

The 2011 award winning film, *The Tree of Life*, received mixed reviews. Quotes from Wikipedia describe the film as: [...] an impressionistic metaphysical inquiry into mankind's place in the grand scheme of things ... attempting to encompass all of existence and view it through the prism of a few infinitesimal lives ... The sheer beauty of this film is almost overwhelming, but as with other works of religiously minded art, its aesthetic glories are tethered to a humble and exalted purpose, which is to shine the light of the sacred on secular reality. ... *The Tree Of Life* is ... ridiculously, rapturously beautiful. You could press 'pause' at any second and hang the frame on your wall ..."

The film opens with a quotation from [Job 38:4-7](#):

⁴ "Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand.

⁵ Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it?

⁶ On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone—

⁷ while the morning stars sang together and all the angels^[a] shouted for joy?

Movie opening:

Young Jack asking God: Are You watching me? I want to know what You are. I want to see what You see.

Mrs. O'Brien: Lord, Why? Where were you? Did you know what happened? Do you care?

Prologue: Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation ... while the morning stars sang together ...?

The film reminds me that God is, at each moment, mysteriously, knowingly, justly, lovingly and actively sovereign ... Nothing escapes His view ... Nothing prevents His plans from being accomplished. [Job 42:2](#) says, "I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted". The past few months have zipped by; and only when I take time to be still, do I notice the many tree-of-life-type-moments + serendipity-like-encounters (serendipity: what seems to be a "happy accident"; a "pleasant surprise"; a fortunate mistake; the accident of finding something good or useful or meeting someone, while not specifically searching for it). May God grant wisdom, discernment, guidance, and courage as we live to be a part of His plan (Romans 8:31).

Joint France-Spain **STMTeam** (Morocco, North Africa) Feb 15-20

It was a privilege to lead 6 brothers from France and Spain to North Africa. We were a mixed team from the Marbella-Malaga church (southern Spain independent church); the Marne-la-Vallee church (Baptist church in the suburbs of Paris); and the Paris Chinatown church (C&MA church). It was the 1st time our Spanish brothers ventured beyond their home-comfort zone to do mission work and to step on neighbouring Moroccan soil. We visited believers in Rabat (capital), Tangier, and Casablanca, discretely meeting in homes/business settings. It was humbling to learn more about the daily spiritual warfare + living-working-cultural challenges that face the ~3000 Chinese Diaspora living in Morocco.

I am thankful for last-minute childcare arrangements for our kids attending school, thus permitting Karin and I to both attend the forum. The speaker, Pastor Garth Leno (Heritage Park C&MA Church, Windsor, Ontario), shared from Psalms, and encouraged us to fix our eyes on the One who is faithful, even when all appears confusing and uncertain.

In Novi Sad, we witnessed the amazing model ministries of our colleagues, the Kuranjis - natives of Yugoslavia who immigrated to Canada, and then returned to Serbia as C&MA IWs. The Kuranjis fluency in the heart-language + culture of Serbians, have positioned them to effectively plant 2 churches with drug rehabilitation centres. Young men in the centres shared powerful addiction-recovery testimonies of how Christ transformed their lives.

After the Field Forum, the Kuranjis connected me with Chinese Diaspora Christians in Belgrade. I met with 2 Chinese-Serbian leaders, Xiang Jun and Sheng, who serve an independent WenZhou-origin church of 80 adults. There are ~8,000 Chinese Diaspora people working in Serbia. Due to geographical, social, and political factors, the Chinese church in Serbia is very isolated from other European Chinese churches. I quickly linked them to our Chinese network body ... What a delight to see these Chinese-Serbians at the recent Interdenominational European Leaders Conference in Spain!

Fellowship of Alliance Chinese Churches in Europe & Surroundings (**FACCES**) Paris, May 20 - 23

>70 leaders attended the triennial European Chinese C&MA Leaders Conference in Paris. The speakers, Pastor Tim Quek + Karen Quan, shared God's word and their ministry experiences. The theme for the talks and panel discussions was: "Passing the Torch to the 2nd generation" was on how to understand and mobilize the 2nd generation leaders in our churches (local-born Dutch, German, French, British, Spanish, Israeli youths) who are richly multi-cultural/lingual/gifted and eager to serve.

