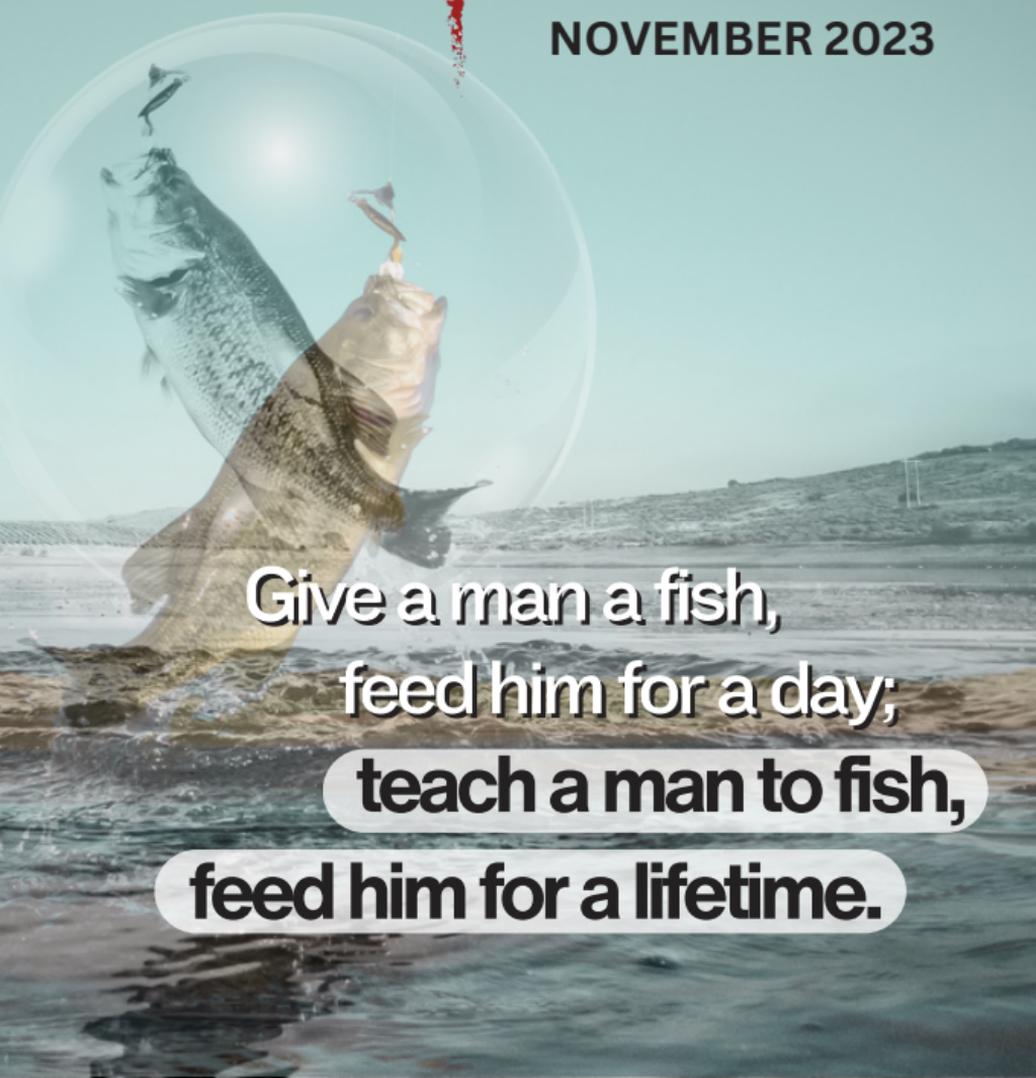


向东服务

# Serve the East

NOVEMBER 2023



Give a man a fish,  
feed him for a day;  
teach a man to fish,  
feed him for a lifetime.

**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



Electronic  
Publication

NOVEMBER  
2023

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## Empowerment Discussion 1

# ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Author / Rev. Andrew Wong

Translator / Gillian Wong

As we journey together with the Indigenous people, we learn to serve them according to their situation, pace, potential, and will. We must move away from the stereotypical or singular approaches when helping Indigenous peoples overcome poverty and injustices. When it comes to helping others, many people habitually “give” (hand out) to meet the needs of the other party, but rarely “empower” (hand up) them to improve their ability to be self-sufficient so that they can overcome their problems in their personal and family life with dignity.

