

January 2022

# Focus on

# Missions



## Report on the Missions Seminar by Dn Koh Lip Hoe

The Missions Seminar held on 2 Oct 2021 was conducted fully virtually for the first time in view of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The theme of the seminar was **Pandemic- Crisis or Catalyst for Missions?**

Indeed, the pandemic has wreaked unprecedented havoc globally, with various industries battered due to the strict measures implemented to curb the spread of the infection. Travel was paralyzed and mission work which traditionally relies on reaching out physically and sharing the gospel was severely affected. However, the pandemic presented an opportunity to relook, rethink and reset the traditional way of mission work and allow Mission work to continue in novel ways despite the pandemic.

A total of 141 participants attended the seminar including overseas brethren from Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia, Thailand and Philippines.

Rev Charles Seet welcomed participants to the seminar and reminded that ever since the Lord Jesus commissioned His first disciples, the work of Missions has faced innumerable crises. However, each time the proclamation of the gospel was threatened, God’s kingdom advanced further and further. The Lord of the Harvest has always ensured that the work of Missions would not only overcome each crisis, but even be greatly helped through it.

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The main message was delivered by Rev Dr Bill Ebert from the Hilltop Christian Ministries in the Philippines. He shared from Matt 28:18-20 and reminded us of the Great Commission. Jesus gave the command and power to go forth to make disciples, baptise and teach, and be obedient to the word of God. God is always with us. He shared on how we should respond in the face of hardships due to the pandemic where no large group meetings, face to face meetings or visiting believers are possible. There is heavy dependence on devices to keep in contact and people without access are left out. Some lose hope, develop depression and even stop the ministry. We are reminded not to complain and murmur (Phil 2:14, 1 Cor 10:10-11) but to have joy even in our trials (Jas 1:2, 2 Cor 12:9)

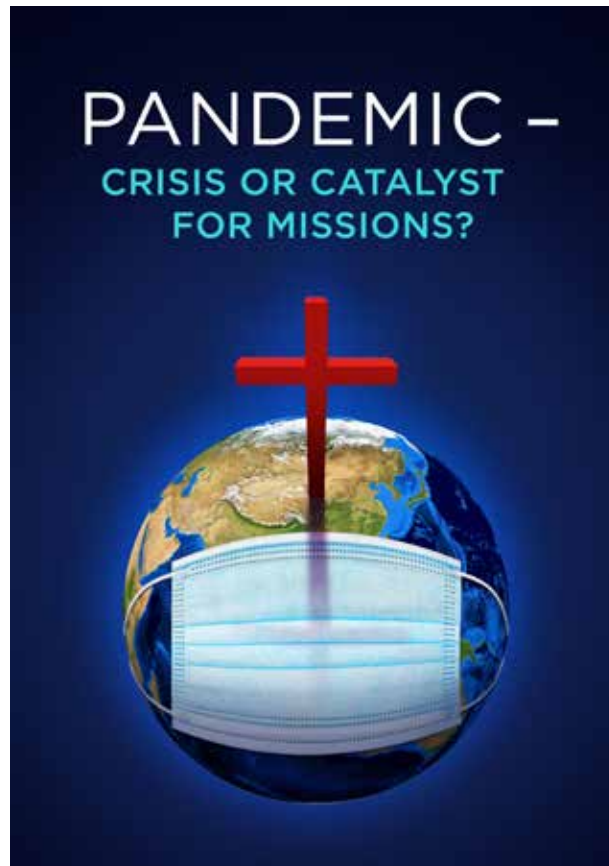
We are urged to think outside the box. To be aware and learn to use computers/devices/internet and new resources effectively. We can phone and text to keep in touch and check on fellow ministers. Bible studies may be conducted virtually. We can hold regular zoom sessions with people who are alone and to pray for them. Even when physical worship/meeting resume, virtual worship/meetings will be useful for those who are unable to attend physically. We are encouraged to remain faithful to God and to be a diligent servant of God. (2 Tim 2:14-15, Eph 4:3, 2 Tim 4:9). We should seek to be an approved servant of God and to handle the Word of truth correctly and to transform lives with it.

The next sharing was by sister Chan Pui Meng who is a missionary to Cambodia from Life Bible-Presbyterian Church. She described the impact of the pandemic on Cambodia with rising cases and associated mortality. Schools were closed, religious gathering suspended and entry to villages were denied. There is uncertainty and fear but there is hope for those who trust in God. Online worship was difficult as there was lack of internet access; some people could not afford devices or internet. Hence reaching out to lost souls was undermined. However, in areas such as churches in the city and towns where internet is more readily available, there was online worship and use of social media to reach out. There was also house and small group fellowship which brought people close together. The economic hardships during lockdown gave an opportunity to support the unbelievers through delivery of necessities to demonstrate love and compassion as well as share the gospel and pray for them.