During business sessions, delegates agreed to formally establish a fellowship (FACCES) and nominated a Working Committee. The purpose is to better connect our growing family of Chinese C&MA churches (from 4 to 26) in Europe. Most delegates were of Han descent (some Europeans and North Africans were present) ... so we externally looked similar ... But it was amusing to hear people share in English with different accents: Cantonese/Mandarin/Swedish/French/North African/Dutch/Singaporean/American/British, or Canadian accent. Pray as we serve together and plan future projects to reach the multi-cultural/lingual/generational marginalized and searching Diasporas.

"**Moving day**" of the Chinese-French C&MA Paris Chinatown church (ECMCF) June 16 + September 15

On June 16, after 10 months of Phase-I (sanctuary) construction, the ECMCF family held our 1st worship service in the newly renovated church building. Strangers who walk by the building have commented that our building is a modern-fresh facelift to our *petite rue* in Chinatown; and the church is now even officially indicated on a city street sign as a religious-cultural landmark!!

On September 15, we celebrated the official dedication of the new sanctuary. Representatives from Paris, Cayenne and Madagascar C&MA/independent French-Asian churches (e.g. Cambodian, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Indian) joined us to count God's blessings. We were also honoured by the special presence of the Paris 13th District Mayor (Monsieur le Maire, Jérôme Coumet), and his deputy (Monsieur Adjoint, Buon-Huong Tan). In his speech, Monsieur le Maire accurately described our Chinatown church to be a beautiful "cocoon" sandwiched between giant buildings. Aware of the challenges the church had faced from neighbours and *la bureaucratie française*, the Mayor promised his support as we look to applying for a new construction-building permit for Phase II of future renovations (to build classrooms).

This Chinatown church has already planted a daughter church and is now, itself, in urgent need to prepare Phase II of renovations to build classrooms for the children and youth. The current facility's entire surface area is 300 m² = 3229 ft². The new sanctuary can be divided into sections by portable walls; but, for example, the class I teach is situated near the church entrance, between the traffic-ridden WC and staircase. Although Phase I (sanctuary) was solely funded by the generous tithing of congregation members (€450,000 Euros; from 2002 - 2012), I hope to raise funds to "hasten" Phase II (more info and link to a powerpoint presentation coming soon ...). Pray, also, for the church's Pastor HO, who, following eye surgery a few months ago, is diagnosed with a serious liver condition and undergoing treatment.

Canadian Chinese Alliance Churches Association (CCACA) meetings: Toronto, June 26-27

This summer, the family was permitted to return to Toronto for special CCACA meetings, and the Joint Missions Conferences (both 1st time opportunities for Karin). Delegates heard updates about C&MA Ethnic Associations, including Chinese ministries in Canada and overseas. We were honoured to hear from Dave Hearn, who shared his C&MA vision, and Brem Frentz, who shared about GM's developments. Pray for wisdom and discernment as C&MA leaders collaborate and take strategic actions.

Joint Missions Conference (JMC) St. Catherines, Ontario: June 27-July 1

JMC is a biennial conference sponsored by the CCACA with Cantonese, Mandarin, English and Children-track mission-focused programs. ~800 participants (1st + 2nd generation Chinese + English - speakers) gathered at Brock University Campus -- to learn more about C&MA overseas mission work. The theme, "i-Open" was based on John 4:35 ... Why wait 4 months when the fields are already ripe for harvest? Karin, our daughters, and I performed a theatrical-multi-media report-presentation. We also had opportunities to lead a workshop; to share as a panellist about our IW calling + experiences; and to connect with others so passionate and supportive of cross-cultural global missions work. Pray for the 18 Chinese people who made a commitment to prepare for full-time service. Pray for the JMC Committee as they start planning for 2015 ... Two thumbs up for how they orchestrate a quadruple-track conference with 4 multi-cultural/lingual/generational mission-focused programs: Cantonese + Mandarin + English + Children programs!