In “Empowerment and Poverty Reduction: A Sourcebook” published by The World Bank,

empowerment is defined as

**"the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives".**

However, this requires addressing the structural barriers that prevent individuals or groups from wanting to take action before they can improve their well-being. These structural barriers include unfair treatment towards the impoverished groups by government or civil organisations (e.g., churches or mission organisations) in their charters, rules, processes, culture, and implementation of plans, all which could be traced back to problematic practices such as corruption and racial discrimination.

The scope of Empowerment is very broad – it can be on the spiritual, social, educational, political, and economic level, where the assets and capabilities of the people in poverty can be expanded and their dignity restored. In this article, I will discuss the topic of “Economic Empowerment”. This is the field that Serve the East needs to first develop to meet the needs of the local Indigenous peoples. Economic empowerment involves teaching the Indigenous peoples to manage their finances, helping them start a business, and connecting them with successful business leaders as their role models, references, and mentors for their own successes. In other words, Economic Empowerment is the key to economic independence for Indigenous people. In this process, we need to educate and guide the Indigenous people on how to use the right business tools and make clear financial decisions. Economic Empowerment will ensure that the Indigenous have equitable access to employment and resources. Running and growing a small business can ensure that the Indigenous people have access to legitimate sources of wealth and become the catalyst in promoting the development of their communities. Through this, Indigenous peoples can complement and support each other to improve the quality of life in their communities.

Sabah is blessed with rich natural resources and abundance of land, with the Indigenous cultures deeply rooted in land and farming. Therefore, in the next five years, Serve the East hopes to empower the Indigenous people through the economy, helping them to become good stewards of their land, and to find the identity and destiny given to them by God. Serve the East will also collaborate with Key Academy Sdn. Bhd. to explore farming and livestock breeding projects with local Indigenous people on the land of Micah Centre. We welcome those with experience in farming and livestock breeding who are ready to share their successful experiences and technologies to work with us. We look forward to seeing more Indigenous peoples in Peninsula Malaysia, Sabah, and Sarawak find hope, dignity, and joy through their hard work, tearful sows, and celebratory harvests through economic empowerment.

<sup>1</sup> Narayan, Deepa. 2002. “Empowerment and Poverty Reduction : A Sourcebook. Washington”, DC: World Bank.

Yuan-Han Journeying Together  
Online Workshop

# Sustainable Economic Empowerment Model



**Author / Chioh Ann Nee**

**Translator / Earnest Chiam**

**Reviewer / Bro. Kon Onn Sein**



On June 10 and September 2 this year, Serve the East ministry organised two sessions of online workshops, with the theme of “**Sustainable Economic Empowerment Model**”, to look into the ministry of economic empowerment for the rural Indigenous people. Bro. Kon Onn Sein, the Managing Director of Yayasan Kajian dan Pembangunan Masyarakat (YKPM), was the speaker for both workshops. He is a veteran in serving the Orang Asli communities, with over 30 years of experience in this line of work. In 2015, he established OA Organik, a shared prosperity organic farm social enterprise. Its contributions and successes were widely acclaimed nationally and internationally.

Mentioning about the Indigenous people in Malaysia, the stereotype impression most people have of them is that they lag behind other people groups in terms of development, and people are quick to associate the Indigenous people with labels like “backward”, “inefficient”, or “laid back”. At the heart of these labels is a result of systemic structural injustice. Although this is not the intention of the policy makers, the legislation and policies are inadequately designed and effectively keep the Indigenous isolated and left in poverty. For example, recognition of their rights to land, a clean environment and decent livelihoods is made very difficult as land ownership matters come under state jurisdiction but there is no policy or legislation that obliges the state to do so. On the contrary, the states are more inclined to give these lands to logging or mining companies that damage the forest and their sources of clean water and livelihoods. The good intentions of the state and policies are not aligned and as a result of the destruction of their natural resources, the Indigenous suffer from multidimensional poverty. Instead of rewarding them for their sacrificial effort and empowering them with culturally suited livelihood programmes in sustaining the forest, they are rewarded with the destruction of their forest, livelihoods and displaced from their ancestral lands. Coupled with the institutional bias of development, urban and rural dwelling areas are way ahead of the Indigenous in all aspects like education, economy, infrastructure and medical facilities. Additionally, the displaced Indigenous are compelled to develop livelihoods like modern dwellers but have been deprived of their beloved forest, way of life and culture. Is it any wonder why they struggle to adjust to the new modern life that puts profit before people and the environment?

