

Trinity Methodist Church
M.I.T.A.(P) No.036/09/2003

CONTENTS

2 Small Groups Feature



5 Times of Refreshing



6 Building Relationships at Church Camp 2004



8 Feature on Ministries



2 Clothed With Power On High



Where is God in your heart?

Whatever your answer may be, take heart, God loves you. He stands at the door of your heart and knocks. If you open it to Him, He will fill it with His Love.

It's my prayer that your heart will be filled with God's love and He will enable you to make a difference in the world.

Pastor Philip Lim

Why Meet?



By Jacob Cheng

They were under severe persecution. Their pastors faced the threat of arrest for preaching the Gospel. They were given warning not to meet in the Name, else they would face dire consequences.

They did face up to the consequences. Some key leaders were jailed for most of their life. Some went in and out of prison every few months. Their properties were confiscated and families separated. Some were inflicted with severe injuries, and some lost their life.

strong in faith. They still meet regularly. They are like "jars of clay...hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed." (1 Corinthians 4:8). Despite fear and oppression, they met in secret places. Hiding from the persecutors, they gathered to pray, worship and learn God's word. They gathered.

"Why pay such a great price for coming together? Can't they just stay at home and be Christians on their own? Then they will not be caught and can continue to be Christians!", exclaimed some TMC kids after hearing this true story. These kids are honest. Their views may represent the perspective of many of us living in a country that enjoys religious freedom.

Ironically, through the years of persecution, the suffering Christians multiplied their meeting groups by the thousands. The Gospel spreads from province to province, and thousands of secret meeting groups started as household after household turned to Jesus. Chains could not stop the work of God. Yet, back home, when we have the freedom to own the Bible and meet without harassment, we do not see such spectacular phenomenon. It seems that we are not put to the test compared to the Christians mentioned above. But this is not really true.

Rather, our community is put to the test daily by the world we live in. Unlike persecuted Christians, our trials are subtle, but devastating. We are chained not by

handcuffs of the persecutor but by worldly perspectives. The weapon used against us is

Individualism. In striving to keep and gain, we have no time for others. Emotionally, we tell ourselves that we have no more rooms for more relationships. Yet the answer is not found in being away from the community, but by being in it. We suffer because we do not share our burdens, especially when Individualism makes us portray a self-sufficient image.

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." John 13: 34-35

First of all, we need to understand that we are part of a Body. As a Body, we share in each others' joy and suffering. The Bible tells us, "If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it." (1 Corinthians 12:26-27). Unlike Individualism, we are not to suffer silently, nor neglect the suffering of others.

Individualism also makes us think that our relationship with God is solely a personal matter. As such there is a lack of discipleship and nurture. Discipleship is exercised through shared lives, like Jesus and His disciples. Therefore, our personal faith is closely related to each other in the Body, with Christ as the Head. According to Ephesians 4:15-16, "we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."

Why should we meet? We meet because the Head, Christ, is present at the gathering of His Body. In Matthew 18:19-20, Christ promises "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."

And we meet because as a Body, we need one another. "But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I don't need you!'" And the head cannot say to

the feet, "I don't need you!" (1 Corinthians 12:18-21)

Being part of the Body, we have our part to play, and are given spiritual gifts for the edification of this Body. (1 Corinthians 12:7-11). By playing our part, the Body fulfills what the Head wanted. But unless we meet regularly and start sharing our life, and minister to one another, how are we to discover and exercise our spiritual gifts? Very often, we discover our gifts by the prayers and affirmation of fellow members.

The persecuted Christians met regularly despite the sufferings because they are a Body, not just individuals. They need to encourage one another to be strong in faith through difficult times. And it is amazing how they evangelized powerfully as a Body. Many turned to Jesus because they saw Christ in His Body, full of sincerity, honesty and love. Their meetings are not driven by programmes and there is no place for superficial relationships. Christ is everything to them. They meet regularly to seek God in fervent intercession and worship together, sharing testimonies of what God has done for them. Much was accomplished for the Lord despite being deprived of freedom and material needs.

Like the persecuted Christian, we too have the same God, same Holy Spirit, same Baptism, and the same Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). But do we have the same love, same unity, and same passion to meet together to fulfill God's purpose? Yet, unlike them, we have the freedom and resources to meet regularly!!

The Small Groups in our church meet regularly for members to gather as part of the Body of Christ. We meet during the week to build each other up in the Lord through learning His word and encouragement. We serve one another and discover our spiritual gifts. We are nurtured and raised to be servant leaders. We seek God together in prayer and worship, and testify to what God has done for us. We receive support from one another in our struggles and encourage each other to love God fervently in the midst of trials. We prepare each other to serve the larger Body with our gifts and talents, and discover our calling and purpose in life. In our small groups, we invite others to witness the Body of Christ and enter His Kingdom. We are just being where God wants us to be. That is why we meet.

If you want to find out more about Small Groups, contact Lim Khia Teck (email: ktdlim@singnet.com.sg) or Jacob Cheng (email: jacob@tmc.org.sg)

CHEREM

- Alternate Saturdays, 4.30–7.00 pm
- Sengkang or Serangoon Gardens
- Leaders: Steven Sim and Lynn Cham

Most of our 12 members are overseas, currently, we have about 5 'effective' members. The average age is 23. As a small group, we seek and serve God together. For 2004, we aim to have the following: Persistent prayer, Genuine Fellowship, Deeper Understanding of God's Word.