In Le Village, there was a COVID case in May 2021 and as a result, church service was suspended. However, the church members continued to meet in Sister Pui Meng's house for prayer and Sunday school. Visitation continued during the difficult times to understand the needs and strengthen the faith of the people. The Great Commission still stands; God is in control even in the pandemic.

Sister Pui Meng also shared on how God led her to Chengko church after having served in Le Village for six years. She had a major spinal surgery some 14 years ago due to an injury. Two years ago, she realized her back was giving her some warning signs due to frequent travelling between Ratanakiri and Phnom Penh and the rough terrain at Le Village. Sister Pui Meng came to know of the opening to serve in Chengko

Church through Sister Sreymoch who is a KBS bible school graduate. The location is more favourable for Sister Pui Meng's back problem and there is also a house near Chengko church available for rent. In addition, Bro Orn and Bro Samnang were able to take over her work in Le Village. God had provided a timely opportunity to move.



Sister Pui Meng shared the quote from Hudson Taylor that "God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supply." She was thankful for the opportunity to serve in Le Village and heartened to see the children she has taught become Sunday School teachers, song leaders, English teachers who are able to work well with the local leaders. She urged us to continue to pray for Le Village and Chengko church.

John Caleb who is an ERBC student from India shared on his plans after graduation from ERBC. He was thankful to be able to participate in the Missions Seminar and to

be able to come to Singapore to study together with his wife. The harvest truly is plenteous but the labourers are few (Matt 9:37-38). There are not enough labourers equipped for the work of God. In the farming community in India, farmers need to know how to handle the sickle and to bend when they work. He likened the sickle to the word of God that we need to be equipped with and the bending to humility to follow the example of Jesus.

It is his desire to return to India after he graduates to train men and women who are not able to go abroad to be trained for the work of the gospel. His Church in India is called the CALM (Christ Abiding Lighthouse Ministry) Church. They can use mobile devices and electronic media to reach the unreached with the light and love of Christ. He covets prayer to be thoroughly equipped to teach young men and women for the work of the

gospel despite the ongoing pandemic.

Yos Samphos, an ERBC graduate from Cambodia shared next on the challenges and opportunities to witness God's faithfulness, goodness and power in the midst of the pandemic. He encouraged us that God is control in times of uncertainty. Cambodia was affected with more than 90,000 cases of COVID-19 infections and mortality of 2,000 at the time of his sharing. The government brought provinces to lock down including Sihanoukville. There were restrictions in public places. Physical meetings were not allowed in churches. They were not able to go out to preach the gospel.

However, God is still working in the midst to empower them to carry on the ministry. The ministry shifted online. Facebook Live was used for Sunday Service, Bible studies, prayer meetings and fellowship. Most of the church members could join and the number of people attending increased. They were also able to bring good news to the unsaved, share the love of God to those who were in difficulties due to the pandemic and encourage them. Prayers are sought for those who do not have internet access and are unable to tune in especially in the remote areas. He exhorted that God will never forsake or leave us in our time of need and to trust in the God of the impossible who never change and that all things work together for good to them that love God (Rom 8:28). He ended his sharing with the words of the hymn: "In times like these":

*In times like these you need a Saviour,  
In times like these you need an anchor;  
Be very sure, be very sure,  
Your anchor holds and grips the Solid Rock!  
This Rock is Jesus, Yes He's the One,  
This Rock is Jesus, the only One;  
Be very sure, be very sure,  
Your anchor holds and grips the Solid Rock!*

The final sharing was from Rev Thawng Nei Bil, Pastor of Biblical Presbyterian Church and Head of Biblical Institute of Theology, Yangon, Myanmar. He shared that Myanmar was not only affected by the pandemic but also political

upheaval and famine. The lock down and curfew hindered outreach, prayer meetings, worship, bible studies and visitation. The difficulties that people faced opened the doors of their hearts as they were looking for peace amid unrest and were hungry for the word of God. This was a good time to share the gospel. He was able to baptise new converts despite the crisis. He encouraged us to trust God as He sees and knows our condition, He is a present help, shield and salvation and can protect His children like how He delivered Daniel from the fiery furnace.

In the Q&A segment, the panelists were Rev Seet and Rev Bill Ebert. One of the questions was how church members can support mission work and missionaries besides praying for them. Some of the practical advice was the use of simple devices like video recorder to record stories for children and bible studies for areas without internet access. Members with various expertise can offer to help teach lessons on Zoom and specific programs that can help missionaries in their work. They may also conduct online lessons and gather for prayers online. They can find out what the needs are in the mission field and the resources they need. We can also start preparing the materials on devotions, bible studies, messages for use when the doors are opened.