**Do not be unfair and do not oppress the poor, for our God is just**

Looking at the Bible, from the Old Testament to the New Testament, we find a very consistent message – do not perform injustice and do not oppress the poor, for our God is just. If we continue our unrighteous ways, the God of justice will surely not be pleased with our worship and prayers. The word of God reminds us of our calling to correct the injustice and corrupt practices in the system, to work towards eradicating poverty and building a healthy and thriving society. Is this not the “gospel” – good news to the poor and oppressed? We can see no shortage of examples of this mission in the Bible, including in Zechariah 7:4-14, Amos 5:7-24, Malachi 3:5, Isaiah 5:8, and in the Gospels of Luke 4:18-19, Mark 7:6-7 and 12:38-41, among others.

Dominant Economic models in the world today prioritise “profit before people”, or what is called “Neoliberal Economics”. These economic models inherently favour those who have huge capitals and corporations who control the markets. By maximising profits for the shareholders; these businesses hire workers with low wages. Any worker who performs below the productivity requirement is discarded. Driven by this bias system, the lowly paid worker finds it difficult to get out of their poverty and the gap between the wealthy and the poor is only ever increasing – and the biggest loser under this economic model is the poor.

In order to see a change in the outcome, we need an entirely different economic model, which is the “Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) Model”. The core principles of this model are non-exploitative, safeguarding the dignity and welfare of all participants with fair and balanced distribution of wealth, and a focus on the protection of the environment, so that the earth is preserved to meet future economic demands, making businesses sustainable. As such, this economic model is also known to some as the “3P Model” (Triple P – Profit, People, Planet), or the “Bottom-Up Economic Model”. There have been successful case studies for this Social Solidarity Economy Model, such as the Mondragon Corporation in Spain. Among its unique practices include the opportunity for employees to own shares in the business, creating a system where profit can be fairly shared among the people. Besides that, the company also uses the money they earned to establish schools and training centres, where the employees’ children can receive their education.

Coming back to the problems facing the rural Indigenous in our own country Malaysia, we can identify the biggest issues being the impoverishment and marginalisation of these people – low income, absence of job opportunities, and lack of local industrial developments, driving the younger generations away from their villages to cities in searching for better working opportunities. While lands in the rural places are available for farming and agricultural activities, practical obstacles such as the underdeveloped transportation network, high logistics costs, which in turn makes the cost of farming non profitable. One way of applying the SSE model in the Indigenous communities is to organise the producers and consumers together. And by linking them, the producers have a market whereby their produce can be sold to the residents in the community. By this, not only the transportation costs are effectively being saved, but this would in turn keep the prices of the produce low, so that everyone can afford to enjoy the freshest and healthiest produce. And when there is an abundance in harvest, the produce can be sold to the neighbouring Indigenous communities for some extra income. This kind of mutually beneficial economic model can raise the financial standard of the Indigenous people.

**Imperatively, the economic model for the empowerment of the rural Indigenous people should be one that is “people before profit”, not singularly focused on profit and wealth, but to build a community that is harmonious, peaceful, and fair. A society with no place for systematic impoverishment and social injustice. A place where mutual love and respect is upheld and pursued. Silver and gold can buy the poor none of this, but this is exactly the Good News the people need and want.**

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# LET JUSTICE ROLL ON LIKE A RIVER AND RIGHTEOUSNESS LIKE A NEVER ENDING STREAM



Author / Kon Onn Sein



***Globalisation has increased the integration of capital and its power over people. We see increasing levels of inequality and economic systems are squeezing the middle class and embedding the poor in poverty.***

Nonetheless, the potential mobilization of small farmers in the communities shows the massive power they possess to make businesses more just and uplift poverty in their communities. Believers have an important role to play in this transformation. The church is called to go beyond just proclaiming the good news. The church can also lead in doing justice. Without justice, faith is distant and hope an illusion. The church can enable their members to be salt and light to society by supporting formation of solidarity groups to farm and buy from each other. In creating this just economic business value chain, it will uplift poverty, create jobs, restore hope, and provide safe food for their people.

