



Taiwan Mission Trip 2014
Sharing Booklet

"Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.'"

- Matthew 19:14



Preface

On July 5th, 2014, nine members from IslandECC partnered with Pastor Tony and 30 members from Light of the World Church, together with 17 members from the US churches gathered in Taipei to prepare for the Mission Trip.

The following morning, our team of 57 people took a 6-hour train ride to travel to Jinlun, Taitung to spend 5 days in the village.

Jinlun is a village where about 80 families from two major aboriginal tribes in Taiwan - Paiwan and Amis dwell in. Many parents from the families have to travel to larger cities like Taipei or Kaoshiung for work, leaving their children behind with their grandparents. Our task in Jinlun was to lead a summer camp during the day, while doing home visits to spread the Gospel in the evening.

This booklet is a glimpse of how God had guided our Hong Kong team throughout this trip, and most importantly, taught us what His love means in action.

Avis Lam

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight.”

- Proverbs 3:5-6

Five days off plus two weekends equals to a 9-day holiday. What can I do? Europe, US, Australia, Japan... etc. Yes, lots of choices for holiday, but this time I chose a special one, Jinlun Taitung.

Since this is my first mission trip, honestly I didn't have much expectation, or I should say, I don't know what to expect. I joined the trip simply because **I knew God prepared something for me, but He wants me to step out from my comfort zone to experience it.**

This is the verse that I put in my mind since the first day of the trip. Since the moment I decided to join this mission trip, I put everything in God's hands. I am not a very patient person, especially when facing kids, so I was a bit worried prior to the trip. But this verse had kept my heart peaceful and my mind prepared for the trip.

With the teammates from Hong Kong, Taipei, Taitung and the US, all of us shared different tasks and became classroom teachers of the students. There are 15 students in my class and all of them were between the age of 10-11, and also very smart and energetic. With the unlimited questions and energy from the kids, the usual me should be very impatient and get frustrated easily. However, my temper was well preserved, and I even enjoyed answering all their unending questions and hung out with them with unexplainable patience.

To my surprise, their English level is not too bad and most of them already knew who Jesus is, although some of them only had a blur idea. Through the different teaching material, testimony sharing and activities during the 4 days, the kids all got a chance to know God and Jesus in a deeper sense and they could start to make their own choices. During the afternoon of the last day, 15 students from the camp got baptized and 3 of them are from my class! What a touching moment when I heard they accepted Jesus as their savior!



It's a fruitful trip for me, not only did I get to meet many new friends, learnt how to be patient, but God also made me realize how lucky I am to have Him in my life. As long as I put all my trust in God, he will give me wisdom, courage, energy, patience... everything I need to complete His task. He knows my weaknesses and gives me different opportunities to overcome it.

Gabbi Li

*"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest."*

- Matthew 11:28

Despite this is my second year going on a mission trip, I did not really have much expectation, as I believe each mission trip is unique in its own way. But God's work in this trip had once again made me stand in awe of His presence.

Prior to the trip, in particular the week before, due to my busy working schedule where I barely had enough rest, I just simply did not have time to prepare myself for the trip. I was so exhausted both physically and mentally that I reached a point where I felt so stranded and started casting doubt on whether I was capable of going on this trip in light of the circumstances then. During those days, I prayed to God many times asking Him for guidance and strength despite how drained I was.

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths."

- Proverbs 3:5-6

Acknowledge Him in all our ways and He will direct our paths. This mission trip has once again reiterated to me that God is always there for us as well as our welfare. He will help us during those challenging times and through all of the storms. He will help us to make the right decisions and lead us to the right direction. **God is our security and He helps us face any challenge.** Prior to and during the mission trip, I had had the liberty to experience more of what the verse meant through my trust and faith in Him. In the face of fatigue, I was filled with energy when I worshipped God and spent time with the kids and the feeling of exhaustion just wore off unbelievably.

This year, I was assigned to a class with kids in the seventh to eighth grade. I was initially worried as to how I could spread the Gospel to them as they are in their teenage phase, the point of life when rebellious kicks in, which sometimes makes it difficult for others to communicate with. One student in particular did not talk much in class and was not keen on sharing his thoughts and views, which made it difficult to tell how receptive he was to what was taught in class. However, at the end of the camp, he accepted Christ as his Lord and Savior and got baptized. Right at the moment that I learned of his decision to get baptized, I was completely filled with joy deep within me.

There was also another kid in my class who got baptized. Seeing him change, within the period of just four days, from a kid who used to be a troublemaker to a child confessing to God for doubting Him before and asking for forgiveness, witnessing this little incident simply heartens me. The joy just surged forward at heart when witnessing two of my students getting baptized. At that instant, all my worries back in Hong Kong just became inconsequential.

