial
Year. Send your Christmas Greetings with our
Centennial Christmas Cards.

Price : \$7.00 per packet
(assortment of 12 colourful cards)

Available in Church
PROCEEDS WILL GO TO OUR TRINITY EDUCATIONAL
CENTRE FUNDS.

TRINITY EDUCATIONAL CENTRE

WE STILL NEED S\$600,000/-

MAKE THIS A PROJECT WHERE EVERY MEMBER
SUPPORTS THROUGH

- Prayer
- Financial Gift
- Interest-free Loan

FAMILY NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS

to Lee Park Ming and Darlene
on the birth of their son
Ian Andrew Shang Jin on
12 August, 1985.



to Rev. Daniel Koh and
Dianna on the birth of
their daughter Shihui on
14 September, 1985.

JOKES ASIDE.....

A young girl went up to her pastor and confessed that she feared that she had incurred the sin of vanity. "What makes you think that?" asked the minister. "Because every morning when I look into the mirror I think how beautiful I am."

"Never fear, my girl," was the reassuring reply. "That isn't a sin, it's only a mistake."

A minister wound up the services one morning by saying, "Next Sunday I am going to preach on the subject of liars. And in this connection, as a preparation for my discourse, I should like you all to read the 17th chapter of Mark." On the following Sunday, the preacher rose to begin, and said, "Now, then, all of you who have done as I requested and read the 17th chapter of Mark,

please raise your hands." Nearly every hand in the congregation went up. Then said the preacher, "You are the people I want to talk to. There is no 17th chapter of Mark!"

"I never go to church," boasted a wandering member. "Perhaps you have noticed that?"

"Yes, I have noticed that," said his pastor.

"Well, the reason that I don't go there is that there are so many hypocrites there."

"Oh, don't let that keep you away," replied the pastor, smiling blandly. "There is always room for one more, you know."