Fostering Social Solidarity Economy in Farming envisions a future where farming is a catalyst for social change and shaping of a fair society. By embracing Social Solidarity Economy principles, the project not only enhances food production and income growth but also nurtures a sense of unity, cooperation, and shared well-being within the community. It serves as a beacon of hope for a more equitable and sustainable agricultural landscape, where the values of social solidarity shape a prosperous future for all equally. It empowers the individual when working in solidarity with fellow villagers, can overcome the unjust giant economic systems that keep them marginalised. It shows that God has placed upon the vulnerable individual and church immense potential to be an agent of change. Those individuals are not helpless people embedded in intergenerational poverty but when they follow the word of God holistically and organise themselves into solidarity groups of production, finance and fair distribution, they become powerful transformative agents of justice for economic systems and society.

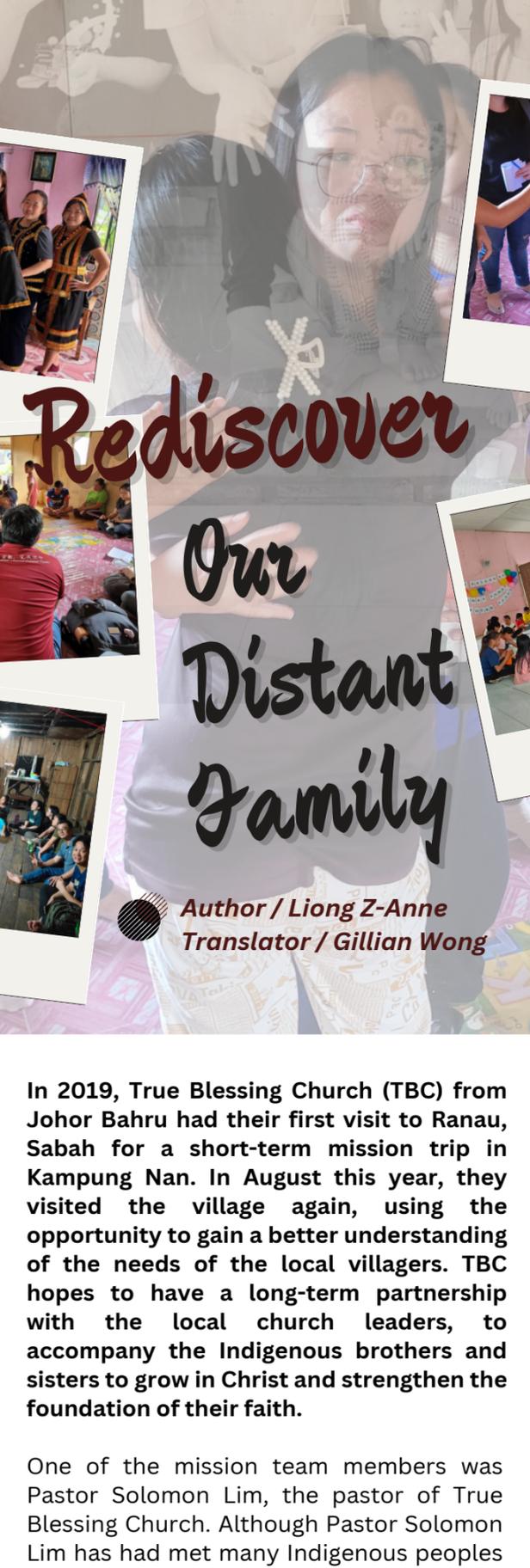


***The gospel has the power of redemption and redeeming unjust structures.***

The gospel has the power of redemption and redeeming unjust structures. It is not the gospel of redemption that allows injustice to keep the poor locked in poverty. God has destined us for the work of transformation and building just societies. We are not destined for intergenerational poverty. We are saved to bring blessings and not saved to be just wealthy. God has given us the resurrection power to transform unfair businesses that keep the poor, poor. We can build fair businesses to create fair societies, that liberate the poor, to restore their dignity, to be equal members of society and unleash their potential to be people of blessing and to share wealth- to be salt and light. In this way, people will give glory to the God we serve.

