

# Sep

2005/

Trinity Methodist Church

M.I.T.A.(P) No.014/09/2005

# Saltshaker

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## Chinese Ministry Moving



*Brothers and sisters, pray along with us as we trust in the Lord to touch more hearts amongst us and let us join hands in ushering them into His kingdom.*

When news of the shift from the prayer chapel to the fellowship lounge broke out, apprehension abounded. A new environment meant orientation was necessary, especially for the elderly in our midst. Signages were put up, a mini 'tour' was conducted, furniture was shifted to make room for space and for the weekly delivery of biblical materials (there was a cupboard in the chapel where we previously worshipped).

Despite such inconvenience we were still blessed! We witnessed more visitors, warmer fellowship among the members and even more food. The excitement did not stop; 5 new believers including our very own beloved caretaker and his wife were baptised on

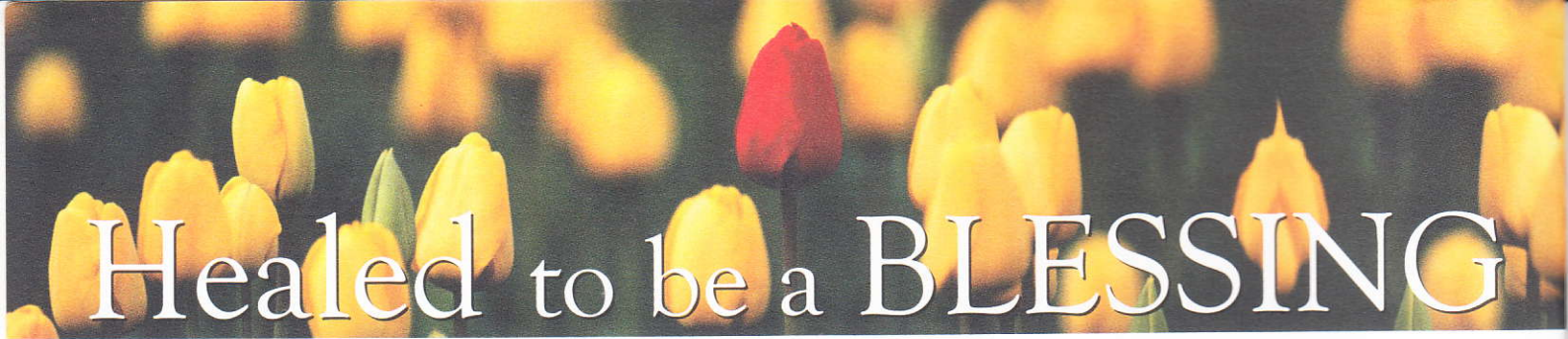
31st July 05 and 2 more had their membership transferred to our church. There were tears of joy, shouts of hallelujah and voices of praise as we witnessed the new believers making their way into the baptism pool. Family members and friends were there to share their joy.

Among the new believers, some had been holding on to their idols for years. It was heart-warming and encouraging as they took their step of faith to entrust their lives to the Almighty God and diligently seek to grow in Him. What's more, some of them have become regulars in our prayer meetings! We are expecting to see more of God's good works in our midst.

All glory be to Him!  
by Cindy Teo







# Healed to be a BLESSING

I was first introduced to Buddhism during a class outing to a temple in my secondary school days. Along with my other classmates, we attended lessons once a week on Buddhism conducted in English. However, as I found it difficult to relate to what was being taught, I soon lost interest and stopped attending the lessons. Not long after, I was intrigued to learn that the staunch and pious teacher who taught us had converted to Christianity.

Later in my teenage years, some friends asked me to join them in their church activities. I attended church and bible studies for only about a year without the knowledge of my parents who are Taoists. Regrettably, I did not continue and marriage to a very good husband who was a non-Christian then did not help to strengthen my faith. Though he was supportive and understanding towards my being a Christian, I had decided then to compromise and even rationalised to myself that I could worship the Lord in my heart without attending church on Sundays. For the sake of convenience, I failed to see the necessity and significance of worshipping and singing praises to the Lord in his Temple.

My absenteeism from church was never in God's plan for me. When my husband was posted for a year to work in the United States, the whole family attended church and I was touched by the Holy Spirit and received my baptism at the Shamrock Baptist Church. Upon our return to Singapore, I was not able to find a small church where my family could feel a sense of belonging. I was taking a very slow walk with God and that it did not help me to grow my faith in Him.

My long search for a church ended when my husband accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour in August 2002. At that time, he was diagnosed with mitral heart valve prolapse even though he had no symptoms. It was God who alerted me to the condition of my husband's heart and brought us out of our darkest moment to safety with guardian angels, helpers, and a skillful heart surgeon.

When my husband was wheeled into the operating theatre with his favourite Psalm 27 closed to his heart, I realised that our lives truly rested in God's hands and His Will for us. The operation took longer than expected and I did sense something was prolonging it. I paced up and down the corridor and anxiously prayed for God's help. I told Him I sensed difficulty in the operating theatre and I pleaded with Him to send someone to pray with me because I simply could not do it on my own. When I lifted up my head, the lift door next to the operating theatre opened, and there

was the familiar face of Rev Juliatt from Wesley Methodist Church. She was visiting some patients in the ward. We prayed together and God was indeed with us and in control of the whole crisis. He was at work in the operating theatre.

The operation was a resounding success even though it was prolonged when my husband's heart rejected a foreign object in the form of a ring that the heart surgeon was trying to put around the repaired valve to strengthen it. His heart had to be stopped twice when the surgeon found that his heart, in fact, functioned better without the heart-ring and that was what we have prayed to God for all along. It also meant that my husband was spared from taking Warfarin for life. It was indeed a miracle from God, especially when the whole hospital stay was only six days for such a major surgery.

