

# Saltshaker

Trinity Methodist Church • April 2003

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People not Places

Where is TMC?

TMC Net

Trinity Family Carnival

Deconsecration & Groundbreaking Ceremony

Movement, Mission and Ministry in Acts

The First Ordination Service in Cambodia

Easter Programme





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## People not Places

The order of service for the blessing of a home states: "It is not the wood and the stone that make a home, but the people who live within - the way they live together, the way they live with their neighbours, and the way they live with God..." All of us have a physical place of dwelling, be it of wood, stone or concrete. Yet, it is the people and the relationships they build with one another that make it a home. That's what makes a house a 'home'.

From the biblical perspective, there is another home we belong to: the church - the body of Christ - the family of God. The way the people, who gather in Jesus' name worship God and relate to each other, will determine the sort of home we call 'church'. Perhaps this is where we need to do some serious thinking: do we view our church purely as the physical building situated on a particular piece of land - and when that structure is disturbed, we are disturbed? Or, are we looking around at our brothers and sisters-in-Christ as the ones who make up the church?

A church can exist with or without a tangible building, but it cannot hope to exist without interaction, fellowship, support and ministry among her members. Imagine a church with a building but without members. Would there be life? The life of the church is not tied to the physical structure but to the lives of all the individuals within that faith community.

We grow together as a church family.

We move together as a church family.

We struggle together as a church family.

We rejoice together as a church family.

During this period of relocation, it is vital for us to clearly understand and be convinced of this. We should regard one another as significant members of the body of Christ. We belong, each one of us. Wherever God may place us, or displace us, whether we have a physical building or not, we are still together - a family, worshiping together... caring together...

Rev Foo Fook Heng



# Faithful and Persistent Mr Wong Yow Chuen

by Tan Kiem Kiook

Honorary Stewards are those who are recognised for giving faithful service to the church and have reached the age of 70. It is an honorary role and they do not have a vote, but it is a role which Mr Lawrence Pang and Mr Wong Yow Chuen played with commitment and seriousness. More often than not, they would attend the monthly meetings, though sometimes they would leave before the end if the meeting dragged on past 10.30pm. I appreciated their presence, simply because they were there. Hence it is with sadness that we note the passing of Mr Wong in December 2002. He had served our community well, and is best remembered for having not only started the Seniors Fellowship and Glee Club, but continuing them over many years.



When I asked several members about Mr Wong, the description that came up most often was that he was "persistent". Us young ones are sometimes quick to start something, but we soon lose interest; we become bored easily. Mr Wong was thus a gentleman of the old school, who persevered in ministry. Each month, he would organise the Serangoon parish meeting: he would approach a host, retrace the way to that person's home, give members of the parish a lift to the host and bring them home at the end of the evening. We remember that regular announcement in the worship bulletin "Any one who needs transport can call Mr Wong Yow Chuen...". Giving people a lift may seem like a small task, but Mr Wong saw it as his service to others, and it was appreciated.

After his wife Ruth suffered a stroke, and had to be put into a nursing home, Mr Wong visited her every single day for 14 years.

*After his wife Ruth suffered a stroke, and had to be put into a nursing home, Mr Wong visited her every single day for 14 years. He would bring her a rose.*



He would bring her a rose. He was a man of his word, and loved her for better or worse, until she passed away in July, just five months before Mr Wong himself joined her with the Lord.

Although a quiet man and somewhat introverted, he started the Glee Club because he knew that the older members enjoyed singing the old time songs like "Silver Threads Among the Gold" and "Red River Valley". This was held once a quarter, on a Sunday evening and started with a pot luck dinner and then a rousing time of singing the old songs. It was a time for them to remember the good ol' days. Mr Wong was happy to have facilitated the activity.

In our world today, it is the bold, bright and the latest fashion which is admired. Mr Wong showed the values of God's world - steadfast persistence, keeping his promises, doing good unto others. We should not only admire these qualities in men like him, but also emulate him.





by Patsy Ong

## Where is TMC?

January was a confusing month for TMC-goers. After the Watchnight service in the cosy old sanctuary at Serangoon Garden Way, a whole community was transplanted – albeit temporarily – to Lorong Ah Soo where previously-quiet car parks and coffee shops woke up to new Sunday morning activity. Signs of an identity crisis surfaced repeatedly during those first few weeks of transition: from the reference made (during the first service at PLMGPS auditorium) to the jumble sale "at TMC", to reports and emergency meetings on "TMC redevelopment".



Saltshaker decided to tackle the issue head-on, and so the question "Where is TMC?" was casually posed to some members during the second week of January, to get a sense of how severe this identity crisis was. Below were some responses:

*A: "I don't know the number ... the street number."*  
(Our youngest respondent: TMC = an address?)