It truly is heartening to see some have been ready to forge new models for shared prosperity and resiliency. These solutions re-write the rules of how money and power operate in our institutions. By shifting ownership and control into the hands of stakeholders and community, we can drive radically different outcomes in our economy of vulnerable communities who live in rural Malaysia. Not all of us can spear head such initiatives but we can all do our little part. We can also join with those who are living out their lives to build a better Malaysia so that faith and worship is not just mere words without action.





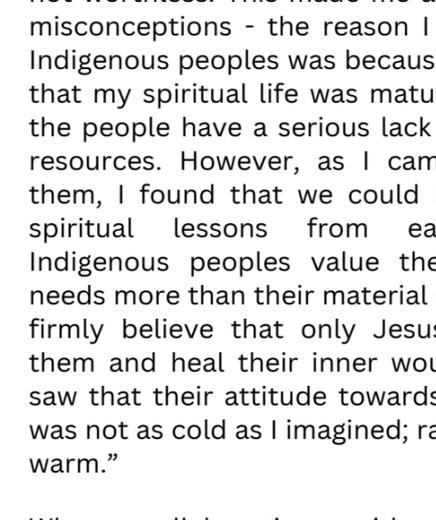
# Rediscover Our Distant Family

Author / **Liong Z-Anne**  
Translator / **Gillian Wong**

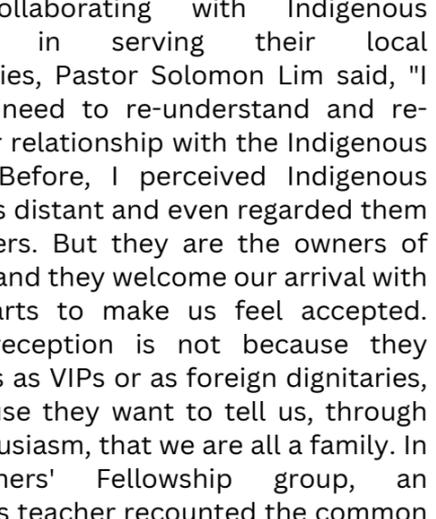
In 2019, True Blessing Church (TBC) from Johor Bahru had their first visit to Ranau, Sabah for a short-term mission trip in Kampung Nan. In August this year, they visited the village again, using the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the needs of the local villagers. TBC hopes to have a long-term partnership with the local church leaders, to accompany the Indigenous brothers and sisters to grow in Christ and strengthen the foundation of their faith.

One of the mission team members was Pastor Solomon Lim, the pastor of True Blessing Church. Although Pastor Solomon Lim has had met many Indigenous peoples from different regions, he had more opportunities to actively collaborate with the local Indigenous church through this visitation trip to Sabah. By serving in the Fathers' Fellowship Group, he experienced a shift in his view of the Indigenous peoples. "According to my observation, no matter the ethnicity and racial groups, men seem to always portray an image of a 'big man'. This is an opinion I had in mind before joining the Fathers' Fellowship. I expected this fellowship to be a one-sided sharing, but the Holy Spirit did miraculous works in the fellowship - one by one, the fathers shared their weaknesses and the pressures they faced in their families. After everyone's sharing, every father in the room had empathy for each other.

