

向东服务

Serve the East

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向东快

December 2021

*Who is willing
to inherit*

the torch of

Yuan-Han Journeying together

- ⊕ It turns out that this is really letting go
- ⊕ Helping The Indigeneous People To Overcome Their Challenges

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Together with God's children,
we serve the Indigenous people,
the marginalized group in our land.

MINISTRY STRATEGY

EMPOWERMENT

To empower Indigenous churches in
economy and education.

AWARENESS

To share the vision of 'Yuan-Han
Journeying Together' with
Chinese speaking churches

SUPPORT

To link the Chinese speaking
churches together in supporting
indigenous churches

TRAINING

To equip Chinese speaking
churches to involve in caring mission



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Editorial board

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Editor / Sis. Jowee Lee

Sis. Carol Lim

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HISTEAM
全人关怀团队
HOLISTIC INTEGRATED SERVICES BHD 828089 D



ADDRESS / 36-B (2nd Floor) Jalan Anggerik
Vanilla R31/R, Kota Kemuning, 40460 Shah
Alam, Selangor.

TEL / +603 5122 1130

EMAIL / info.ste@histeam.org.my

WEBSITE / www.histeam.org.my/

STE BANK Acc. / Maybank 5127-8101-2599

Holistic Integrated Services Bhd

MICAH BANK Acc. / OCBC BANK 707129924-3

Holistic Integrated Services Bhd

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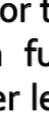
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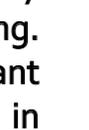
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Written by Rev. Andrew Wong

[Click to read](#)

[“New Discoveries on the Ancient Path \(1\) & \(2\)”](#)



Great Discovery No. 4

IT IS ONLY THROUGH OBEDIENCE, BY SAYING “YES!” TO GOD, THAT YOU CAN TRULY EXPERIENCE THE JOY, CONTENTMENT, PEACE, AND SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS.

The lesson of obedience is not one only for the trainees in Micah Centre, but a fundamental yet difficult-to-master lesson for every believer who vows to truly follow Christ.

One month ago, when I was still in prayers and preparation for my upcoming schedule arrangements for the weekend, the name of a city kept coming into my mind – Kuching. But even so, I was greatly reluctant to say “Yes” to this prompting in my heart. Also weighing down my mind was the preparation for next year’s Global Leadership Summit, while I also remembered that I had several sermons, seminars, and articles (including this one) still yet to be prepared as the deadlines were closing in. My eldest son voiced his concerns that if I were to go to the city, I would have to go through airports throng with travellers following the recent lifting of travel restrictions, not to mention that the destination is also one of the hardest hit by the pandemic. Even I was questioning myself – for just a session of preaching and an appointment with a ministry supporter who has repeatedly extended her invitation for a meet up – is it really worth the risk to make the trip? But in the end, in submission and obedience – a spiritual discipline that I have been practicing through the years in the ministry – though not without questions and doubts, I travelled to Kuching.

The church that I was invited to preach was an Indigenous church which I have never visited before. While I was there, the senior pastor called in to send his appreciation, and through our conversations I learned that the church is very active in the missional and church planting works in the interior areas. Also from talking to the leaders of the church during the fellowship after worship, I was convinced that this is the church to be perfect partner for HISTEAM in our ministry to lead mission teams into interior of Sarawak to learn about the Indigenous churches there. I had this firm assurance in my heart that this church is God’s answer to our prayers, following the signing of MOU with the Borneo Evangelical Mission (BEM). Thanks be to God!



Rev. Andrew & Rev. Matthew

As for the ministry supporter who has repeatedly invited me to meet up, we finally got to enjoy our fellowship over a meal during my visit to Kuching, during which I was also introduced to two new friends who came along with the supporter. At the restaurant where we had our meal, one of the hawkers, upon hearing that I am a pastor, requested me to pray for her as she was struggling with some difficulties in life. However, I had a hard time communicating with this lady as she tried to talk to me in the local dialect which I am unfamiliar with. Thankful to God, in His wonderful plan He had already prepared the solution – the two new friends I have just met were speakers of the local dialect, and they stood in to help translate the lady’s sharing to me and mine to her. Finally, we managed to share our prayers, care, and support for this lady, a neighbour in need, without great difficulties. Praise God indeed!