Another question was asked if we would be more badly hit if the pandemic came ten years earlier. The panelists felt that this would be so without the technological means that we have today. However, God would make a way and there would be an answer to the church. We would still be using much of the resources that we use today for mission work in the post pandemic world. Seminars/conferences may be conducted for different mission fields at the same time without travelling. Missionaries from around the world can meet online and share and help one another.

The seminar concluded with a closing prayer from Rev Charles Seet.

## Chengko Mission: Update by Sis Chan Pui Meng



Chengko Church is in Tropang Moul Village in Chengko Commune, Prey Nob District in Sihanouk Province. Pastor Sobin Chey has been pastoring Chengko Church since 2012 after he had graduated from Kampongsom Bible School. He has a wife and two daughters, aged five and nine years.

Time flies as it has been four months since I left Le Village for Chengko in August 2021. The good Lord had provided me with a cozy house with a nearby laundry and marketing facilities and a house that was free from the wood borer insects and no “night visitors” (rats) to wake me up. As I recalled those days in Le Village, it was by God’s grace that He enabled me to live with those friendly creatures for six years.

During the COVID 19 restriction measures, the only church activity was the Sunday Worship Service in the evening and the Sunday School in the morning. For a long time, the church did not have a prayer meeting. Prayer is the lifeline of the church. God has ordained prayer as a means of grace for His people. Elisabeth Elliot wrote, *“Prayer lays hold of God’s plan and becomes the link between his will and its accomplishment on earth.”* Thus, Pastor Sobin, sister Sreymoch and I started the first prayer meeting in late August 2021. Then, we began to see God working in our midst, as the brethren in Life Church who were also praying with and for us. *“Prayer is the key to success in any great work for God.”* (Dr. Stephen Felker)

At the first Worship Service in Chengko Church, I was surprised to see only six worshippers, including Pastor Sobin, his wife, and myself. After a few weeks, a few believers who had left the church for some time came after our visitation. Some older

*Sis Pui Meng’s house*



*Prayer meeting - Ps Sobin, Sis Sreymoch and I*





*My first worship at Chengko Church*



*Worship service after two months*



*Bible study with 2 ladies led by Sis Sreymoch and I*

teens also began to attend the Worship Service. Prayer changes things.

As the COVID-19 restriction measures gradually eased in September, we started the English classes for the Primary and Secondary students, and the Khmer language class for the Lower Primary students in the evening. Before the English lesson, we had a 30-minute sing-along session and memorization of Bible verses in the Khmer language. Introducing a Bible verse a week allowed us to share the gospel and teach them the Word of God. Pastor Sobin taught the Khmer language to younger children and the English language to the Secondary students and I taught the Lower and Upper Primary students.



*Lower Primary level*



*Upper Primary level*



*Reciting Bible verses*

The Lord began bringing in many students to us. They were, then, encouraged to attend the Sunday School. Our prayer is that the students will come to the knowledge of God's love and accept God's grace and grow in faith. The Sunday School provides bonding between the teacher and her students. The younger children were enthusiastic to sing and learn the Word of God.



*Sis Pui Meng's class*



*Sis Sreymoch's class*

In November, when the schools reopened, many students, especially those in the Upper Primary level, did not come for the classes because of their afternoon school and distance. We pray that the Lord may bring them back to us again.

We also initiated Saturday visitation to students' homes and Sunday visitation to the villagers. Our presence in their homes provides an opportunity to get to know our students' parents and share the gospel with them and the villagers, whom we might not have a chance to meet. We discovered that many students lived quite far from the church as they have to walk for 15 minutes to get to church.



*Sunday visitation with Pst. Sobin and Sis. Sreymoch*



*Saturday visitation with the children*

We observed that many older teens, who attended the English class, did not come for the Sunday school despite our encouragement to do so. So in November, the Lord enabled us to start the Children's meeting on Friday evenings. Our goal was to reach out to those children who do not attend Sunday school. We had Christian movies, and Bible stories that conveyed the gospel clearly and then, followed by games. Thus far, the average attendance was around 15 to 20 students.



*Friday Children's meeting*



*Game time*

On 19<sup>th</sup> December, we had our Christmas Service and thereafter we showed the movie, "Jesus of Nazareth." Pastor Sobin spoke on "What is Christmas?" We thank the Lord for bringing about 10 to 15 people from our neighborhood to the Service. The Christmas celebration gives us an opportunity to invite our neighbors and to share the gospel with them.

We praise and thank the Lord for bringing His people into His fold through all these activities. These were made possible through your (Lifers) faithful prayers in serving the Lord together with us. It meant so much to us. We thank the Lord for granting us strength and grace in His work.

Finally, brethren, with the humbleness of heart, I would like to urge you to take heed that God is looking for faithful men and women, who are willing to forsake the comfort of life, to take up the cross to follow Him in these last days. On the mountain in Galilee, Jesus gave the Great Commission to His disciples and through them to us,



*Christmas Service*

*"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even into the end of the world." (Matt.28:18-20)*

Later at the Mount of Olives, before Jesus ascended to heaven, He gave His final words to His disciples. He said,

*"But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8)*

If His disciples had not obeyed His command, we would not have experienced God's love, the forgiveness of sin, joy, and His grace available to all who believe in Christ Jesus. Each of us has a God-given role to play in fulfilling the Great Commission.