We have learnt that it would be folly on our part to think that, for our convenience, we can function on our own without putting God first in our lives. If we earnestly seek God and put our complete faith and trust in Him and His Will, we will never be alone even in our times of suffering. He will be there for us to the very end. The bond between our heavenly Father and His children is unbreakable because of God's forgiving and merciful nature. He will not abandon us if we seek Him and ask for His forgiveness.

With God's help, we have been faithfully attending Trinity Methodist Church (TMC). For the past three years in TMC, we are grateful to God for enabling us to receive much joy from participating and serving Him in some of the activities. During our family crisis, I had asked God to give my husband the opportunity to serve Him on earth and for this reason, we have set up the Tent of Good Works Service Unit in TMC to enable our fellow church members to also experience the joy of co-labouring for the Lord. For all these, To God be the Glory!

*Diana Chee*

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Amanda Yong

saltshaker

## PHOTOGRAPHER

Andy Chew

## TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH

34 Serangoon Garden Way  
Singapore 555940  
Tel: 6282 4443 Fax: 6282 0094  
E-mail: churchoffice@tmc.org.sg  
Website: www.tmc.org.sg

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# TMC Membership Committee



Saltshaker catches up with Mr Yu Yong Horng, Chairperson of the Membership Committee, to find out more about his committee's work.

**Q:** What is the role of the membership committee in TMC?

**A:** In the past, the committee performed mainly an administrative role associated with the membership roll, for example, preparing birthday cards for members, arranging for welcome lunches for new members after baptism classes and the annual church anniversary lunch. However, starting from last year, we felt that there was a need to move on, particularly in 3 areas: (a) in encouraging members to be more involved in one another's lives; (b) in addressing the needs of new visitors; and (c) in answering to church members' needs in times of bereavement.

**Q:** Could you elaborate on the 3 areas of focus?

**A:** We wanted to encourage members to make the effort to know somebody else in church because in a Christian environment, what is important is not just going for the church service, but also the interaction amongst God's people. It is quite a challenge since TMC is quite a 'traditional' church where people are more comfortable mingling with people they know rather than to step beyond the 'boundaries' and talk to those they don't know. If people already find it hard to talk to other regular worshippers, it is even harder for them to talk to visitors and encourage them to come back. In the area of helping members to cope with bereavement, what is happening is that a group of church members are rotated to attend the bereavement services. However, sometimes these members do not know the people who have been bereaved so it's quite a challenge to think about how we can minister by just being there.

**Q:** What are some challenges faced by the committee?

**A:** One of the main challenges is in getting people to come forward not just to 'serve', i.e. helping administratively, handling logistics/meetings, but to 'minister' i.e. help/encourage somebody.

**Q:** Tell us a bit more about the people in the existing committee.

**A:** The existing committee has gone through some sort of a renewal. In the past, it used to be formed mainly by people who were involved in other committees. Even now, people like Pak Lin, Heather, Robert Yeo, Syn Wun, Jean, Kenga and Alvin Ho are heavily involved in other ministries. However, recently, new people like Chris Seah, Terence Ooi, Dennis Yong and Stephen Chow came forward to serve for various reasons. Some felt that the church did not cater enough for various groups and had the burden to do something about it. Others were people who, after the PDL, were willing to try and see if this is an area they can do something for God.

**Q:** What would you hope to see in the months ahead?

**A:** I hope that more people will be encouraged to come forward, especially in terms of the bereavement ministry. Currently, bereavement notices are sent to LCEC members and also membership committee members. However, the members helping out in the ministry often do not know the persons affected. In time to come, we hope to have a network of contact points such that people who know the persons bereaved can be quickly contacted and provide support during that period. At the moment, often by the time the notice is printed in the bulletin, the funeral service is over. We are also hoping to conduct a membership survey in the coming months. This will help us get a sense of the demographics of the church members and regulars so that the current ministries can better cater to their needs. We can also take the opportunity to update the membership roll. In terms of the Visitors' corner, which we are in the process of planning for, there would be a need for dedicated people to help out, not so much in the mechanics like setting up the table, but more so to relate to newcomers and tell them about TMC and what has God done for the church. Hopefully, we can build up a team of people to be proactive such that as soon as a visitor comes, he will be identified straightaway as a newcomer and be welcomed.

**Q:** How can the congregation at large help out in the work of the Membership Committee?

**A:** One way would be to consciously interact with one another. To take the initiative, trusting that God has a purpose for us to know one another. We are fellow-Christians and this relationship is different from, say, that of being fellow-colleagues. If we were only colleagues, where there are conflicts, there would be no need for these to be resolved, we just have to keep out of one another's way. But as fellow-Christians, God uses each one of us to sharpen others' faith and build each other up – so if conflicts should arise, we should work through them in love. Where there is forgiveness, there is reconciliation. Where there is reconciliation, there is unity. For we are one body in Christ. In this way the world may see the church as one body fulfilling the Great Commission of God's Salvation. Also, it is everyone's job – not just the usher's or the membership committee's – to ensure that visitors to the church are well taken care of. Another way would be to join the bereavement ministry. People who are willing to minister to other members during their times of loss can sign up with the membership committee.

If you would like to help out or minister to others by being part of the Membership Committee, please contact the church office.

by Patsy Ong





# The

# ABC

# Experience

by Chan Chong Wei

## ABC of old

There is so much about the Adult Bible Class (ABC) of old to reminisce about. The centre-piece to all that wonderful memory was the old Upper Room. Taking the trip down memory lane a little further, one recalls Ivan & Kiem's (Mr Ivan Tan and Ms Tan Kiem Kiok) strong teaching focus as the mainstay of the ABC.