As I was writing this message in Kuching, thinking back to the past two days here, I finally understood why God has led me to visit this city at this exact point of time. Not only did I get to complete the tasks which I have been preparing for, God surprised me with some unexpected blessings and outcomes from this trip. I managed to rekindle and enjoy the fellowship with some old friends whom I have not seen in years, God also arranged for a serendipitous meeting with a Chinese pastor who has just received the vision, not long before the COVID-19 outbreak, to mobilise the church to go into the Indigenous communities. Though it was our first meeting, I felt a deep and strong connection with him, with our shared calling and burden, and our faith in God’s providence and guidance in our mission to serve our Indigenous brothers and sisters, holding us together in one accord.

What I am trying to say is simply —

the obedience towards God’s instructions is the true demonstration and action of His children’s love for Him.

Just as recorded in Jeremiah 7:23,

“Obey me, and I will be your God and you will be my people. Walk in obedience to all I command you, that it may go well with you.”

Amen?

To be continued...

[Click to read](#)

[“New Discoveries on the Ancient Path \(1\) & \(2\)”](#)



It turns out that this is

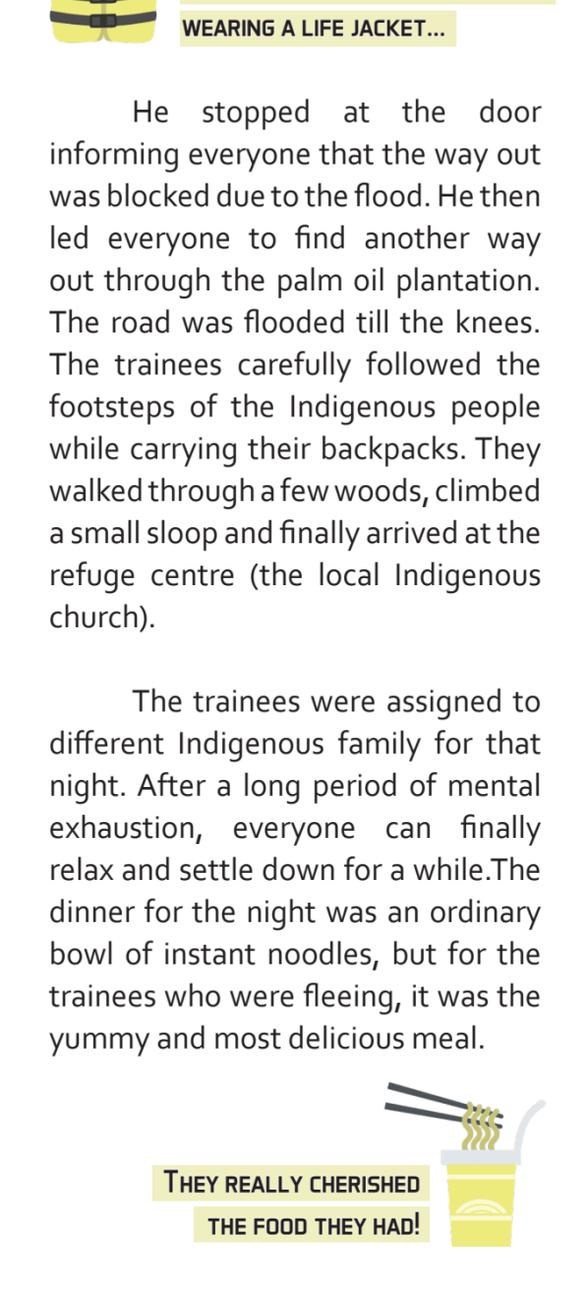
real

Written by
Jowee Lee

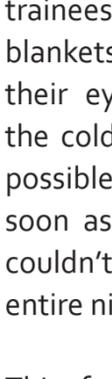
letting go

In the afternoon of 15th September 2021, Sabah was raining cats and dogs for 2 hours. One mentor was conducting an online class at the office and another one was staying with 8 other trainees in one of the Indigenous people's houses. That was the house they lived during their practicum days in the village. The owner and his family had moved to the city.