*A: "Here!...Of course!"*  
(Affirmative, with a look of pity at the interviewer who asked such a simple question)

*A: "What is TMC? How do you define TMC?"*  
(The non-committal scientific / General Paper essay approach)

*A: "It's here now."*  
(Cautious, measured tone)

*A: "You mean the actual building?... er... (pause) this is TMC, what..."*  
(Bewilderment giving way to light)

*A: "34, Serangoon Garden Way"*  
(With conviction)

*A: "I don't know... PLMGPS, Lorong Ah Soo?... it's here now right?"*  
(The confused... who was then asked the question below)

*Q: Where is the church office?*  
*A: 'ah...that I don't know...'*





So where exactly is this elusive entity called "TMC"? Perhaps a good clue can be found on the chartered buses that ferry people each Sunday to service at PLMGPS. Never mind that the sides of the buses bear a different identity (eg. Maris Stella High) because on Sundays, a huge sign saying "TMC" is displayed prominently at the front as it trundles around Serangoon picking up church-goers.



Another clue about our identity can be gleaned from 1 Peter 2:4-5 which says, 'As you come to him, the living stone... you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.'

TMC then, is made of "stones" - not dead bricks and cement, but people who live because Christ lives and who are built into a "spiritual house". What makes a church is the bonds built together as people draw near to God through Christ.



The reference to "offering spiritual sacrifices" in the verse may seem rather intangible at first glance. But we see that in fact, each Sunday brings groups of people who cheerfully move chairs; equipment; hymnals; and prepare communion cups; all unto the Lord. Each Sunday, children troop to the Hannah block opposite the auditorium and Children's Ministry teachers and helpers willingly share their time and faith with these young ones; each Sunday, TMC-ers 'encourage one

another' as they meet together (Hebrews 11-24-25); one Sunday saw enthusiastic groups go out laden with mandarin oranges and God's love to the residents around Lorong Ah Soo.

So, where is "TMC"? We are TMC. TMC is where we worship God, and spend time with people in service and ministry.

Psalm 127 declares: 'Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labour in vain'. We need to seek God's guidance and blessing on the redevelopment of the church building in Serangoon Garden Way - but more crucially, we need to seek Him over our development as a house of God - as "TMC".



by Ellen Seah

# TMC Net

Your walk with God should never be lonesome, because God meant for us to be part of a community! On this journey of spiritual growth, our Christian friends and small group members play an important role of praying and encouraging us.

To help each of us find our home in TMC, a new network - TMC Net - is coming into form. To be launched in middle of this year, this plan is to reach out to more TMC members to join existing small groups or form new ones.

Many of us are serving in one way or another, in the choir and music ministries, teaching children and youth, planning for missions, cooking, ushering, or organising activities for others. Still, there are many more whose activity does not go beyond attending Sunday service. And, in a fairly big church like TMC, it is not difficult to get lost in the midst.

Hence, the TMC Net hopes to create an avenue for us to know one another better and establish closer relationships. Look out for TMC Net!





# OUR diaries

23 Feb

Being in charge of the Jumble Sale, my job is to collect the items. So, I prepared an announcement for the bulletin. After the announcement was made, people started to give things and I had the problem of storage. Even though I was truly encouraged by the efforts of the church members, I started worrying because I couldn't keep everything at my place. Thankfully, Brian offered to store some the items at his house. Winnie Ng

2 March

Had a very stressful week. My main task this week was to contact all the Methodist churches and seek their approval to visit them to publicise the carnival and sell coupons. I felt discouraged as out of the 16 TRAC churches, only 7 approved our visit.

Anyway, all went well today. It was really encouraging to see all our youths waking up so early to travel to their assigned churches. Thanks be to God as our total collection from all the churches we visited (including TMC) is about \$4,150. Brian

2 March

Today the youth groups went to different churches to publicise the basketball tournament and family carnival. My group went to Aldersgate and Faith.

We met at 8am at Commonwealth MRT with 1,000 flyers to give out, and sell coupons. When I just reached the station, I received calls from a few of my members telling me that they couldn't come. So we were 6 people, with 2 churches to visit, and 1,000 people to reach out to. Things didn't look good to the crowd. He then paid \$10 to buy a ticket, even though he knew he couldn't come.