## ABC Today

Like its predecessor, the ABC of today begins after the first service, from 10.30 a.m. to 11.15 a.m. at the Upper Room. Such similarities, however, belie the great strides that have been made. For instance, books studies in ABC are no longer aimed merely, at improving bible literacy amongst its students. As one of the ABC facilitators, Mr George Matthews, puts it: 'God gave us the great books to study so as to get His people to grow. What is He talking about in those passages? His purpose is to challenge people so that they translate what they have learnt into practical life. If the bible is not used, it is as good as the paper it is written on.'

Yet, the pastors and the Lay Ministry Staff (LMS) are only too aware of the constraints imposed by limited pulpit time and they hope that the ABC will help bridge the gap in meeting the congregation's needs. The practice of having the Pastor's sermon of the preceding week as the day's study agenda means that the ABC has become accessible to the congregation at large; not just those certain ABC faithfuls. Moreover, this ensures that the ABC will never drift into its own intellectual reverie.

Whilst not the same number of people will be quite taken with the pastor's message every week, so as to wish to attend ABC the following Sunday, its facilitators are quite prepared to meet any turnovers in class size. In fact, as Mr George Matthews puts it: 'Size does not matter. The focus is not on numbers. We will keep doing it if there is only one person. We do not look at numbers. If there is a need, we will meet it'.

How then, is this all possible? It all started with the Purpose Driven Life (PDL) campaign. It was an experiment then, to affirm the number of attendees. The PDL campaign began last year with a following of about 50. This year, it formally took off with an attendance of about 250. In any case, the PDL ended with a pool of 13 facilitators, all of whom had a better

grasp of the students' needs. This set the stage for the ABC to accommodate quite a crowd without having facilitator-group interactions suffer.

## Structure and Order

This season's bible study for the church is on the Sermon of the Mount. What is the most practical way to learn the beatitudes? Biblical truths are never taken in isolation of one another, and the Sermon was Jesus's first proclamation of God's kingdom. Theology of such will never quite come in small doses. How then, is it possible to put into practice things beyond one's complete grasp? Let's find out...

I attended one of the adult bible classes on Sunday and was given a workbook based on John Stott's 'Sermon on the Mount - 12 Studies for individuals or groups'. The workbook is delineated into sessions of one for each week. Of the 150 workbooks printed, 30 were used in ABC and the rest were given out to small groups.

At the beginning of the class, we broke up into 3 groups of about 7. I was in the Family Circle small group. Facilitating that group was small group leader Ms Amy Cheong, with her counterparts Messrs Lim Choo Siang and Ong Chwee Chew doing likewise in other groups. The atmosphere was relaxed. There was much room for spirited discussion amongst my group composed of home-makers and working adults. The issue of one's estimate of the self - Christian meekness - brought us to discussions of the dangers of certain worldly ethos such as that of meritocracy. Other seemingly disparate topics include: frustrated car drivers, issues about the maids, different approaches of parenthood in disciplining teenagers/small children, taking up issue of a brother facing injustice, the quirks of Hindi and so on. These personal experiences and perspectives gave flesh to the meaning of 'beatitudes'.

Given so much focus on life-application, can the conundrum of having such an approach without compromise on theological substance, be adequately addressed? Fortunately, yes, and that came in the form of the facilitators' gentle and opportune introduction on the concepts of legal, moral and social righteousness, as was espoused in 'The Message of The Sermon of The Mount' by John Stott.



# Christian Social Implication and Responsibility

*'You are the light of the world... let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.' Matthew 5:14,16*

According to UNICEF, 30,000 children die each day due to poverty. And they 'die quietly in some of the poorest villages on earth, far removed from the scrutiny and concern of the world. Being meek and weak in life makes these dying multitudes even more invisible in death.'

That is about 210,000 children each week or just under 11 million children each year. 210,000 children is equivalent to 130 primary schools with 40 children in each class. Or imagine 525 blocks of HDB dwellers (4 per household) dying every week.

5 years old is when a child is beginning to communicate and knows how to express pain. While we live in abundance, let's remember that there are children out there crying for help.

- Number of children in the world: 2.2 billion
- Number in poverty: 1 billion (every second child)

Shelter, safe water and health (for the 1.9 billion children in the developing world):

- 640 million without adequate shelter (1 in 3)
- 400 million with no access to safe water (1 in 5)
- 270 million with no access to health services (1 in 7)

50% of the children in this world suffer from the effects of poverty. No doubt many will be abused or exploited as sex workers, drug pushers and cheap labour.

So, now that all of us know Jesus' kingdom manifesto, what next? How does that square with our take on what it is to live righteously? Being familiar with PDL's five pillars of worship, discipleship, evangelism, fellowship and ministry, the group was able to pass lightly on the all-embracing aspects of the righteousness being declared by Jesus. All that was necessary was a brief rehash by facilitator Mr George Matthews.

My earlier apprehensions of being bludgeoned into indifference by too much theology, had disappeared with this pedagogical sleight of hand. Being drunk on the Word places us in the position of knowing God's purpose for us. The prayer, as printed for that session was: 'Dear God, please satisfy my hunger and thirst as I study the Sermon of the Mount.' I believe that ABC has been a fine instrument for that as it will be for other studies. Anyone who is interested need not be worried about rigid adherence to class schedules - one of the facilitators Ms Amy Cheong could even leave halfway to attend to her ministry!