The mentor saw that the ditch in front of the house was flooded and felt uneasy. Hence, she and one of the trainees walked to the nearby river to examine the surrounding. She was surprised to find that the river is rising and began to be levelled with the river bank. She quickly instructed the trainee to return to inform everyone to evacuate quickly, but the other trainees thought he was joking. It wasn't until the mentor came back that she ordered the trainees to pack up quickly with a serious expression on her face, only then the trainees realised that the situation was indeed serious.



the river is rising and began to be levelled with the river bank



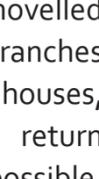
AT THE SAME TIME,

AN INDIGENOUS PEOPLE CAME OVER WEARING A LIFE JACKET...

He stopped at the door informing everyone that the way out was blocked due to the flood. He then led everyone to find another way out through the palm oil plantation. The road was flooded till the knees. The trainees carefully followed the footsteps of the Indigenous people while carrying their backpacks. They walked through a few woods, climbed a small sloop and finally arrived at the refuge centre (the local Indigenous church).

The trainees were assigned to different Indigenous family for that night. After a long period of mental exhaustion, everyone can finally relax and settle down for a while. The dinner for the night was an ordinary bowl of instant noodles, but for the trainees who were fleeing, it was the yummy and most delicious meal.

THEY REALLY CHERISHED THE FOOD THEY HAD!

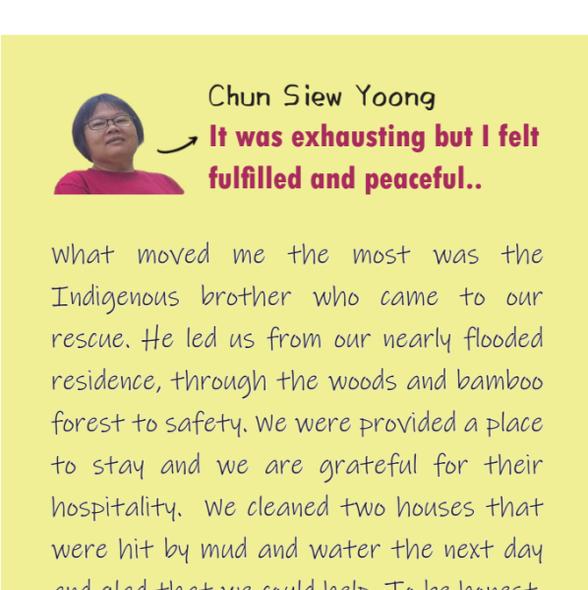
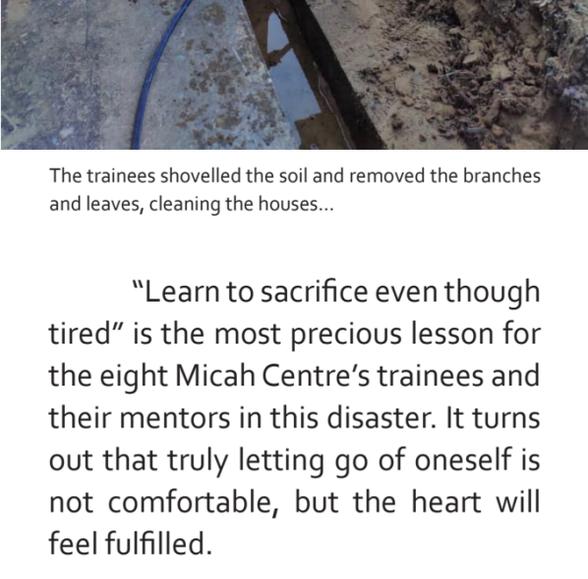


Power was cut in many places, there was no clean source of water too. After changing their clothes and spreading their sleeping bags, the trainees covered themselves with blankets torn with holes. They closed their eyes, hoping to get through the cold and tiring night as soon as possible. Some trainees snorted as soon as they lay down while some couldn't sleep and kept tossing the entire night.

