



UPDATE! TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH CHINESE PARTNERSHIP CONVERSATIONS

Some of you will be aware that we've been deepening our relationships with our Chinese friends in the Cantonese speaking congregation. They meet for worship in the building at 1.30pm every Sunday, as well as running a growing number of other activities during the week.

We've been delighted to share in some joint ventures such as – social walks, maintenance work around the building, filling the containers for The Gambia, the joint Carol Service last December (PLEASE NOTE – THERE'S ANOTHER ONE PLANNED FOR SAT 16TH DEC 2023 AT 6PM – GET THE DATE IN YOUR DIAIRES NOW! DRINKS AND MINCE PIES FROM 5.30PM), along with Simon Che's fascinating and informative talks on the history of Hong Kong, shared with the members of 'Coffee & Chat' in May 2023.

Some of the background information to this shared endeavour is included for your interest at the end of this update but, suffice to say, our Leadership Team and Church Council (and the Chinese Executive) are now of the view that we are working towards a 'One Church, Multiple Congregations' model.

This would mean that the Cantonese-speaking congregation and its associated activities would unite (or we prefer 'grow together') with our own English language services (Messy Fun Church, Sunday mornings, Foundry Worship) and our activities, to form ONE CHURCH, while maintaining the individual identities, languages and particular expressions and emphases of the Christian faith that are unique to the MULTIPLE CONGREGATIONS.

We would therefore have one Church Council and a common Mission Statement both of which would support the ongoing work and mission foci of the individual 'streams' of worship, prayer, bible study, pastoral support etc. that make up our church life.

There is a lot to do to find our way through but we firmly believe this is where God is leading us; that together we are stronger and that, in our diversity, we glimpse a fuller expression of what the Kingdom of God is really like.

We wanted to keep you informed and seek your views because we want to travel together on this journey. The Leadership (i.e. our Leadership Team and Church Council and the Chinese Executive) are united in their desire to start exploring what this means for us but want to 'test the water' and ask for your comments in response.

We are genuinely interested in hearing your views on this. You may think it's a good idea, or you may not be convinced it is the right way for us to progress, or you may have questions that you'd like to ask. Please complete the slip at the end and send it to the office. We will try to answer your questions if you leave your name, or you can put your comments and remain anonymous.

Looking forward to hearing from you by Sunday 17th September, at the very latest!

Rev Sam – on behalf of the Trinity Leadership Team

14/8/23

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FROM CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES/REPORTS:

Extract – Church Council Minutes (14/11/22):

RESOLUTION 2. Church Council authorizes the Leadership Team to continue conversations with the Chinese Church expressing our preferred option is to be fully integrated as one Church with multiple congregations. This was passed unanimously.

Graham thanked the Leadership Team and other Committees for all their hard work on behalf of the congregation. Sam encouraged us to step out in faith when God's work is being done.

Extract – Church Council Minutes (17/7/23):

Rev Sam said it was great to deepen our partnership and work more closely together towards the 'One Church – Multiple Congregations' model.

Noted that this could be quite a long journey, and quite complex, but would enable us to better support God's work in this place, together.

The Chinese Congregation were thanked for their contribution to the life of Trinity in many areas, for example their continued gracious and generous donations to the Foodbank collection.

Extract – Part of Simon Che's report to the Church Council (17/7/23) on behalf of the Chinese Congregation:

Leaders of Trinity and Chinese congregation have been working together to explore our next step of moving forward together. The direction is now towards 'One Church Multiple Congregation' under the Methodist canopy. The mission calls for more prayer and sharing, deliberation and reference, advice and reflection from the church family. We pray for our Lord's wisdom and guidance as we proceed.

RESPONSE SLIP: (Please note – last date for responses SUNDAY 17th SEPTEMBER)

Having read the update issued 14/8/23, my view on the English-speaking congregation at Trinity working towards a 'ONE CHURCH, MULTIPLE CONGREGATIONS' model is as follows:

- I think it's a good idea because...

- I'm not sure yet because...

- I have some questions – please get in touch!

- I don't think it's a good idea because...

NAME: _____ CONTACT TEL. NO. (if needed) _____

PLEASE RETURN THIS SLIP TO THE CHURCH OFFICE (MARKED FAO REV SAM) BY 17/9/23

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

PLEASE PRAY AS WE DISCERN OUR FUTURE TOGETHER!