FAMILY ASPIRATION

DISTRICT EAST

- Thursdays 8.30pm
- Tampines

The District East small group started with a group of 9 people living in the east. 10 years later, we still meet somewhere in the east and we have grown to include 7 "hyper-active, noisy" kids. We strive to learn God's word amidst children throwing tantrums, supervising homework and pacifying crying babies. Those who wish to join us must love kids, be tolerant to noise, able to keep late nights and be flexible with the small group programme.

HEARTBEAT OF GOD

- Alternate Thursdays 8pm
- PLMC
- Leader: Violet Khor

BLESSINGS

- Fortnightly on Fridays 8pm
- 82, Kasai Road, Seletar Hills
- Leader: Iris Ang

RIVER OF LIFE

- 11.00am on Sunday
- PLMGS(P) canteen

The SG is currently doing the Chinese ministry. It is planning Mooncake Festival and Chinese New Year outreach programs and for community penetration at Serangoon North.

SERANGOON NORTH

- 2nd and 4th Thursdays: 8.15 – 10.15pm, Serangoon North or Bishan;
- 3rd Friday of month: Vespers at Chen Su Lan Methodist Children's Home

The SG has about 12 members of various ages (and 2 child members). A typical small group session would include worship, bible study and sharing/supper/prayer. We are currently doing a study on Sermon on the Mount. Once a month, we conduct vespers for the children in Chen Su Lan Methodist Home. We welcome all to join us for small group and/or vespers.

HOUGANG SMALL GROUP

- Sunday 2pm Fortnightly
- The SG is currently studying the Book of Luke.

CITY GROUP

- 1st and 3rd Thursdays 8–11pm
- Rotational venues
- Leader: Png Hock Chye

VILLAGE PEOPLE

ACTS 29

- Alternate Saturdays 4 pm
 - Rotational venues
 - Leader: Seng Hee
- The SG comprises 7 families (14 adults, 16 children). It is focusing on Giftings – Service – Ministry, "To Know God and Be Known By God".

SENG KANG

- Fortnightly on Sunday evenings
 - Seng Kang area.
- We are currently doing Essential Prayer Life and may be moving on to Purpose Driven Life. We welcome families with little kids to join us as we grow as Christian families in the faith.

SERANGOON PARISH

- Every 3rd Wednesday
- Coordinators: Heather Pates & Robert Yeo

We love to sing hymns, learn from the Bible and pray for one another. We welcome all church members, young and old to join us for good Christian fellowship.

WATCHMEN

- Monday 8.15pm – 10.30pm
- Orchard

The SG is currently focusing outward, reaching out to our friends & colleagues. As such, it tries to bring activities in line with this focus. Monday meetings consist of Fellowship (those who can make it meet for dinner earlier at 7.15pm), Worship, Prayer and the Word (members take turns to facilitate the study). We have just completed a book study on Isaiah in Mar 04 and are currently going through the book "Vital Theological Issues" addressing difficult questions about the Christian faith. Every 4th meeting, we have an extended period of prayer & praise instead of a bible study.

Outside of SG, we meet for tennis on Sunday evenings for fellowship and also as a platform to bring non-Christian friends along as well. Currently we have about 2–3 seekers/Christians looking to get back with God (all not from TMC) who join us for tennis/SG.

KOINONIA

- 1st, 2nd and 4th Thursdays, 8pm.
- Rotational (Serangoon North, Ang Mo Kio, Bishan, Seng Kang)
- Leader: Png Kong Jin

THE ROCK

- Thursdays, 8.15–10.30pm
- Serangoon North

The SG is currently doing a variety of studies.

NEW GROUPS

FANG YEA YEE, DAVID GWEЕ AND FAMILIES

Our new small group is focused on the needs of families with kids in their early teens. We will be following the Purpose Driven Life programme. If you have kids who are 12 years and above, we would like to invite you to join our small group. We are meeting once a month on every 4th Saturday at 7.30 pm at 21 Palm Grove Avenue, #04-17, Palm Grove Condo. The first session has started on 26th June. Please call David Gwee (Hp: 91738910) or Yea Yee (Hp: 9785 2255) if you are interested.

HUM SIN HOON

This new small group is aimed at providing the opportunity for us to experience small group life together, over an initial commitment period of eight weeks, with weekly meetings on Saturdays from 2.30 – 4.30pm at 1 Pandan Valley #02-104. We will start the first session on 7 August, and we will use the Purpose Driven Life (PDL) program as the materials for study and discussion. If you are open to experiencing Christian fellowship and study together, and would like to get to know some of the other TMC members and friends, you are most welcomed to join us in this small group adventure. We will all learn together, and help each other on in our daily walk with Jesus.

Call SinHoon at 6467-7652 if you would like to participate in this Small Group experience."

THE NOMADS

Join us in this journey as we work our way to reach our final home. Although we travel together, we are still very much traveling alone, walking on paths we have chosen. Together we shall learn, share and uphold each other through the different times ahead. This group is open to all interested in traveling with us.