This fatigue lasted until the next day...

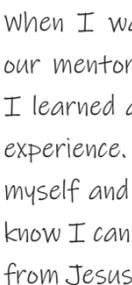
"The water receded!" This was the news spread by the villagers everywhere. After hearing the good news, the trainees who were having breakfast planned to return home to rest. At the same time, a villager was gathering everyone to clean the houses that were severely affected by the flood. The trainees were very reluctant in their hearts. However, because of serving, they sacrifice themselves and went forward with their tired bodies.

By taking this step, they were connected with several Indigenous families whom they had never spoken with. They are Catholics and live nearer to the river. The damage to their houses were the most obvious in this flood. The trainees shovelled the soil and removed the branches and leaves, cleaning the houses, hoping the families could return to their home as soon as possible. With this connection, whenever the trainees passed by these few houses, they no longer just looked at them like strangers, but stopped the car for a catch up.



The trainees shovelled the soil and removed the branches and leaves, cleaning the houses...

"Learn to sacrifice even though tired" is the most precious lesson for the eight Micah Centre's trainees and their mentors in this disaster. It turns out that truly letting go of oneself is not comfortable, but the heart will feel fulfilled.



Chun Siew Yoong

It was exhausting but I felt fulfilled and peaceful..

What moved me the most was the Indigenous brother who came to our rescue. He led us from our nearly flooded residence, through the woods and bamboo forest to safety. We were provided a place to stay and we are grateful for their hospitality. We cleaned two houses that were hit by mud and water the next day and glad that we could help. To be honest, it was exhausting but I felt fulfilled and peaceful.

Moses Goh

Really let go of myself and try my best to help others..

When I found out the neighbouring village was severely affected and needed help, I was reluctant and exhausted but I still prayed to God for strength. When I arrived, the village was horrible. Knowing that they needed help, I put aside my fatigue, emotions and focused on serving. When I was almost giving up, God send our mentor to bring KFC to cheer us up. I learned a lot of valuable lessons in this experience. One of it is to really let go of myself and try my best to help others. I know I can do better! I need to learn more from Jesus, do justice, be merciful and walk humbly with the Lord.

Edited by
Sis. Jowee



Helping The Indigenous People To Overcome Their Challenges

Every time when we go on mission trips, we have to ask ourselves some very hard yet honest questions:

"Have the people become more confident, independent, or gained new abilities or skills from our ministry?"

"Have their spiritual lives matured, their leadership qualities improved?"

"Have their level of education and their economic condition shown improvements, their standard of health and hygiene become better?"

"While we may feel good about our ministry towards them, how much actual good are we bringing into their lives?"

TWO months ago, during the "Indigenous and Chinese (Yuan-Han) Journeying Together Vision Sharing and Prayer Meeting", Pastor Lam Kee Hing shared with us the importance of the Indigenous Church in Malaysia. Through introducing the background of the Indigenous people of East and West Malaysia, he helped us to understand why they are still facing great difficulties and challenges even today.

On September 13, Pastor Lam shared a second message with us. This time, he focused on the right principles and effective strategies of ministering to the Indigenous people. These insights and wisdom were gained from his own experiences, the mistakes he made in the early years of ministry as well as his observation of the services of other Christians.

THREE common mistakes commonly made in this ministry

(1) Too much charity, not enough empowerment

Many churches and organisations like to go on short term mission trips to the Indigenous communities. These visits last from as short as a few hours, to a few days. They would bring supplies of food, other daily goods, building materials, tools and other basic necessities for the villagers. After coming back from the mission trips, they would often be so happy for the experience, and would proudly share the lessons they learned during the trip.

