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Saltshaker

Trinity Methodist Church

M.I.T.A.(P) No.045/09/2004

"God fanned the spark of divine flame through the lives and ministries of the Wesley brothers and their fellow pilgrims in the early Methodist movement. That flame touched our shores on Feb 7, 1885 when James Thoburn and William Oldham landed in Singapore"
- Bishop Dr Robert Solomon



Remembering our heritage is the message that Bishop Dr Robert Solomon reminded all Methodists in his Episcopal Letter (No.12 May-August 2005). Seventy-one years after James Thoburn and William Oldham landed in Singapore in 1885, two other missionaries, although they did not arrive together, came to Singapore. It was not their original destination but they had been brought here by circumstances beyond their control.

We loved them and we called them by their first names as Olin (Rev Dr Olin Stockwell) and Chris (Rev Christopher Hulse Smith), the pioneer clergy behind the founding fathers of Trinity Methodist Church.

In this issue, we highlight extracts of family memories by Eileen Smith, wife of the Late Rev Christopher Smith, written in a letter to our Lay Leader when she sent a memorial donation for the Church redevelopment.

The Lay Leader has given us permission to reproduce the letter written in her own handwriting. He would like to acknowledge the gift of \$6,000 received in memory of her husband - part of which has been used to purchase the pulpit in the Worship Hall. The other portion of the donation goes towards the new communion railings planned for the sanctuary.

The Worship Hall is dedicated to the memory of both the pioneer Pastors Olin Stockwell and Chris Smith. Please approach the church office if you would like to make a donation.

I have a memory - - - - -

In the days when Chris was a lecturer at Trinity College + sang in the choir at Wesley, I can remember the exciting day when Chris set out with Andrew Lee to go + look at a piece of land in Serangoon Gardens

--- I have a memory of feeding David, our eldest, in the back row of St Peter's church where we worshipped + waited.

--- I have a memory of young Melvyn Tan, feet dangling from the piano stool, as he played songs losing in Sunday School in the bungalows before we all walked down to St Peter's.

--- I have a photograph of Chris, spade in hand, turning the first sod.

Numerous pictures of a New Year's Eve celebration + a watch night service in the shell of the church, only rough concrete on the floor, lit by candles, before we flew back to England on leave.

--- I have two very tiny black & white photos. One of me cutting the ribbons on the gate when the church was opened, + another speaking at the microphone under the watchful eye of Andrew Lee + Uncle Sam.

--- I have countless memories, photos, tape recordings of 'bring + share' meals, W.S.C.S. special events by the choir, of our heart-breaking farewell + the privilege of sharing with you the year before Chris died.

--- I have an unforgettable memory of his memorial service + still listen to the recording.

for ... Chris thanked God until the day he died for all that he received + shared + we are humbly proud to have been at the beginning of such a wonderful church history.

Thank you so much for all you have contributed to us + may God richly bless you in the years ahead.

Eileen

CLAIMING JERICH0



by Amanda Yong and Eugenia Koh

As part of TMC's efforts to reach out to our community, members of our church gathered on three consecutive Sunday afternoons in January 2005 to take part in a mini 'campaign' to personally invite our immediate neighbours in specific areas within Serangoon Gardens and selected blocks of flats in Serangoon North Avenue 1 to join us on our 40-Day Purpose Driven Life journey.

A Prayer Survey Walk was conducted on 16 Jan in order to literally 'survey' the land, that is, to gain an insight into the spiritual beliefs held by the residents, observe the spiritual strongholds in the land and to pray for God to prepare the way.

On 23 Jan, TMC members pounded pavements and knocked on doors to distribute PDL flyers and invited residents to sign up for TMC's PDL campaign. This three-step 'offensive' concluded with the 'Blessings Project' on 30 Jan when members again set out in groups to bless the residents with Mandarin oranges in conjunction with the upcoming Chinese New Year celebrations.

The Acts 29 and District East small groups share their experiences of being involved in the PDL Campaign's outreach drive.



ACTS 29

The January 2005 issue of the Saltshaker rightly identified that TMC was in 'the wilderness' and is now in the 'Promised Land'. Members of Acts 29 saw the same picture, but in the capacity of ark-bearers. We were inspired by the account of the fall of Jericho in the book of Joshua:

The priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan, while all Israel passed by until the whole nation had completed the crossing on dry ground. (Joshua 3:17)

We are told in Joshua 6:4 that for six days, seven priests, carrying seven trumpets and blowing them before the ark, marched around Jericho once each day. On the seventh day, the priests encircled the city seven times, after which the people gave a loud shout and the walls of the city collapsed. Jericho was the first kingdom out of 31 that was conquered and delivered to the Israelites by the Lord (Joshua 12:9-24).