An analysis of long-term trends shows the gap between the richest and poorest countries was about:

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| • 3 to 1 in 1820  | • 44 to 1 in 1973 |
| • 11 to 1 in 1911 | • 72 to 1 in 1992 |
| • 36 to 1 in 1950 |                   |

Although the latest statistic on the gap is not available, it is obvious that the 'haves' versus the 'have-nots' is getting bigger. As we progress economically, the weak and poor are the victims of our successes.

Approximately 790 million people in the developing world are still chronically under-nourished, almost two-thirds of whom reside in Asia and the Pacific.

## What is Christian social implication?

*'If there is a poor man among your brothers in any of the towns of the land that the LORD your God is giving you, do not be hardhearted or tightfisted toward your poor brother. Rather, be openhanded and freely lend him what he needs.'*

*-Deut. 15: 7 & 8*

True outreach is from seeing and giving, not just giving and not seeing. Join Outreach and Social Concerns to touch someone's life. Contact TMC at 62824443 or email William at [jconnect@pacific.net.sg](mailto:jconnect@pacific.net.sg)

*by William Chua*

## Order and Sense

According to Ms Charlotte Foo, the ABC allows her to: 'enrich knowledge and supplement what pastor has touched upon.' Indeed, it does but that may not be the case for all sessions. Owing to liaising difficulties, it is hard to match the ABC strictly to the preachers' message. That may result in confusion should ABC's approach and the pastors' message come into conflict. ABC facilitators do not wish to second-guess each preacher's train of thought. It is up to participants to figure out the connection between preacher's message and the ABC's approach, which rests on biblical basis.

With that much emphasis on living life according to the living word, ABC is certain to put its participants well on the road to Christian living and witnessing. So it is worthwhile to drop in at the Upper Room for a visit. In the words of Mdm Ong Sok Eng: 'Come and experience the group.'





The Amazing gRace was amazing in all senses of the word – incredible, terrific, outstanding, and a smashing success. The hard work and efforts of the organizing committee certainly paid off as all the participants (in a total of 40 cars) enjoyed not only great fun but also a wonderful time of fellowship.

Having signed up for it without realizing the time we were supposed to meet – a bright and early 8 a.m. – I must admit that I dragged myself out of bed asking if this car rally was really worth my precious beauty sleep, especially on a Saturday morning. These doubts however quickly dissipated once the car rally started.

It was an adrenalin pumping morning ahead, as we cracked our brains and utilised every single brain cell in guessing the clues that the committee had come up with. The clues were challenging and provided good fun as the groups raced to outwit and "out-speed" each other to chalk out the most points.

Groups were tasked to complete as many clues as they could, from the various zones. The various parts of Singapore were broken up into North, South, East, West and Central, with

each zone consisting of 5 questions to be answered. Groups had to attempt to answer at least a question each from 3 zones to be in the running for the prizes.

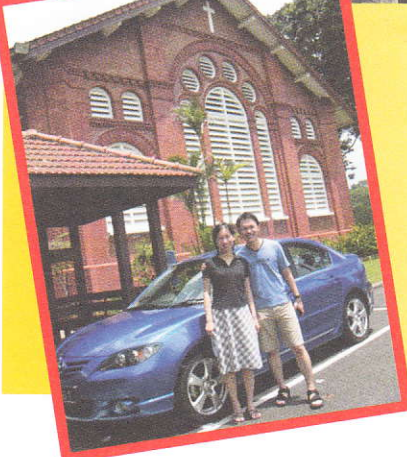
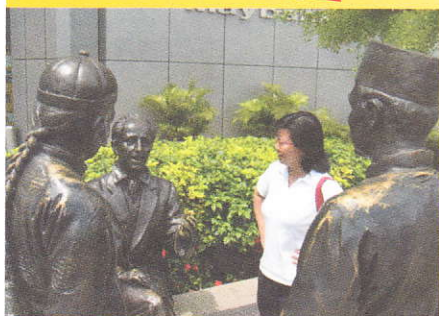
There were also bonus points to be given out for groups that dressed either themselves or passers-by in "the armour of God", made from newspapers and other materials. This provided some opportunities for us to introduce ourselves and our church to the people we met. These passers-by amazed many of us by going the distance to provide help. Those we met, including a security guard on duty, gamely donned the "armour" that we made.

It was indeed a time of warm fellowship, as we got to know family and friends that were being brought for the car rally. The cryptic clues certainly made it essential for teamwork and discussions, with these also serving as conversation starters as we gathered after the rally. To provide you a sense of exactly how cryptic the clues were, here are some examples:

- a. Red and White and Red and White, candy canes reaching for the sky. Follow the Admiralty to the Valley and if you see double you'll know you're not in trouble, just look for the green sign pointing three different ways. List what is shown by the arrows. [8 points] What is the use of the other pair of chimneys? [4 points]
- b. In the midst of 'Bahtera' forest near the Sandy beaches, where young Scout, Christine and Moe have their many adventures. Can you find Christine's favourite game? [10 points] Where does Moe live? [5 points] How may flags can Scout raise? [5 points]
- c. This Base once held fond memories for those who enlisted into the army, it is now relatively deserted except for a few shops with a famous Indian fish-head curry restaurant at one end, and an old church at the other. What is the name of this church? [4 points] When was it built? [2 points] Who is the vicar? [1 point]

Through the rally, many got to know other members of the church better, brothers and sisters whom we would not usually have had much interaction with. A group of youths established great rapport with a team from the Chinese Ministry, as both cars constantly found themselves racing to the same places. Friendships and camaraderie were forged as the groups sought to find the shortest routes to the destinations and traded their adventures after the race.

