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Sharing with you what it is like to go beyond the 4 walls of the activity room.

# MINISTRY AND BEYOND



December has always been a busy and hectic month with anticipation of the Christmas celebrations awaiting us and the intention to share the real reason behind this season. This has always been a time for us to bless the slum community. By the providence of God, we were able to distribute rice to the elderly, Christmas presents to the children and “blanja” a simple Christmas dinner to a small slum community, Nongmai. This Christmas we were very blessed to have the Online Mission Team from Queenstown Lutheran Church do a 2-day Christmas program with the Afternoon Activity kids. It was a first of its kind and was fun and meaningful as they spent time sharing the meaning of Christmas! On top of that, the children also received Goody Bags, airfreight all the way from

**Ministry is about stepping into the lives of those whom the Lord has put along your path and allow you to demonstrate God’s love and hope, so that they can see and know Him.**

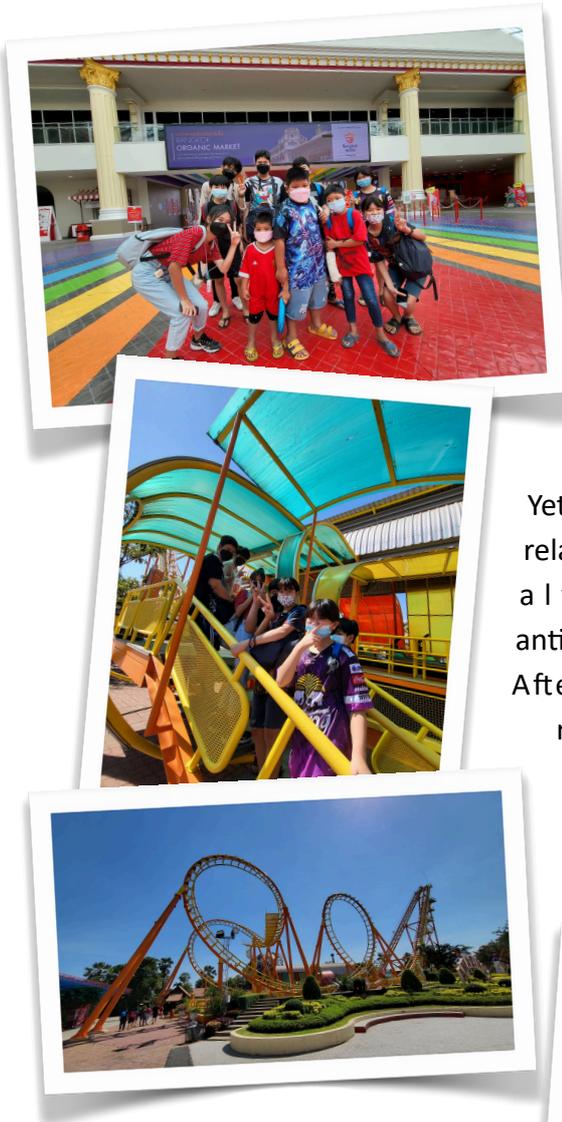
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Singapore, consisting of cute-patterned masks, hand sanitizers and Ribena blackcurrant pastilles which were their absolute favourite. They loved it because they were yummilicious and you cannot find it here! The left-over Goody Bags were used as special rewards to encourage the kids during our normal daily program. I also had the opportunity to travel to Chiang Rai to meet and spend some time over Christmas with the youth there. It was a good opportunity for me to foster closer relationships and to discuss a little about the youth work that I am going to start in 2022.



January – March 2022



The work continued with exciting activities, faithful teaching and personal ministry with those who come and be with us. It was very encouraging to see how the church youth and the children from the slum could relate and find friendship in one another for this is an important process in channeling the slum kids into the church. This ministry has allowed us to help them and share the Lord’s love with them. But the covid situation has been a hindrance. It affected regularity as we were ordered to close then reopen; and only to close again whenever a covid situation required us to.

Yet the children who see the value and treasure the relationship we have built always wait with anticipation and hope the Afternoon Activity will resume soon. We are always so thankful for the financial support from God’s faithful



servants who gave to the work for that has enabled us to organize special events and outings for the children. This New Year we had steamboat together and even went to a water park. I could see that they were so excited and happy. One other thing that always made their day is when we celebrate their birthdays, reminding them that God has given them life and they matter to God and to us.



## James (Ah Bui)



Talking about birthdays, James who has known the Lord through Afternoon Activities celebrated his 9<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 23 of January. Never did we know that he will be with the Lord 3 days later. It was a heart-breaking experience for me to witness someone passed away at such a young age. He had leukemia and was not detected earlier. When the doctor found out, it was too late. The day that they found out he had leukemia was the very day he passed. The cancer has already spread to his lungs and brain. At the beginning of the year, James' father thought that he snores abnormally loud and had brought him to see a doctor to get help for his snoring problem. The doctor said the reason could be because of his obesity or it could also be some sort of cancer. At that time, the parents did not think too much into it. They decided to treat it as the doctor had advised. There were no signs that screamed

cancer. James only felt tired easier than usual and experienced difficulty breathing through his nose. He did not have much pain either. Only on the night before his passing, he told his parents that his back hurt and he cannot really sleep so they rushed him to the hospital early next morning. Upon receiving their call, I hurried down. Not long after I have reached, the doctor pronounced him dead. It has always been my fear to witness a child's death. When my niece and nephews were young, I prayed regularly that the Lord will keep their lives at least until they grow up. I prayed that because I do not know if I can handle having to witness their passing away at such young age. I remembered that I once dreamt about my son drowning in the sea when we brought him on a vacation and woke up weeping, having Ivy and my son hugging and comforting me in the middle of the night. James' passing was quite unbearable for me but the Lord Himself comforted me and gave me strength to go through it. The most comforting thing was that James' father being a Buddhist himself had chosen a Christian funeral because James was a baptized Christian. He said to me that on their way to the hospital, he could hear James singing Christian worship songs to the Lord. John Piper said, "Mission Exists because Worship Doesn't". In my 7 years of ministry here with the slum kids and before I move on to my new area of ministry, these comforting and assuring words from James' father has given me strength, affirmation and joy for my years ahead in the mission field. Make the gospel known is the very essence of my time here. I am so thankful James is the Lord's and I will remember him so dearly in my heart always.

