

The Critchleys in Singapore 2002

History

In October 2001 I was privileged to be involved in leading worship and sharing in meetings/conferences during the visit the President of the TRAC Methodist Church, Singapore and a number of his fellow Singaporean ministers.

This was a wonderful time of fellowship, friendship and an opportunity to network across the nations.

In March of 2002 I received an invitation to visit Singapore with my family to Minister in my Worship Leading role and to teach/enable seminars for musicians.

Having accepted the invitation, time seemed to quickly roll by and November arrived with a sense of excitement about what God had called me to offer and a real sense of also being sent to receive.

Prayer

I have to say that the period just prior to our trip was filled with the most intense period of prayer support we have had. It seemed to confirm that God wanted to fill us with His enabling and anointing to carry out His work for this time.

We had prayer from our Class Meeting, Church Prayer Meeting, 2C7 City Prayer Initiative, Headway National Prayer Conference and were aware of many other prayers being raised on our behalf for ability in ministry, safety and security.

Leaving the UK

On the 18th November we set off from Manchester Airport, not quite believing that God's adventure with us had begun but all anticipating a new culture and new opportunities.



Sam, Lily and Jessica prepare for the 16 hour haul!

The Children were looking forward to riding in the clouds and with the blessing of window seats and sky cots all was prepared for the journey to the other side of the globe!



Lily Mae over Baghdad

Time to adjust

Having arrived at Changi airport (in the rain) We immediately felt the change in temperature and were met by Pastor Sng Chong Hui who was to be our host. The pastor stayed with us during his visit during October 2002 and was the one who was instrumental in our ministry trip to this part of the world.



Sam and Jessica in the Botanical Gardens

For the first couple of days we really were given a chance to settle into our new home and to see some of the sights of this lovely island.



Sam, Zac, Nat & Jessica (Jurong Bird Park)

Musicians Workshop

The first seminar I was to lead was for church music teams. A good group from the locality arrived and after a time of worship together Paul began by splitting up the musicians to talk through and feed back on what they felt the real meanings of Praise and Worship were:



Group discussion during Musicians Workshop

The groups worked enthusiastically together entering into lively debate, looking through biblical contexts of worship and talking about their own experiences.



Paul delivering worship teaching

The overwhelming outcome of this group was to see the Praise and Worship of Jesus demonstrated in daily living. This was reflected in the teaching that followed where Paul talked about the fundamental aspects of the worshippers heart, lifestyle and practical outpouring of God given gifts within the music team. Some time was spent on the Worship leaders role, musical ability of the time and the importance of bringing offerings that were aimed at excellence before God and motivation for congregations

First Sunday

The church of Ang Mo Kio is made up of congregations from many different people groups. The building and offices house English, Chinese and Tamil congregations.



Paul leading at Contemporary Service

All have practical outreach and spiritual development programmes built around their core desires to worship the Lord.



Time to Worship

From the opening welcome and chords it was obvious that each congregation was eager to meet with God and it was wonderful to see so many people abandoned in worship of God. Something that we English sometimes find culturally and often spiritually difficult to be.

During the first Sunday I met to pray with the Traditional morning service congregation at 7.30am. Led Worship for part of the 8am Service, dashed to the Contemporary Worship Band practice for 8.30am, led Worship at the 9.15am Contemporary Service, rehearsed with the Evening traditional 'alpha' band at 3pm and led worship at the 5pm evening Traditional Service. Arrived home around 7.45pm (Not bad for the first taste of Singapore Sunday!!)

Weeks 2 and 3

During the second and third week I was responsible for delivering a seminar on Cell Worship Group leadership, Song writing and held rehearsals with Contemporary, Traditional and Youth Worship Teams.



Songwriting break-away group

God Blessed us with the ability to communicate well and to enjoy good fellowship with small groups as we worked, worshipped, laughed and learned together.



Lily joins the cell group

Family Focus

More family time was enjoyed seeing some of the many tourist areas on and off the island along with some very welcome Sunshine. Our hosts made sure we were able to make the very most of our leisure time and were keen to keep us refreshed and blessed. We even celebrated Tracy's birthday with a personalised yummy Malaysian Cheesecake!!



Sam and Jess meet the Powerpuff Girls



Tracy Celebrates her birthday!



Sam, Paul and Jess off Sentosa

Second Sunday

On the Second Sunday the Programme was repeated with the addition of a quick rendition in the Children's Church and a rehearsal with the Church choir. Never a dull moment!



Paul and the 'Alpha' band

This worship team sprang from the 'Alpha' course which ran at Ang Mo Kio and is now consistently being instrumental in the development of worship within the traditional evening service.

Challenge

Rev Sng Chong Hui was keen for me to work with some of the 16-18 year old musicians from Ang Mo Kio with a view to leading a celebration during the final night of our stay in Singapore. Despite what seemed to be a short period of time, some latecomers to rehearsal and unbridled zeal, we were able to share together in what proved to be a major highlight of our time together. This new

youth band which became affectionately known as the '5 loaves and 2 fishes' (Tracy and Paul being the fish!!) God gave us a wonderful evening of open worship and ministry to one another guided by His Spirit and releasing gifts in the young band and the 'body' they sought to serve on that night. I believe at some time we'll be getting a CD with some video footage of the evening. Should prove interesting!



Some of the new Youth Band during one of the earlier seminars held at Ang Mo Kio. A new gift was uncovered in the song writing ability of Justin and a passion captured to live and give worship for this generation

Closing Thoughts

During this trip we observed much and were involved in much. Paul felt he was able to pass on some useful lessons in the walk of worship we all take and we were all inspired by the single-minded faith of the Singapore Church. There were other meetings and events that we could have mentioned but hope that this has given you a flavour of the richness God gives us in His World Wide Family.

The Face of God

Ang Mo Kio Methodist Church had recently published a book of Testimonies called 'The Face of God' to which Paul had composed a song (We seek Your face) reflecting God's ability to heal, restore, transform and save His people. It's our desire to see the reality of this in our City and across our nation as the Lord graciously pours out His love on us as we humbly come before Him giving Him the Praise and Worship that really is due to Him alone.

Be Blessed

Paul, Tracy, Jessica, Samuel and Lily