

Interviewee: Faye Chin

Interviewers: Priscilla Li, Xingyi Li

Date/ Time of Interview: February 11, 2018. 1:30 PM

Transcribed by: Priscilla Li, Xingyi Li

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Audio Track Time: 49:02

Transcript:

Key:

FC: Faye Chin

PL: Priscilla Li

XL: Xingyi Li

—: speech cuts off; abrupt stop

...: speech trails off; pause

Italics: emphasis

(?): preceding word may not be accurate

[Brackets]: actions (laughs, sighs, etc.)

Background:

Faye Chin was one of the first members of the Sunday School at Chinese Baptist Church, which started as a mission of First Baptist Church in Houston, Texas. She grew up in the church, which was composed of key members that stayed at the church from the First Baptist Church, including Mr. and Mrs. R. C. Lloyd. Drawing from her experiences at the church and the dynamic of church members who attended the church, Mrs. Chin provided invaluable information regarding Chinese Baptist Church's beginning years. She also brought the First Baptist Church's 144th anniversary book, which has a few pages dedicated to describing the foundation and beginnings of Chinese Baptist Church. There were some mistakes in the book regarding Chinese Baptist Church that Mrs. Chin corrected on photocopies.

Setting:

The interview was conducted in first floor office of Texas Asia Society on 1370 Southmore Blvd, Houston on February 11, 2018. The interview focused on Faye Chin's early year experience and personal involvement with Chinese Baptist Church. In the interview, she talked about the establishment of Chinese Baptist Church as a mission at First Baptist Church and process of becoming an independent church in 1953.

PL: Today is February 11th, 2018. It is 1:30. We're at the Asia Society, um interviewing Ms. Faye Chin about the Chinese Baptist Church. My name is Priscilla Li.

XL: My name is Xingyi Li.

PL: Um I guess we can start off with what your relationship with CBC is, first?

FC: Okay. According to this book, I was in 19-... in 1940, there were 17 Chinese and 8 others present on the opening day of the Sunday School at 3:30 in the afternoon on May the 5th, 1940. Ms. Daisy Gee Gor was the first Chinese uh Sunday School Superintendent and the teachers were Mr. and Mrs. R. C. Lloyd, Mrs. David Crow. The Lloyd's brought the first members, 3 ye-, 3 year old Faye Wang. Faye Joe Wang. That's me. Okay. And actually, uh, this is the 25th anniversary yearbook of the First Baptist Church and

so they've given uh Chinese Baptist Church, which was their mission that they started in 1940, uh several pages. Which I will be happy to make a copy and give to you for your files, okay?

PL: That'd be good. Okay. So what year did you start attending, I guess, like right when they started?

FC: 1940.

PL: 1940.

FC: Yeah May 5th 1940.

PL: So you uh just attended the Chinese school?

FC: No. What it was uh - the reason that - let me just give you a little bit of background. The reason that the mission started. We start - Chinese Baptist Church started as a mission at First Baptist Church in downtown, Houston, Texas. And at around 1939, a lot of the missionaries that were in China were uh brought back to the United States, I guess because of the impending war with Japan. So most of the missionaries were brought back for their own safety. So they were here, and they were just all over the United States. But most of the ones that came back to Houston, did go to uh First Baptist Church because it was the largest church and it was the largest Baptist church. And most of the missionaries were Baptist. So, that's why this article that I'm gonna give you it says "As early as 1938, the need for a ministry among the Chinese community of Houston was apparent." And that was because all these missionaries came back from China and they sought us out 'cause they still wanted to work with other Chinese. And um the reason that I was the first one that they were aware existed was because Mr. and Mrs. R. C. Lloyd, who were members of First Baptist Church, and consequently got acquainted with all the missionaries that came back from China, realized that there was a need, probably for - um a place for worship for the Chinese. Uh the Lloyd's were very good friends of our next door neighbors because we used to live in downtown Houston at 800 Bell, which is the address for the Exxon Headquarters, which just moved to Friendswood lately. But anyway, she lived in the duplex next to us so the Lloyd's when they came to visit. The lady next door, and I don't know her name and it doesn't mention her name here. They used to come and visit - they saw me because I was in and out of the two homes all the time. So then they asked my parents if they could take me to church. Well, I was only uh I had - I wasn't even 3 yet, I would be 3 in August, when they started taking me to church, and I guess it was just probably before this official dedication of the Sunday School. Because uh this was in '40, 1939, they realized that I was there and through my parents, they found out which other children were also available. And that's when they realized they needed to start a church for us.

PL: So the demographics of the church members were all Chinese in the beginning? Probably?