Showers of Blessings (outreach) Media Producers (Toronto) July

I met with Showers of Blessings staff in Toronto who agreed to bring a team to Paris in October. Their crew will interview and film the life journeys of Chinese Diaspora Christians living and working in Europe. The television-media organisation will produce short documentaries that will be shown on global Chinese cable television channels. Pray for all the preparations, and that these programs will be powerful testimonies to viewers.

Canadian Herald Newspaper (Toronto) July

The Herald Newspaper is a free outreach monthly paper journal (self-funded through advertisements and donations); and circulated among the Chinese Diaspora worldwide. This summer, I met with the Toronto chief-editor and staff, to request their assistance to help us improve the content + quality of the European edition. Praise God for the Canadian team's eagerness to help us better reach Europe!

Marriage Retreat (Toronto) July 26-28

After attending a marriage retreat with 18 mainland-Chinese-Canadian couples in Toronto, I met with different leaders to discuss future plans to send teams to help us develop family-related ministries across Europe. Pray that, together, we can assist European churches offer retreats and training to provide the much needed support to couples. Pray that we build strong Christ-centred marriage + family relationships.

Dortmund Church Building Purchase (Germany) August

The Dortmund Chinese-German church plant has grown out of its rented facilities. This year, the Chinese congregation's landlord unexpectedly offered to sell the building at a very attractive price (450,000 euros), due to its own German-speaking-only congregation's decline in membership. In response, North American and Asian C&MA Chinese churches urgently mobilized financial support towards this strategic + fruitful opportunity. Sufficient funds were miraculously + quickly raised and mortgaged. And although funds raised by Canadian Chinese C&MA churches have yet to be channelled to Germany, God's will was done! The building inauguration service will be held on November 3 -- with special invitations to the national-C&MA-MAKD Germany President, Vernon Rehmann, as well as the U.S-Chinese-C&MA Missions representative, Frank Fung.

New C&MA church to join AECM France-National family (Martinique), September 20-23

The Martinique Chinese church, although geographically distant from Europe, has a very close "connection" with the Chinese-French C&MA-AECM in France. Martinique is actually French *territoire* -- part of the France Overseas Territory islands located in the Caribbean Sea.

In September, the church was officially established and registered with the France–Martinique government. Last week, I had the privilege of escorting the France C&MA national president and his wife, Michel & Lois Viguiers, to Martinique to celebrate the occasion. For the Viguiers (although French citizens), it was their 1st time visiting a France Overseas Territory; they were astonished by the opportunities to reach the different ethnic communities.

Over 150 people attended the special Martinique church festivities – including 2 dignitaries from the local Chinese Community Association; and representatives from the Guadeloupe (independent) church + the Cayenne (C&MA) church. The historical event was even broadcast on the local television evening news – reportedly the 1st Chinese church in Martinique!

Historical journey:

- Martinique is a strategic location due to its ties with France, making it an economically stable island under French currency and EU law. The Martinique church is ideally positioned as a launching base to launch multi/cross-cultural ministries in neighbouring regions.
- In 2004, Brother Chiu Xin Hua (a deacon from an independent Chinese church in Paris) invited my dad and me to join him on a business trip to the 3 islands -- Martinique, Saint Martin, and Guadeloupe (where Mr. Chiu owns a business). We surveyed the 3 islands (Chinese population >2000), visiting restaurants and shops, “scouting” for Chinese Christians. By providence, we met some families, including a key couple in Martinique, Andy & Kitty Cheung (not-yet-baptized new believers at the time). Nothing immediately sprouted from that first visit, but God was working.
- In 2007, I went on a 2nd visit to Martinique. Again, the families gathered and I encouraged them to start a regular bible study group. The impetus was there, and then soon drizzled off; but God was still working.
- In 2009, a Christian family from Cayenne (also part of the France Overseas Territories), Catherine and Francois Chau (former deacon of the Chinese C&MA church in Cayenne), moved to Martinique to start a business. With their care and encouragement, the Christians regularly gathered for fellowship. God was actively working.
- From 2009–2012, a self-funded C&MA pastor and wife, Emmanuel and Dorothy Tso (Montreal Chinese C&MA Church) provided pastoral assistance. STMTrips were organized 2X/year, in partnership with the Cayenne + Suriname Chinese C&MA churches, to conduct training, teaching, and religious ceremonies, including 3 baptisms and weddings. God continued to work.
- In February 2013, I invited the Martinique leaders to write the French national-C&MA president, to request information regarding the necessary steps to join the French C&MA family. (Next year, in March 2014, the Martinique church will officially become a member of the France national C&MA body (AECM) and join our Alliance family!) God continues to work.
- In May 2013, two Martinique leaders attended our European Chinese Field Forum in Paris, and also joined our FACCES fellowship.
- As described above, last month, on September 22, 2013, the Martinique church was recognized as a church by French Martinique authorities.
- This past July, the Ottawa Emmanuel Chinese Alliance Church and I had ongoing chats about Seamless Link joint projects. I encouraged them to adopt the Martinique church for a period of 2–3 years. The Emmanuel Church Board has agreed to send their 1st STMT this/next year. Praise God!