Indeed, all glory be to God for this fun-filled event. For those who participated, we are already looking forward to the car rally being an annual affair, gearing ourselves for yet another challenge!

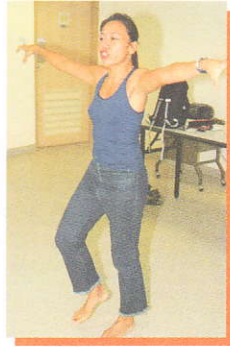






by Eugenia Koh

## FUN(D)RAISING AEROBICS



If you happen to walk by the Abraham room, otherwise known as the fellowship lounge, between three to four o'clock on Sunday afternoons, the sight you are likely to be greeted with is of a small group of ladies jumping, hopping and punching their fists to the pulsating beat of techno music. Or, in more dignified—but no less painful—moments, you might see these ladies engaged in a variety of graceful Pilates poses.

Conducted by Jane Tan, a TMC member and certified fitness instructor, the "Stretch and Tone" exercise class kicked off on 14 Aug 05. With the aim of raising funds for the church, the exercise class also provided the participants with an energy-boosting, heart-pumping workout.\*

Although only four of the estimated 10 people who signed up for the class showed up for the first two lessons, those who were present thoroughly enjoyed themselves. The grimaces on the faces of the participants belied the fun and satisfaction they derived from pushing their bodies and working out some rarely used muscles. Due to the intimate class size, Jane was able to tailor the exercises—a combination of cardio, aerobics and Pilates—to suit the varying fitness levels and preferences of the participants.

Fun, fitness, fellowship and fundraising—who would have thought they could go together? Sneak a peek into the Abraham room on Sunday afternoons, and you would be surprised.

*\*Each participant paid \$180 for 10 lessons. Full proceeds went to the TMC redevelopment fund.*

by Amanda Yong

## TRAC Special Session

The Trinity Annual Conference (TRAC) Special Session is held every year in July. This year's session was conducted in Trinity Methodist Church (TMC).

The purpose of the Special Session is to allow the delegates from all the TRAC churches to make decisions on immediate issues which cannot be delayed till the TRAC Annual Conference. The Conference is held annually towards the end of the calendar year.

One matter on this year's agenda, which concerned TMC, was the confirmation of ordination for Members-On-Trial (MOT). Our Assistant Pastor, Lai Kai Ming, who is one of the MOTs, will be ordained as a Deacon on 24 November 2005 during the Annual Conference.

Trinity Methodist Church will be hosting the Annual Conference from 21 to 24 November 2005.

by Andy Chew







Farewell lunch with the church staff

## TMC Administrator Bids Goodbye

It was in July 1996 when I officially stepped into TMC as the first Church Administrator. Time flies and, without realising it, I have stayed with TMC for over 9 years.

Being the first can be a "guinea pig" experience but I count it a great blessing to have the opportunity to help set up a proper office and put in place the various administrative systems. It was also an eye-opener to discover and experience what goes on in the church office and what takes place behind those church activities that happen Sunday after Sunday and on special occasions.

The past 9 years also gave me the opportunity to help bring about the transformation of the physical church office from a container-like office, to one with rooms/workstations on the ground level, and finally to a corporate kind of office within a spanking new complex that soaks up all the available built-up space. I thank God for His divine

plan that allowed me to spend 4 years with the Church Redevelopment Committee to develop His project which is a shining jewel in Serangoon Garden, and am very thankful to be associated with it. It is my dream and prayer that this jewel will attract and draw people far and near to this place of worship and to experience His love together as a family of God.

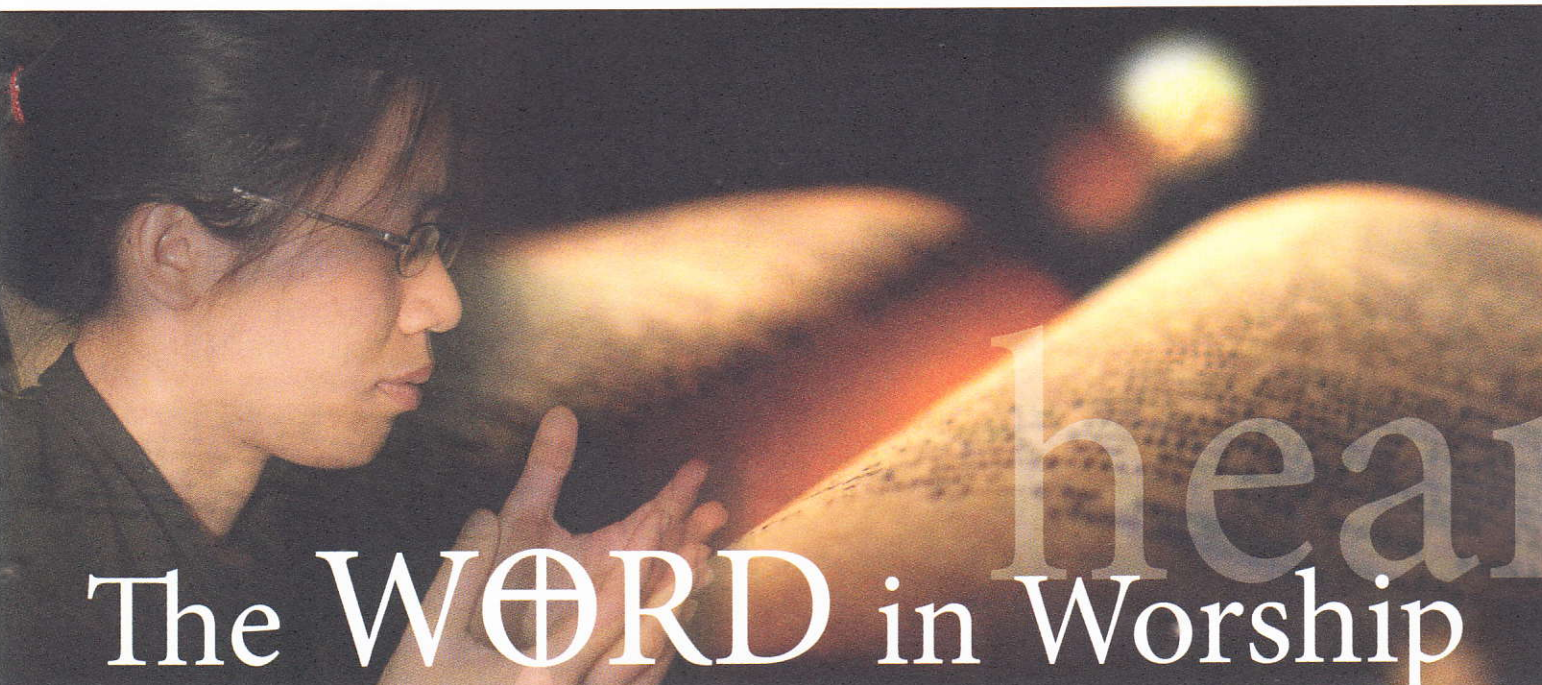
Serving full-time in TMC enabled me to work side-by-side with the church leaders. It allowed me to see the love for God and passion for His works exemplified by these faithful servants who have laboured in love unconditionally for many good years. I also experienced the love of God and His healing spiritually and physically at the Friday Prayer Fellowship.