We in Acts 29 prepared ourselves and 'softened' the ground prior to the flyer distribution by praying with P.U.R.P.O.S.E. in accordance with the PDL Campaign Prayer guide. We

were sent to 'spy' on the land, gather useful intelligence and to pray against any strongholds as led by the Holy Spirit.

Acts 29 was assigned Blocks 117 and 118 in Serangoon North Avenue 1. We worked in two groups of three people each. We could see a Hindu temple looming just on the edge of the Serangoon North Avenue 1 estate and there was a 'house temple' in Block 118. We prayed over stair-landings, letterboxes and houses with palpable signs of loan-shark activities and covered them with blessings for good instead of evil.

We felt strongly convicted that we needed to do a 'Jericho' so that the walls of unbelief would fall, and the light, love, salvation and name of the Lord Jesus could then roll in. If the 'Jerichos' in Serangoon North and Serangoon Gardens fall, then in similar fashion all other strongholds in the neighbourhood will also follow the fate of the remaining 30 kings of Canaan.

We are in the Lord's Army. Yes Sir! The one who leads us is none other than the Captain of the Host of the Lord's Army with His sword drawn for battle.

1. Why did your small group decide to participate in this together?

We wanted to do something together as a small group. It is also less daunting to serve together as a small group.

2. How did it feel doing it as a group?

It was FUN. Less intimidating when we serve together as a group, knocking on each door and trying to break the ice. We rejoiced in the fellowship with one another. There was a lot of support within the group - especially needed when the number of children almost outnumbered the adults! The group took turns caring for and carrying the children. We had a great sense of satisfaction from doing this for God together.

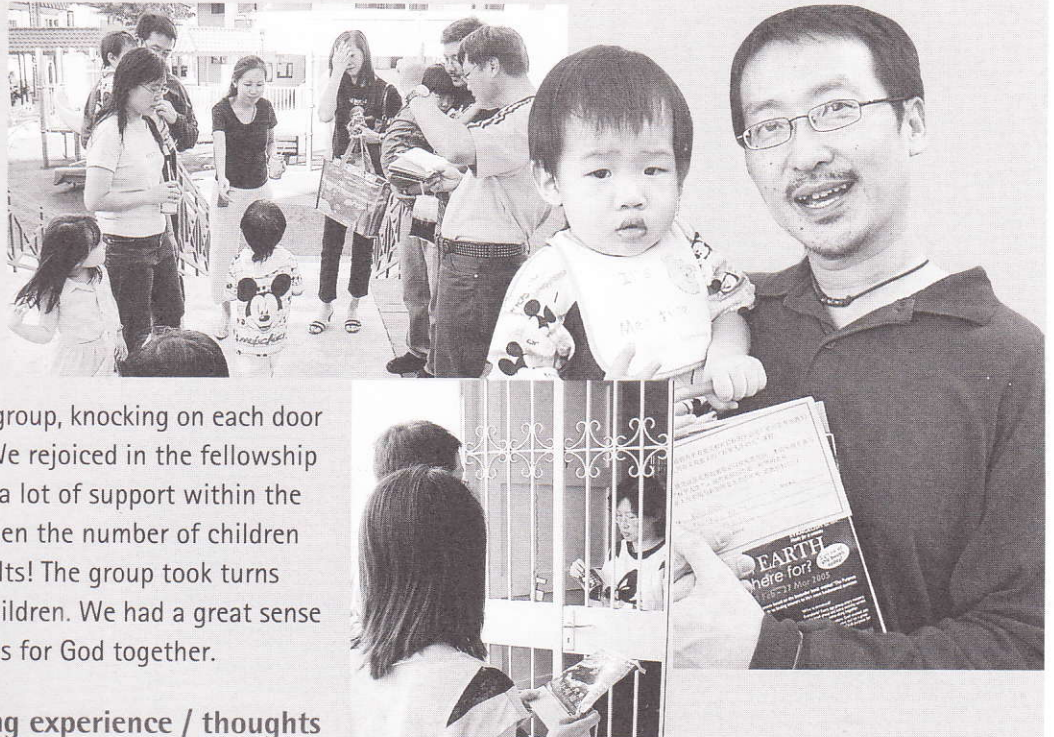
3. Interesting / heartwarming experience / thoughts to share?