Currently, the Martinique Chinese church meets in the building of a church that is part of an evangelical denomination called, La Mission Chrétienne Evangélique de Martinique (comprised of 30 Creole-French-patois-speaking churches on the island; whose members are native Martiniquans from geocultural groups, e.g. French Caribbeans, French West Indians, French Antilleans, and Antilleans).

Pray for a full-time worker (medium/long-term pastor/IW) to guide the growing Martinique Chinese church: 30 Mandarin + Cantonese-speaking adult members, and 15 French-speaking children/youth. Last year, there were proposals to reassign Anne Louie to Martinique (our Canadian IW co-worker who had planted a church in Amsterdam and who continued to feel called to plant cross-cultural churches in Europe). Strategic opportunities are open to co-work with the Martinique church to pioneer work in the neighbouring islands of Saint Martin, Aruba, Guadeloupe, and Santo Domingo. Although other plans were made for Anne to serve in Costa Rica (part of the Caribbean Sun Region), do pray for Anne as she learns ventures out to learn Spanish and to do multi-cross-cultural work with the Chinese-Spanish-speaking Diasporas.

Cambridge C&MA Church (United Kingdom) May, October, December

In May 2013, Ben Fung (Ottawa Chinese C&MA church) went to the U.K. on a business trip and vacation, and seized opportunities to preach/teach at the Cambridge C&MA Chinese Church (church plant; formally established/joined in 2012). From October 26-30, 2013, a STMTeam, also from Ottawa, will preach/teach in Cambridge (+ then in Paris) -- on the topics of, Social Concern, Ethics; and Apologetics. The STMTeam will also meet with Cambridge church lay-leaders (new Christians) to learn about church leadership and structure. For December 2013, plans are being made with the national-U.K. C&MA director to officially install deacons-elders.

Other Praise & Prayers

- Praise God for Anne & Wing Sung (Ottawa C&MA church lay leaders) who served the Amsterdam Mandarin C&MA Church for 2 months (May-July).
- Praise God for Pastor Augustine + his team of 4 lay leaders who will also serve the Amsterdam Chinese C&MA Church; and then assist another independent Chinese church in the south of Netherlands (October 2013).
- Pray for Janet Sing (retired C&MA IW) who is undergoing cancer treatment in Calgary.
- Praise God for the STMtrip to Oslo in July-August, to assist an independent Chinese church.
- Pray for all the final preparations of the International Missions Rendez-Vous Conference - for Young C&MA Leaders (Hong Kong, Dec 23, 2013 - Jan 2, 2014).
 - The theme of this 2nd conference is, "To Be - Être - Soy".
 - Click on links for more information (and see information letter below photos on last page of this newsletter).
http://www.chineseawf.org/ver01/images/Poster_A2_%20Eng_130601.pdf
<http://www.chineseawf.org/ver01/html/news.shtml>

(see photos below)

Merci beaucoup, for your continued prayer support



Phase 1 – Paris church renovations (sanctuary)



Phase 1 – exterior (brown wood)



Praise cakes ... good for the soul and stomach !



