



by Lim Sue Yien

Martha's Bustle & Mary's Balance



As you partake of Holy Communion in our church, do you ever wonder how the table came to be laid so carefully with white lace cloth over the elements? Who actually prepared the "wine" and the bread? What brand of grape juice do they use? How do they get the juice into all those tiny cups?

Family Circle formed out of a small group of people who were experiencing the "Purpose Driven Life" Church Engagement Programme together in 2005 during Lent. Amy, the SGL, was the facilitator for the programme, and was approached by some of the participants to start a small group after the programme ended. The "pioneer" members were Chui Lin, Katherine, Sok Eng, Sandra and Charlotte, who has since moved on to another small group. The other members are Grace, Lena, Aileen, Stephanie, Anita and Irene. Family Circle used to meet every Sunday for an hour between the 8.45 and 11.15 services, but in order to accommodate commitments to various ministries that the members were involved in, the meetings have been cut down to the 2nd, 4th and 5th Sundays in a month.

Due to the very short meeting time, about 30 to 40 minutes are spent in study, and the rest is spent in sharing, fellowship and praying. The SG did the "What's So Amazing About Grace" CEP together in 2006, and followed that with Phillip Yancey's "The Jesus I Never Knew", then "Women of the Bible", and now "Men of the Bible". This desire to know the Bible better and deeper stemmed from the story of

Mary and Martha. All the ladies in the SG will freely admit that they live very busy "Martha" lives working, looking after their families and getting involved in various ministries in church, so the regular SG meetings, in addition to their individual Quiet Times, provide the "Mary" balance.

In 2008, Family Circle was approached to prepare the Holy Communion Elements and Table on a monthly basis. The ladies prayed about it and decided to sacrifice sleep one Sunday a month and arrive in church at 7.15am to prepare the Elements together with Soo Yee, who is not with Family Circle, but who also serves faithfully side by side with her sisters in Christ. With bleary eyes and shaky hands, the ladies pour out the grape juice into hundreds of the tiny Holy Communion cups in less than half an hour with the help of... wait for it... SOYA SAUCE BOTTLES! Yes, the humble tau yew bottle has a higher calling! On the 1st Sunday of each month, the ladies fellowship over this menial yet very important aspect of church life, and feel honoured to serve the Lord and His church this way. Through the years, many different brands of grape juice have been used, including Ribena (which quickly lost out as it is technically NOT grape juice but blackcurrant!) and for the past 2

years or so, the "Berri" brand seems to be in favour for the rich, dark red colour and flavour.

Could you do more as a small group? Would you want a simple but fulfilling activity that everyone in your group, both young and old, could participate in, and help the church? For starters, the Saltshaker that you are now reading needs hands to help it into envelopes. We print 700 copies once every two months that are mailed to each member's household and neighbouring churches.

If your small group is interested to help, please contact Dawn in the church office.

About Small group connect... This feature is brought to you by the small group committee at Trinity Methodist church. It seeks to bring and integrate small groups into the church life of trinity Methodist church. It features one small group per month.

More about small groups at TMC can be found at www.tmc.org.sg/smallgroup.html, Park Ming at Parkming@tmc.org.sg or 62824443