***I see that the fathers value the inheritance and service of the faith and worry that their children would not follow the Lord earnestly. They worried not about their children's fulfilment of their material needs but for their hunger to follow the Lord in their hearts."***

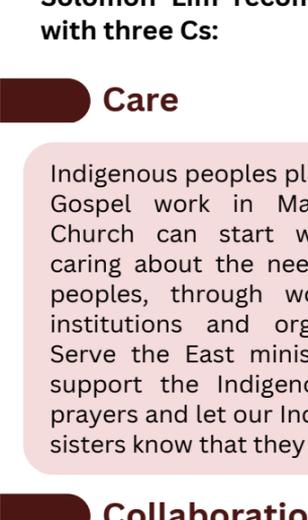


Home visitation

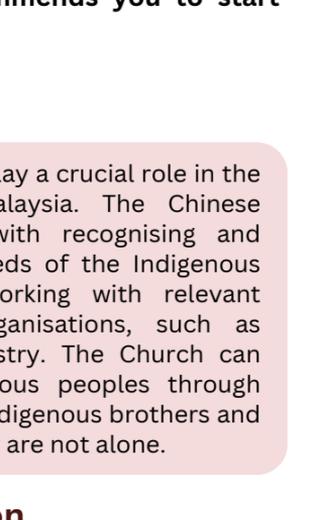


Through family visitations, Pastor Solomon also heard the voices of the mothers and sighed, "I feel that the mothers have an inferiority complex and often share their weaknesses. I think that they deserve recognition for their efforts to live and serve the Lord even when life is challenging and resources are scarce. I want them to know that what they believe in and do is not worthless. This made me aware of my misconceptions - the reason I served the Indigenous peoples was because I believed that my spiritual life was mature and that the people have a serious lack of material resources. However, as I came to know them, I found that we could learn many spiritual lessons from each other. Indigenous peoples value their spiritual needs more than their material needs; they firmly believe that only Jesus can fulfil them and heal their inner wounds. I also saw that their attitude towards their faith was not as cold as I imagined; rather, it was warm."

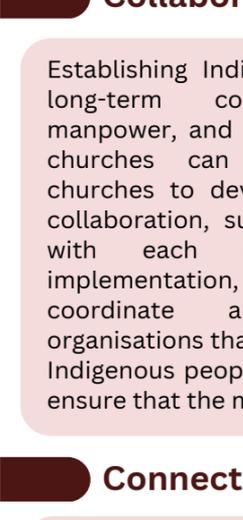
When collaborating with Indigenous churches in serving their local communities, Pastor Solomon Lim said, "I think we need to re-understand and re-define our relationship with the Indigenous peoples. Before, I perceived Indigenous peoples as distant and even regarded them as outsiders. But they are the owners of this land, and they welcome our arrival with warm hearts to make us feel accepted. Such a reception is not because they respect us as VIPs or as foreign dignitaries, but because they want to tell us, through their enthusiasm, that we are all a family. In the Fathers' Fellowship group, an Indigenous teacher recounted the common history and origins Indigenous and Chinese people share. I was surprised to find that we share a common bloodline. When the Indigenous peoples take the initiative to emphasise the similarities between us, they are breaking down the barriers between ethnic groups whilst showing acceptance and tolerance for each other."



Tried on Indigenous traditional costumes.



Children Sunday School Training



Intercession time



pastor solomon lim (right) prayed for an Indigenous lady

In summary, Pastor Solomon Lim believes that the Church should not preach the Gospel only to outsiders or unreached people. Rather, the Church should work together to build the Indigenous churches that not only warmly welcome people into their houses by sharing their hospitality, but more so to actively and enthusiastically invite people into the Kingdom of the Lord by sharing the Good News of God.

Therefore, if any Chinese churches are willing to journey together with our family - the Indigenous churches, **Pastor Solomon Lim recommends you to start with three Cs:**

## Care

Indigenous peoples play a crucial role in the Gospel work in Malaysia. The Chinese Church can start with recognising and caring about the needs of the Indigenous peoples, through working with relevant institutions and organisations, such as Serve the East ministry. The Church can support the Indigenous peoples through prayers and let our Indigenous brothers and sisters know that they are not alone.

## Collaboration

Establishing Indigenous churches requires long-term companionship, adequate manpower, and resources. Hence, Chinese churches can work with Indigenous churches to develop plans for long-term collaboration, such as becoming partners with each other. In terms of implementation, Chinese churches can coordinate and collaborate with organisations that journey together with the Indigenous peoples on a long-term basis to ensure that the ministry is effective.

