

July 2020

# Focus on

# Missions



## Taiwan Report

by Rev Daniel Khoo (30 April 2020)

“He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” (Psalm 91:1)

We are very thankful to the Lord for keeping us safe and healthy in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. We were supposed to return to Singapore on 21 April 2020 but Singapore Airlines cancelled our flight. Recently, SIA has also extended their cancellations of flight to many countries, including Taiwan, until end of June. However, some airlines have resumed their flights from Taiwan to Singapore and we thank God that we managed to book our air tickets to return to Singapore on 30 April via Eva Airway.

We had to e-register with Singapore ICA three days before our departure, to inform the date and time of our arrival. They would then serve us with a “Stay Home Notice (SHN)” for fourteen days at a designated facility (a hotel). Thank God we arrived at Singapore Changi Airport safely. God’s grace saw us through the 2 weeks of SHN we served at the Intercontinental Hotel.

### Contents

- Taiwan Report ..... 1
- Financial Help for Churches in Batam ..... 3
- Updates on Lae Village Church, Ratanakiri ..... 7
- Eternal Life Church, Chiang Mai, Thailand .....10

### 1. Liu Bao Church

Liu Bao Church has started live-streaming their worship services and also implemented safe-distancing measures in the church premises. Every Sunday, all worshippers must wear a mask to church, have their temperature taken and their hands sanitised before they are allowed to enter the church building. The church is also taking extra precautions in view of the Covid-19 situation. For example, they now have virtual prayer meetings to reduce physical contact.



The church has arranged for me to preach and conduct holy communion every first Sunday of the month and Mrs Khoo will take over my teaching sessions at the hearing-impaired worship service.

### 2. Hearing-impaired ministry

We continue to have our daily evening Bible Study sessions at our apartment. We are now studying the Lord's Prayer. We have finished four out of a total of fourteen lessons. The hearing-impaired brethren are doing well and they come every evening after work to study the Bible. We are very encouraged by their diligence and desire to seek the Lord.

This month, one of our hearing-impaired brothers also invited his unbelieving hearing-impaired friend (Mr Lin Fong Long) to our hearing-impaired worship service. Please pray for us to have the wisdom to reach out and evangelize to the hearing-impaired community in Taiwan.



Every Sunday after church, we will have lunch with a group of the hearing-impaired brethren as well. They love to fellowship with one another and Sunday is an opportunity for them to meet and talk about their activities during the week. Most of them do not socialise at their workplace and live alone. As such, Sunday is the only time that they could meet and fellowship with mutual friends.



The hearing-impaired brethren are also learning to use Skype and Webex for our distance-learning when we return to Singapore. Please pray for wisdom and God's help because most of them are not computer savvy and would have challenges using digital tools.

#### Thanksgiving items:

1. Thank God for keeping the brethren and both of us healthy thus far during this time of the COVID-19 outbreak.
2. The hearing-impaired brethren are still coming faithfully for the daily evening Bible Study at our apartment.

#### Prayer requests:

1. Pray for Mrs Lisa Li and may the Lord strengthen and help her to overcome all the side effects of her chemotherapy. At present, she is doing very well, and she is very grateful to God for helping her to cope with her illness.
2. Pray for wisdom and strength to learn the Taiwanese sign language (TSL) so that we can minister the Word of God effectively and efficiently among the hearing-impaired brethren.
3. Pray for the Lord to grant me the wisdom to prepare Bible lessons and messages clearly and

concisely in PowerPoint slides.

4. Pray that the hearing-impaired brethren will continue to grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus. Pray that they will apply what they have learnt from the Bible and bear a good testimony for God.
5. Pray for my medical appointments and my blood test results. I have gone to see another doctor for a second opinion, and he has advised me to go for a PET scan. He also thinks that I should go for radiation therapy soon. Please pray for me as I need the Lord's guidance to make the correct decision regarding my medical treatments.

Thank you & God bless.

Yours in Christ,  
Rev & Mrs Daniel Khoo

## Financial Help for Churches in Batam, Indonesia

During this COVID-19 pandemic, many people have lost their jobs around the world and Indonesia is no exception. Many members of our three churches in Batam have lost their jobs and are in need of financial support. Following an appeal from the three churches, the Missions Committee decided to provide support in kind for basic essential items like rice, oil, and eggs to these families. As a goodwill gesture, the support was also extended to the Petra Church which is under the care of Sister Roska Choi.