We had as many adults as children in our group so it was an interesting experience as we believe God moved even the kids to obey and showed the equal participation from the kids as well as the adults.



For the prayer walk, we split ourselves into two groups. It was interesting that one group had children of school-going age who asked aloud amongst themselves at each door, the race and religion for each house. One of the parents had to line the children in a row at the staircase-landing on each floor to keep them quiet whilst the adults checked. They quietly obeyed.

At the same time, the other group had a pregnant lady with two of her toddlers. One of the adults, helped carry one-and-a-half year old Lincoln from floor to floor but did not experience any fatigue. When we were approaching the end of the prayer walk, Lincoln said he wanted 'water'. According to his mum, that was the first time he said the whole word. He used to only say 'ter'. We sensed then that God was saying that the people at the block were also thirsty for His streams of living water.



We had another joyous experience with the children. One group was knocking on several doors with no response, when we finally met a nice middle-aged lady. At first, she hesitated to open her door but when she saw little three-year-old Ryan (brother of Lincoln) holding out the bag of oranges, she smiled and opened her grill-doors to receive the oranges. Without a thought, Ryan walked straight into the house assuming that the lady invited him in. (This was very surprising as Ryan is normally very shy around strangers but on that day, he was extremely gregarious and obedient - the model of the perfect kid.) With Ryan in the house, it provided the opportunity to share with the lady the purpose of the visit. Having a child around as we knocked on the doors was truly helpful as people were more receptive.

4. How have you all grown through going for this together?

Going for this together further affirms the unity in the small group. It also created an awareness of the need for God's salvation in the community.



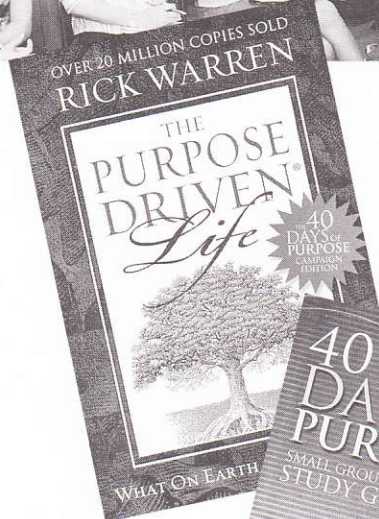


Reflections on PDL

by Winnie Ng



...after joining a small group during this 40 day journey, I've begun to taste the sweetness of a small group and I value the honesty amongst the members.



Honestly speaking, I was reluctant to do this testimony sharing when asked to because it meant that I had to spend time churning out something worthwhile to share. But when someone older 'arrows' you to do it, you can't say no. Still, I'm thankful I took up this challenge because it actually forced me to sit down and reflect on how the past 40 days have been.

Firstly, I've always been skeptical about Christian bestsellers. I questioned the big hoo-ha about New York Times bestseller "The Purpose Driven Life".

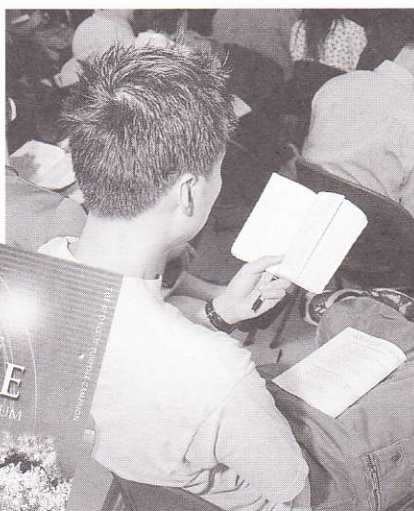
However, since the church was embarking on this 40-day campaign, I decided to go along with it. I must admit that it wasn't easy disciplining myself to read the chapters consistently. Yes, there were days where I crammed 2 chapters in 1 day. But God's grace was sufficient and he carried me through the entire book!

Let me share with you one thing that truly struck me in this journey and that is purpose #2 – Fellowship. Prior to this campaign I was not involved in any small group because of a few reasons. But after joining a small group during this 40-day journey, I've begun to taste the sweetness of a small group and I value the honesty amongst the members. I've taken the step of faith to be more vulnerable in my sharing and allow others to uphold my struggles in prayer. I must say that this is indeed a breakthrough for me! As Pastor Lai mentioned in his sermon on Fellowship: God can act directly on you but He chooses to work through another believer to reach out to you. So you never know, the person right beside to you may be the next person to touch your life!