## Ministry in Taiwan (2018-2021) (by Rev Daniel Khoo)



*Our deaf brethren @ Liu Bao Church*

29 December 2021

*“We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.” (Psalm 78:4)*

Dear brethren

Last night, we took a flight from Taipei to Singapore. Thank God for journey mercies as we had a very smooth journey from Taichung back to Singapore, our sweet home. Deacon Jian Ping came to our apartment to pick us up and drove us to Taoyuan International Airport. Brother Ethan (a youth from Liu Bao Church) studying at a university in Taoyuan also met us at the airport. We had a wonderful time of fellowship, and we hope to arrange a time to study the Bible together via ZOOM.



*Deacon Jian Ping and Brother Ethan  
sending us off at the airport*



When we recall and count the many blessings that the Lord has bestowed upon us throughout these three years in Taiwan, our hearts are filled with joy and praises to God for His wonderful work. We echoed with the psalmist: *“Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth’s sake.”* (Psalm 115:1) Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to share with you God’s wonderful blessings and to give glory to His name.

We thank the Lord that during this time of the COVID-19 pandemic, many countries had closed their borders and locked down their cities, we are glad for the opportunity to go to Taiwan to serve as missionaries to the hearing-impaired people. We thank God for helping us obtain a resident visa, which allows us to travel in and out of Taiwan to serve in the ministry. Truly, the Lord has opened this ministry for us, and no man can hinder us. *“I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.”* (Rev 3:8)



In His time and under God’s marvellous leading, my wife and I visited Liu Bao Church in Taichung in September 2017. Liu Bao Church was where I pastored during 1989-1992. We met a group of hearing-impaired brethren, and they are our “spiritual children” whom we led to Christ about thirty years ago. We were surprised to see them, and we are thankful to God for keeping them in the faith after so many years. They asked us to come back to minister to them because they could not find a suitable church to cater to their spiritual needs. In Taichung, only one church has a deaf ministry, but they do not have a pastor. They attended the Sunday service for a while, but soon they left because there was no spiritual feeding.

After returning from Taiwan, our hearts were burdened with their spiritual needs. We prayed over the matter, and we decided to go back to help the deaf brethren in Taichung. We spoke to the leadership

of Liu Bao Church to let the deaf brethren attend their church services. They also agreed to allow us to help them establish the deaf ministry. We began our involvement in the deaf ministry in Taichung in January 2018.

God has prepared everything for us to serve Him in Taichung among this group of deaf brethren. We managed to get our resident visa in July 2018. In addition, the Lord provided us with an apartment to stay in and touched the landlord to charge us with a very low rental cost. The place was in a good location and easily accessible for the deaf brethren to come to our house for evening Bible study after their work.



*Evening Bible study at our apartment.*

We had our daily evening Bible study (Monday to Friday, 7.30 pm-9.30 pm) with the deaf brethren. They came every evening to study the Bible without fail, regardless of any external circumstances, e.g., when it was raining and even during winter. It was such a great encouragement to us as their fervent desire to know God and His Word incredibly put many of us to shame. They treasured every moment to study the Bible and to know God in a personal and intimate way.

I thank God for preserving my health during these three years of service in Taiwan, even though I have undergone surgery and radiation therapy. God is good to us. The COVID cases in Taiwan remained relatively low. They managed to control the spread of the virus effectively and maintained zero local infections for the past two months.

During these three years' stay in Taiwan, we thank God for helping us to build good relationships with the brethren in Liu Bao Church. They organized a farewell lunch for us on 26 December 2021 and presented us with a plaque as a token of their appreciation for our work in the ministry. *“So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.”* (Luke 17:10)



*Liu Bao Church presented us a plaque during the farewell lunch (potluck)*

We feel sad to leave them, especially the deaf brethren at this time. We hope to return to Taiwan again next year to visit and fellowship with them, God willing.

We are thankful for Brother Jian Fong, Sisters Emma, Shiny and Joanne, who have come forward to help the deaf ministry. Brother Jian Fong has agreed to share the Bible lesson every fifth week of the month. We pray that the youths will also come forth to serve in the hearing-impaired ministry.

We met with the Liu Bao Church's leaders on 12 Dec 2021 to discuss the continuation of the deaf ministry. We have made some arrangements to continue ministering to the hearing-impaired by ZOOM after our return to Singapore. I will speak in the deaf services twice a month - the second and fourth Sunday of the month via ZOOM from Singapore. Liu Bao Church will take care of the first, third and fifth Sunday services. We are confident that our Lord Jesus, the Great Shepherd will continue to guide and bless this work and His people for His glory.