The purchase and distribution of the essential items were spearheaded by Efendi and in total, 115 families benefited from this support: 56 families from Tanjung Piayu, 28 families from Sagulung Bahru, 20 families from Batu Aji, and 11 families from Petra. Below are pictures of some families receiving the support.

### Families of Sagulung Bahru



# Financial Help for Churches in Batam

## Families of Tanjung Piayu



## Families of Batu Aji





Families of Petra



# Financial Help for Churches in Batam

## Thanksgiving Notes from Batam Churches

Bantuan Sembako untuk gereja  
GAPPI Sagulung Baru

NO	Nama	Komentar	Paraf
1	...	...	...
2	MARION (Gereja Baru)	Terimakasih sangat banyak ya Tuhan Yesus...	Tal
3	OP Kerynti (Gereja Baru)	Terima kasih atas bantuan...	f
4	KE Lesum (Gereja Baru)	Terimakasih atas bantuan...	f
5	Kel. Masuku	Terimakasih atas bantuan...	
6	Kel. Siantan (Gereja Baru)	Terimakasih atas bantuan...	
7	Kel. Sungs	Terimakasih atas bantuan...	
8	Indung (Gereja Baru)	Terimakasih atas bantuan...	
9	MA Sintang	Berterimakasih atas bantuan...	
10	Berterimakasih atas bantuan...	...	
11	Berterimakasih atas bantuan...	...	

12	Arakaya (Gereja Baru)	Terimakasih atas bantuan...	
13	...	...	
14	...	...	
15	...	...	
16	OP gurun	Terimakasih atas bantuan...	
17	Mama Guree	Terimakasih atas bantuan...	
18	Mama Guree	Terimakasih atas bantuan...	
19	KE ERU	Terimakasih atas bantuan...	
20	Kel. Heaps to Sungs	Terimakasih atas bantuan...	
21	Kel. Mikdal Lesu	Terima kasih Tuhan atas berkat yang...	

UCAPAN TERIMAKASIH RITE BANGUNAN GEREJA LIFE-SINGAPORE

1. Terimakasih atas bantuan yang diberikan kepada...
2. Sembako dan sembako lain yang sudah sangat...
3. Terimakasih atas bantuan yang sudah diberikan...
4. Terimakasih kepada Gereja atas bantuan yang telah...
5. Terimakasih kepada Tuhan atas berkat yang di...
6. Terimakasih kepada Tuhan atas berkat yang...
7. Papi Tuhan, kami sangat bersyukur dan berterima kasih...
8. Terima kasih kepada gereja life dan puji syukur...

UCAPAN TERIMAKASIH RITE BANGUNAN LIFE - GEREJA JAYA

1. Tuhan memberkati Gereja life...
2. Tuhan Yesus Kristus...
3. Terimakasih kepada Gereja GAPPI yang...
4. Tuhan Yesus Kristus...
5. TERIMA KASIH KEPADA GEREJA LIFE JAYA...
6. Tuhan Yesus Kristus...
7. Tuhan Yesus Kristus...
8. Tuhan Yesus Kristus...
9. Tuhan Yesus Kristus...
10. Tuhan Yesus Kristus...
11. Tuhan Yesus Kristus...
12. Tuhan Yesus Kristus...
13. Tuhan Yesus Kristus...
14. Tuhan Yesus Kristus...
15. Tuhan Yesus Kristus...
16. Tuhan Yesus Kristus...
17. Tuhan Yesus Kristus...
18. Tuhan Yesus Kristus...
19. Tuhan Yesus Kristus...
20. Tuhan Yesus Kristus...

# Updates on Lae Village Church, Ratanakiri, Cambodia

by Chan Pui Meng

## The Ministry at Lae Village Church during the COVID-19 pandemic

My annual short break for this Chinese New Year had turned out to be a five-month rest here in Singapore. It was an unexpected long rest given to me by the Lord. Our God is an all-knowing God — step by step, He unfolds the status of my health and the COVID-19 pandemic.