This mission trip reaffirms to me that God has sent me on this trip for a reason, despite how weary I was. **He wants me to bring joy and to spread His love to the kids and people in JinLun.**



Jackie Lloyd

"But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.'

And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them."

- Mark 10:14-16

1) God's answering to prayers

Before the announcement for the Taiwan Mission Trip came out, I had been praying for an opportunity to serve Him. I have always had a heart for mission trips, so when the announcement was out, it did not take too long for me to make the decision to go on this Mission Trip.

I am thankful for being given the opportunity to take part in this Trip - my first Mission Trip.

Above all, **I am thankful for God's willingness to use me to accomplish His purposes and advance His Kingdom.**

2) Sponsorship

I was able to receive full support in a very short period of time. Extra support had also been raised from families in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

I am thankful for the unwavering support and love my family and friends had selflessly given me through this trip.

3) Teammates

(A) Hong Kong Team - Enjoyed the time sharing and brainstorming together. Teammates are all gifted in their own special way.

(B) Taiwan + US Team - Glad to have a chance to know many of them. It was very encouraging and inspiring just by listening to their stories.

I am thankful for the opportunity to serve together with the people God had put around me during this Trip.

(C) Teaching Team - I was assigned to work with a group of talented people in Taitung- first and foremost, Ms Bev and three TAs (all teenagers) - Joy T., Joy W. and Tim.

I am thankful for the opportunity to be teamed up with this group of teachers. We had our challenges but we all had one passion - gave it all for the students in our class.

Dear God, please listen to my prayers for the children in JinLun, especially for all the kids in our class:

Eister, Lulu (believers for many years) - that they will continue to be the salt and light.

Shawn (new believer through this trip) - that his faith will be strong and firm, and that he will grow and be transformed.

Alice, Neymar, Tom, Larry, Terry, and Lin (still seeking) - that their spiritual eyes be opened, that their hearts be softened.

Amen.



Jess Yeung

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

- 2 Corinthians 12:9

I recently had the privilege to participate in the mission trip to Taiwan. The experience was extremely rewarding and invaluable.

When others express interest in mission work, it is often either because they have a strong passion in providing help to a less fortunate community, or a great desire to bring the gospel to a particular age group. For me, **I was simply hoping to be able to experience God's presence, His love, and His power, as well as to rediscover God** by extracting myself from the overwhelmed work life in Hong Kong, where I found it very difficult to hear God in the midst of the constant busyness at work. God had indeed showed me His unlimited grace and His enormous capacity for love throughout the trip.

Firstly, He made it possible for me to join the Taiwan mission trip even during the very last stage of the trip's preparation. I never expected I would be accepted. But I was. Praise The Lord. I was then able to witness His great love and power throughout the trip.

Secondly, God helped me to overcome my weakness. To be honest, I never felt comfortable when asked to openly share my testimony. However, this was the first challenge that God gave me on the trip. Not only we were told to share our testimonies with all of our team members (there were almost 70 of us!), I was also invited by Pastor Tony to share my testimony in front of 178 students due to my similar background with them. (Not to mention I had to share it in my broken mandarin.) In the end God must have used His power to help the students to be fully engaged and absorb my testimony.

Praise The Lord.

Lastly, God has shown me His enormous love time after time during the trip. Throughout the trip, together with the wonderful team, we had the opportunity to show these children God's love, and I prayed everyday that they can come to know Christ more and more deeply. At the end of the camp, four of my students came to receive salvation and one of them was baptized, by me! The fact that they received salvation was beyond my expectations. I now wholeheartedly praise the Lord every time I remember the moment of them receiving salvation.

After returning to Hong Kong, my biggest prayer request is that the students will be able to grow in Christ and experience His love everyday. I ask God that someday they will be able to help the rest of the JinLun community to know Christ. I look forward to the day when we meet again and hear all the amazing works God has done in their lives, and that a church has been firmly established there in JinLun, Taitung.



Kevin Iu

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

- Galatians 5:22-23

After last year's Taiwan Mission Trip, there was a big need for a new church to be planted in Jinlun because of the multiple religions that exist in the village. My heart had a big urge to be part of it. But it didn't take long for my mind to kick in and persuade my heart that it's just because of the spiritual high during the trip that produced such thought. My mind even questioned whether returning next year was a good idea.