We shall begin by meeting alternate Friday evenings starting at 8:00pm for 2 hours. The topic of our study is Knowing God written by J. I. Packer. The first study will begin 6th of August. The place of meeting is Apt Blk 196, # 02-559, Bishan St 13 Spore 570196. Tel: 625 83381

As 'Iron Sharpens Iron'

by Alex Tan

Iron sharpeneth iron; So a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." (Proverbs 27:17)
 The Labour Day holiday yielded no rest for some 20 Small Group Leaders (SGLs) as they learnt first-hand what building up a Christian community was all about. The initial sessions on self examination was easy enough, but building a small group had a few more layers than just getting individuals right with God, as the SGLs soon found out.

What does building a Christian community entail?

SGLs were soon put through their paces as they were challenged to think about each of their members and identify their strengths and weaknesses. They soon realized that there were members that they had not been spending time with enough, so much so that it was difficult to complete this exercise.

As the SGLs moved through each level, the self, the group, the church, there was a realization of the need to keep TMC's small groups in sync with the larger vision of the church. And there was more to be done to spur members of small groups in becoming more involved in the church.

How was this to be done?

There were discussions, encouragements and yes, arguments. Yet, how the SGLs interacted with one another gave them a picture of how the small groups could be. As 'iron sharpeneth iron', so too do small groups play a part in moulding the lives of TMC members, and spurring them on to greater works of faith.

If you are doing it because no one else will, it's a job. If you're doing it to serve the Lord, it's a ministry.

If you're doing it just well enough to get by, it's a job. If you're doing it to the best of your ability, it's a ministry.

If you'll do it only so long as it doesn't interfere with other activities, it's a job. If you're committed to staying with it even when it means letting go of other things, it's a ministry.

If you quit because no one praised you or thanked you, it's a job. If you stay with it even though no one seems to notice, it's a ministry.

If you do it because someone else said that it needs to be done, it's a job. If you are doing it because you are convinced it needs to be done, it's a ministry.

It's hard to get excited about a job. It's almost impossible not to get excited about a ministry.

If your concern is success, it's a job. If your concern is faithfulness, it's a ministry.

People may say "Well done" when you do your job. The Lord will say "Well done" when you complete your ministry.

An average church is filled with people doing jobs. A great church is filled with people serving in ministry.

... sets you thinking doesn't it?

The words struck a deep chord within.

It set me thinking about what I was doing to serve HIM, my attitude in being a part of His wonderful ministry – it's not work anymore but a privileged opportunity to serve!

There were more lessons from Pastor Kai Ming and Jacob's sharing but I don't have enough space to describe them all. Other group leaders also gave insights on their respective groups' struggles and how they overcame them. It appears we're not alone, we all have similar experiences.

At the end of the retreat, I return to my SG, refreshed. I shared with my members my experience and promised them that at the next gathering, they will ALL be dragged along with me! I informed them, not as their facilitator but their mentor!

From Facilitator to Mentor

by Boon Choon Huat

Back in 1994, the pastor and Elizabeth Lim, a former church leader approached me and "strongly" encouraged me to attend the Small Group Leaders' training conducted by John Melicent. (I was hood-winked into going!) They told me that I could just attend with no commitment. RIGHT!!! Immediately after the training, I was ambushed into starting a small group. "Me a leader???" (not in my wildest dreams), "I'm not ready! I'm not equipped! I'm not capable...." My protest fell on deaf ears. So, we compromised, I became the facilitator of a small group. To me, that sounds better – not so stressful and (hopefully) not much (spiritual) responsibility. Haha!

It's been 10 years now and I've been happily facilitating my SG. We are very democratic, I only facilitate (co-ordinate), we take turns to lead in bible study and decisions are made by consensus. When all agree, we do. SIMPLE.

Fast forward – 30 April 2004 – Small Group Leaders retreat. Honestly, I didn't want to go but Khia Teck can be VERY persistent!! Since I'd blown him off on numerous occasions, I felt guilty and finally relented.

This is where things changed for me. My comfort zone got shattered– my days of a facilitator in my small group came to a screeching halt. I am told that in my capacity as the SG leader, it goes beyond just facilitating – the role involves more. I have to be a mentor. Huh? What does that entail? Shudder...Panic!!! No, that is not what I agreed to



10 years ago and I am VERY happy to maintain the status quo.

By the second day of the retreat, I started singing a different tune. OK, I agree, more needs to be done, more can be done and yes, I want to be a part of that.

So, what happened at the retreat? Well, you'd have to be there to experience it. God worked His "magic". But I'll tell you a little....

Pastor Philip shared the Prayer Stool by Canon Graham Kings – which gave us insights on ways to better prepare ourselves as we enter into God's presence, to commune with Him, spend time with Him and basically to fully enjoy the experience of fellowship with the Lord Almighty. This got me thinking about my relationship with God.

Pastor also read another passage that touched me deeply, on the difference between A JOB and A MINISTRY.

Do you have a job in this church and this community.... or do you have a ministry? There is a difference!

Times of Refreshing

by Amanda Yong

Just like the message for this year's Small Group Sunday, which came with the tagline—"Small Group is Refreshing... Try it!" — the programme designed to mark that special Sunday was certainly a refreshing one.



The SG leaders were presented a gift by Mr Sathia as a token of appreciation.