On 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020, I came back home to spend the Chinese New Year with my siblings. It is also a time for my annual routine health screening at the polyclinic. Last December, I sustained a severe backache whilst travelling on a long journey from Lae Village to Phnom Penh. Thus, I had an additional orthopaedic consultation, not knowing that this would lead to a five-month break.

On the second day upon my arrival, I saw an orthopaedic surgeon at the Singapore General Hospital. Immediately, I was referred for MRI and X-ray. Marvellously, they were done on the same day and I was diagnosed to have spinal stenosis and two torn intervertebral discs. Then, I was advised to rest for three months in Singapore.

As soon as I was told to stay here for three months, my thoughts ran: “Oh! my co-workers, teachers, and the children are expecting me to return soon. I did not leave enough teaching materials for my teachers! ...”. As I turned to the Lord, I felt a sense of peace and was comforted by His word, “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths” (Prov.3:5,6). God enabled me to cast all my cares onto Him. We are merely His instruments to carry out His will.

The following day, I called up brother Samnang, the Lae Village Church leader, to inform him of my medical problem. Thank God that he took it quite well and trusted the Lord to guide and help him shepherd the flock.



Bro. Samnang's family

Over the same period, the news of the COVID-19 infection in China was spreading fast. Wuhan announced for a lockdown on 23rd January 2020. This had caused a stir among many countries very rapidly. By March, the infection had spread rapidly to Korea, South-East Asia, Japan, Europe, United States and to many other countries too. Thousands were infected and mortality rates were rising at an alarming rate. Many countries started to impose lockdowns and travel restrictions on their borders. The World Health Organization pronounced it as a pandemic outbreak in April.

Our government had also introduced strict precautionary measures and travel restrictions. Singaporeans were advised to stay home and not travel out of the country from early April. Cambodia was also not spared from the COVID-19 pandemic but the infection rate was relatively low.

For the protection and well-being of the people, all schools, religious gatherings, and non-essential services were suspended from April. Churches in the cities and rural areas including Lae Village Church were not spared too even though there was no known case reported in the village. During this period, I had been in touch with the church brethren via Whatsapp.

### Lae Village Church ministry

In the months of February and March, Lae Village Church activities were as per normal as precautionary measures were not yet introduced. That was also a busy period for harvesting tapioca and cashew nuts. Harvesting is a family affair – young and old work together from morning till evening. The children are excellent helpers for gathering nuts. So, the church attendance was usually affected during these months. However, thank God the church leader, Samnang, was holding the fort during this period.

A teacher, Sarin, a Grade 9 student, oversees four English classes for the children. Even though the attendance had dropped during this period, the teachers' love for the children kept them faithful to the task. In my absence, they used a dictionary app to help them in the pronunciation of the English words. Their commitment gave us joy in our work for the Lord.

17-year-old Sarin, who has been with me for more than three years, is teachable and helpful to the children ministry. She is also a Sunday School teacher. When the Sunday School teaching materials have been exhausted because of my absence, she continued to teach the children without any visual aids. With the help of the Holy Spirit, the children would keep quiet, stay focused and listened to her attentively.



Sarin teaching SS

By April, the COVID-19 cases in Cambodia had risen to above a hundred. The government began to suspend all schools, religious and social gatherings to observe social distancing. All of our youths who studied in Ban Lung (provincial town) returned to the village. By God's grace, Lae Village Church was permitted to conduct Worship Service with fewer than twenty worshippers. However, three weeks later, it also had to stop.

Though physical worship in the church was not permissible, it has not deterred God's people from worshipping our true and living God. Samnang knew the popularity of Facebook among the Jarai youths and he decided to record his preaching in his own home during the lockdown. The believers were encouraged to log onto Facebook to view the recordings. In Singapore, we have many options to reach out to our own audience via the mass media. But in the rural areas of Cambodia, the people are still not tech-savvy. Yet, God has His way of making it possible for His people to worship Him.

