

Village Gospel Mission Trip | 2015



Dreams Beyond Imagination

by Jenelle Picchi

I've never been out of the country before. I've never been called to go. From a very young age, God called me to America—to serve and love the broken people around me. There are so many lost here, and sometimes it is harder to break through the self-sufficiency and post-modernist thinking.

But life has different seasons, and obeying God means He can take you wherever He wants! This season, God said go to Taiwan and He would provide the finances, which He did. I am so grateful for the generous hearts of my family in Christ.

Let's not even talk about the flights there. Except this: over 25 hours of straight traveling.

The Taiwanese college students were young and bright and oh-so-loveable. What an amazing experience for them, to work through a program and lead. God brings the most wonderful people together and weaves our journeys with skilled fingers. I also loved this opportunity to get to know people from our church a little more. I search for their faces now when I go to Sunday morning service. I search for their faces now when I go to Sunday morning service.



It was much harder than I had thought to not be able to understand or speak the same language. It was humbling to be translated to and for. On the plus side, it allowed our team member's personalities to really shine through. (Sometimes words can get in the way of seeing a person.) One of the struggles for me was during the English camp. I was so *excited* to meet the youth! My husband and I met at a summer camp where I've counseled over 10 years, so I have a lot of experience with youth camps. I know my gifts, and I usually know where I fit in with the team. Well. No language makes things difficult. Usually, I get to know kids by asking them many questions about themselves! How do I show them that I'm interested and I care without words? I struggled with this. I am a person who knows who I am, and when my role is undefined, I get frustrated.



It is easy to forget that larger things are happening in the spiritual realm than what we see in our physical realm. Satan loves to throw doubts: Why are you even here? God says: You are here because I told you to be here. It is easy to get caught up in self instead of seeing the bigger picture.

So I smiled a lot, and did weird, exaggerated things like walking backwards and hand shapes to make them laugh. During the Home Ec class we taught, I really wanted to joke with the boys and/or spar with them sarcastically. I grew up in the middle of two brothers, and I can sometimes get along better with guys than girls. But no language, so we fed them lots of marshmallows and it was good.

And oh, these youth. What precious souls! Loved seeing their bright, serious eyes. Loved watching them open up more and more as the week went on. The Taiwanese college students, EJ (the DJ)

and Robin (Boy Wonder), on our team were amazing teachers. They made it so fun and engaging. They told the youth that they can dream!

One of the homes we visited after school was a girl named Jessica. So sweet and quiet. She wants to be an artist, and she is one already. When we finally found her house, she was playing with her 4-year-old brother. They hid behind the couch and he would peek out every once in awhile. He started dancing and singing the camp theme song; she must have come home and taught him! Seeing her with her brother showed another dimension of who she is.

And the BEST PART EVER! was on Saturday when she and another girl named Peggy (also in our group) *gave their lives to Jesus!* Amazing! God is so good and faithful! I dream about how He will lead them, how they'll go back to their families with Living Hope and change their part of the world forever.

The dreams God has for us are beyond what we can ever think or imagine. He brings us together under one Name and one God and one Heart. He gives us individual gifts and callings so we can further the Kingdom of God, even here, even now. I am thankful for this opportunity to go to Taiwan, to rejoice with the angels over daughters and sons found, to remember that obedience is enough even when I don't know the details or the why. I am thankful that I am a dreamer, and I'm excited to be back in America, taking on the dreams for my own life. -As well as being back in my own country with my native language.

- *Jenelle*