To round things up, I'm thankful that at the end of these 40 days I've found a small group to belong to and I truly anticipate growing and maturing with them in Christ.

I hope that my testimony has been a blessing! Thank you!





PDL in the Chinese Ministry

by Amanda Yong and Connie Ng

Carol Lie has been a member of TMC's Chinese Ministry almost since its inception in 2003. She shares with Saltshaker her take on the impact of the PDL campaign on the Chinese Ministry and on her own spiritual journey.

How was PDL conducted in the Chinese Ministry?

During the period of the campaign, the Chinese Ministry as a whole, met earlier on Sunday mornings – at 9.30 am instead of 11 am – so we could spend more time learning together. Most of the time, it was either our leaders, like Jacob or Hui Ling, who would give a sermon after which we would break up into two smaller groups for discussion.

What were your expectations, if any, before embarking on the PDL campaign?

Personally, I was excited to find out how God could change my life by transforming my attitudes, thoughts and perspectives through the PDL campaign.

How do you think the Chinese Ministry has benefited from the PDL campaign? How has the Chinese Ministry grown in these 40 days?

I think that PDL provided the opportunity for deeper and more open sharing in the Chinese Ministry, especially when it came



to the older and more senior members who shared a lot about their personal lives, and this was something that the younger members like myself were able to learn from.

Also, we have about four or five members in our ministry who were

intending to get baptised before we began the PDL campaign. During the 40-day journey, they asked many questions, which helped to confirm their decision to be baptised. In fact, these members will be joining the next Baptism and Membership class.

In his book, Rick Warren shared five purposes – Worship, Fellowship, Discipleship, Ministry and Mission – that God

has for our lives. Was there any one purpose that you felt most strongly about?



As a worship leader, I felt that the exploration of 'Worship' was to me, the most meaningful and relevant out of all the five purposes discussed. Previously, the 'aunties and uncles' in the Chinese Ministry thought that worship was only about singing, but through PDL they learnt that worship is really not just about singing. They began to understand that worship is also about other things like prayer, fellowship, and Bible study... a whole lifestyle.

What personal lessons or insights have you gained from going through the PDL journey?

The chapter on the different purposes that drive people's lives such as wealth, career, etc, really spoke to me. In the past, I used to think that my career was the most important thing in my life, and it hit me that what Rick Warren wrote about was what I actually went through before. It was like a reminder from God not to go back to the old me.

Do you feel that God has changed you and refined you during these 40 days you spent on the PDL campaign?

Yes, I believe He has. I now show more concern for others around me. During the PDL campaign, a lot of emphasis was on how much God loves us, and because of that I felt I was not doing enough. Now, I make the extra effort and take that extra step to show concern even towards people I don't know very well.



Ministry Fair

by Melissa Koh

What on **EARTH**
am I here for?



40 DAYS
of PURPOSE

After forty days of purpose-driven study, a Purpose-Driven Life fair, was set up to showcase the various ministries within the church. This was both in an effort to drive home the message of the final two purposes for leading a purpose driven life as well as to show members of the congregation where or which area they can serve in. Each ministry set up their own little booths in the plaza to showcase their mission statements, what they do and the areas where they needed more helpers.



From the well-known to the rarely-heard of ministries, here is a list of a few them in no particular order:-



Worship and Music – Its name pretty much speaks for itself. At their booth, there were many pamphlets describing the many areas where people could serve in.



Prayer and Intercession – This ministry prays and intercedes for the church, the pastors and members. Inside the church bulletin for that week was an invitation card inviting people to join this ministry.

Outreach and Social Concerns – This ministry is the outreach arm of the church, where volunteers can sign up to do visitations to old folks' homes and orphanages or do general social work. They were giving out free tissue packets with an advertisement to join the Methodist Welfare Services in selling flags.

WCS – This is an all-women ministry, where ladies gather to fellowship and learn to be women of God. They also had many handicraft items displayed at their booth and exhibited their specialty in cooking. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, a lot of the food sold in church are provided by these lovely women.