Besides the traditional dedication of Small Group leaders and Parish leaders, who were each reminded of the great responsibility and opportunity entrusted to them in their ministry, there was also an encouraging testimony shared by Mr and Mrs Terence Ooi on how they joined TMC and the Acts 29 small group. To further encourage those members of the congregation who have yet to join small groups to consider and eventually join a small group, members of various small groups distributed little green booklets, which extolled the benefits of being part of a small group.

The end of the service did not mark the end of the Small Group Sunday programme. A refreshment fair followed. There was food galore as most of the 19 small groups set up booths offering all manner of snacks and light bites such as nonya kueh, cakes, keropok, fresh fruits, jelly, popcorn, sweets, and even Chinese dumplings courtesy of the Chinese Fellowship (which sprung from the small group, River of Life).

While the food appeared to be the main draw for many, it was also a means to bring attention to the signboards proudly displayed in front of each booth. Each signboard provided a brief yet creative introduction of the respective small groups. Hence, while the refreshments tantalised and satisfied the physical hunger of many, the small groups were also offering the congregation the warmth of their fellowship and inviting those who were interested to satisfy their spiritual hunger by taking a bite of that deliciously refreshing thing called a Small Group.

SG members distributing the little pamphlet on Small Group to the congregation

food galore



Building Relationships at Church Camp 2004

by Eugenia Koh



As TMC sought to obey the two greatest commandments at our church camp, God indeed poured forth His Spirit, teaching us what it means to love Him with our whole heart, soul and mind, and loving our neighbour as ourselves. The presence of God in our midst led to two non-Christians accepting Christ! Indeed, we rejoice with the angels in heaven to welcome them into our family!

'Love your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'
Matthew 22:37-38

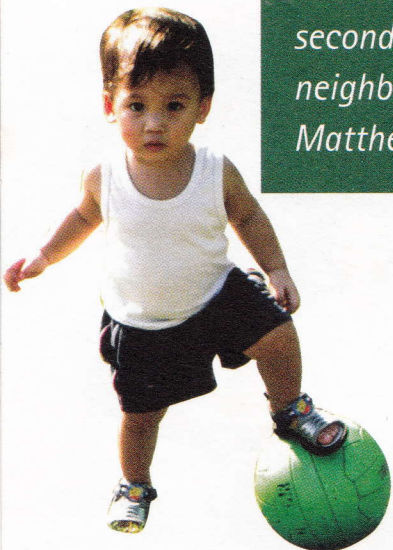
It was truly a time where the family of God at TMC came together as one, a time of rest, a time of fun, and a time of spiritual nourishment and reflection, a time of basking in the presence of God.

With everyone being separated into various intergenerational groups, we had a great time getting to know many new faces, brothers and sisters whom we had not met before in church.



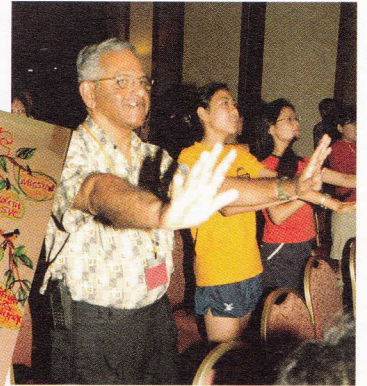
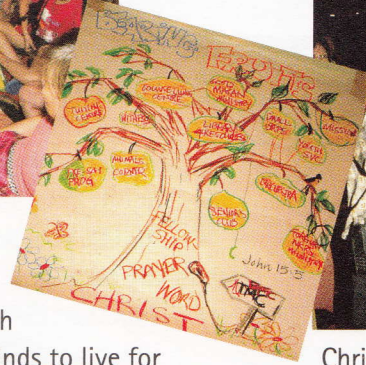
The groups consisted of various families and individuals of all ages. These groups were cleverly named after the elements of the fruit of the Spirit with a twist. Instead of the usual elements of the fruit of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, patience etc, we had local fruit names such as jambu, rambutan, nangka, nanas etc.

Being put into these groups helped break barriers between adults, youths and children. Each member of the group had a special contribution, the adults with wisdom to share, the youths with their abundant energy and the children with their childlikeness and innocence. It was truly encouraging to see how the love of God binds us all despite age and other differences.





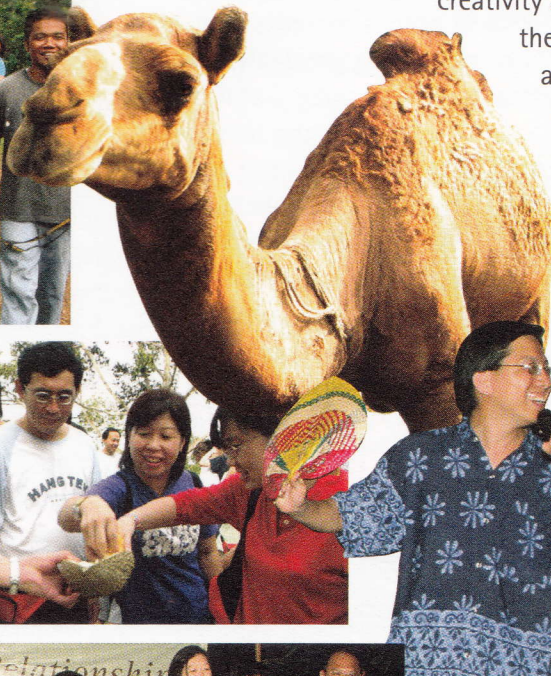
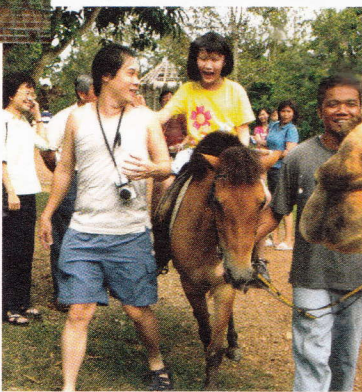
The speaker sessions were inspiring and thought-provoking, challenging each of us to truly renew our minds to live for Christ. The speaker urged each of us to convert our knowledge of what God wants into steps of practice for, unless knowledge becomes transformed to the revelation of the truth by the conviction of the Holy Spirit, knowledge remains purely knowledge and one does not grow. Challenging us with a simple equation $\text{faith} + \text{action} = \text{insight}$, he encouraged us to take the step of faith to do what God wants and assured that God will truly honour that step of obedience and draw us closer and deeper.