## Connection

If Chinese churches are interested in long-term collaboration with Indigenous churches, they should not ignore the need to maintain contact and connection with Indigenous churches, especially in establishing the goals and targets of their partnership. This is because a "touch and go" contact method is not beneficial in establishing and enhancing Indigenous ministries. I will encourage the church to stay connected with the Indigenous churches in the long run as it allows the church to continue to follow up on the situation and the needs of the local Indigenous churches, so that our Indigenous brothers and sisters can feel the love of the body of Christ. Annual short-term mission trips are often unsuccessful in establishing deeper relationships with the Indigenous peoples, nor can they comprehensively understand the situation and needs of the peoples.

**If you are touched and want to participate in Yuan-Han Journeying Together, we welcome you to contact the person-in-charge of the Serve the East ministry, Bro. Isaac Goh (010-216 2602) to discuss the opportunities to collaborate with us.**

## Sharing of a mission team member



### Caroline

This was my first time visiting an Indigenous village and interacting with the Indigenous people. I did not feel the gap between the city and the countryside on this visit. We are all Malaysians; we are all God's people. Regardless of our race, colour, or language, we can serve together in the Lord.

I am very grateful to the staff members in the Serve the East ministry who served as a bridge between the short-term mission team and the local Indigenous peoples, taking us to visit the homes of the local villagers and arranging the travel itineraries. During my visit, I saw the patriarchal culture in the village and felt the psychological pressure and suppression of the inner emotions that the women have suffered for a long time. I was very moved to hear the true feelings of the local Indigenous women in conversations and saw that they relied heavily on and craved the word of God.

May God continue to guard and watch over the villagers of Kampung Nan, raise them, and make the Gospel flourish among them. May God bless them with a mature and fruitful spiritual life to build and change more lives. To God be the glory!



# Serve the East Updates and Prayer Items

## August 2023

Aug

**1st-3rd**

Rural Economy Empowerment: Bro. Kon Onn Sein and co-workers visited some villages in Ranau, met with local leaders and villagers to understand the local situation and needs, and shared the vision of economic empowerment.



**4th-7th**

Micah Training Vision trip (Kudat).



**11th-16th**

Sabah Mission trip (Skudai Christian Church / True Blessing Church).



**28th-30th**

Micah Trainees' Retreat

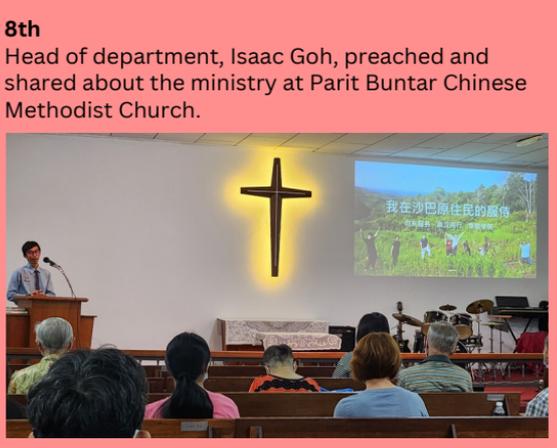


## September 2023

Sep

**1st**

Three-month rural practical for Micah trainees begins.



**2nd**

Rural Indigenous Community Economic Empowerment workshop (Part 2).

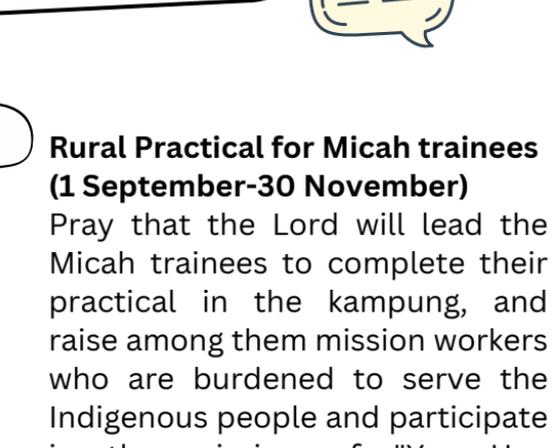


**6th**

Head of department, Isaac Goh shared about Micah ministry with Wenzhou churches in their online prayer meeting.