FC: Yes, uh-huh. Yes. We were all - all of us were - I think in the 1939-1940, there might have been 500 Chinese in Houston. And most of us either were in the restaurant business or in the grocery business at that time. Because most of the Chinese that came over first before uh this generation of Chinese that are mostly from northern China, they all came from Canton. You know, they were all Taishan-speaking.

PL: So did they speak uh - at that church they spoke Cantonese or Taishan - the dialect?

FC: The dialect that most of the people spoke was Taishan. But most of us were the children. The adults did not go to church, at the beginning. Because they were - most of us had - like I said, we were either in the grocery business or restaurant business. The restaurants always opened on Sundays and the grocery opened a half a day on Sunday. So the Lloyd's - Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd what they would do - they went around and they picked up me, and they picked up C'tol, that's C-apostrophe -T-O-L girls. There were 3

of them. Uh 'cause they lived right around the corner. So they took the 4 of us to church. And I'm not sure which other people came, but we were the first 4 that actually came. But because the 3 C'tol girls did not go as regularly as I did, because the Lloyd's picked me up religiously. Because I lived close to them, I guess. And that's why they gave me credit for being the first member.

PL: Okay. Um so how long did they do that for - taking you, physically?

FC: Well they started picking me up in 1939. And then uh when they found all these - it says here that all the missionaries that came back took up the cause of figuring out that there was a need for a ministry among the Chinese community in Houston. So uh starting in 1939, they started building on uh putting together this mission for us. And what it was - was an outreach program for First Baptist Church. 'Cause First Baptist Church not only did missions for us, they did missions for uh Hispanics and any other minority groups that needed you know help and they would start a church for them. So, uh it says in the beginning on May the 5th, 1940, there were 17 Chinese and 8 others that were present on the opening day of the Sunday School and it was at 3:30 in the afternoon and we met in the basement of First Baptist Church.

PL: Um how did a regular church service go? In the beginning?

FC: It says by the time the first Chinese Pageant rolled around, there were 40 people present and even though the average attendance was around 25 every Sunday, whenever there was a holiday or Christmas, then of course more people came. But I think more of the parents attended with us and from time to time, there was a number of returned missionaries that visited the school and uh - in this article they give the names of the seven missionaries. The one that I really remembered was Ms. Pearl Johnson, and she was asked to come back to Houston in uh 1941. And what she did - she did not drive, but she took the bus and went all the way to Fifth Ward and had - Wednesday after school bible study for the children. And she did this for several years. And it says in the Christmas program in 1941, there were 73 - uh Chinese that came to that program. And then in 1942, there were 125 that were present at the uh - oh there were 80 that were present at the uh... Christmas service. And then the 3rd anniversary enrollment in Sunday School was 75 and 17 members uh were baptized in 1942. So they actually became - when they became - when they uh became Christians, and became baptized, they actually became members of First Baptist Church because we were still a mission of First Baptist Church. And at that time, when they uh baptized the 17 - that was the first indication that they would start a Chinese church. And Ms. Johnson stayed with us in 1941 until 1944, doing this weekly bible study thing in addition to working in the Sunday School. And then we had - this article lists several other people. It says, "According to the Houston census at the time, there were 300 Chinese residents in Houston". But that was because - that was in 1944. But I think a lot of them didn't do the census. You know, they were still not legally here, stuff like that. So this article will tell you almost everything that you need to know about the history of uh how the Chinese Baptist Church began. [PL: Okay] And then it also tells when they left Chinese Baptist and built their own building that was down the - the building that they built - and there's a picture of it here, is where the George R. Brown is right now. It's the - it's the southern tip of the corner where the George R. Brown - on Hamilton and Lamar. Okay.

And I think this little picture here is the 1954 - that was the first anniversary. So I guess they opened the church in 1950- the building - their little building, they moved into it in 1953.

PL: Okay, I see.

FC: I don't think I'm in this picture because I was still in high school. That was the year I graduated from high - no October of 1954, I'd already graduated from high school because I graduated from high school in June of 1954. And I was going to college in Corpus Christi at that time. So, I'm not in this picture, I think my sister is, but I'm not in this picture. Yeah.

PL: [referring to CBC 1st Anniversary photo] Is this Mr. R. C. Lloyd?

FC: Yeah the Lloyd's are the - naturally you're gonna - they're the Caucasian couple. This is Mr. Lloyd right here [**PL:** Oh okay.] and his wife, who is just as tall as he is. But I think she was sitting down because she was a lady. Let me see if I can find her. Okay Mrs. Lloyd is right here, and this is Mr. Lloyd right here. And Ms. Evans played the piano for us for a long time. So we had a lot of Caucasians that were actually the teachers and the leaders so most of the - the non-Chinese uh were the teachers in this picture. And if you want me to identify them, I can.