We may feel good about the goods and services we have provided for the Indigenous people. However, for all the materials we have provided and the ministry we have done, the actual benefit the people receive from us may be minimal. Even worse, we might miss the fact that we could have caused greater damage and created more problems to the people we think we are helping. While we try to give as much help as possible to the Indigenous people, we may have forgotten a very important aspect which is to teach and train them to help their own community. As the saying goes, "give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime". This unrestrained giving may breed a culture of dependency among the Indigenous people, causing them to want and expect more and more from others.

It must be emphasized that the act of giving and the desire to help in itself is commendable. However, short term mission trips like these – especially if, as commonly practiced, is just once or once a year, then it is more akin to "spiritual tourism", and it is hard to bring any lasting impact for the Indigenous people from it.

(2) Too much love, not enough accountability

It is true that most Christians are full of love and generosity; for ministry of charity, many Christians are happy to give willingly, abundantly, and freely. We give joyfully and the Indigenous people receive it gladly. However, if we only give freely but neglect to demand accountability from them, we are only creating an array of new problems and issues. For example, the amount donated or goods brought in may determine how well a mission team will be received or if there is inequality in the distribution of goods we have given, it may cause discontentment and jealousy among the community, and the people may become overly dependent and adopt a mentality to just wait for assistance without showing the will for any responsibility. There have been instances where free material supplies and aids were given to certain Indigenous groups but it was later discovered that in the end many of the goods that have been given to them were not put into use but were just being left out in all places, gathering dust.

(3) Too much feeling of superiority, not enough real participation

Sometimes, while we try to serve the Indigenous people with love, we may, consciously or otherwise, possess a sense of superior patronizing attitude towards them. The fact is that a relatively higher number of Indigenous people have a lower education level than the other races and many of them belong to the lower income group. It is thus very easy for them to be perceived as being weak, powerless, and pitiful. In addition to that, many of the Indigenous are quite reserved in nature and may not always speak out much in front of others. Because of this people may think that they can be easily controlled or manipulated. Those seeking to help and support our Indigenous brethren must be aware of a number of signs of superiority that we may have such as thinking that we know what is best for them, not trying to understand and empathise with them, unwillingness to seek for their advice, failure to have deeper conversations with the them about their lives and challenges and so on. And because we are the benefactors and givers while they are the beneficiaries and receivers, our Indigenous brothers and sisters may be even more reluctant to question or correct us even when we have made mistakes or offended them. And with this going on for years, we find that many Indigenous folks are still largely where they were when we first started to help them with not much progress seen.

CONCLUDING CHALLENGE

My Prayer and Hope for the future
God will use brothers and sisters from the Chinese Church to come alongside our indigenous brothers and sisters to effectively encourage, equip and empower them:
spiritually,
economically,
socially and
Educationally
So that they can rise up and fulfill their destiny

Concluding Challenge & Prayer

What Pastor Lam has shared above are from the experiences and observations in his years of serving in this particular ministry. He humbly accepts that some may disagree with him and may have different opinions. However he believes that his insights and conclusions can be a useful reference for discussions relating to ministry to the Indigenous people.

Pastor Lam has also shared a few other important principles about this ministry. These are: (1) respect the Indigenous as a stakeholder in the work rather than a hapless beneficiary; (2) consult and engage the Indigenous leaders rather than trying to control them or decide what is best for them; (3) assist them in fulfilling their needs rather than wants; (4) be purposeful, rather than reckless, in your giving; 5) maintain an attitude of bringing transformation and enabling them for growth, rather than treat this as a visit-and-leave job.