*Trial run using ZOOM virtual platform, thank God everything went smoothly.*

### Thanksgiving items:

1. We have also set up our computer to run ZOOM. We did some trial runs, and I thank God for Sister Ai Hua, who has kindly offered her help to man the computer to ensure that the system is running correctly. I thank God for hearing our prayers that He has always provided us in such a marvellous way whenever we have a need.
2. Sister Lisa Li is doing well with the chemotherapy once a month. Please pray for her recovery.
3. Thank God for our Christmas gathering at Brother Allen's home (deaf brethren). His mother was also present and prepared a delicious beef soup dish for us. We were glad that we could share the gospel with her again. Please pray for the salvation of Allen's mother (Mdm Lin Su Yue) and for her to come to know the Lord.



### Prayer requests:

1. Please continue to pray for some of the deaf brethren who are sick:
  - 1) Sister Mei Zhun is physically weak due to old age;
  - 2) Sister Su Ping's frozen shoulder and dry eyes;
  - 3) Brother Wang De Ming's heart conditions.
2. Pray for the salvation of Mdm Lin Su Yue, Mdm Ou Su Zhen, Mdm Wang Xiu Yu and Mr Xie.

## Ministry in Taiwan

3. Pray for us to have the wisdom to minister to the hearing-impaired brethren remotely through social media after returning to Singapore.
4. Pray for the leadership of Liu Bao Church that they will be faithful to God's word and stay away from false teachings and charismatic influence.

Although we had handed over the work in Taichung to Liu Bao Church, our ministry is not at the end. We will continue to serve the Lord wherever He leads us, and we will continue to minister to the deaf brethren in Taichung via ZOOM.

Our hearts are full of praise to our Almighty God, who has guided and blessed us the past three years of our ministry in Taiwan. We are also very grateful and want to give a special thank you to everyone for being our faithful prayer partners in serving the Lord together in His vineyard all these years. May the Lord bless you richly as you walk with Him day by day.

We wish you and your family a Blessed New Year!

Yours in Christ,

Daniel Khoo & Lee Nah



*Outing @Nantou*

# Ministry update from Tanjung Piayu B-P Church

## (by Bro Efendi Ginting)

Greetings in the love of Christ,

Praise the name of the Lord Jesus because He has led my life journey until the end of 2021. Living in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic for the past two years has been very worrying, and ministry work has also been hampered by many fears in everyone's hearts, including in the hearts of church members where I serve in Tanjung Piayu Bible-Presbyterian Church, and government regulations also limit all social activities, as well as church activities in order to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus, and so that everyone is not infected with the virus from others.

For most of the year, church activities were limited, and all church activities were advised to be postponed. Sunday services were still carried out in God's house by those who served (music players, worship leaders, singers, and preachers) while the congregations attended worship services from their respective homes via live streaming.

Praise God in December 2021, COVID-19 cases in Batam decreased, and we rarely hear about people being infected with the COVID-19 Virus, and also many church members have received the complete vaccine (first dose and second dose). Because of that, we have carried out worship at the church normally. In Tanjung Piayu, the Sunday School ministry has started in October 2021, and we have also opened the Sunday Service at the church to the public.

I see that through this COVID-19 incident, there is a valuable lesson for all of God's congregation, and that is also what I often convey in every preaching of God's Word as written in Isaiah 55:6 "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." I convey to the congregation that in this frightening situation, the coronavirus can kill us at any time, this is an opportunity for all members to draw closer to God. Those who have been far from God, now is the time to seek God, whose faith is weak, now is the time to acknowledge the Lord Jesus and rely on Him alone. Life is short and death is at the door waiting for us. Take the opportunity during this pandemic to correct ourselves and improve the quality of our worship to God. If we are given life and free from COVID-19 until now, it is by God's grace. If there is still no change in ourselves then a bigger disaster can happen. It just happens and threatens our lives. This pandemic period is a good time to reflect on the meaning of life and return to the Lord Jesus. May the Lord Jesus work in our church in Batam to grow the faith of the congregation.

Second, during this pandemic, the churches under Life Bible-Presbyterian Church Singapore mission umbrella are also blessed by assistance from the Life BP Church. Assistance in the form of daily living needs is quite meaningful for all congregations, even for the teachers at the New Life School because we are very in need in difficult times because of the pandemic.

During this time of COVID-19, I am also very blessed spiritually because the Word of God works at the Tanjung Piayu Bible-Presbyterian Church. There are spiritual blessings that I cannot imagine seeing with my physical eyes. I believe God is working and revealing His power. This is the testimony of the ministry in Tanjung Piayu.