Fortunately, Tunhow and his wife Wei-wei found me at the right time early this year and invited me to plan for the trip together. Although the mind automatically tuned to self-depreciation towards my own ability, God was gracious enough to fill up my heart and let me know how happy I was even at the thought of joining for the second time. Therefore, I signed up. Prior to the trip, a lot of administration and logistic work was required, either one is my deadly weakness. But of course, God is good. **God is good not because He didn't let anything to go wrong before the trip, but the faithfulness He has shown us.** Chaos occurred, but God poured more faith and patience to our team to go against the wind. It was the experience in holding on to the mast of His promises that was priceless. "For when I am weak, then I am strong".

The goal for our mission trip was to spread the Gospel to the children in Jinlun, through lesson plans, games and home visits. Because we believed that Jesus really meant it when he said, "for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven." So our strategy was to build up the children, who are pure, simple and neutral to adult problems (especially on the tribalism issues) in order to impact their families for the long run. We believed the children in Jinlun were the key towards the hardened hearts of the villagers, but I have never imagined my heart was penetrated by them instead -

many parents were away from Jinlun for work, but even if they were there, drinking problem was very common. So the children were often neglected or abused.

When the children heard about Jesus who is ever-loving, they could boldly say they wanted to accept this love and had faith in God to take care of them. They wanted Jesus. The hearts of these children were exactly what Jesus was trying to tell us how we should believe in His love. And I clearly know that I do not have such faith as they do. I praise God and at the same time, I thank these little kids as well.

Short term missions are never intended for using what gifts we think we have, but simply being attentive to what God wanted us to hear and see. Through this trip, I thought we were there to help the kids, but God never needed us to do such task. God gave me relationships with the kids instead. Because only relationships can manifest the love God had planted in each of us. And it is because of God's love that we can enjoy the abundance of life.



Recalling the after thought of last year's experience, my view towards mission trips was like a getaway, an instant soul journey to experience a taste of heaven and 'escape from reality'. But instead, it was the other way around. The enemy tried to clothe the beauty of reality with the constant worries I had about life back in Hong Kong - work, family, relationships, future, you name it. But God showed me what reality is through the nine fruit of the Spirit. I could never remember exactly what they are from the Bible, but during this trip, it was not difficult to name them out. It was

always present. I felt like that was the life that God had designed us to live, the dependence He wanted us to have towards Him, and the faith in the victory of Jesus upon all these diminutive worries in our minds.

Sandy Niu

"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

- Matthew 6:33

I was baptized 13 years ago, but always considered myself a "yo-yo" Christian. I am scared of any Christian event that is going to take more than two days, especially those that requires living outside; hence I've never imagined that I'd go on any retreat or mission trip. Out of curiosity and the fact that I am Taiwanese, I attended last year's sharing session, and God put this desire in my heart of joining the trip in 2014. So I went. **I went with no expectation, but to my own surprise, I came back with my faith refreshed.** I want to share three things that touched/impacted me the most:

1. Remember what is eternal: Being a yo-yo Christian, sometimes I feel I'm so close to God but can be dragged away by something else the very next minute. My focus could not last for more than 2 days, on the 3rd day of the trip, I felt like leaving that place already. I started to ask myself what I was doing here; this was not going to help the kids once we left, and they will still be poor, both financially and spiritually. Doubts mounted in my heart and robbed all my joy and peace, and I became really unhappy inside of me. Somehow I got to speak to pastor Tony and Esther that night about what was in my mind. Pastor Tony listened to me and simply replied "Sandy, you have to remember what is eternal, and hold on to God's words." And that blew me away. The reason behind all these struggles was because I did not fix my eyes on what is eternal (i.e. the treasures in the Kingdom of our Lord), but instead, chasing the worldly things that will fade away. And feelings can be deceiving; but God's words are true and ever-lasting. This experience helped me try to look at things from the "eternity" perspective.

2. A family that puts God first: I was the first Christian in my family, and most of my friends are either single or young couple. This was the first time I encounter so many Christian families. We had around 20 teenagers or primary school kids on the trip, who wanted to come

themselves instead of being dragged by their parents. Throughout the whole trip they were happy, always smiling and being helpful all the time. No one ever showed a grumpy face despite the not-so-great living condition. I was amazed by their obedience to the parents and to the Lord, and their willingness to serve others. Parents that put God first in the family can certainly make a difference in their children's lives. This experience has helped reassessing my criteria for choosing my future spouse.

3. Deliberately share the gospel: The lead pastor Tony and his wife Esther made it very clear, that we went to Taitung not just to play with the kids for one week, but to share the gospel that will change their lives. On the six-hour train ride, we practiced with each other how to share our testimonies, tell the gospel, and lead others to say the prayer of confession; I also saw a few brothers just sitting next to strangers and started to share gospel, invite them to church, etc. During classroom time, we intentionally delivered the message in the morning lectures. For example when we taught the English word "communication", we also taught them "prayer" - a communication between you and God. I do very little evangelism in my daily life at work, as I always thought that I should impact people through deeds and words rather than "hard sell" my religion. However, these were only excuses, and often times I fail to behave well and fall short of presenting who God is. This experience made me feel more ready to share gospel for the rest of the trip, I felt more boldly and deliberately.