2nd generation pastors from Paris, Amsterdam, Algeria, Toronto, Montreal



Dan Haag, Stockholm, Haifa, La Réunion – multi-cultural/lingual/generational work.



Joint Mission Conference (Parade of Nations)



Martinique – land of coconut milk + honey + heat



Martinique + France leaders



STMTeam – ferry from Spain to Morocco

Greetings!

On behalf of the Chinese Alliance World Fellowship (CAWF) and the planning committee of Rendez-Vous 2013, it is my pleasure to inform you about an exciting upcoming missions event designed for the 2nd-generation emerging leaders, "**CAWF Rendez-Vous 2013**". By God's grace, this will be the second Rendez-Vous held with cooperation by committee members from around the world, allowing effective promotion of the global nature of the CAWF.

The last Rendez-Vous held in Thailand in 2011 was successful on multiple levels. On one level, the event brought over **110** delegates from around the world (Australian, British, Canadian, French, Hong Kong Chinese, Indian, Macanese Chinese, New Zealanders) to gather in Bangkok, to be exhorted on the call of mission, and to also experience the need for Christ in Thailand. On another level, over **20** people responded to an altar call to offer their lives to full-time ministry. In addition, **8** of those took their first step towards full-time ministry by enrolling in theological studies and joining longer term mission trips. Praise and glory to God!

For **Rendez-Vous 2013**, we will continue the tradition of re-capturing the Alliance spirit and passion for missions in the 21st Century, through the theme of **our identity in Christ**, relevant particularly in the midst of a *multicultural* upbringing. We trust many 2nd generation Asian immigrants will respond to this theme, and also be attracted to the prospect of revisiting cultural roots via short trips to East Asia. We also hope that the trips to East Asia will provide an opportunity for the young people to see how He has been working in these areas and how they can be a part of the work there. May He use the trips to fire up their love for Him, and for spreading His good news to the ends of the earth.

Some highlights of Rendez-Vous 2013:

1. **Theme:** To be ... | 我是 ... | Etre ... | Yo soy ...
2. **Speaker:** Rev. Vinh Doan (Previously Baulkham Hills Chinese Alliance Church, Australia)
3. **Date:** 23 Dec 2013 to 2 Jan 2014
4. **Place:** Hong Kong (Track A) - China/Macau/Taiwan (Track B)
5. **Language:** English and Cantonese
6. This conference will offer 2 tracks (participants may register for Track A only):
Track A: 23 Dec 2013 to 27 Dec 2013 (conference in Hong Kong; with speakers, workshops, discussions, outings to mission posts in Hong Kong area)
Track B: 27 Dec 2013 to 2 Jan 2014 (with the option to choose one short-term trip to China, Macau, or Taiwan)
Cost: Early Bird: **On or Before** 13th September 2013

I.	Track A	= US\$155 (HK \$ 1,200)
II.	Track A + B	
	Option 1: Southern China/Macau	= US\$515 (HK \$ 4,000)
	Option 2: Central China	= US\$810 (HK \$ 6,300)
	Option 3: Northern China/Taipei	= US\$1,025 (HK \$ 8,000)

After 13th September 2013

I.	Track A	= US\$180 (HK \$ 1,400)
II.	Track A + B	
	Option 1: Southern China /Macau	= US\$540 (HK \$ 4,200)
	Option 2: Central China	= US\$835 (HK \$ 6,500)
	Option 3: Northern China /Taipei	= US\$1,060 (HK\$ 8,250)

* Please note the above rates include travel costs to the option sites, but **DO NOT** include the airfare to Hong Kong or any visa application costs. Also note that there are limited places.

7. **Main purpose** of conference:
 - A. To provide an opportunity for young people (18-30 year olds) to interact with other young people.
 - B. To provide participants with an opportunity to be involved in cross-cultural mission work.
 - C. To encourage participants to be open to a call to full-time ministry.

9. **Regional Contacts:**

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