PL: Yes.

FC: We can write on the back. We could. Yeah, alright.

PL: Um so you stopped going to CBC after you left for college?

FC: Well I - I graduated from high school in 1954 but I was very active from the time it started until high school. And then I went to college in Corpus for a year, and then I came back and I started going back to CBC but I'm not in this picture. Because, then I moved to California in 1957.

PL: Okay.

FC: And I was there until 1974.

PL: And when you came back to Houston, you don't - you didn't go back?

FC: Well what happened was they had sold the property downtown, and uh I don't know if they left. Because when I moved back in '74 they were building the new building that they have over in Memorial. Because we opened that in May of 1975, so the new - the new building - and we...okay we must have become a church...it says here the day the membership the Chinese Baptist Church is 900 with a truly, fully graded Sunday School, training union, we don't have training union anymore, and the present pastor Lok-Tin Cheung - he's already retired. Because this book was written quite a few years ago. Let's see. This was - oh this book was written in 1985. So it's quite - but the history of the - of the chapel is here. So anything that you want to ask me about 1985. So 1985 - in 1975 we were definitely already an independent church - Chinese Baptist Church. And I think we must have become independent in 1953. But they moved into the building in 19... - see we moved - this is - well the year is wrong here. Chinese Baptist Church was able to move debt free into their present facility at 900 Brogden in 1978. Well we didn't move in 1978, we went in '75. Because the valuable downtown property was sold to make room for a skyscraper, and it didn't make a skyscraper. It made George R. Brown. So some of this information is incorrect. Today the membership of Chinese Baptist Church is about - I don't think it's 900 - and the reason is it's not 900 - I shouldn't mark the book because I have to return that - the, the, the present enrollment of Chinese Baptist Church is probably closer to around 7-750 because we have so many new churches that have opened up since then. So they pulled away a lot of members. Okay?

PL: Okay. So what kind of activities were there when you were there, at CBC?

FC: At the beginning at CBC or the mission?

PL: Um, you can do both.

FC: Okay, so with the mission, because everybody in, in - all the Chinese in Houston were scattered, we didn't have a central Chinatown, we just had businesses all over different parts of town. Most of the grocery stores were in the uh black neighborhoods like Fifth Ward and Third Ward. Uh I think Fifth Ward and Third Ward and First Ward were the main places where they had the grocery stores. So we used the church as a central meeting place on Sunday, so when we started our services at 3, we just got there at 3 o'clock and we just stayed for the rest of the day. We went at 3 o'clock and then we would have service from 3 to 4. Then the different age groups would break into different age groups. If we were younger - if we were you know teenagers, young teenage - young people, younger than teenager, then some of the older - teenagers, some of the young adults took us under their wing, we either went bowling, went to the movies, did things. But on Sunday we came in an all-day affair. We started at church and then we just sort of socialized. After we had church, we just met as a social group. Because that was our, our once a week that we would get together 'cause we were all so scattered.

PL: Okay. So most of the - most of your church friends were not your classmates?

FC: No. Most of the people that went to church were our Chinese friends and all of us went to different schools, so we had a different group of friends that we went to school with. And most of them were probably non-Chinese - they were probably all Caucasian.

PL: Okay. So the services were in - in English?

FC: The services were in English.

PL: Okay.

FC: Because we were all - it was geared primarily for the children. Because our adults didn't start coming to church until we actually got a Chinese minister. Because our first pastor was American, and I think he retired - or he decided that - He was the one who said that in order for us to get the adults to start coming to the church, we had to get a Chinese speaking pastor. So our first Chinese speaking pastor was um I think it was Hong Sit.

PL: Okay, and what was his name - the American pastor?

FC: Travis Key.

PL: Travis Key.

FC: He was our first - Travis Key.

PL: Okay. And the adults didn't start coming until -

FC: So when the Chinese pastor came - I don't think he came - he wasn't there - I don't think he came until 1957 because when he started, I was already gone. Let me see where Travis Key is...oh no Hong Sit is in this picture, so he was there in '54. So he must've started right in '53 or '54.

PL: Okay.

FC: And that's why we had - you see a lot of - in 1954, we have a lot of adults in the congregation already.

PL: Yes.

FC: Yeah 'cause when this picture was taken, I was 17. But I wasn't in it - but I think my sister was. Let me see if I can find my sister. I know most of the people in the picture. But like this lady, Mrs. Lum, um she was one of the elders. One of the older ladies - she was probably the same age as my mother. My mother and dad never actually went to this church because they had a rest- after we had the grocery store, we had a restaurant - and the restaurant was always open all day on Sunday. My parents didn't start going to church until they moved to California.