Not only did each of us receive spiritual food and nourishment, there were also many opportunities for nourishing the body of Christ, allowing bonds to be built. A telematch was held on the second day and it was a smashing time of letting down one's hair, playing games such as passing the rubber band with straws, throwing and catching waterbombs, jumping in a gunny sack and wheelbarrowing across the field. Other 'body-building' activities included a treasure hunt at night and having groups come up with their dream church.



The camp ended on a high note with Kampong Night, with the groups pitting their creativity and performance skills against each other. The theme was based on the good old kampong days, and groups came up with various kampong songs, dances and skits to entertain the crowd. The best performance was a Teochew skit which sent the audience bellowing in laughter, as William and Chew Chwee acted as hosts to a Kampong beauty pageant.



Children's Ministry

by Chan Chong Wei

Have you ever wondered what is happening, every Sunday at 11 am, to the children aged 2 to 12?

Yes, they are at the Hannah block but what exactly are they doing? Preparing to be the next Singaporean Idol? Well yes, they are singing but for a different reason – they are worshiping God and singing His praises. There are currently two worship teams in the CM: one of them is for the preschoolers and the other is for the primary school children.



The Children's Ministry (CM) has been faithfully nurturing the children and setting them up to be little men and women of God. The 100 or so kids are helped along in their spiritual growth, by 30 teachers. The Chairperson of the CM, Mrs Daphne Lim, sees the work of her ministry as a crucial one because it is so important to set the foundation of the young right and there is so much to teach the young. Therefore, she hopes that parents are mindful of the importance of Sunday school and not merely see CM as a child care facility for their children every Sunday. If tuition or other enrichment classes are important, what more is Sunday school which focuses on the spiritual state of the child?

children in CM, there are weekly worship and bible study classes. The thrust of the CM programmes is to instill Christian values and, more importantly, help the children become more aware of God as someone who is real. The awakening is difficult to impart with just 'head- content'; it has to be done with the Holy Spirit.

For bible studies, the primary five and six children are doing 'Wise Up' from the

Disciple Land Series and some parts of the Old Testament. The aim is to equip them, teach them wisdom and learn to fear God, before they leave the CM. As for the younger children, they are using the 'Sharing And Learning Together' (SALT) series from Scripture Union as their study material. These materials are chosen such that the children approach God with a fine balance between sound doctrines and a personal relationship with God of which sharing with one another makes that pursuit all the more meaningful.

Besides teaching and facilitating the bible study classes, the CM teachers continually experience the joy of seeing their charges grow in spiritual maturity. In working out the teaching pedagogy, the questions that often occupy the teachers are: "What is Salvation in the eyes of the child? Do children understand what simple faith is?" The empirical answers to these theological lessons are reassuring. Most children are able to, pointedly, display such faith.

It is proven that if they were taught, they would know, they can perform and even take Holy Communion. In the words of Mrs Daphne Lim's: "When you can get to them, they can respond." Indeed the children did not misbehave during communion for the month of May, thanks to the hard work put in by the teachers.

Perhaps, for certain children, observing the proceedings of the Holy Communion go beyond the call of decorum but the answer is best known, only to God and them. Indeed, two of them have committed their lives to the faith. Young Joshua and Esther Mak, who are in primary four and three respectively, wish to be baptized!



In addition to spiritual maturity through normal classroom work, the teachers have also brought into CM, the standards of Christian outreach from The Campus Crusade's Four Spiritual Laws (4SL). The children are encouraged to share the gospel with their friends with a simplified version of the 4SL, in which the articles of the Christian faith are broken down into sentences not more than 10 words so that they can be easily assimilated by a child.

The CM has a wish list. First, there is a need for more teachers, or rather, volunteers devoted to Christian education. Second, at the moment, all our resources are concentrated in the 11am CM. The Thank God It's Sunday (TGIS) programme, under the direction of Ms Susan Chua, is a stop-gap measure for 9.00am service. When we move back to our new premises, we pray that we can have a full-fledged CM for 9.00am too.

To the teachers, a day's work in CM is hectic and labour intensive; where attention has to be paid to each and every child. The dividends gained, however, are worth every endeavour, in this labour of love.



Youth is a wonderful period of one's life. It is a period of great vibrancy, of dreams, of passion and of energy. Indeed, as it is stated in Proverbs 20:29, "The glory of young men is their strength" and in Ecclesiastics 11:9, "Be happy, young man, while you are young, and let your heart give you joy in the days of your youth".

