

LINDA – Fieldnotes – Saturday, June 30, 2007

Subject: Street solicitation for church worship
Location: 5th Ave between 126 and 127th Street
Time: 1:05-1:15

A street preacher outside a church around 126th and Lenox, on 126th on the north side. A few people standing around but don't look like they are listening, since they are facing away from him. Several men hanging out on the west side of Lenox, where I am walking. One sits on a milk crate, the other leans against scaffolding next to him. A well-dressed woman passing out small pamphlets on our side of the street hands me one. I look at it and turn back. A man in his forties passes, declining a flyer. A young man in a red upturned baseball cap, white T, and jeans also declines. I ask her if she is affiliated with the church. She says no, and we establish that she is with the street preacher.

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I tell her that I just moved to the neighborhood and I haven't seen that before. She seems surprised and ask where I am from, and I tell her California. She asks if I want to get some information, gesturing toward the church. I ask her where the church is. She tells me the Bronx. I look disappointed and she tells me how to get there by public transportation. She writes the name of the church for me on the pamphlet, "Miracle Revival Temple." She also writes the address for me and detailed directions: "4 train uptown MT Eden walk MT Eden to Macomb Rd." She writes the church's phone number, and when services are held. She then introduces herself and writes her name and phone number.

She asked me if I wanted a prayer. I said sure. She went on forever, asking God to protect me. She also mentioned something about loneliness, which was upsetting to me. [I think being alone in NY also has impacted how I feel about the Mormon Church: simultaneously vulnerable, needy, and condescending.]

[From the number of churches in Harlem, we are deducing that they compete for worshippers. To make things worse, they face competition from other churches! Perhaps I should have hung around and found out more.]

I walked to 128th to check out four churches listed in Varenne's directory. The first, which must have been Shiloh, listed services at 11am. The second, the Christ Temple, listed something much earlier, at 9 or something. [After the garden talk my brain was too full to hold all this information.] The third, East Mount Olive, had nothing posted outside. Before I got to the fourth, I came upon the community garden (see next set of notes).

- Shiloh Church of Christ 7 W 128Th St
- Christ Temple of the Apostolic Faith 208 13-17 West 128th Street
- East Mount Olive Church 26 W 128Th St
- Christ Community Church of Harlem 69 W 128th St