I want to thank deeply the Pastor-in-Charge (my boss), Assistant Pastor, LCEC Chairman, Lay Leaders, the Laity, colleagues, members and friends of TMC for working patiently with me and making my service in TMC a memorable one. Last but not least, a big hug to those (you know who you are) who have been very responsive to my calls for help in big and small tasks.

I look forward to keeping in touch with all at TMC.

Praise God for He is good all the time.

Elsie Teo



# The WORD in Worship

Saturday May 27, 2005, Methodist Centre, Barker Road – it was with much anticipation that I sat down, together with about 20 other participants from various Methodist churches, for the "Word in Worship" workshop (one of 13 music & worship workshops run during the Aldersgate commemoration events in May this year). The session was led by none other than our Bishop Robert Solomon. In his usual engaging way, Bishop led us to reflect on the role of God's Word in worship, teaching and expounding along the way.

### Role of Word in Worship

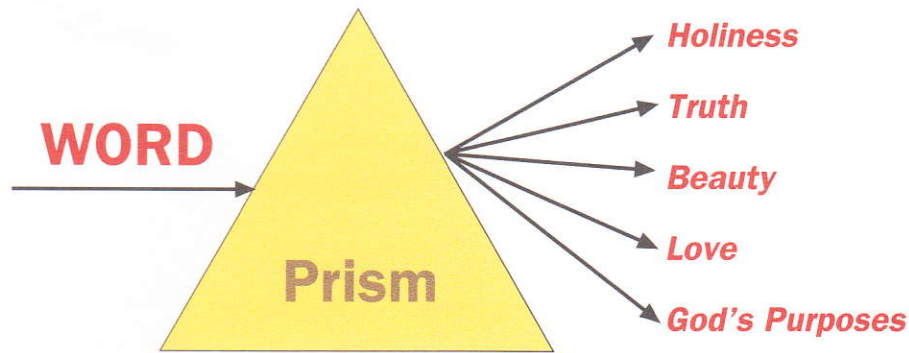
Bishop began by painting a picture that he felt best represents and

helps us understand the role of God's Word in our worship, drawing from a quote by William Temple.

*'To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God'. – William Temple*

God's Word used properly in worship brings awareness of holiness, truth, beauty, love and God's purposes. Pictorially, one can think of the process as God's Word going through a prism and causing a five-fold effect.





The pastoral ministry is really the ministry of *the Word and the Sacraments*. In the Word, Jesus is audible; in the Table, He is visible. Without the Word there is no church. Without the Word there is no genuine worship. In worship, the spirit and the Word come together. In the early church, the Word played an important role in protecting churches against heresy, whilst the Table addressed the problem of disunity. Looking back at history, the focus of worship had actually shifted from the Table (Sacraments) during the medieval times, to the Word in the Reformation period, and it appears that today, it is music and singing. Our worship experience, however, should be a balanced diet, primarily of the Word and Table. If we are not careful with our focus, we could find ourselves feeding on an unbalanced diet and ending up spiritually anaemic.

Participants were given an interesting insight on the significance of the **Spoken Word** compared to the written word. We were asked to reflect on which is more important – the spiritual capacity to see or hear? What we see is the reality but it may not be the truth. When we hear the Word, it is the Truth. When truth challenges reality, we must listen to the truth (what we hear). We were told that the desire only to see makes us self-centred. The act of hearing, however, makes us God-centred. Just like people in OT times who received visions which needed to be interpreted before they understood what the visions meant, we need to hear to understand what we see. The power of God's spoken word is described in Isaiah 55:11 and has a special life and creative power of its own not found in the written word. In many of today's worship services where scripture reading is often not given a proper place or even omitted, we need to recover the act of proclaiming God's Word and the hearing of such words as an essential component of the worship service. The reading of God's Word (scripture reading) in the worship service should be an important ministry, requiring readers to be trained and equipped to read with thought and skill. I am glad that TMC is doing precisely that.