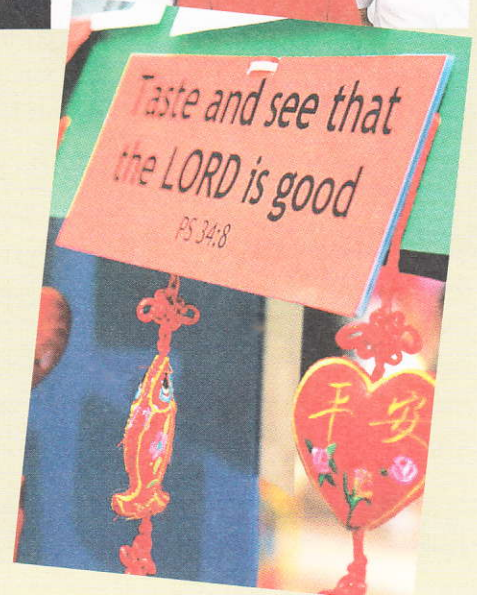


Communications – This ministry helps to produce video-recordings of key church events and the attractive posters that hang around our church. It also produces the once-every-quarter church newsletter (what you are reading now) and manages the TMC website.

Chinese Ministry – One of the newer ministries, this is catered specifically for the Chinese-speaking people. It is a fast-growing ministry. People with Chinese-speaking friends should hurry and bring them to this ministry to learn more about God, in Chinese.

Witness and Evangelism – As breathing is to living, witnessing and evangelism is to being a Christian. However, this ministry only consists of two people at the moment. Hopefully, there will be more people who can see the need and importance of this and will sign up.

There are of course many more ministries around and many of them have a great need for people to offer their time and service to serve within the church.





The final purpose we looked at in our PDL journey was that of Missions and there was also a booth for missions. Pastor Santik, Ravy, her daughter Ratana and Bunthoeun from Tak Mau-Trinity Methodist Church were present during the fair and they performed a couple of Cambodian songs, together with the impromptu arrival of an ensemble troop of children playing various instruments. Ravy was also busy giving out purses she had brought over from Cambodia as goodwill gifts. These people came to encourage our church in our mission work and to inspire us to do more.



After the fair, I heard from a church worker that there were at least twenty people who accepted the Prayer and Intercession Committee's invitation and we rejoiced at my small group. This is a start and our hope is that it is only the beginning and more will step up to serve in the coming weeks. The need is great!

Are you up for it?

Golden Years

*This is the best time,
this is the right time*

*To sow your bonus seeds in His field
And reap the golden harvest, they'll yield.*

*By faith you lift up His spade
I'll drive away your pains and aches*

So dig and sow for all to see

How vital and green you still can be

For the last flicker of the candle flame

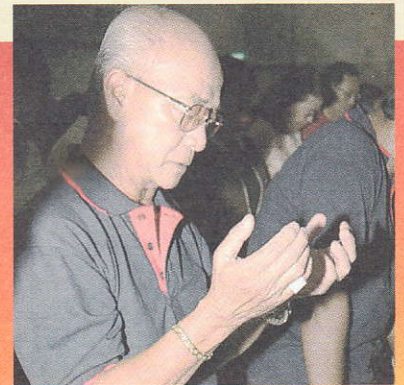
Can still bring glory to His wonderful Name.

- Gems from Auntie Pat

*"For they are transplanted into the Lord's garden
and are under His personal care.*

*Even in old age they will still produce
fruit and be vital and green."*

Psalm 92:13-14

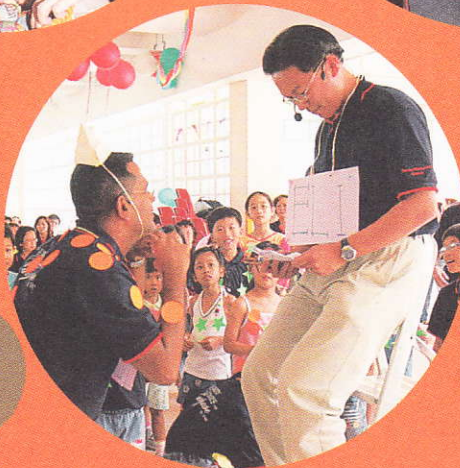


What on EARTH
am I here for?



40 DAYS
of PURPOSE

Celebration!



Celebration Sunday

*The grand finale of
the 40-day Purpose Driven Life (PDL) campaign*

by Amanda Yong

'Celebration' was the theme and it was in a celebratory mood indeed that Trinity Methodist Church on 27 March 2005 marked Easter and Celebration Sunday, which was the grand finale of the 40-day Purpose Driven Life (PDL) campaign. No effort was spared to enhance the atmosphere of festivity and rejoicing. The open plaza of the church premises was festooned with colourful streamers and balloons, and the Worship Hall was decorated with placards bearing memory verses from the PDL campaign, while the members who were clad in blue PDL polo T-shirts added to the carnival-like mood.