The Lord has also enabled me to keep in touch with my teachers, some youths and children via Whatsapp. Through the Whatsapp video, I was able to discuss the Sunday School lessons and English lesson materials with my six teachers. With the help of a teacher, God enabled us to have sing-a-long sessions with a handful of children and helped them to refresh their memory verses. We were so excited to see one another. They sang along with my ukulele playing and recited the Bible verses enthusiastically. It is important to help them realise that God has not forsaken them and His presence is always with us regardless of where we are.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought much fear among the Jarai people. They are animists and offer animal sacrifices (buffalo, pig or cow) to appease the spirits. Brother Reli, who was the ex-teacher of KBS, has a ministry in Ban Lung, Ratanakiri — he shared that many villagers are resorting to setting up “humanoid scarecrows” at the entrance of their villages. Entry into the villages was blocked except for the villagers with special permission to go in and out. Anyone who breaks the traditional law has to pay for a pig to act as a sacrifice to appease the spirit or ghost. The people are gripped by fear and too afraid to turn to God. They are still living in the bondage of the devil and



sin. Thank God for protecting His people in Lae Village Church and sparing them from animistic practices.



Humanoid scarecrow

James O Fraser, a missionary to the Lisu tribe in Yunnan, lamented, “It does seem a terrible thing that so few are offering for the mission field ... I can’t help feeling that there is something wrong somewhere.... Hundreds of millions of people have yet to hear the Gospel as it has not been brought to them – a mere handful of missionaries sent out from the home countries to evangelize them.” The Lord said, “The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few” (Matt.9:37). Paul in Romans 10:14 said, “How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?”

In May, the COVID-19 condition was more stable and no known case was reported thus far. Therefore, small groups of not more than ten were allowed to gather for worship. Samnang started the worship service at his home but the Sunday School and English classes were still suspended. Since they were absent for four weeks, the response for the worship service was rather cold – only 6-8 believers or sometimes none. Most of them were busy at their farms. Our leader was concerned that prolonged closure of the church could affect the faith of the believers not only in our church but also in other village churches. He felt lost like a shepherd when all his sheep were not in the sheepfold. We pray

that their faith will not fail them but the Lord will hold them fast.

When small group gatherings were permitted, online Bible study with my teachers (6 teachers and 1 student) was initiated. Currently, our bible studies which are held on Thursday evenings are based on the Bible Truths on the Life of Christ (BJU press), and the English lessons based on a prayer book are held on Mondays. They are conducted at Sarin’s home. We thank God for the wonderful sweet fellowship.



Bible study group

Observing precautionary measures was not a concern in the villages because there was no COVID-19 case reported. The villagers went about their duties (including farming) as per normal except there was no school for all youth and children and no church activities were held. However, they were not wearing masks and strict social distancing was not practiced.

### Challenges

Prolonged closure of the church activities posed a threat to the believers’ faith. Our leader observed that when the worship service resumed on a smaller scale after a month closure, the believers seemed to be quite detached. The children also failed to turn up when they were told to gather for fellowship. Distractions and temptations in the village are as real as they are in the towns and cities but in a different form.

The evil one is working extremely hard. His objective is to cut off their communication with God. The devil rejoices when God’s people are busy for their livelihood, pursuing after riches and pleasures. The apostle Peter said in I Peter

## Eternal Life Church

5:8, “your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour”. I covet your earnest prayer for them.

In spite of the above challenges, we still thank God for this pandemic where we learnt many spiritual lessons such as the vulnerability of a church as a body of Christ, the proper use of modern technology to our spiritual advantage, the worshipping of God in spirit and in truth and the importance of unity of the body of Christ. The people of God must be fed with the solid meat of the Word of God, so that they can stand firm on the promises of God in times of crisis. We must also labour for His people in prayer. There is no fast way of building a strong church without sacrifices. We have instant noodle and instant tree but not an instant grown-up church. We must not be spiritual ‘mushrooms.’