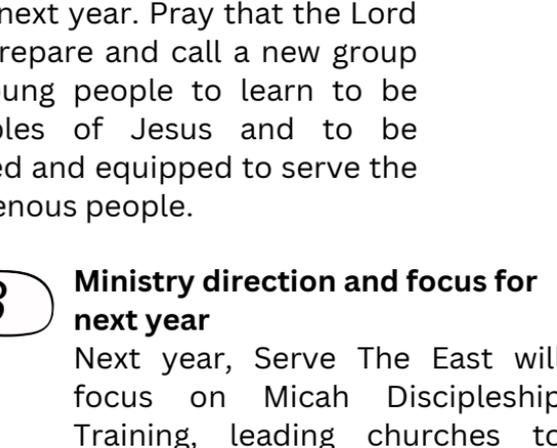
**13th -20th**

Sabah Mission Trip (PCC-Penang Christian Centre)



**20th**

With The Hope Village (a Christian organisation), we visited some villages in Ranau, to share with local churches about new approach (SRI) of increasing rice production and enzyme production.



**21st**

Co-workers and Micah trainees joined in Christian Fellowship gathering of local secondary school in Kg Kalan. They interacted with 50 Indigenous students, and gave each of them a copy of Alkitab.



**29th - October 6th**

Sabah Mission Trip (CFC-Christian Fellowship Centre, KL).



## October 2023

Oct

**8th**

Head of department, Isaac Goh, preached and shared about the ministry at Parit Buntar Chinese Methodist Church.



**13th**

Head of department, Isaac Goh, shared life testimonies and vision casting with the young adult group of Subang Jaya Assembly of God .



**24th - 26th**

Micah Centre Leadership Planning Retreat.



## Prayer Requests

1 Rural Practical for Micah trainees (1 September-30 November)

Pray that the Lord will lead the Micah trainees to complete their practical in the kampung, and raise among them mission workers who are burdened to serve the Indigenous people and participate in the mission of "Yuan-Han Journeying Together".

2 The Enrollment of 7th Intake of Micah Cross-Cultural Discipleship Training.

The new intake of cross-cultural discipleship training will start in April next year. Pray that the Lord will prepare and call a new group of young people to learn to be disciples of Jesus and to be trained and equipped to serve the Indigenous people.

3 Ministry direction and focus for next year

Next year, Serve The East will focus on Micah Discipleship Training, leading churches to participate in mission trips, discipleship for Christian students in secondary school, rural economic empowerment, and collaborating with other organisations to empower rural communities.

# 弥迦学院第六届结业礼兼筹款晚宴

## 6th Graduation cum Fundraising Dinner

皇子宴会厅  PUTERA



**1 DECEMBER 2023**  
**(FRIDAY)**



**7:00PM - 10:00PM**



**PUTERA THEATRE**  
**BALLROOM**

JALAN BUKIT PADANG LUYANG,  
TAMAN TUN FUAD, 88300 KOTA  
KINABALU, SABAH



## 赞助 SPONSORSHIP

-  **RM10,000** 获赠4张VIP席位 / 4 complimentary VIP seats
-  **RM8,000** 获赠3张VIP席位 / 3 complimentary VIP seats
-  **RM5,000** 获赠2张VIP席位 / 2 complimentary VIP seats
-  **RM3,000** 获赠1张VIP席位 / 1 complimentary VIP seat

## 购买席位 PURCHASE OF BANQUET SEAT

-  **RM150** 一个席位 / per seat
-  **RM1500** 一个餐桌 (10人) / per table (10 seats)

## 参与捐献 OFFERING

您可以直接汇入我们的银行户口，并将汇款单据发送给我们。

You may deposit to our bank account and forward the deposit slip to us.

**HOLISTIC INTEGRATED SERVICES BERHAD**

**OCBC BANK : 707-129924-3**

预知详情，请联系 **FOR MORE DETAILS, PLEASE CONTACT**  
**CAROL LIM 012-4240118**