YOUTH@TMC

by Eugenia Koh

Youth is often the period of time where one is most open to God and makes the decision to be a disciple of Christ. As the Psalmist says in Psalms 119:9-19, "How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart; Do not let me stray from your commands."



At TMC's Youth Ministry, we seek to be a Christ-like community where every youth will love God and be disciples who will make disciples. We seek to nurture a generation of youths who will love God and make a difference for Him wherever they are, and who will move on to be future godly leaders of the church.

This explains the decision to have inter-age groups instead of groups of common ages. In each group, the age ranges from 13 to 18. The older youths are usually called upon to help lead a youth group and are nurtured as leaders.

By mixing the various ages, a culture of the older youths taking

care of and looking out for the younger ones is being forged. This has led to a greater integration of the youths and a more cohesive ministry. The road towards this has not been easy and there are still many challenges ahead. One main challenge is how to pitch the lessons to the youth as they vary in ages and spiritual maturity. Older youths have often found themselves not being sufficiently fed.



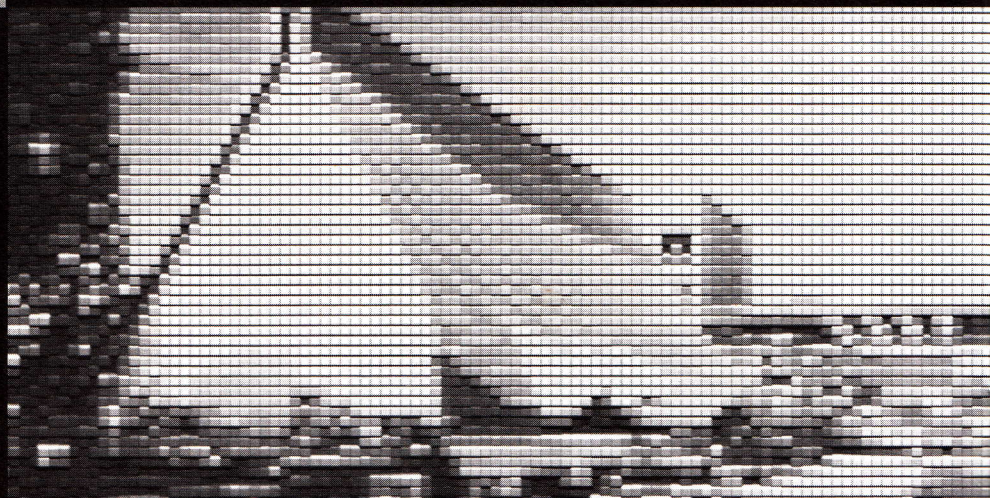
To deal with this problem, we have been challenging these older youth to take up greater leadership and to nurture their younger brothers and sisters in Christ, acting as mentors to them. We see the potential for them to

grow as they learn to give instead of to receive, and as they see God's goodness working in both their lives and the lives of those they are guiding along.

God has indeed been very good and gracious to us. At our recent youth camp in December, He has poured forth His Spirit and ministered to our youths, drawing each one closer and deeper into His presence. Both the leaders and the youths have been ministered to and revived, as we met God together in His grace and through humbling ourselves in prayer. We believe that just as we have encountered God and deepened in fellowship with each other, God will similarly pour forth His Spirit upon the entire church, reviving us all as we continue to seek Him in prayer.

Stitches on TMC's Fabric

by Chan Chong Wei



The Women's Society of Christian Service (WSCS) has occasionally – by a mischievous play of its acronym – been lampooned as Women who Serve Coffee every Sunday. Part of the mischief stems from the testimony of faithfulness of the ladies to service and their excellent culinary reputation.

The WSCS is a distinct chord that runs the length of the Methodist fabric. It has a rich heritage that is embedded, both, in the traditions of the Methodist Church and in itself – as an entity. It began as Women's Foreign Missionary Society (WFMS) in 19th Century America and after many transformations became known as WSCS in 1940. The General Conference WSCS was inaugurated in 1976 and remains the WSCS governing body. The Trinity Annual Conference (TRAC) WSCS has under its wings, 14 Chapters, of which the Trinity Methodist Church (TMC) WSCS is one of them.

The TMC WSCS is as old as the church and it seriously looks to its goals to help women grow in the knowledge and experience of God; make Christ known throughout the world; and develop a personal responsibility for the whole task of the church. The Chairperson, Mrs. Jessie Chong, is assisted by her executive committee and the coordinators in the areas as follows: Christian education, spiritual life, social concerns, missions, handicraft and local activities.

Many of the WSCS activities overlap with other ministries. For example, they have their social concerns and yet these activities, broadly speaking, do not come within the purview of the Outreach and Social Concerns Committee. In another instance, when Pastor Lai Kai Ming goes on home

visits to administer Holy Communion for the home-bound, he is accompanied by some members of the WSCS and some from the Seniors Ministry. Certain WSCS activities amount to small group functions. In other words, the WSCS is happy to be, wherever it is, so long as there is service to the women, to the Lord and to family of TMC.