As the first service ended, work started. We gave out the flyers to many people; most of did not seem very interested in the carnival at all. Of course, there were also a few who were responsive and bought tickets immediately. After a good 45 minutes work, we collected \$150. At the end of the day, our group collected about \$300. God is Good. Benjamin Ho

21 March

These past 2 weeks has been an extremely taxing one with meetings almost everyday and new problems arising all the time. Nevertheless, I thank God for giving me the strength to persevere despite my tight schedule. Many problems arose, like the lack of power supply, to the location of stalls to the lack of teams participating in the basketball tournament. However, God provided a way out of these obstacles. When there is a lack of power supply, He provided enough power sockets and cables, and He brought enough teams to participate in the tournament. Indeed, planning for a carnival and basketball tournament together is no easy feat but I thank God for His Grace.

Brian





# Trinity Family Carnival

by David Gwee

If you missed the Trinity Family Carnival at Serangoon Garden Secondary School on 22 March, then you missed a lot of fun! Organised by the Youth Ministry, the carnival featured everything that most fairs have plus the added attraction of the 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament.

Food stalls ran the gamut of local favourites like laksa, mee siam, fried rice and mee goreng to Western-style hot dogs, popcorn and candy floss, to the exotic and yummy Turkish ice cream which was very popular.

One could also easily get bitten by the shopping bug at the jumble sale and jute bags stall, and children of all ages tried their hand at the fishing, target, slam dunk and hangman stalls. Those wanting to immortalise themselves (but on paper rather than stone) could get their caricature done for free. Many amusing music dedications were heard over the sound system.

However, the highlight of the carnival had to be the 3 on 3 basketball tournament. Thirty teams played round-robin, and then knockout stages under the blazing sun. Some budding Michael Jordans and Yao Mings contributed to a visually exciting spectacle. Our very own TMC team comprising Pastor Foo, Lai Kai Ming, and Aaron Wilfred performed creditably and managed to progress to the knockout stages.

The takings of the day went towards the Church Redevelopment Fund. At the end of the day, all that is left to do is to say "Well done!" to all those who participated and helped, especially the Youth Ministry.





# Deconsecration of the TEC and Groundbreaking Ceremony for the TMC Redevelopment, 8 January 2003, 8pm

On 17 July 1988, then Bishop Ho Chee Sin consecrated the Trinity Education Centre to the glory of God. As TEC has to be demolished to make way for the redevelopment, it was necessary for Bishop Dr Robert Solomon, the current Bishop, to deconsecrate the building. He did this symbolically by taking down the plaque and handing it to Mr P Sathiasingam, Lay Leader and Chairman of the Redevelopment Committee. Having done this, Bishop Solomon then prepared the way for the new buildings by breaking the ground at the car park with a mechanical earth digger.



*"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven... a time to plant and a time to uproot... a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance..." Ecclesiastes 3:1 - 4)*

*When does banal, everyday reality suddenly transform into memory? Perhaps when you are attending the service for the Deconsecration of the TEC and Groundbreaking for the TMC Redevelopment project.*

*Perhaps when, like me, you are sitting in the sanctuary on the night of 8 January, together with a small number of church members and others involved in one way or another-the contractors and architects responsible for the redevelopment among others-taking part in the service, and listening to the addresses given by our church leaders and guests like the Bishop Dr Robert Solomon and TRAC President Rev Dr Isaac Lim. Perhaps, you too were suddenly hit by an acute sense of loss struck by the sudden (and late!) realisation that the TEC, so familiar and so essential to the life of TMC, would exist only in your memory.*

*As the wise words of the writer of Ecclesiastes reminds us, "there is a time for everything". Indeed, the service was a time to remember and to give thanks for God's abiding faithfulness to us through the years. Waves of sentimentality aside, the TEC*

*was definitely much more than a building. It served as a hub of daily TMC life. It was a place where children and youths received spiritual nurturing, where all came to be trained in the Word and in discipline, where friendships were forged and blossomed, where God's people laughed, cried, worshipped, and shared meals together. However, as the verse in Ecclesiastes also states, "there is a time to tear down and a time to build". Just as the construction and existence of the TEC for the past 15 years attests to the goodness and providence of God, the tearing down of the TEC now and the ensuing redevelopment signifies what Rev Dr Lim calls yet another "exercise of faith" for us.*

Amanda Yong





# CHRISTMAS 2002

by Amanda Yong



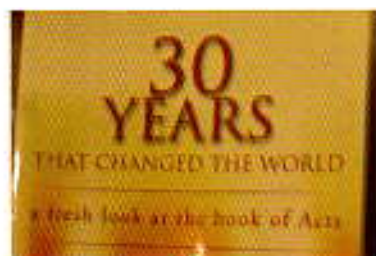
Some members of TMC celebrated last Christmas with a twist. For the first time, the Witness and Evangelism Committee encouraged members and friends to organise a "Christmas-At-Home" party. As part of this programme, 10 small groups and members held parties with the express purpose of reaching out to their non-Christian friends and relatives. Carollers, consisting of groups of youths and the Psalm 100 Choral Group visited these parties, and personal testimonies were shared. This was an excellent opportunity for some small groups to take their baby steps into what was a first-time experience for some evangelism.