PL: Oh okay. So are some of these people, like the original charter members?

FC: Right. Most of them are gone. This was - she was our Sunday School superintendent at this time. Mrs. Lina Wong, she just passed away last year. Lady with the hat, yeah right there. I think that's her. She just passed - she was our Sunday School Superintendent after we became a uh a independent church - Lina Wong was.

PL: Okay and when the pa- when the - I guess the adults started coming -

FC: That was around 1954. '53-54.

PL: And those adults - were they mostly the parents of the children or just other adults?

FC: Mostly the parents and the grandparents of the children. And they were Taishan-speaking. Yeah. And the reason - Hong Sit he was bilingual. He would preach in English and Cantonese. He didn't preach in Taishan.

PL: Okay. And right now you got to Asian American Baptist Church?

FC: Yeah, we're getting ready to change the name of that. We just had - the reason I was running late was because we had to vote. Yeah the reason that I changed to that church was because I moved to Sugar Land. [**PL:** Yes.] And that church is in Missouri City. And also because the English speaking pastor from Chinese Baptist Church, he left Chinese Baptist Church and he started Asian American Baptist Church. So I sort of followed him.

PL: I guess, how was the atmosphere like at the mission and then at the church?

FC: Well when we became a full-fledged church - when we were a mission, we had to answer to First Baptist Church. So everything that we did, we did around First Baptist Church schedule and whatever they okay'ed or didn't okay was fine. And then - but Baptist are governed by the uh Southern Baptist Convention. We're part of the Southern Baptist Convention. And so pretty much they had the parameters. But every church has their own by-laws, you know that they can abide by. But you know when we became an independent church, well we - we still had relationships with First Baptist Church because they were our founders and everything. But we became independent like I sa- it says in the article, that you'll read, that uh we were debt free we had - okay we sold the downtown property. This piece of property we sold three quarters of a million dollars.

PL: To George R. Brown?

FC: George R. - the City of Houston purchased it from us. We had only a quarter of a block and back in - they purchased this from us and I think in the 70s, but they let us stay there until they were ready to break ground for George R. Brown. And that must have been around 1970 something, early 70s, because when we moved back to Texas in '74, the church was already being built. But they had already bought the land

at 900 Brogden. So - and it says that uh - because like I said - we didn't - I'll make the changes on the copy - because 1970 is incorrect because we actually moved into the church 1975, because I was trying to get the building permit for - to get into the church to do this wedding that I was coordinating. And it was my cousin's wedding, and he got married in 1975. So that's how come I remember - this date is wrong. Yeah and this - and they didn't do a skyscraper - this, the church - what's here at the old space is now George R. Brown.

PL: Mm-hm.

FC: Okay?

PL: Okay. So when you said "we" like when uh you sold the property, um was it First Baptist Church who got the money or Chinese-?

FC: No Chinese Baptist Church. CB- this was in the 70's. And we were already an independent church in 1953 [**PL:** Oh okay.] yeah. This was our first anniversary so - I'm just working backwards from years. So if this was our first anniversary, as a church, then that meant that we became a full fledged independent church in 1953.

PL: Mm-hm.

FC: And that's the picture of the first anniversary, but they moved into this building before they became a church. They moved into the building while they were still a mission. [**PL:** A mission? Okay.] Yes. Because I think we moved into the building...it doesn't - oh First Baptist Church purchased the northwest corner at the intersection of Lamar and Hamilton in downtown Houston. So ground was broken for the new mission also in 1949. So we had this building probably from 1950 until 1953. We were a mission from 1950 until 1953. We were still a Chinese Baptist mission. And then in 1953, we became Chinese Baptist Church. The church - the difference - the, the, the uh - dif - the way that you differentiate is that when you're a mission, you still are a part of another org- a mother church and we were the- First Baptist Church was our mother church. And then when we became independent, we became a church - we dropped the mission and we became a church.

PL: Okay.

FC: And that's - that sort of tells the story. I'm gonna make a copy of this and gonna change the dates. [**PL:** Okay, good.] Because the people who were doing the same thing that I'm doing, but I'm associating it with years - like I remember the wedding was in 1975, so I know that year is wrong. So 1949 is probably correct and 1950 was when they broke ground. That sounds good because I went to the church when it was still a mission. By the time we became a church, I was already, sort of a senior in high school and so I sort of dropped out for a while 'cause I moved away for a short while.

PL: Okay. And you said you were involved in the church?

FC: See all of the social activities centered around the church.

PL: Okay.