### Why is the Word important in Worship?

The Word gives us the focus of who we are worshipping. John 1:1 tells us that Jesus is the Word (LOGOS), the Incarnate God. The Word is God's revelation of Himself to us and worship is our response to His revelation. God's spirit works through His word. Colossians 3:16 suggested that even in our singing of hymns and spiritual songs, it is best done using God's words.

### Where does the Word feature in the worship service?

In the context of the Sunday service, one tends to think of God's Word only in the scripture reading and the preaching, but God's Word is actually woven into so many different parts of the worship service, viz.

- Scripture verses in the bulletin for meditation before start of service
- Use of scriptures/psalms in the Call to Worship
- Singing of the psalms directly, or hymns/songs based on scriptures
- Use of the Decalogue or *beatitudes* to remind us of our shortcomings before a holy God
- Responsive reading using scriptures/psalms
- Use of scriptures during prayer time
- Saying of the Creed (Nicene)
- Use of scriptures in the benediction
- Use of scripture verses in the physical environment e.g on banners, posters
- At the Table (Holy communion) – God's word is made visible

*"To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God".*

~William Temple

### Summing it up

At the end of the workshop, I gained a new awareness and appreciation of the significance and place of God's word in worship. Our worship needs to be balanced, with due emphasis on the Word and the Sacraments, even as we employ music and singing to convey and enhance the worship experience. As we come together each Sunday to worship God, His Word actually 'encounters' us at every stage of the service – in our hearing, our reading, our singing, our praying and our seeing. I wonder how many of us come to church on Sundays with the expectation of encountering God's Word? I wonder too if God has a word for each of us every Sunday.

Above and amidst the music/singing and rituals of the worship service, I know now that I will need to keep my spiritual ears and eyes opened to His Word, lest I miss out on the encounter – be it of His holiness, His truth, His beauty, His love or His purposes.

by Yip Syn Wun



# “Worship as Spiritual Formation”

At Aldersgate 2005 in May, this topic caught my attention. What is the purpose of worship? Is it possible for church-goers to walk away from a service untouched? Have some worship services become mere rituals or entertainment? In worship, who is the object?

We were reminded of Acts 2:32-47 which described how the apostles practised the following which we observe at Sunday service :

- **Praising God.** When we give thanks to God, we realise how blessed we are and we are able to give and bless others.
- **Re-telling the Story of God.** Stories in the Bible tell us about God and His people. It brings human aspirations and hopes into perspective.
- **Acknowledging God.** Worship is an acknowledgement of who we are in the sight of God.
- **Interceding for others.** Prayer is an act of worship– the church needs to pray for the world. Through communal prayer, we show compassion toward others in the same way that Christ showed compassion toward us.
- **Expecting to Receive the Grace of God.** Through the prayer of confession and Holy Communion, we are reminded of the grace of God.

Sunday or corporate worship brings about a two-fold action – it glorifies God and it sanctifies the time, place and every relationship. In Galatians 4:19-20, Paul spoke of the character of Christ to be formed in believers. Corporate worship invites us to a transcendent perspective of God and re-aligns our relationships to God, other believers and the world. For example, when we pray, we bring others' needs to God, as well as our own and in so doing, we experience God in a marvellous way. In the process, we are transformed to be more like Christ, serving in the community.

Who is the object of our worship? If we look again at Acts 2, it is clear that the Christian faith is about our relationship

with God and others. It is not about self-gratification. The Sunday service teaches us to worship God and reminds us of our responsibility towards others.

Is 'service' equivalent to only the sermon and 'worship' just the music? The preaching of God's Word is one act of worship in the service, and so is the music. While musical instruments have been a great help for us to 'make a joyful noise unto the Lord', they are but tools. We adore a Living God who desires us to worship Him 'in spirit and in truth' and that can only come from the hearts of His beloved children – no less! So, if we have been coming to service expecting only to listen to the sermon or the music, pause and think again – we are missing other important acts of worship such as prayer, tithes and offerings, and our experience cannot be wholesome without these.

If God is the focus of our worship, we need to come to church prepared with a heart that reveres Him. Whether the service has 'touched' us depends not just on what is presented but also what is received. An unprepared heart can neither give nor receive. An unprepared heart focuses on the wrong object e.g. the things and the people, instead of on God.

Our Heavenly Father is not only concerned about us on Sundays, but every single moment of our lives. If we are called to present our bodies as living sacrifices and to renew our minds continually with the mind of Christ, should we only seek to experience God on Sundays? By compartmentalising Him on Sundays, what we are really saying is that we do not acknowledge God as the Lord of our lives from Monday to Saturday.

Worship therefore has to be a lifestyle that helps us in our spiritual formation process. When we truly worship God, we do not demand Him to do for us the things we ask for. Rather, we learn to listen to what He has to say and what He wants us to do. Responding in obedience is the surest way to receive His abundant blessings! He has nothing but the best for us, if only we co-operate with Him. Hallelujah!

by Sim Sok Hian

## Trinity Methodist Church Golf Tournament 2005

*Rev Christopher Smith Trophy*

19 October (Wed) @ Orchid Country Club

Fees: Donation Flight – \$1600 for 4 players  
Single entry – \$300  
Flight of 4 players – \$1120

(Fees include goodie bag, green fees, buggy & dinner)

Format of play : System 36

Hole-in-one prize : \$80,000 cash





# A happy learning environment by Melissa Koh

## TMC KINDERGARTEN

*The aim of the kindergarten is to nurture children in every aspect of their development by providing a stimulating, safe and happy learning environment.*

Since the beginning of this year, TMC Kindergarten has opened its doors to the pre-schoolers living in the surrounding neighbourhood as well as those in our congregation. Its mission statement is 'To be a Christian institution that nurtures children to be intelligent independent learners and morally upright, socially respected and responsible members of the community.' The aim of the kindergarten is to nurture children in every aspect of their development by providing a stimulating, safe and happy learning environment. It also carries out programmes that provide opportunities for children to actively acquire knowledge and skills that would enable them to be self-motivated, independent and capable learners.