The day's programme kicked off with the traditional Easter Sunrise service at 7 am, followed by breakfast at 8.30am and a Combined service at 10 am.

The Celebration Sunday programme continued immediately after the Combined service with the participation of a few Small Groups including the Rock, which led the congregation in the singing of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs and the Village People, which performed an entertaining skit and a song. There was also feasting (a scrumptious catered lunch), fun and games (a treasure hunt for the young and young-at-heart!) all of which added to the revelry and merriment.

Many were also encouraged by the members who bravely stepped forward to glorify God by sharing their testimonies of how God had changed their hearts and their lives through PDL. Initially, the congregation was palpably surprised when Rev Philip Lim began his sermon "PDL 7—What Have We Learned?" by making the unusual move of coming down the stage towards the congregation, asking members to share the lessons they had learnt from the PDL campaign. However, as the members poured out their inspiring stories of lives transformed, minds renewed, and hopes restored during the Combined service, and in the Celebration Sunday programme that followed, it was certain that many hearts were indeed gladdened and moved.



A SMALL GROUP'S JOURNEY

by Eddy & Evelyn Cheong (Rock and Saved & Sanctified)

The decision by the church to adopt the Purpose Driven Life campaign church-wide is a God-send. We at the ROCK, together with the ladies from Saved & Sanctified (they have joined us for this season) embraced the opportunity to embark on this journey together.

Prior to this, one of the main challenges we faced as an SG was not unlike what other groups faced: how to move from a group where members are comfortable with each other to one where we dared to share our vulnerabilities and fears, where we can truly support, be accountable to, and spur one another unto love and good works.

Amazingly, we saw God working in our very first meeting for Week 1's reading: "What on Earth am I here for?" The session had a typically slow start with the usual more vocal people sharing. Then one sister began to share

her struggles, and another, and another, and we ended that night praying over the needs that were shared with freely flowing tears. What a night! We were all awed by how the Lord used the readings to minister to us, provided depth for our group discussion and granted boldness to our members to open up and share more freely about past hurts, failed expectations and inhibiting experiences.

On hindsight, God's perfect timing is once again clearly illustrated. Individually, our members are all going through challenging times in their lives. Coping with young children, career challenges, personal struggles, and handling difficult people are but some of them. So, it is no surprise that one of the most engaging sessions we had was "We were created to be like Christ - formed by troubles". Phrases like:

- "We know about Jesus when life is rosy but know Jesus only in suffering"
- "We learn things about God in suffering that we cannot learn in other ways"

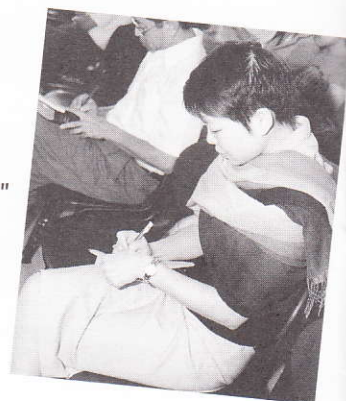
- "You'll never know that God is all you need until God is all you've got"

- "Every thing that happens to you has spiritual significance. Everything!"

- "It is vital to stay focused on God's plan, not your pain or problem"

...are reminders that there is a God-allowed reason for the very difficulties that we are going through now. At the end of the day, those who are experiencing trying periods found comfort that everything is in God's hand. We need to do our part in being obedient and continually trust in God who will in His own excellent timing unravel His marvellous plans. Hallelujah!

There was also a heightened awareness to invite new people to join our SG. We had several visitors, mostly invited by our members, and one of them now attends our service regularly! All glory be unto God! Through understanding God's purposes for us in worship, fellowship, discipleship, service and mission, it helps us understand our natural inclinations and to work on our weak spots, especially in outreach. One thing we did was to identify the people we care about who are pre-believers or



'back-slided' Christians and to commit to praying regularly for them. These are baby steps we have taken, intending to build them into a lifestyle.

The PDL has truly been a channel of God's abundant blessing in our Small Group and we look forward to living out His purposes for our lives with each other as accountability partners in our journey toward Christ-likeness. Thanks be to God!

Learning to be like Mary by Amy Cheong

My PDL journey started last year in June when my former Small Group, Potter's Clay, decided to study it, one chapter a week rather than one a day so that we could really go in-depth. Looking back, I see it was part of God's plan, to prepare me for my role as one of the PDL Small Group Facilitators, and the other SG members for the PDL Campaign.