FC: They like I said, we would go to the church from 3 to 4, 4:30 and then we would go do bowling, we would go to the movie - do whatever. Because everything was downtown, because we were already already downtown. So we would just get together in different age - we would break off into our different age groups and do things. And usually we had an older, uh one of the older young adults, supervising us

as teenagers, because I wasn't even 13 yet, so we had to have somebody supervising. So that's why we did that. And then I - as we get - as we each grew older because I remember that when I first started driving, when I was a sophomore in high school, I started picking up people to go to church too. You know.

PL: Okay, so you always had to provide your own transportation because your parents were working?

FC: Yeah. Well somebody usually picked us up uh and then when the Lloyds, some of us - some of the young people, some of the young, older teenagers started driving, then the Lloyds picked up fewer people but they used to make several trips. They would pick up a car load, drop them off and then they would pick up another car load and drop them. They were really good, so they usually picked up probably about ten people and they would do it in two or three trips. Cars were bigger then, so they would probably fit us in two cars, two trips.

PL: So do they like totally like when you guys became a separate church do they just didn't have any more ties with the Chinese Baptist Church or were they still kind of involved?

FC: The Lloyds?

PL: Yes. The Lloyds.

FC: Oh the Lloyds stayed with the Chinese Church until they died. [**PL:** Oh wow.] Yeah they moved over because you see they are in the picture? Yeah they're in this picture. They stayed with the Chinese Baptist Church until they died. And the thing was really neat was, right around the corner, [pointing at the photo] from this location on Lamar and Hamilton, they bought a little house. It was just a little house that was right around. So they could walk to church but they, you know, they got in their car and they went and picked up. They must have been in their eighties when they passed away because they lived to be a good ripe age. But we always have Caucasian that came, did the music and taught the Sunday school classes until we had some of our own adults that grew into those roles. Like George Gee, he's in the picture here. Uh he was...when he became Sunday School's Superintendent, he was only 17 years old. But he was driving and he was picking us up and he just passed away three years ago. But he was active until the day he died, until he got sick yeah. And his sister was our first Sunday School Superintendent, that's Daisy, and then George became the second superintendent. And these are the Lloyds right here [pointing at the photo]. Yeah.

PL: So they really allowed the s- the members to get involved in and to grow into more, bigger roles?

FC: Right. I think they really encouraged it. I think one of the points of having a mission is you start them, you plant the seed and then from there they start developing their own rules and their own - getting their own people to come and support them because we're - the money that we built the 900 Brompton from was the collections- offerings we collected every Sunday. It had nothing to do with First Baptist Church. I don't think First Baptist Church was helping us financially after we moved here in 1953. But they still, we still participated, we, we supported each other but not monetarily.

PL: Do you remember any like um challenges that - that took place when Chinese Baptist Church first started, like from mission to independent church?

FC: Well I was kind of young. [**PL:** Okay] I was still you know I was probably in eighth or ninth grades so I wasn't interested in the politics. I'm sure there was politics involved. [**PL:** Yeah.] Uh unfortunately most of the people that would be able to discuss it with you are gone, you know. Because I am 81. You know? So you know these were people that were a lot older than me but they've been gone for a long

time, yeah. And this book, when I - when I make a run of this, you probably would be able to tell. Isn't Viola Chan also given you the story? I know she's also doing the history for Chinese Baptist Church and I'm supposed to be helping her with some of it too because she didn't come to uh Chinese Baptist Church until uh probably 1955 or 56. So she - she went to Wheaton Bible College, so when she came, she came as an adult. She became one of our Sunday School teachers, and so she has been here for a long time.

PL: Yes. I interviewed her yesterday.

FC: Oh did you? Yeah. So she could probably tell you a lot of the stuffs that happened between 1970s and the present because I haven't been that active in Chinese Baptist Church since 1970. Well I came back, my son was in um uh third grade, so I went to Chinese Baptist Church pretty regularly. I was in charge of the Act teens; I was in charge of several of the youth groups uh from the 60s, no, the 70s and the 80s and the 90s because my son graduated from high school in '87. So I was pretty active in the Chinese Baptist Church working with the youth from 1970s to 1987. [long pause] I gave them uh classes. We did etiquette classes and we did uh cooking classes for the girls. And I don't know what the boys did but you know, but they - there was always some other fellows that were in charge of the boys and different ones of us- women took over the girls of different ages. Most of my ladies now are in their 40s and 50s. [laugh]

PL: And it was still mostly Chinese church members?