The kindergarten initially started with 7 children but has increased its intake to 13 in the second semester, and is looking forward to an intake of 30 children by the start of next year. This gradual but steady increase in students indicates that the kindergarten's curriculum, vision and aim make for an attractive environment for parents and

guardians to place their children in. What was a most surprising discovery, however, was that the majority of the children enrolled at the kindergarten did not belong to members of the church's congregation. In fact, many non-Christians were enrolling their children in the kindergarten. Ms Susan Chua, the current principal of the kindergarten, hastened to explain that this was because the late Mrs Alice Lim (ex-principal) had developed a good reputation for the kindergarten. Hence, many of the people living nearby find it a good set-up for their children to learn in.

This is a most encouraging sign since one of the key objectives of the TMC kindergarten is to be an outreach ministry into our neighbourhood. In May this year, the kindergarten worked with the WSCS ladies to hold

an open-house as well as a Parenting Day. Coming up on 10th September, another open-house cum registration day will be held with the added benefit of free medical check-ups for the parents. However, there is an urgent need for



volunteers. Susan said that during the PDL fair held earlier this year, a booth had been set up to enlist volunteers for the TMC Kindergarten. She highlighted that the kindergarten and church badly needs more volunteers to help befriend these non-Christian parents and it is her hope that the congregation will join together to pray for more people willing to take some time out to reach out to these non-Christians who have already taken the first step towards Christ by placing their children in His school.

*If you would like to help out in the TMC kindergarten outreach efforts, please approach Susan Chua or contact the church office.*





## EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

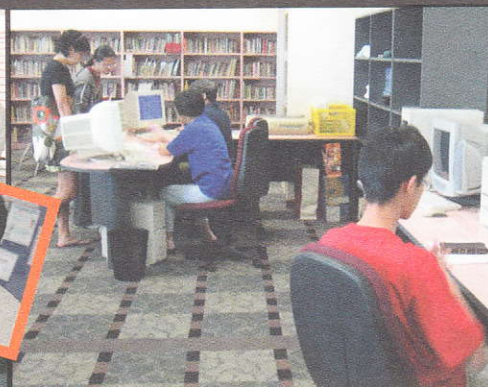
### WSCS Meetings



Sharing of God's gifts - a cooking demo by Maggie product line



### TMC Resource Centre



Come & check out the latest resources

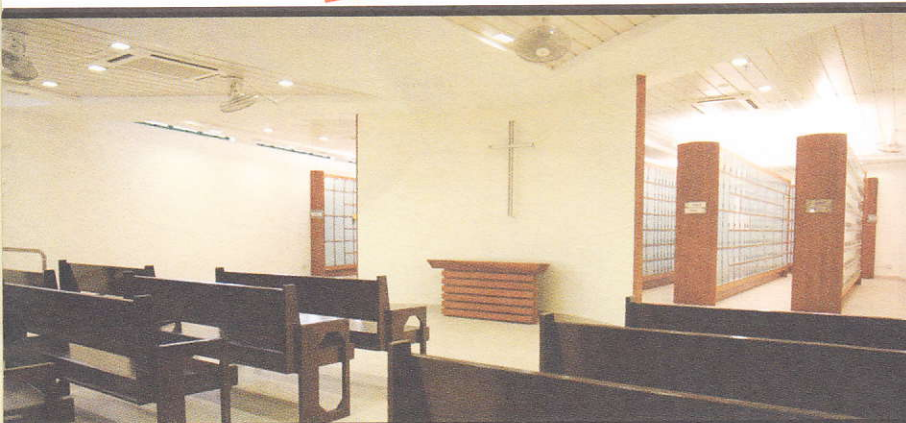
TMC Resource Centre opens every Sunday, 10am - 1pm @ Benjamin, Level 2



### GB Enrolment 2005



GB Enrolment & Dedication Service



## The Chapel of Life in Trinity Methodist Church



and prayer. The Chapel's opening hours are from 10.00am to 7.00pm daily (including Public Holidays).

There are about 2,400 niches for single and double urns. These are on a 75-year lease starting from 2005. Select a niche for yourself and your loved ones. Niches are available for booking now and all donations will go towards the Trinity Methodist Church Redevelopment Fund.

For enquiries, please call Tel: 6282 4443.

Trinity Methodist Church has been redeveloped to cater to the needs of a growing ministry. Among the new facilities is a columbarium - 'The Chapel of Life' - located at the basement of the redeveloped church building. The air-conditioned columbarium's design and finishings include frosted glass plaques for the niches. This makes for a warm and restful setting, not just to keep the ashes of loved ones, but also for quiet contemplation, devotion

### DONATION AMOUNTS\*

Level	Single	Double
7	\$2,500	\$4,500
6	\$3,250	\$5,875
5	\$4,000	\$7,250
4	\$4,000	\$7,250
3	\$3,375	\$6,125
2	\$2,750	\$4,875
1	\$2,250	\$4,000

\*subject to terms and conditions

For members, minimum donation amount will be lower.

- TMC members: 20% less
- Other Methodist Church members: 10% less



Chapel of Life, Trinity Methodist Church: B1, 34 Serangoon Garden Way, Singapore 555940  
Tel: 6282 4443 Fax: 6282 0094 E-mail: churchoffice@tmc.org.sg Website: www.tmc.org.sg