The two-fold evangelistic thrust of the Christmas programme was reinforced by an evangelistic play during the Christmas Eve service. Inspired by the popular game show "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?" the play presented the gospel message in an innovative way, challenging the congregation with the question: "Is That Your Final Answer?" Two non-Christians answered that call, praying to receive Christ, living testimonies of God's power to convict and move hearts.





# Movement, Missions and Ministry in Acts



*The Book of Acts can also be entitled "The Acts of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles and the Church". Covering a span of about 30 years from Jesus' ascension to Paul's imprisonment in Rome, it is written by Doctor Luke, and the only Gentile author of a book of the bible. Although we can see clearly the ministry of the Holy Spirit in initiating (1:8), directing (8:29) and commissioning (13:4) the early believers; the church also met opposition from Jewish leaders in Jerusalem (Chaps 3 - 5), political leaders (12:1) and business people (16:19). Over 2 weeks, Mr Kua Wee Seng brought this book alive to us, as well as shared pertinent examples from his own life and ministry. Likewise, TMC could follow the same principles in outreach and ministry.*

## The Movement of the Good News from Jerusalem to Rome in 6 stages:-

### 1) In Jerusalem (1:1 - 6:7)

The Holy Spirit came upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost, Peter preached and thousands believed. These first believers devoted themselves to the apostles teaching, fellowship, breaking bread and prayer. Those who heard came from all over the world, and would have brought the gospel back to their homes in Cyrene (North Africa), Cappadocia (Syria) and Asia Minor (Turkey today). 6:7: "So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly..."

### 2) In Judea and Samaria (6:8 - 9:31)

The church rapidly grew out of Jerusalem through the ministry of the Seven deacons, e.g. Philip left Jerusalem and went to Samaria, and was also led to preach to an Ethiopian on the Gaza road. Because Philip spoke Greek, the lingua franca of the day, he was able to preach in these different situations. 9:31: "Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord."

### 3) To the Gentile God-fearers (9:31 - 12:24)

At this stage, the gospel crossed another cultural line when Peter went to the home of Cornelius, a centurion of the Italian Regiment. Cornelius was a God-fearer, i.e. he was not a Jew. Peter had a vision where God clearly told him that he could eat all foods, and thus was convinced that he could have table fellowship with Gentiles.

12:24 "But the word of God continued to increase and spread."

### 4) To Gentiles in Asia Minor (12:24 - 16:5)

The Holy Spirit commissioned Barnabas and Saul (13:2) for His work and, over a couple of journeys, they went to Cyprus, Asia Minor and Greece. A key event during this time was the Jerusalem Council (15) when all the leaders of the church got together and affirmed that Gentiles did not need to be circumcised in order to be Christians.

16:5 "So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers."

### 5) Expansion to the European continent (16:5 - 19:20)

Here, the missionaries used a variety of methods to spread the Word: they preached to Jews in synagogues (17:2), and to Gentiles in the marketplace (17:17). Paul spent extended times in Corinth a major port, and Ephesus the most important city in western Asia Minor. His team mates here were Aquilla and Priscilla, and Silas and Timothy. As a result, "all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord."

19:20 "In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power."

### 6) Paul in Rome, the capital of the Roman empire (19:20 - 28:31)

The Kingdom of God, which started as a small Jewish sect in Jerusalem has now reached the Rome. Although Paul is under house arrest, the book ends on a positive and triumphant note: "Boldly and without hindrance he [Paul] preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ."

28:31



## In our outreach, TMC adopts some of these principles:

### 1. Outreach to our neighbours

We made our presence known in the neighbourhood by giving mandarin oranges to homes in the immediate vicinity of PLMGPS and inviting them to come and join us.



### 2. Hosting meetings at home and in church (Christmas at home and Christmas Eve service)

At Christmas, we invited our friends and family to join our Christmas at home parties and Christmas Eve worship service.



### 3. Cross-cultural Outreach

As a church we have committed ourselves to reach the Khmers in Cambodia. This is done in 2 ways by:

- sending teams there
- supporting and equipping the Cambodian church.

by Andy Chew

## The First Ordination Service of Methodists in Cambodia

17 January 2003 has passed but to many Methodists in Cambodia, it will be a date to remember. This was the day of the first ordination service of Methodists in Cambodia and it was held at the Methodist Centre in Phnom Penh. More than 500 people, including Methodists from different parts of the world witnessed 10 Khmer pastors ordained by the Bishops representing four Methodist conferences: Singapore; Korea; United Methodist Church (USA, Switzerland, France) and The World Federation of Chinese Methodist Churches.