By default, every woman is a WSCS member. However, the number reported to TRAC is 40 because not every TMC lady is an active WSCS member. According to Mrs. Jessie Chong, a poll she had conducted at random revealed that 9 out of 10 young adults do not wish to be active in WSCS. The WSCS is always struggling to free itself of the label, as a society that is, strictly speaking, for the home makers and the retirees. Most young adults have their own activities to look to on Saturdays and have their own small groups during the weekdays.

Saturdays are the only days for groceries, family and rest for the young adults. Therefore, the younger women may not be that taken by the activities that the WSCS wanted to organize for them, such as marriage and parenting workshops.

Being rich in heritage and conservative in outlook, is the society in danger of dying an anachronism? Far from being relics of the past, the traditions have seen that the women assume greater responsibilities in the family of Christ. Firstly, members of the WSCS have, customarily, been proud of

their financial independence and require no sustenance from the church. Indeed, they have raised \$25,000 for their new WSCS room and part of the room will be refurbished as a prayer room for the general use of the church. Moreover, the considerable WSCS resources are used to help other ministries. For example, the Methodist Women's Centre was used for the TMC youth camp because of its affordability. Secondly, by tradition, the culinary and handicraft skills of the WSCS women are hard to match. There are appreciative noises too, coming from certain quarters of the church whenever the WSCS women cooked. The parish meetings, from time to time, have their certain attraction. From food sales, the WSCS hopes to raise \$15,000 by next July to help pay for the

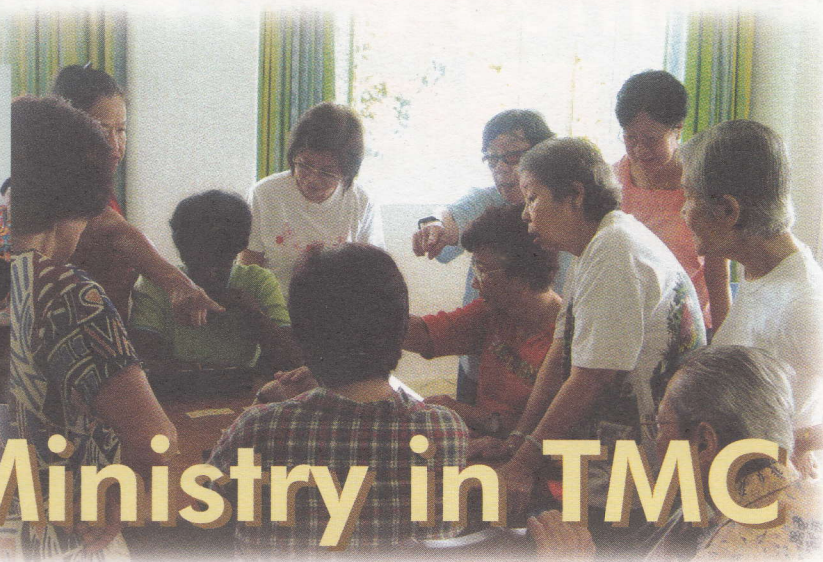
church pews. Lastly, the women have not only cooked their food well, but their bible as well. Every first and third Friday, the women meet in St Peter's Church in Serangoon Gardens for bible studies with members of the congregation.

The studies are facilitated by Mrs Esther Wong.

The WSCS bible studies are generally known to be thorough.

As seen, the heritage of the WSCS is not greatly diminished by modernity but it remains to be seen if the TMC WSCS, or the WSCS in general, can reach out to the young to carry on their finest traditions. It will be a sad day if stitches made on the TMC fabric, are no longer made by the women of WSCS.





Seniors Ministry in TMC

by Wee Eng Hock

Nearly one-third of TMC members are "Seniors" and Seniors Ministry's role is to bring them together regularly to relax, enjoy themselves and strengthen the bond of friendship between our members. Besides growing in spiritual maturity, we also encourage caring and sharing and helping out in whatever way they can be.

Because we have no "home" of our own now, an event is organised for seniors once every 3 months and they are encouraged to participate in other activities organised by TRAC Board of Seniors Ministry (GYM)

Visitations Programme

So far, 20 Seniors have signed up for the visitation programme. We have made several visits to the home-bound and the sick on an ad-hoc basis but a proper programme for regular visits will be formalised soon.

What We Did for the Current Conference Year:

Year 2003	Event	Participation
5-17 Sep	GYM/Faith MC Study Tour to Turkey	6
27 Sep	GYM/Barker Rd MC Hi-Tea	8
16 Nov	Seniors Sunday Lunch & Fellowship	79
21 Nov	GYM 3rd Anniversary Dinner	20
20 Dec	Seniors X'mas Buffet Dinner	54

Year 2004	Event	Participation
6 Jan	GYM Prayer Focus	3
15 Feb	Seniors Quarterly Get-together	69
21 Apr	Seniors Picnic & BBQ	32
24 Apr	GYM/Wesley MC Hi-Tea	9
24 May	GYM/Aldersgate Celebration	5
6-9 Jun	GYM Convention in KL	11

Fund Raising

As part of our efforts to help raise funds for our Church Redevelopment Project, the Seniors Ministry launched our "Coins Tins Project" towards the end of February this year. 248 Tins have been issued and collections from the tins returned so far have been encouraging.

Looking ahead

More activities are being planned for our return to our new "home" in Serangoon Gardens where we will try to widen Seniors' participation in Seniors Ministry activities and make it even more vibrant.



EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Rev. Philip Lim
Pastor Lai Kai Ming
Chan Chong Wei
Jeannie Chee
Eugenia Koh
Lai Wei Cheng
Lydia Leong
Patsy Ong
Alex Tan
Amanda Yong

CONTRIBUTORS

Jacob Cheng
Lim Khia Teck
Boon Choon Huat
Wee Eng Hock

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Png Kong Jin
Andy Chew

TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH

Mailing Address:
Serangoon Garden Post Office,
PO Box 436, Singapore 915532
Tel: 6282 4443 Fax: 6282 0094
E-mail: churchoffice@tmc.org.sg
Website: www.tmc.org.sg

saltshaker

Clothed With Power On High

by Lai Wei Cheng

"And see, I am sending you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." Luke 24:49

And see, I am sending you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.

With this verse in mind, the Trinity Annual Conference (TRAC) of the Methodist Church in Singapore organised and funded the International Prayer Conference (IPC) which was held from the 16th to the 19th of June this year. The first of its kind in the World Methodist Body, the conference brought Methodists from 22 different countries to come together and intercede for the Methodist family; to experience, once again, the renewing flames of the Holy Spirit and to, once again, shake the very foundations of the world we live in, like how John Wesley shook 18th century England with his preaching and fervour for the Lord.

"Give me one hundred Christian workers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God. I care not a straw whether they are clergymen or laymen. Such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of Heaven here on Earth. God does in nothing but in answer to prayer"
- John Wesley

Each day would consist of a worship session in the morning, followed by a speaker session, and thereafter, prayer and intercession where the Pastors would go to the front of the hall and intercede for any needs of the congregation. After prayer, one of the speakers for the conference would lead in a time of Bible Study. The afternoons would be split into three portions; the first part would be the first workshop of the day. This would be followed by a time of prayer for a list of countries before the next workshop.

A 3-hour break gives the conference delegates time to digest the day's spiritual feeding as well as to nourish themselves physically. After that, conference delegates as well as members of the public would gather together for the evening services on the topic of renewing the Wesleyan Flame in the global Methodist body.

Everyday was a "high time in the Lord" as the Bishop Violet L. Fisher, Resident Bishop of the New York West Area, put it in her sermon to the congregation during the opening service on the 16th of June. She said that in order for revival to come, the Methodist Churches would have to first come before the LORD in sackcloth and

ashes, for if our hearts are not focused on God, how could we hold the holy flame of the Holy Spirit and spread it to the world? Rev (Dr) Wes Griffin, President and International Director of International Leadership Institute quoted from 2 Chronicles 7:14 and said it is only when we turn our hearts to the LORD, that change will come upon us and in the societies that we live in. She also talked about how Methodist

Churches focus more time on problem solving rather than using that time to pray and seek the One who can set things aright.

However, when renewal comes, what are we going to do about it? Are we going to sit in the pews and let the "strangely warmed" feeling make us

feel happy? That was the question posed by Rev (Dr) Alvern Vomsteeg, International Director of Training (International Leadership Institute), to the conference delegates on the fourth day of bible study. Referring to Acts 13:1-3, the early church sent out Paul and Barnabas past the doors of the church to reach out to the least, the last and the lost, to be the "voice of one calling in the desert"; to tell the world that Jesus Christ lives, instead of sitting back and enjoying the feeling of having the Holy Spirit talking to them.

Even as we pray and wait for renewal, personal, corporate prayer and intercession is just as important to empower the church to transform the church and society around us.

During his sermon on the second day, Rev (Dr) Terry Tekyl's (President of Renewal Ministries) message to the congregation was to humbly ask for the Glory of God to fall upon the church and cities of the world, for it is only the presence of God that can really touch the hearts and lives of people. The call is to be a "presence-based church", a church that is more focused in attracting God's presence rather than filling the pews with more people - a message that I personally feel is important to all

Protestant denominations.

Before his sermon started, Rev Teykl asked the congregation to pray for the people in front them, for whatever needs that the Holy Spirit would impress upon them. As I was praying for the person in front of me, the sore feeling in my throat that was bugging me since Day 1 suddenly lifted! After the prayer, Rev Tekyl asked who experienced healing and many others in the congregation raised up their hands as well. Indeed God's presence was moving among His people that day.

Many of the workshops during the IPC touched on the different aspects of prayer like discerning prayer (how to tap on God's wisdom), persevering prayer (praying even when you don't feel like it) and raising houses of prayer (Radiating the Glory of God as a community of individuals). For myself, attending the workshops helped me to understand how to walk closely on a personal level with God, as well as to reach out with the love of God that He showers on me, to the immediate people around me and, finally, how to extend that love beyond my country to the world.

The third evening service was set aside for a youth service, which drew many youth from different Methodist Churches. The speaker that night, Rev (Dr) Pat McKinstry, Pastor of Upton MC, explained how worship is an integral part of worship and the various ways of worshipping God through clapping, shouting, standing etc. As Methodists, we are to move forth with God's authority and open doors that could spread God's word in ways we never imagined. Though we may be of little power, there is Him above who has unlimited power and will supply all our needs.

God has definitely moved among His people during the conference, inspiring us to walk with Him even closer and pray even more than ever before. We should not only pray for revival among the Methodist Churches but to remember the other Protestant denominations as well for, together, we are truly the Body of Christ. To God be the Glory!