## Eternal Life Church (ELC), Chiang Mai, Thailand

### ETERNAL LIFE MISSION (ELM)



- 1991 Chiang Mai (Nirand)
- 1997 Ban Long (Nirand & Yong)
- 2001 Li Wu (Sholu)
- 2002 Bo Rae (Worawat)
- 2002 Pong Mai (Polu)
- 2006 Pong Mai Hostel (Polu)
- 2006 Pangmayau (Nirand & Yong)
- 2006 Ya Nam (Wirak)
- 2007 Hui Ki Lek (Somchai)
- 2008 ELC Hostel (Mook)
- 2014 Sam Ngan (Saemen)

**Eternal Life Church Chiang Mai (or ELC)** started out as a student centre with Saturday and Sunday Worship on 2 June 1991, with four congregants namely, the Tamees. The next week saw a couple of the Lawa Tribe, friends of Pastor Nirand, who in turn brought along their friends and loved ones, producing the first fruits of four for the first Thanksgiving Anniversary the next year. Two of them, Fon and Tha, still worship at ELC today. At the same time, the Children’s Club and Youth Bible Club met on Saturday morning and Sunday afternoon, respectively. Many of them were baptized later, and still worship at ELC today. It is a unique church of tribal folks worshipping in the Thai medium, where all tribal migrants worship in their respective languages in their churches. Presently there are 22 families, as well as singles and a few varsity students who serve as Sunday School teachers. One of them did an internship before the pandemic in Singapore, under Dn. Leow Ban Tat of ACE.



ELC started as Life Student Center 1991



Eternal Life Church Property 1999



Eternal Life Church 2000



Youth Bible Club 1991



Pastor Nirand Tamee



First fruits 1992 (Tha and Fon on right)



Sunday School Staff 2020



ELC Session 2018



ELC after lifting of lockdown 7 June, 2020 (29th Year)

## Eternal Life Church

In 1997, Pastor Nirand ministered to ostracized AIDS patients, with one of them living in Ban Long Village, one-and-a-half-hour's drive over two hills from Chiang Mai. The weekly Saturday visits gave birth to the indigenous Thai church in August that same year. It is faithfully held together today by Mr. & Mrs. Rung and Pon (Jirawan), the Aquilla and Priscilla of ELC Ban Long of eight families today.



ELC Ban Long Annual Christmas Outreach



Mr. & Mrs. Rung (front) & Pon (in red 2nd row)

The third Thai church of 10 families is **ELC Pangmayau** (founded in 2006), which is another hour's drive over two more mountains from ELC Ban Long. ELC houses some of their students who further their studies in CM City. Pastor Nirand and Eld. Yong now take turns to reach out to these two daughter churches.



ELC Ban Long 1997

In 2001, an evangelist from Mt. Wawi approached Pastor Nirand for help to start a ministry in the mountains of Chiang Rai Province. **Pastor Sholu** ministers to **ELC Li Wu** of six families of the Lahu Tribe today, with nine families moved out as stricter forestry laws forbid rice planting now. There are still many unbelievers in this village.



**ELC Bora** of 13 families, founded in 2002, is under the care of **Pastor Worawat**, with many families still outside Christ.



**ELC Pong Mai** (2002) of eight Lahu families, is under the charge of **Pastor Polu**. Together with his wife, they look after the student hostel. The late Bro. Chua Beng Hai saw children walking to school, along the 10 km route while in the car, and was moved to build a hostel for them to walk just 5 minutes across the road. Before Pong Mai Hostel was built, the children never finished school, as the journey to school made it difficult for walking, cycling or driving during the rain season. Each term, the church provides accommodation for 10 to 20 Lahu students while the public school provides food from Monday to Friday, and ELC during the weekends and holidays.



**ELC Ya Nam** was founded in 2006, with 35 families of the Lahu and Akha tribes, is under the charge of **Pastor Wira**.



**ELC Hui Ki Lek Mai** was founded in 2007, with 28 families, is under the charge of **Pastor Somchai**.



**ELC Sam Ngan** was founded in 2014 with 25 families of the Lahu Tribe, is under the charge of **Pastor Saemen**.



### Training Program for Pastors

These pastors were evangelists before they had any proper Theological training. Thus, Eternal Life Mission started hosting short-term quarterly Pastor Bible Conferences. Initially taught mainly by Pastor Nirand, help came along from Herald BPC through Rev. Dr. Bobby Phee and his team, Rev. Dr. Tan Wai Chun (from US) , and Nazareth BPC through Rev. Anthony Tan —they have continued helping for many years. Herald BPC also provides financial support for all the conferences.



Rev. Dr. Phee of Herald BPC



Herald BPC Team members



Rev. Anthony Tan of Nazareth BPC