FC: Chinese Baptist Church is mostly Chinese church members, [**PL:** Mostly Chinese.] Yeah uh-huh. But now it has expanded. I think they've got a Mandarin speaking minister, they have an English-speaking minister, they have a youth minister and then they have a senior minister who is actually English-speaking more so than. He is from = he's from New York and I think he speaks Toisan but you don't speak Taishan from the pulpit. That's considered really not classy. [laugh] But he doesn't speak Cantonese so I don't think he really preaches in Chinese.

PL: Yeah they have a Cantonese pastor as well.

FC: Yeah, they do. I don't know who he is because I haven't been going since. Because I've been going to AABC for the last ten years.

PL: Oh wow. Okay. Have you guys ever collaborated with CBC or any other Asian churches in Houston?

FC: They all do things. We always invite each other to everythings thing. Like we have a Fourth of- they have a Fourth of July picnic here. I mean at Chinese Baptist Church. Or they used to have a Fourth of July picnic. And then it was open to the whole Chinese community. They used to have five or six hundred people showed up for that. Now our Fourth of July picnic that we don't have any more although our membership at our church was probably around 80 or 100 when Coleman was there. It's dropped since he left. A lot of the- When Coleman retired, a lot of the young couples left because we did not have a developed program for their young children who were between the ages of 2 and you know, the - preschool. [**PL:** Yes.] We did not have a strong preschool program so most of those young people left and went to an American church. Most of them are Sugar Creek Baptist now. Yeah. We're going through a terrible transition in Asian American Baptist Church. In fact, we just voted today to change the name that it's not going to be called Asian American Baptist Church anymore. It's going to be called Faith Fellowship because we want to become rather than a Chinese, Asian church, we want to become a neighborhood church, or community church. [**PL:** Okay.] So that church would be open up to hopefully anybody that wants to, is welcome to come in the neighborhood.

PL: Oh okay. What prompted the change because of the-?

FC: Well, simply because we never were able to build up the Chinese Congregation [**PL:** Okay.] and we had quite a few Pilipino that comes to the church and quite a few other Asians that are not Chinese that are going to the church too so. And they try to welcome everybody and it's strictly English-speaking. [**PL:** Okay.] And we are looking for a minister.

PL: Mm. Do you have any question?

XL: Um sure. So when you were the leader of the youth group, so what is the - what are the children in youth group? Are they the next generation of your-?

FC: Like I said, most of them were in their 40s and 50s now. [**XL:** Oh.] Yeah .Most the one that, my youth group, the one that I worked with. Okay my son is 48 and they're older than my son, so they are in their 50s. They're mid-50s. So I had them when they were between the ages of 13 and high school when they graduated from my school. And we would meet, most of the time we met after church. Uh we would meet at the afternoon in church. We would do things together. We could uh - we had - the thing that my girls enjoyed doing the most was learning to cook. We had cooking classes. I had cooking classes for them and then we did etiquette classes. We did - learned to set a table with fine china. We did slumber parties and I tried to do one as each group gravitated and moved over. Then my older girls became my helpers. And then we would bring the younger groups and try to...We did pretty much the same program for and I guess I worked with three different groups. I went from seventeen, sixteen, fifteen. You know, and then after that, when my son graduated from high school, I wasn't working with them that much anymore because it wasn't necessary for me to work with the youth anymore. [laugh]

XL: Are they the kids of the like the previous church members or-?

FC: Oh were the children...Yes the teenagers that I worked with were parents who belonged to the church and they were the second generation. Most of the kids that I had, their parents were all second generation because our parents were the first generation. I - I'm confused I was first generation born here so what do you call that?

XL: Second generation. [laugh]

FC: So I'm second generation right? Because my parents, even though they were from China, they are first generation. So I'm second generation. So most the kids I taught were third generation then. Yeah because their parents were American born.

XL: So you knew their parents already?

FC: Yeah we were all friends. Because we all went to Chinese Baptist Church, we pretty much socialized together. That's where most of our friends were, you know. That's where our social base was based upon the people that we knew at church. And then as we all started working, yeah we socialized with people that work some but you know, the main core of our social uh existence was the people that we had known from church. And that we had grown up with actually.

XL: So when you became first involved, like into the CBC, what's your parents' opinion because they are not Baptist?

FC: Like I first became involved. When my parents moved to Corpus Christi in 1957 and then they retired in 1960 - [inaudible] they retired in '65. When they retired from Corpus Christi, they moved to California because I was living in California. I was in California from 1957 until 1974. And that was one

of the reasons I - one of the main reasons that I had uh - then I came back in '74 and '75, that's when I started working with the teenagers again. Because when I was in California, I was not married. I was just trying to you know pursue a career, then I got married and after I got married we had my son. My husband was offered a job in Texas because he was in oil you know. [XL: Yeah.] That's why we moved back.