### First Spiritual Blessing

In the month of November 2021, to be precise on the first Sunday, there is a Tanjung Piayu congregation member, Mdm Devi Zai, who has experienced a disaster that we must resolve and deal with. Firstly, I would like to share her background. Mdm Zai came and worshiped at Tanjung Piayu Church about six months ago. She was pregnant. That's why I requested Mrs Wilda (treasurer of Tanjung Piayu church) to investigate and dig up information about this mother. Mdm Zai said she was from Nias. She and her 12 year old daughter were left behind by her husband whose whereabouts is unknown. Because of this situation, we served and treated Mdm Zai and her daughter well.



*Visiting Mdm Devi Zai in hospital*



*The body of Mdm Zai's baby taken to be buried*

In November 2021 after returning from Sunday worship, she became sick and was about to give birth. Because her condition was severe, she had to be taken to the hospital for a Caesarean section. In this case, people who were around the house (illegal housing) took the mother to the hospital, and the doctor had to operate because the baby in her womb has died. After the operation was over, someone informed me and Mrs Wilda. We immediately arranged a time and invited several members of the congregation to visit the hospital. Arriving at the hospital, we were asked to pay the administrative costs of her child who died, and the cost of burying her baby. We were confused because we had to be responsible for the hospital fees. But thank God, with His help, the hospital waived the fees because she was indeed poor and did not have anything.

After I buried her son, we discussed with several congregation members asking for donations from the congregation. Thank God, the members gave Rp. 1,400,000, and the cost to bury her child was Rp. 500,000 and after Mdm Zai came home from the hospital, we visited her at her house and comforted her and gave her the money we collected from the congregation. While consoling her, I told this mother to confess her sins, and promise to be faithful before God, because all the members have helped, and the church has also helped. We continue to pray for this mother so that she truly has faith in the Lord Jesus and appreciate the help of the congregation.

### **Second Spiritual Blessing**

12 years ago, there was a youth of the Tanjung Piayu Church. Her name was Rina Sembiring. When she was young, she was so faithful to God but in 2008 she married an Islamic Youth and became a Muslim. On her wedding day she also did not invite the church, and from then onwards we no longer had any communication with her. In the course of her life, she divorced from her husband and we heard about it.

On Christmas Eve, we were surprised because she came to the church to worship. After the service was over, I spoke with her, and I said praise God because this Christmas Eve the Lord Jesus came looking for her. And I invited her to come to worship on Christmas Day and she attended. May the gospel that was preached work in her heart, and she will return to seek the Lord Jesus the Saviour. Praise the Lord. May the name of God be glorified. Soli Deo Gloria. Amen.



*Mdm Rina Sembiring was present in Christmas Eve service on 24.12.2021 (1<sup>st</sup> row on the right, with cream blouse)*

# Testimony from Sagulung Baru B-P Church

## (by Bro Mikdal T. Lisin)

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on my ministry in 2021.

The COVID-19 pandemic that hit the whole world has made a huge impact on all aspects of our lives, confining and limiting whatever we want and can do. It causes panic and fear of the threat of death from the grip of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was recorded that in 2021, after the New Year's holiday ended, the spike in cases of the COVID-19 pandemic increased dramatically by tens of thousands per day and the death rate increased even above a thousand people. People were afraid to go out and do activities outside the home, people were afraid to be in a crowd, including to gather and worship in church. That is the reality.

We really feel the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in our ministry. Even though we are confined and restricted, the work to serve the spiritual needs of the congregation is still carried out with due observance of health protocols. For several months we had to carry out services and worshipped online via Zoom, but the problem was that not all congregation members could attend. There are excuses that it is unsatisfactory to follow online worship, that they cannot access the Zoom address, some are without reason or are simply lazy. Looking at such a situation from the point of view of the person entrusted with shepherding the congregation, we can see that the congregation's main need is the need for God.

In 2021, I taught the congregation that we know about the main human needs (including need for clothing, food, shelter, clothing) and we can also add to the list of needs, namely the need for security, the need for self-recognition, and so forth. But there is one need that is far more important than all of these needs, which is the need for God. Eating and drinking are the main needs of humans. If these needs are not met, it will bring disease and death to our bodies. But if the need for God is not met, it will not only bring death to our spiritual bodies but also eternal death (separated from God's presence forever).

I asked the congregation why should we worship? Why should we have a fellowship with God? And why should we seek God?

The garden of Eden is the answer. The garden of Eden is God's small temple on earth that God designed so that God can fellowship with humans and conversely humans can fellowship and enjoy God. According to the Westminster catechism as well as the Heidelberg catechism, even after mankind fell into sin, the great theme carried throughout the Old and New Testaments is Communion with God.



Why should we have a fellowship with God?

Because God is the need of human life, it is not only the need for our spiritual life but far greater than that is the need for eternal life, living in eternity with God (1 Chronicles 16:11; Psalm 105:4; Isaiah 55:6; Amos 5:4–6; Zephaniah 2:3; Matthew 6:33). The command to seek God is not an option or a choice for us but as God's people, the command to seek God is the necessity of all necessities.