In the past when I heard people saying that they were being blessed on the mission trip, I always thought "how could that be possible? You go there to serve other people so it's the people you serve that are blessed but not you." **But now, I can say that "Yes, I was being blessed tremendously by going on the mission trip to serve Him and His people".** I guess that's how God's kingdom operates, and I can finally see it.



Tunhow Ou

*"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit;
and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord;
and there are varieties of activities, but it is the
same God who empowers them all in everyone."*

- 1 Corinthians 12:4-6

This year's mission trip was my second to the village of Jinlun, Taiwan. The previous time, for me, was like a visit to the aquarium. During those childhood outings, the highlight was always the tunnel that takes you on a spectacular underwater safari. You can't help but instinctively hold your breath as you step into that mysterious hallway for the first time, drawn by the life and movement surrounding you. A new believer, I was brimming with questions and eager to grow up on that first journey. I expected to walk through to the end of the tunnel and gather all the answers I needed.

And I did indeed witness amazing things then. My wife, who felt she had often floated aimlessly in life, discovered a joyful passion for teaching children. The missionary team was a large and diverse group, but orchestrated by the same power of love. The spirit seemed to flow so freely through everyone else, but somehow, I was merely a spectator. The experience was detached and distant. **It felt like the only thing I could do was press against the cold glass barrier and stare.**

I returned home a bit puzzled and disappointed, but nevertheless, my wife and I agreed to focus on building our relationship with God. As months passed, it was revealed to us the deeper meaning of dying to self -- the true essence of the Christian life. While my spiritual conversion had spurred me into a flurry of action, I finally grasped the concept of the other rebirth, the one that is a lifelong journey. We were being taught how to take up our own cross -- and for me, that meant putting aside my pride and control -- to follow Jesus.

When we were invited to help organize this year's trip, it became clear that following Him also meant going back to Taiwan and accepting the change in role from the frontline to behind the scenes. During the weeks of planning, I suddenly discovered that my skills and work experience were finally being used in a purposeful and meaningful way - a stark contrast to all the passionless jobs of my past. By leading the missionary team, we realized how God was transforming us to work as the Body of Christ. He was stretching both of us to our limits so that our true identities would be forged.

The most vivid moment for me happened during an afternoon of evangelism. Everybody had been working hard to bond with their students through the various camp activities, and now it was time to break up into small groups to share the gospel. As my eyes swept the room, I was astonished to witness the children so captivated -- there was a great sense of beauty and order, as if the mission and all our efforts had culminated to this point. But instead of the isolation of that underwater tunnel, I felt a visceral connection... of being released into the water. **I finally felt alive and free.**

"To me, to live is Christ and to die is gain."

- Philipians 1:21



Wei-wei Chang

"Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand."

- Ephesians 6:13

Early this year, Pastor Tony and his wife Esther invited me and my husband, Tunhow, to help organize the mission trip this summer. Without giving us pressure, they kindly asked us to pray about the matter and see how the Holy Spirit might move our hearts. But to be honest, when I first heard about this possibility, I was hesitant and doubtful. My natural strength is in supporting and nurturing where I had found the perfect match as a teacher during the previous year's mission trip. This new role would require making plans and organizing activities, which were weaknesses that caused me to worry about committing. I was very close to turning down the invitation.

However, after fulfilling our promises to pray, I soon heard a voice rising from within my heart. It was clear, urging me to accept and face this challenge. Despite my concerns about not being able to handle this task, I had faith that God would somehow use this time and experience to equip me, possibly for my future calling. At that moment, **I knew that I just needed to obey Him and His will, and let Him take care of the rest.**

Looking back and reflecting upon what God has spoken to me through this mission trip, I realize that our dear Father often provides in a way that I cannot imagine! In the beginning, after we had seemingly gathered our Hong Kong team, some people suddenly had to withdraw. There were plenty of worries and concerns whether we would have enough people this year. Praise The Lord! Even though the team was indeed small, it was a wonderfully-crafted group that was perfect for our new plans. Each individual was very attentive and hard-working. From the many pre-trip meetings to the extensive

material preparation to all the summer camp facilitation, the Hong Kong team of nine worked incredibly smoothly!