XL: Okay. So what was your parents' opinion about you going to church?

FC: Oh. What are they feeling? Well, my - my fa- my mother was Buddhist and she never became. She was a Buddhist for all of her life. My father, after he retired to California, he started working, he was a senior, but he started working with the seniors because he taught art classes at the senior's center that he went to which was in a church. Because it was in a church that he became a Christian also. My dad was one of the ones that he would uh he would take time off to pick up kids for church if the Lloyds were not available or when the group got too large. He was the one that brought children to church. He - my father felt like okay, we were Christians, so he was gonna get - he was going to be okay. He was going to get in on our coattails [laughs]. You know, that was how he felt. He never went to. My dad never ever ever went to this church. Never walked in the door of this church the whole time he lived in Houston. He was not against it. It's just he always worked on Sundays so he never went to church on Sunday. He always worked on Sunday. Every business that he was in was always open on Sunday. And when he was off, you know, when he worked for other people, Sunday and Saturday were always the busy days, you know, weekends. So he would always have a Monday or Tuesday off. So he never got to go to church in Texas. It wasn't until he retired, that he started going to church regularly.

XL: Okay. So at what time did your siblings become involved in the church?

FC: From the very beginning. My sister was two and a half years younger than I am. So when I was, in 1940, when I was talked about in the book, she was only - she had been born in February of 1939, so she was only a year old. My sister was not outgoing as I was, she was very shy. And so she was a cling-cling child. She did not go anywhere without my mother. I went any place. I mean anybody could take me anywhere. If I was born in this generation, now, it would be dangerous because I would just wander the streets. I don't care. When I was - when I was living in this neighborhood, I saw my next door neighbor who was the Lloyds' friend leave, and I was only not even three yet. I followed her from Bell Street to Texas Avenue. Do you know how far that is? It's about ten blocks. And I only had on training pants. It was in the middle of the summer. Just bare feet, training pants. When I got to the parking garage, this has nothing to do with the church, but anyway, that's part of my history and I think I told this to this other kids. When I got to the parking garage, the man called my father's restaurant that he was at partner in, which is on Fannin Street, right across the street from First Baptist Church. And - as soon as my uncle answered the phone, he knew it was me. He said to my dad "go get your daughter, she's down the street at the Rice Hotel". [laughs] But I had - that was before I even started going to church. I was younger than that. Because I was three before - by this time.

XL: So what prompted CBC became independent?

FC: From being a mission?

XL: From being a mission, yeah.

FC: That's - every mission thrives to become an independent church. First Baptist Church, they start a lot of missions. They - whichever ethnic group or whichever community or whichever neighborhood needs financial assistance or needs leadership guidance and things like that. They're - one of the things about the Baptist Church, the main thrust of the Baptist Church is starting missions. It's outreach- it's called

outreach. So they outreach and they start you off and then they teach you. It's just like being a parent, they teach you, you grow and then you become independent. That's why we want. They never- it was never their purpose to keep us under their thumbs. They always wanted to get us started and then for us to become independent. That's why you know they've written a nice article about us here. The book is really good. I didn't realize it was in 1985 they wrote it. I thought it was a newer book than that. And I guess they're going to do another one - in every 25 years? They probably should have another one since then. But the reason we had this one is because that the story about Chinese mission and that's just in this book. And I will be happy to make copy of this. The book doesn't belong to me. It belongs to my friend who is still a member. He married to a non-Asian lady who has - was born at First Baptist Church. Her father was a member of First Baptist Church and, so that's the reason they have the book.

XL: Okay. Um so you were talking about the financial like part of the church, how it was moved from the George R. Brown, like the older site to the newer one. So do you know more about like the fundraising process?

FC: Well they also had to kept the old building, they had a capital fundraising. The - the money they got for the property downtown was more than enough to buy the five acres that they have now on Brompton Street. I think they paid 25 thousand dollar an acre, now a million dollar an acre over there. So they - just by daily offerings, it says the first offering they collected was 87 dollars. So that's how it just grew from there. You know that was in the 1940s. And so from 1940 until 1970, whatever. I guess it was the 1970's that they decided they were going to expand the downtown area where George R. Brown is and I think that's probably when they sold the property around 1970 or 1971 because they sold the property, they had the money, it was drawing interest from the bank quite a while before they actually broke ground. You know, they broke ground in 1973 probably. They broke ground before I came back and I came back in January 1974. No, and I think that's about the time they broke ground.

XL: Okay.

[pause]

XL: Mmm. So how do you think CBC has changed after you left the church?