Even though until now their ears may still be heavy to hear and have not really given their heart to God, I believe that God's word that is preached never fails to do His will. As it says in Isaiah 55:11 "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Amen.

*New ceiling for the church interior*



### **Church Building Renovation Works**

In addition to the testimony of the ministry above, we also give thanks to the Lord Jesus Christ as the head of the church for leading and maintaining His church until now. Apart from God's providence for His church, our struggle in recent years is our desire to renovate the church building where we worship. This longing emerged when the roof of the church building leaked, and the room used for worship was flooded due to the rain and furthermore some parts of the church ceiling were worn and separated from the frame. In addition, because the compound is very open, it is feared that it could be abused by young people in our neighbourhood. Therefore, we had a special offering for the renovation work of this church building once a month. After four years, it turned out that the donations collected were far from the funds we needed. However, we are grateful to the Lord Jesus Christ that our shortcomings were later filled by the Singapore Life BP Church through the Mission Committee.



*Building extension, new church roof, boundary wall at Sagulung Baru B-P Church*

Therefore, on behalf of the entire committee of the GAPPI Sagulung Baru church, we would like to thank you profusely for the support and assistance from Life BP Church in Singapore, the Mission Committee, and also the entire Life church congregation who always faithfully supports us in prayer. Through the support of thoughts, prayers and material, the work of renovating our church building can be carried out well. Lord Jesus Christ blesses us and His work, Amen.



# God's Leading in the Ministry of GAPPI Batu Aji in 2021

(by Sis Paola Simbolon)



We can only express our gratitude to God because God has been with us, preserving the lives of His congregation throughout 2021, both in joy and in sorrow. I am grateful that God continues to provide opportunities for the GAPPI Batu Aji church to serve Him.

In 2021, there were a few problems in the ministry of the Batu Aji church. Some congregation members were tempted by a pastor who claimed to have great gifts. They even attended the services held by the pastor since 2020. I have personally reminded them that in their struggle, they should not believe in the empty words of men, but truly believe in God. This matter became a bit complicated, because there were several other members who did not like their attitude. They urged me to be firm with those who followed the pastor's invitation and asked that the unfaithful members be expelled from GAPPI Batu Aji fellowship. I explained to them that solving this problem is not as easy as that. I am grateful that God taught me to be more silent, listen more, and approach more, so that there are no divisions. I asked those who followed the pastor if their hopes, wishes had come true when they followed the pastor, they said no. I am grateful that this matter can be resolved properly. They have promised to remain faithful to worship at GAPPI Batu Aji and they said they no longer follow the pastor.

Through this matter there are several valuable lessons that I have learned:

1. I feel that the faith of the GAPPI Batu Aji congregation is still very weak, so I have to teach more about faith in the Lord Jesus. Only the Lord Jesus can give joy and peace in human hearts. If the human heart is filled with peace from God, then we will be strong to face all the struggles that God allows to happen in our lives. Simple food can taste good if there is peace. Difficult economic problems can also be overcome if there is peace in the human heart. God will not forsake His loved ones.
2. I am very grateful for this issue. I believe the devil is never happy with churches that teach the truth. The devil will try to cause trouble and division in God's church. I am grateful that God is still willing to use the GAPPI Batu Aji church to teach the truth of God's Word, and God is still protecting His church so that there are no divisions.

3. I am very grateful because I feel that it is not because of strength, of human greatness, that the ministry at GAPPI Batu Aji has been established to this day, but that everything is God's work. I am grateful to be able to see God's unique love and to see by faith the way God shapes His people.



*Combined Youth Christmas 2021*

Another item that we are grateful for is that God still cares for His people and blesses us with good health, especially God keeps the COVID-19 virus away from the GAPPI Batu Aji congregation, so that we can conduct activities, work and participate in worship activities in the church. We are grateful for the Life BP Church Singapore which continues to support us in prayer and provide social assistance in 2021. May God continue to use His church to be the light and salt in the world. I am grateful for the ministry activities that went well in 2021. Other ministries such as the Household Fellowship, the Women's Fellowship, the Prayer meeting combined with the Youth Fellowship, Sunday School went well, except in August because of the government measures, namely PPKM (Enforcement of Restrictions on Community Activities). Thank God for the opportunity in 2021 to celebrate Easter, church anniversary, and Christmas. May God continue to use His church to serve God until the Lord Jesus comes the second time. Glory only be to God's name, Amen.