Learning to work with your spouse to prepare for such a big project, especially when you have opposite approaches, was also a very special experience for me. My husband is a typical thinker who tends to process things in a logical way, whereas I'm a feeler who focuses on emotionally connecting with others. There were, of course, many moments when we had a conflict of ideas and how to deal with issues. While marriage is challenging at times, working with your spouse definitely elevated the challenge to another level! We learned how it was necessary to humble ourselves and listen to each other. Through countless discussions and communication, we slowly found the point of balance between each of our extremes. For me, this was a precious experience of us growing together through sanctification.

Even though I wasn't able to return as a teacher to directly spend time with the local children, working behind the scenes provided me a clearer view of the whole structure and process of organizing a mission trip. Through this endeavor, I learned to work with both the body of Christ and the secular world -- with more wisdom, love and patience. In the future, I hope to maintain a servant heart while putting on the full armor of God and courageously being a Christian soldier!



Winnie Chong

"I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth."

- Genesis 9:13

Before going on this trip, one thing always posed as a barrier of my faith for God. I know that God allows bad things and challenges to happen to His people, but why? God has answered me through a number of incidents on this trip. One of the major incidents happened during the camp in Jin Lun.

During the 4-days camp, I was one of the teachers for a class of 13- to 15-years-old teenage kids. The kids are very happy to be at camp and welcomed us with a lot of love and smiles. But as I got to know them deeper, I realize they each have a story of their own about their homes. On day 2, a new student came to our class. She was a special one. She had a very hip and cool dyed hairstyle, with tattoos on her arms and legs, and multiple piercing on her ears and on her tongue as she later showed me. She is 15 years-old. As I got to know her, I asked her, "Wow, cool tattoos, where did you get them?" She answered me, "I did them by myself at home." Apparently, she has a tattoo gun at home and does it when she is bored. She is a very nice girl and I enjoyed getting to know her and chatting with her. But as we ended camp that day, my heart was very heavy for this particular student. I kept thinking about her family, and possibly the amount of care and guidance she gets at home to allow her to get these many tattoos and piercing on herself at such a young age. I, along with other teachers, was very worried about her.

She did not come back for day 3 or day 4 (the last day) of the camp. My heavy heart for this student lingers on, as I did not have a chance to get to know her any further. I prayed to God, "please take care of this girl, better yet, it would be great to see her again to get to know her more and even pray with her before we leave Taiwan."

I continued praying. And on the night of day 4, we held a rally event in the village where everyone in the village was welcomed to come to see performances presented by the kids. In the middle of the rally event, this student showed up! I was very happy to see her, and welcomed her to sit with our class. When I talked to her further, I realized she was actually a bit drunk. Her eyes were half-closed, with a smirk on her face. She told me she had been drinking before coming to the event. My worries grew for her as I conversed with her. However, it is because she is in this state, she answered openly and honestly any questions I asked her. I asked her about her family, her siblings, and got to know that she is not very happy at home because her parents are always in Taipei for work, and her Aunt and her older brother are very strict, not allowing her to go out and she is always extremely bored at home. At the end of the conversation, I asked if I can pray with her right then. She said yes! I prayed with her and asked the Holy Spirit to watch over her in her upcoming days. After that, my heart was settled, because I know God is watching over her and will be with her in her coming days.

This incident taught me again that God didn't create the bad things to happen, but these things happen because of our own fallen human choices, and He does have the power to turn it around into something glorious. This girl drank before the event, for whatever



reasons that she has. And because she is a bit drunk, an opportunity came up for me to pray with her and hopefully plant a seed of faith and peace in her heart. It was amazing to me to see how the string of events tied up in the end and it allowed me to get to know God's character a little bit better. **God allows rain to fall, but He can make a rainbow out of the rain!**



Afterword

Our belief for the Taiwan Mission Trip is that the children are the key towards their families. We believe when Jesus said "to such belongs the kingdom of heaven", he referred to the childlike trust and humility towards our heavenly Father, which we as adults often tries too hard to earn them or even forgot what it's like to "become like children".

God's presence in Jinlun was obvious during the camp, but our tasks are not yet finished. The goal of having a healthy and sustainable church still flames in our hearts. We pray fervently that God will use us to be part of His great plan in Taitung.

If your heart is with Taiwan, we ask that you join in our prayers as well. Pray for the children and villagers in Jinlun that God will always be present and uplift their faith in Him alone.



Special thanks:

- Binmao Elementary School
- Light of the World Church
- Albuquerque Chinese Baptist Church
- Sugar Land Chinese Baptist Church
- 台東豐里浸信會 (TFLC)
- Pastor Sherman, Ricki Yuen & Ly-ann

For more information, please visit:
www.islandecc.hk/ministries/missions/overseas-outreach/taiwan/