FC: Well, it continues to grow, you know. They are getting...They had a lot of growing pains. Every church has growing pain. We had one minister who came and was there. He came as a young man and he didn't retire until he was almost eighty. Lok-Tin Chung, his name is mentioned in the - in the - in the article that I am going to give you. But when he came as a pastor, he came before they moved. I think he was part of the process when they sold the property. So he was part of the process - he just passed away last year. Unfortunately his wife has Alzheimer's. If she - has - was cognizant, she would be able to tell you everything but she's - you know she's totally out of it. And uh but he was there, shortly after the - cause this - Hong Sit only stayed for a couple of years because they found out that he was not really a Baptist, he was actually a Pentecostal minister you know and he - so he didn't stay long. So he went and build a church right across the street across the railroad tracks from us. He started Grace Chapel and it took a lot of our members with him.

PL: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

FC: I don't know what else you need to know.

PL: Oh that's true [laughs].

XL: Oh I actually see a lot of women..[pointing at the photo]

FC: There was most women. We didn't have a lot- Well a lot of the husbands didn't come. But the husbands that came were very, very active. You know, they were very, very supportive. And they did everything they had to do and they gave lots of money. And they had deep pockets. But no, we didn't have a lot of men that came. Most of the time they just sent their wives to come with the children. Except my mother didn't come, she never came. Yeah it's mostly the women that came and they brought the children. By the time we had a Chinese-speaking pastor. Because the first pastor we had, Travis Key, uh we were all very, very loyal to him. He stayed in touch with us until he died. His wife just passed away last year. And I stayed in touch with her because she was my first pastor's wife. And I babysat her children and things like that. So we - and she always felt like that Chinese Bap-...He became pastor of several other churches after he left us. But we were his first church. He came straight to us out of a um uh [XL: College?] uh ministerial college. Yeah. Out of seminary, is what is was.

XL: How old was he?

FC: He was very young. Well no -he was in the service and then he went to seminary. So he might have been close to thirty? I don't know. When you're that young, you know I was only eleven. And he was an adult. I thought he was old. Everybody was old to me when I was a child. [laughs]

XL: Uh so what do you think like..why do you think there were more women, children than men? Do you think it's the restaurant, grocery store businesses?

FC: I think because of by this time, a lot of the mothers were staying home because you know, that generation, the mothers didn't work. They all either worked in the family business or they took - stayed at home and took care of the children. When didn't women start working? 60s, 65, 70s. I mean the women workforce didn't really get strong until the late 50s right?

XL: Yeah.

FC: Because I remember when I went to college, I had a choice - I could become a school teacher or I could become a secretary. And I wasn't - didn't want to become a doctor. I didn't want to become a lawyer. Women didn't have the aspiration to become those big career types of things then. Because I figured as I told my father I said, "I really don't want to go to college dad because I probably will just get married". Well that didn't happen to me. I married later than everyone of my friends. They were all married and had children before I got married. I should have had a career. But I didn't I was lazy. I didn't like school. [laughs] The C'tol's by the way, all three of those girls went to Rice. They graduated from Rice. And then they ended up working at their father's grocery store. They did nothing with their Rice education, but they were smart. And they got whatever it took to get into Rice back in the 40s and the 50s.

XL: Um so what were - what was the demographic of like of the administration team or the board members like during that time?

FC: Well, like I said, most of the Sunday School teachers were probably most of the Caucasian people that you see in the picture and then the older uh Chinese, you know, by that time. As we got out, I was teaching uh when I was in high school, I was teaching six and seven years olds in Sunday School. So that's how the demographics were. As soon as we got out of, as soon as we got out of junior high school, if we wanted to go to a class for high school, we usually - most of us only went to the high school class for a year and we were drafted to teach the younger kids because they needed teachers. So I started teaching six or seven year olds uh probably when I was in 10th or 11th grade.

XL: So, so that was before the first Chinese pastor came over?

FC: I think it was before the Chinese pastor... Yeah, right.

XL: Do you know what year was it?

FC: Like I said, I am figuring that this was taken in 1953, '54, [pointing at the photo], and I think that Hong Sit came in 1953. [**XL:** Okay] Yeah. Because I never did- I never was a member, an active member when he was a pastor. 'Cause I just remember, I think he was here like in '52 from 54' to '55 because when I came back in Houston to the University of Houston, he was already gone. And that's when Lok-Tin, I think Lok-Tin came about '55 or '56, maybe '57. The man who stayed- He was with us for forty years. The name that's in this book here. And I will make a copy of it. You know what, if I run a copy now, I can mark it for you because these - like I said this was borrowed. So we have one, two, three, and the pictures are pretty good too.

[00:49:02]

End of Interview