Pastor Lam additionally offered FIVE specific recommendations for increasing effectiveness in the ministry to the Indigenous people

1 Firstly, do not just give verbal advice or theoretical solutions but also provide practical help and supportive guidance as well. For example, say, we want to help a group of Indigenous villagers to develop a fish farm. What some people will do is to gather the group of Indigenous villagers, teach them the steps of setting up the fish ponds, give them the fish fries and all the necessary materials and tools for the project. And then hope that the project will then succeed. This is only helping them verbally and theoretically. If we were to come back to visit after three months, we wouldn't be surprised to see no fish ponds and no fish farm in operation. It is imperative, therefore, to remember that in all of our service to them, we have the responsibility to guide them along the way, to work with them side-by-side, step-by-step until the project takes off.

2 Secondly, do not just give too freely or blindly but also build accountability. Whether it is in the form of money, seeds, fertilisers, tools, or materials, it is unwise to just freely hand over these things to our Indigenous folks. Our equal and perhaps greater responsibility is to set up an accountability system. It can be done in several ways:

- through requiring a true record of how our gifts (resources) have been or are being utilised.
- through requesting regular reports
- through conducting periodic spot-checks.
- through keeping track of the official receipts, financial records, or inventories.

3 Thirdly, do not just cause excitement and create passion at the beginning of a project but ensure they are maintained consistently from the beginning till the end. It is normal for us as humans to be enthusiastic and passionate about a new idea or new project at the beginning. There is this well-known Malay proverb which goes: "hangat-hangat tahu ayam" which literally translated means chicken dropping remains warm only for a short time. To ensure that the stakeholders of a project remain passionate, we need to do regular checks, strive to maintain a stick to the set timeframe, agreed methods, and established regulations when carrying out a project.

4 Fourthly, do not breed dependency, but establish authenticity in relationships. The right relationship we should maintain with the people we work with is one of a partnership, each side playing their own crucial role in the equation. Those who give help and assistance to the Indigenous people need to have a heart of love and empathy to truly know them, a giving spirit to freely share what we have with them, and a respectful attitude to honour them as our equal partner.

5 Fifthly, do not be overly directive, but seek more to empower them to take up ownership of the agreed project. From a long-term perspective, it is only when the Indigenous people begin to take up the ownership, to assume the responsibility for their own lives and future, that our help and service for them can bear the fruits of transformation and development. So our role as the helper is only to be the supporting side, to empower them and come alongside them, to equip them with skills to fully realise their potential. We are not to make them into "yes-men", who only know to meekly follow whatever things the helpers make them do.

Pastor Lam concluded his sharing with stories of 3 individuals and organizations who had successfully ministered to the Indigenous people. These success stories give hope and encouragement to all of us involved in this ministry that we can truly serve the people effectively with the right principles and strategies. And it is our hope that these testimonies can also be an inspiration to those joining the "Yuan-Han Journeying Together" Vision Sharing and Prayer Meeting.

If you wish to join Vision Sharing and Prayer Meeting Please contact Carol 012-4240118

4th Graduation Ceremony

 **Date: 9 January 2022 (SUNDAY)**

 **Time: 4:00PM - 5:30PM**

The 4th batch trainees have completed their cross-cultural disciple training.

We would like to invite you to witness their graduation ceremony on-line, and give thank to the Lord as He has led this group of young people to go through the journey of cross-cultural where they learned to journey humbly with Indigenous people.

Stay tuned on our Facebook & YouTube.

Click the logo to enter the page:



Pray for Serve The EAST ministry

Kelas Teman Baca (KTB)

Updates: In early October, when the pandemic improved, our only Kelas Teman Baca resumed class. However, the good times did not last long. Mid October, someone in the village was diagnosed COVID-19 positive, thus KTB was forced to suspend classes again. Thank God, the pandemic is under control and there were no more confirmed cases. KTB will be resumed on 22/11 (Monday). Children can go back to Kelas Teman Baca again.

Prayer Request: On November 22, the students will return to school. May God grant these children wisdom so that they can keep up with the learning progress and are willing to continue learning. Pray that God will continue to lead the two Indigenous teachers in KTB to teach the children wisely during this endemic.

