

Serangoon Small Group: A Trip Down Memory Lane



“THE BIBLE KNOWS
NOTHING OF SOLITARY
RELIGION”

JOHN WESLEY

BACK ROW: ROBERT YEO, WOON WEI TUCK, HELEN TIO, CHONG HONG BIN, AL ICE CHONG, LIN DA WEE, PAUL NG, E UNICE YEO, LUCY LA U, CATHERINE PANG'SH ELPER, JEAN SANTA MARIA.
SEATED: MRS WOON CHIK NEO, ADELINE CHIA, MONA LEE, CATHERINE PANG AND HEATHER PATES.
ABSENT: ROSLYN TEO, LILY THAM, TAN POH LING.
PHOTOGRAPHER: DAISIE YIP

Back in the day when policemen wore shorts (literally), Trinity Methodist Church was a much smaller place. Most of the church community was organised into 3 parish groups, Serangoon, Seletar and City, based on where members lived. Each parish had 20-30 members. Members took turns to host regular meetings in their homes, where there would be a whole lot of food, fellowship, singing of hymns....almost like a glee club (for younger readers, not “GLEE” the TV Series on Fox but glee clubs, where folks sit around and enjoy each others company by singing songs). Pastors attended parish meetings in those days to teach from the word, pray for members, and basically tend to their sheep in a time where there were no mobile phones nor Facebook by which to do so.

These were the humble beginnings of the Serangoon small group. Led by Mr Wong Yow Chuen until his passing in December 2002, Serangoon Parish as it was then known, was one of the pioneer small groups of this church. Affectionately known as “BG Wong”, Mr. Wong led his group with enthusiasm. He would pick up the phone to call each member reminding them to come to the next meeting.

After 2002, the group disbanded for 2 years when it became difficult to find homes to host meetings. Members were getting on in age and meeting regularly became difficult when the church was using the premises at Paya Lebar Methodist Girls’ Primary School.

However through the support of the Lay Ministry Staff and the pastors, combined with the determination of Robert and Heather to serve, the Serangoon Parish started to meet again under a new name, the Serangoon Small Group.

Today the group meets every third Thursday of the month in the Prayer Chapel. Paul and Heather take turns to lead bible studies of major books like Joshua and Judges to a group of 15-18 members. With the average age close to 70, there are valuable life experiences shared at each meeting, not to mention humour, encouragement, love and a healthy dose of emotional support, in the spirit of John Wesley’s original “Methodist societies”.

Not content to merely look inward, the group supports the ministry of June and Kari, 2 missionaries now based in Valencia, Spain, by offering their prayer and financial support. Whenever the couple return to Singapore, they get invited to the small group meetings. Sometimes, Serangoon SG will team up with Seletar SG to host these meetings, or get-togethers at Christmas known for its amazing food and sing-alongs. Last year’s mooncake festival dinner was organized by Serangoon SG, still fondly remembered by all who participated.

While every small group has its own issues, the one wish of this group is to see some new faces! So do drop by TMC’s Prayer Chapel if you’re in the neighbourhood on the third Thursday evening of every month.

ABOUT SMALL GROUP CONNECT...

THIS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED 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.

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*“WATCH OVER ONE
ANOTHER IN LOVE”*

JOHN WESLEY
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