When George Matthews asked me in early January if I would help in the Campaign as a Facilitator, I agreed immediately.

Immediately after, however, I started having doubts - we were only halfway through the book and how could I prepare in time? Would I HAVE the time, considering my job, family commitments, etc?

As the Campaign took off the Sunday before Ash Wednesday, I was busy rehearsing for Trinity Gospel Players' skit - *Meaningless*. As if the stress was not bad enough, my 92-year-old grandmother, who had been nursing a bad cough, developed pneumonia and had to be

hospitalised. Through all this, I learnt to just give it all to God. I was physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually exhausted. And yet I could still worship together with my family who found God to be so real in this crisis, fellowship with my friends, relatives and fellow church members who were a great source of comfort, and work on following Christ in living a life of discipleship.

Then there was the skit for Ministry Sunday entitled *Spiritual Gift Exchange*, just a month after the *Meaningless* one. That one needed 4 actors! Where would I get FOUR at such short notice? Once again, I put it in God's hands, and he delivered George Sathiasingam and Thomas Liao on a silver platter. By the week before the performance, we had still not found



our 4th actor. Then, by the information booth, God pointed out His choice - Yuet Lin. I was surprised as I knew she had never acted before, and was not comfortable with public speaking. Would she ever say yes? I

was most skeptical, but I followed the Holy Spirit's prompting and as many of you saw on 13 March, she performed beautifully. It was a most humbling experience. God can take the most difficult periods in my life and turn them into the most victorious.

In facilitating my PDL small group, I often felt inadequate and unworthy, but I pressed on, and God blessed me with a wonderful group of people, and a spiritual partner who was there for me in my ups and downs. Family Circle, I thank each and every one of you for this opportunity to share your lives and your PDL journeys. I am happy to say that Family Circle will continue as a new small group after this campaign.

I learnt in my PDL journey to lean on God, listen to and love His people, and follow in the footsteps of His Son, my Savior. And I have learnt to say in all circumstances, like Mary, "I am the Lord's servant."



OSC – Fulfilling His Commission by Chan Chong Wei

The Outreach and Social Concerns (OSC) Ministry has gradually shifted, in recent months, towards keeping its programmes firmly grounded, so as to be less ad-hoc. In the past, it was a hodge-podge collection of volunteers who provided the leadership and helped get the programmes going, many of whom were already overtaxed by commitment to other ministries. Now, all that is going to change and central to this is the setting up of a new ministry framework that consists of three new sub-committees. These are the Needy Families, Pelangi Home and Chen Su Lan sub-committees which will independently develop their own programmes. OSC chairperson, Mr William Chua, hopes to have a cadre of leaders bring about more focus and that translates into more commitment to the programmes within the subcommittees' respective offerings.

The Needy Family sub-committee, overseen by Ms Joyce Tan, will be starting the \$1 per month programme. With every contribution of a dollar a month from a church member, there will be a pool of funds of about \$2400 in six months. This will be used to succour the 7 needy families. This programme will

be long-running as the OSC does not wish to impose an additional financial burden to a church already stretched by its redevelopment project. Pelangi Home's concerns, though of less visibility, but of equal importance will be overseen by Ms Gillian Pang. A couple is considering taking up the appointment concerning Chen Su Lan at the time of writing.

Beyond the local scale but still within the OSC's purview, is a bigger project requiring the concerted effort of the 12 Methodist

churches in the District East, inclusive of Trinity Annual Conference (TRAC) and Chinese Annual Conference (CAC). The Women in Geylang (WIG) programme was mooted to pool together churches' resources to reach out to that stigmatized and socially dislocated segment of society. The programme is still in its preliminary stages. Please pray for directions for the organizing committee and that non-Methodist Churches can also be included in this outreach programme if possible.

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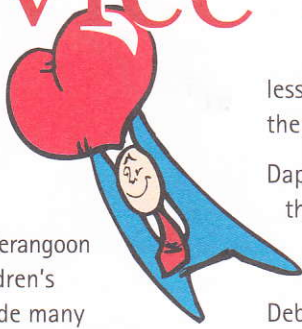
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Service of Love

by Patsy Ong

'Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others' 1 Peter 4:10



Since moving back to Serangoon Garden Way, the Children's Ministry (CM) has made many adjustments. For a start, instead of just having one 11am session for children in the pre-school and primary levels, it has had to conduct three sessions every Sunday to complement the Sunday Services and the Adult Bible Classes. Saltshaker takes a peek at what takes place on a typical Sunday...