*Praise item by fathers*



*Teachers singing praise*



*Remember the Bible verse*



*Let's memorise Bible verses*



*Sunday School creativity*



*Crafts*

# Update from Eternal Life Church

## (by Rev Nirand Tamee)

Time flies so fast. Now we are in the final month of 2021 with the New Year coming very soon. Throughout the year, we could not do as much as we would have wanted for our Lord as well as for our neighbours because of the Coronavirus pandemic. But praise and thank God for His grace and mercy which is abundantly upon us since the beginning of 2021. He had protected us from evil and harm and provided our daily needs and other necessary things in our daily lives. He is indeed our great shepherd who cares for us and carries us each year.

### Coronavirus Pandemic

*“He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.”* (Psalms 91:1-3)

Since the end of the year 2019, most people have been talking about the Coronavirus. Every TV channel and radio station reports about the number of new cases, deaths, recoveries, vaccinations, etc. Jesus Christ had predicted in Gospel of Matthew Chapter 24 that in the last days, there will be pestilence. The virus itself keeps mutating into new variants such as Delta and Omicron.

Thailand had experienced three waves during the past two years, with each wave getting worse and worse. The first wave, there were less than a thousand new cases per a day and the second wave saw over a thousand cases per day. The third wave saw more than ten thousand cases a day with many more deaths during this wave. Some days, there were more than a hundred deaths. But by the grace of God, not many members of ELC Churches were infected. Three members of ELC Chiang Mai, one from ELC Pangmayau and one from ELC Yanam were infected. His wonderful healing hands were upon them. All of them recovered. God is our refuge and fortress, He has delivered each one of us from this deadly disease. For those who had to undergo quarantine, ELC Mission provided a small token of cash to them.

### Help the Students

*“Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.”* Psalm 127:3

Since the COVID-19 spread in Thailand, each family's income has been negatively impacted. A few of our university students are self-supporting their tuition fees because their parents could not support them. We thank God for the needy fund from Mother Life BP Church. We managed to give a small amount to six primary students, four middle-high school students and four university students. Before providing the money to each student, Pastor reads them Psalm 127:3 that every child is a precious gift from God and whosoever fears the Lord will receive wisdom from God. *“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”* Proverbs 1:7.



*(4 other students were given in another session and not included in this picture.)*

## Thanksgiving Services

*“Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.”* Proverbs 3:9-10

From the month of April onwards, the villagers plow the field and prepare to plant the crops. In June, they started planting. At the end of October, the villagers then start harvesting the crops and later have thanksgiving service at church. They will bring along some of their fruit such as paddy and rice pumpkins, cucumbers, etc. Mostly, when they have service, they will also invite their neighbours, especially ELC pastors and members. But because of COVID-19, each church held service by themselves. No other church members are allowed to attend the thanksgiving service. From the end of October through the whole month of November, every Saturday, each church held their service.



### Church Worship Services

*“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”* Hebrews 10:25

During the past few months, most ELC churches and other churches had to cease Sunday service and other church activities. But by the grace of God most ELC churches have resumed service except ELC Chiang Mai, Ban Long and Yanam. Recently the local administration had allowed gatherings of less than 50 people, so ELC Chiang Mai resumed service on the first Sunday of October, but on the third Sunday two members were discovered to be infected with COVID-19 and the church had to cease services from the fourth Sunday onwards. Thank God for new technology that helped us to worship Him online.

### Giving Aid to Church Members

*“If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?”* James 2:15-16

Praise and thank God for the relief fund from Life BPC Singapore. During the middle of October, ELC Mission had managed to distribute rice to the village churches. The members were especially grateful to Mother Life for the help. It was just before harvest season and it was a great relief for them in obtaining food. To some of the churches, we helped with other needs like groceries. May double blessings will be upon Mother Life.



## Sonya Resort Dedication at Ban Long

*“Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.” Psalms 127:1*

Mrs Son, who is a member of ELC Ban Long and her husband, a prison official, had built a guest house in Ban Long. He requested permission from the District official to hold an opening ceremony on 5 December 2021. The members of the church also took opportunity to have worship service at the resort that day. ELC Ban Long had not held service for almost a year.



*“He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.” Psalms 91:4*

We thank God for being our great shepherd who looks after us and provides for our daily needs. He also protects us from evil and harm, especially from COVID-19. All ELC Pastors are very grateful to Mother Life for providing their monthly salary and other needs. May God bless our Mother Life continually and may the Lord use each one of us in His precious ministry till He returns, Amen.

## Announcement on Designated Offering for Missions

We thank God that Lifers are very generous in their offerings towards missions. In terms of support, the church gives priority to our fully-supported missionaries and we would like you to be aligned with the church's position when giving towards missions. Rather than giving offerings that are designated to specific individuals or mission stations, you are encouraged to give to the Missions Fund and let the Missions Committee disburse them as it sees fit. Your understanding on this will facilitate an informed stewardship of resources for the Lord's work in missions. If you wish to contribute financially to missionaries, please indicate "DO Missions" in the reference field in your e-Offering via the Life Church PayNow QR Code. May the Lord bless your cheerful giving.



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