One of the new pastors ordained was Rev Lun Sophy, who was here in Singapore from June 1997 to May 2001 to do his Bachelor in Theology at Trinity Theological College. He was supported by TMC and worshipped with us during that time.

Ever since his return to his homeland, Sophy has been involved with different responsibilities entrusted to him. He is currently the Pastor-in-Charge of Toul Kork Methodist Church situated at the Methodist Centre. He is also the co-ordinator for all the sister churches in Phnom Penh and is a part-time lecturer at the Methodist Bible School.

Sophy sends his regards to every one in TMC and thanks us for the support and prayers given to him during his time here. He asks for continued prayer, especially for protection in his travels around the country, and from the schemes of the evil one.

God is indeed working mightily in Cambodia, and the church is growing. That weekend also saw the baptism of about 100 Khmer Christians. Let us all continue to pray for these people that more will come to know our Lord Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and through the lives of Christians there.





# Easter Programme

17 April

Maundy Thursday

- Holy Communion Service, 8 pm in the School Hall



*"The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed took bread and when he had given thanks he broke it saying 'This is my body which is for you; do this in remembrance of me...'"*

On Maundy Thursday we recall the Passover meal Jesus ate with his disciples. This meal takes on special significance for the church, for it is when Christ instituted what we now call Holy Communion.

18 April

Good Friday Service

- Combined Service School Hall at 10.00 am

*"With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last."*

We gather as a church to remember the passion and suffering of our Lord Jesus, who died on the cross to save us from our sins. A cross draped with black cloth will be displayed to remind us of our sins which He bore and the dark moments that He went through.

- Good Friday Children's Workshop, 10.00am in Hannah Block
- Corporate Prayer & Fasting, 11.30am - 12.30pm at the School Hall  
*"My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."*  
Prayer and fasting are acts of self-denial that are borne out of a deep desire for God. Our church needs prayer for her ministry and missions; and we need to pray and seek God together. In view of the world situation, Christians have a great responsibility to pray, for we are the ones that can come before God with confidence because of the Cross. The Children's Ministry will have a programme and simple lunch at this time.

20 April

Easter Sunday

*"On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus..."*

- Sunrise Service with "Flowering of the Cross"  
7.00 am in the School Field

- Celebration Breakfast for Everyone!  
8.00 am in the School Canteen



*"And while they still did not believe it, because of joy and amazement, he asked them, 'Do you have anything here to eat?'"*

Celebration often comes with a feast. This will be a time when the whole church community can gather for food and fellowship. There will be programmes for adults and children. Come and join us! For catering purposes, please call the church office at 6282 4443 or email churchoffice@tmc.org.sg if you wish to attend.

- Worship Service with Easter Play and "Flowering of the Cross"  
10.00 am in the School Hall



The "Flowering of the Cross" is a striking and beautiful way of showing that new life emerges from the death on Good Friday. Everyone is invited to put a flower onto a frame of a cross as an indication of their love for God. In addition, we encourage you to write a special commitment to God, which, with His strength, you pray you will fulfil in the coming year.

## TMC Redevelopment Fund

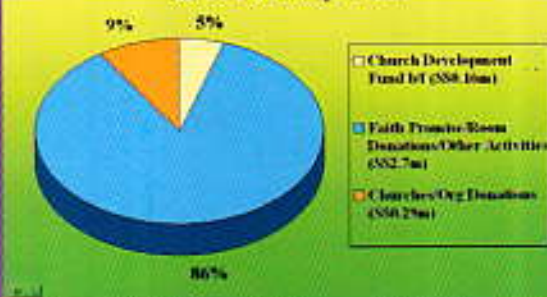
### Status of Funds

as of February 2003



### Breakdown of Funds Raised (\$53.2million)

as of February 2003



## TMC 47th Anniversary Golf Tournament

In support of the TMC Redevelopment Project

Date: Friday 12 September 2003.

Venue: Orchid Country Club.

Tee-off Time: 12 noon

Fee: \$300 per player for game, prizes & buffet dinner.

Donation Flight: \$1,600.

Hole in one - cash prize of \$80,000.

For Registration Forms, please the office at 6282 4443, or email churchoffice@tmc.org.sg

There will also be a 47th Anniversary Golf Tournament magazine.

Advertisements may be made as follow:-

- Full page \$1,000.
- Half Page \$500.
- Quarter page \$300.