Kindy and Nursery

Pre-schoolers join either the Kindy or the Nursery in the Kindergarten (room behind the sanctuary) at 8.45am and 11.00am on Sundays.

On this Sunday, the children first combined as a large group in a mini service before breaking into the Kindy and Nursery groups for their lessons. Halfway through the service, Auntie Sherry asked the children if they had something to share about how God had blessed them. Instantly, at least 4 hands shot up and Auntie Sherry had to pick the first two children who raised their hands and promise the others that they could share the following week. Little Isaac gave thanks to God for his brother who shared a new shoe with him while his friend Aston, thanked God for his sister who shared a toy with him. After that, a little girl held the offering bag gingerly as she passed it round the room. Parents and teachers were also on hand to guide their children to acknowledge God's provisions by giving back to God what He has given. The doxology was then sung.

Later, in their classes, the children in the nursery played with cut-out figures which were being used to tell a bible story while the Kindy children went through the lesson materials from their resource book, engaging in both discussion and crafts.

When asked why she decided to serve in this area, Angie, who has been helping out with the CM for a few months, said that after the membership classes she attended a few months ago, the ministry had been highlighted as one that needed help and she had come along to take a look. Her fear was that being a new Christian, if children were to ask difficult questions during the

lessons, she may not be able to answer them. Nonetheless, she was willing to try.

Daphne, the CM coordinator, highlighted that the greatest need currently would be for teachers in the 11am Kindergarten/Nursery. This is because Deborah, who has been helping out in CM for many years and who is the main teacher for the Kindy, will not be able to help out in the CM in the later part of the year. Also, the main teacher for the nursery, Eunice, would be going overseas for an extended period of time a few months later. The rest who are involved currently are mainly in the capacity of helpers.

Primary School

For the 8.45am service, the children in the primary level gather as one group for the CM. However, for the 11.15am group, which is much larger, the Primary 1-4 children and the Primary 5-6 children have separate sessions.

On this Sunday, in the *Hallelujah* room, there were approximately 25 children (Primary 1-4) and 5 teachers/helpers. Auntie Dorcas started by reminding the children of the reason for coming together, which was to sing praises to God. Next Auntie Leng Leng started the singing segment which included loud singing by the children and also a special segment whereby 3 children led the group in singing praises by using multi-coloured flags while singing the song 'Jesus, Name Above All Names'.

When asked how often flags were used as part of the worship, Dorcas said that this was the first time they were using the flags although they had let the children 'jump' and 'dance' previously or even use tambourines on occasions.

Concurrently, in the *Barnabas* room, there was another group of 25 children who were gazing intently at their songsheets in their files. Instead of a teacher leading the children in songs, there was a group of children, huddled around microphones, who had been designated to lead songs for the day while a radio played the music in the background.

Daphne explained that this was a deliberate effort to get the older children more involved in their spiritual growth by getting them to lead their own worship. She shared, 'I think the children are beginning to feel that they



have a place in the church. For example, during the Easter party, the P5-6s had prepared a skit and had thought that they were going to the sanctuary to perform for the congregation. So they were a little disappointed when they found out that they were just going to put up the skit at the CM celebration.'

After the songs segment, the children in the *Hallelujah* room broke up into smaller classes occupying a few of the level-three rooms while those in the *Barnabas* room stayed on for the week's lesson.

Asked how long they have been Sunday school teachers, Grace and Mercy said, 'We have stopped counting' (on further recollection, they estimated that it has been about 6-7 years). When asked how they have managed to serve in the CM all this time, they said immediately, 'By God's grace... and because there is no one else to do it.' On realising that they were going to be quoted in Saltshaker, Mercy quickly added, 'So whoever comes in, trust me, they will be equipped by God's grace.'

CM at 10am

Daphne noted that the current CM from 10-11am was more of a child-minding service so that parents who would want to attend the classes could leave their children there. The session could be as simple as watching over children in the Fellowship Lounge as they watched a video. However, there was a need for more help to do this. She also said that getting teachers who were willing to commit for the week-by-week teaching is a lot harder than getting volunteers for ad-hoc events.

In future, there are plans to start a 10am Disciple class for children in the CM who, being bored with years of going through the same bible stories, may need more in terms of spiritual food. While for the other CM sessions, the challenge is to get more teachers, for the Disciple class, the challenge could be more of getting parents to bring their children to the sessions as they did not coincide with the service times.

Do look for Daphne, email the church office, or just walk-in to the CM sessions if you are interested to help out in any way.