Rural Preschool Ministry

Updates: The Movement Control Order (MCO) prevents the preschool education center from conducting classes as usual. Telecommunication in rural areas is underdeveloped, therefore internet facilities is very limited. Teachers cannot use the Internet to teach. At present, teachers can only assign homework for students to complete at home.

Prayer Request: Pray that our Lord helps the teacher to stay in confidence, able to face many difficulties and challenges boldly. Pray that the Lord will help the parents to cooperate with the teachers by supervising their children to complete their homework at home.

Micah Centre

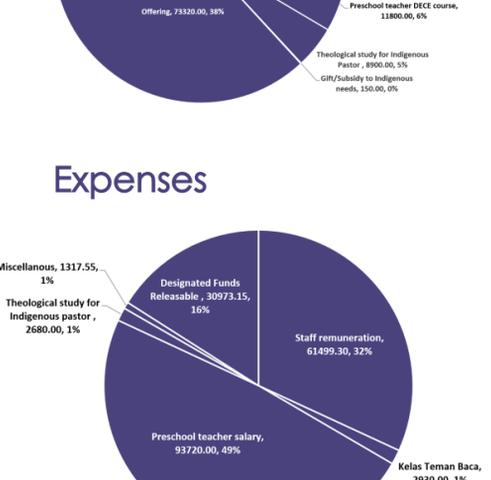
Updates: From mid-August to mid-November, Micah trainees had their practical in an indigenous village near Micah Centre to experience rural life and learn to serve the indigenous people. Although the pandemic was looming, following standard operating procedures, the trainees still move around in the village and got to know the villagers, established relationships with them, and encouraged them with the word of God. We're thankful to God that this second phase of practical has been successfully concluded. Later on, the trainees will enter the indigenous village at the interior of Ranau to serve for one month and prepare for graduation.

Prayer Request: Pray that God will protect the trainees when they enter another indigenous village to serve, pray that they'll be more confident to apply what they had learned, and become a blessing to the local people. Pray that God will continue to lead the trainees as to their direction in life even after graduation, and that God will continue to work in their hearts, so that they have the courage to turn God's moving into actions, serve the Lord throughout their lives, and become elite soldiers in the kingdom of God.

Support the Needs of Indigenous People

Updates: In the last issue of Serve The East Bulletin, we did mention the pastoring issues faced by Indigenous churches during pandemic, and we also called upon Chinese churches to sponsor walkie talkies for every family, so that the indigenous pastor can continue to pastor his flock by using walkie-talkie. Thank the Lord, some brothers and sisters donated a sum of money that is sufficient to sponsor 22 walkie-talkies to a church in the local village.

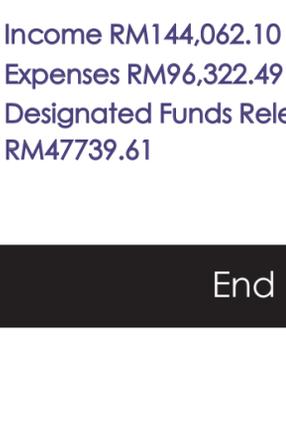
Prayer Request: Pray to our Lord that He'll will grant wisdom to the pastors and leaders of the indigenous churches in every villages, to be faithful in pastoring the flock entrusted to them, and lead the church to overcome challenges in this pandemic.



Serve The East 2022 Plan

Updates: On December 6, we held the last online vision casting prayer meeting, where we also revealed our plans for next year.

Prayer Request: Pray that God will move Chinese speaking churches to be willing to participate, whether serve personally among the indigenous people, or by prayer, or support financially, so that HISTEAM can walk hand in hand with Chinese speaking churches in the Yuan-Han Journeying Together.



Financial Report Jan-Sept 2021

Serve The East

Income



Expenses



Income RM193,120.00

Expenses RM162,146.85

Designated Funds Releasable

RM30,973.15

Micah Centre

Income

Expenses

Income RM144,062.10

Expenses RM96,322.49

Designated Funds Releasable

RM47739.61

End