



March Issue 2018



## Christmas visits to various organizations

From 24<sup>th</sup> October through to December, Tzu Chi New Zealand volunteers played the role of Santa's little helpers at various community service centres, celebrating an early Christmas with around 350 elders.

The twelve community service centres are: Christchurch Delta Community House, Mangere Communicare, Glen Innes Communicare, Hillsborough Communicare, Pakuranga Communicare, Manurewa Stroke Club, Chinese Stroke Club, North Shore Stroke Club, Howick, Highland Park Stroke Club, Auckland Parkinson's Society and Auckland City Mission.

This year's programs include: Piano performances, Hulusi performances, Wudang Sword Dance, Chinese folk dance, Sign Language performances, and a review of Tzu Chi volunteers' work in New Zealand.

Rikki of North Shore Stroke Association was moved to tears during the sign language performance "We are One Family". "As a Maori, I found our concept of family is very similar to that of Tzu Chi. Yes, we are indeed one family."

Coordinator Jane Fleming, on behalf of North Shore Stroke Association, thanked Tzu Chi for its dedication. "2017 is coming to an end. Thanks to Tzu Chi volunteers, with their efforts the association's monthly meetings had been carried out smoothly."

Howick and Highland Park Stroke Club members very much looked forward to this event. George, who has been a member for over 12 years said cheerfully, "If it weren't for you, we could not have been successfully used the Indoor Rolling Ball as one of our rehabilitative activities."

Tzu Chi has also been looking after four Auckland Communicare Centres. Serve morning tea and healthy vegetarian lunch. The weekly gathering where the elderly socialises with old friends and Tzu Chi volunteers who take good care of them.



## Chinese Social and Health Expo

Auckland Emergency Management Resilience and Welfare is a government body which interacts with communities and helps Auckland City Council identifies the various needs of the communities. The Council hopes to establish harmonious relationships with the communities and help them to be ready and prepared for any disasters.

On 11 November 2017, the first Chinese Social and Health Expo was held at the Freemans Bay Community Hall with the aim of helping Chinese community to get to know social groups and welfare organisations. At the Tzu Chi booth, our young volunteers introduced Tzu Chi to the public with a smile and warm greeting.

Our rabbit craft activity attracted much attention of the young children, breaking the ice between our volunteers and the participants. While the children had fun, our volunteers took the opportunity to introduce Tzu Chi to their parents.

"People should help and support each other. Now I help others. Maybe I will need help from others one day." Mr. Sun, who lives in North Shore, said in agreement to the philosophy of Tzu Chi and joined Tzu Chi voluntary team on the spot.

Ivan Yeo, coordinator for the event, said: "Tzu Chi has contributed to the community, and is constantly providing care for the Chinese in New Zealand as well as the mainstream. We hope that more Chinese will learn about Tzu Chi and become their volunteers and in helping those in need which will lead to a closer community interaction."

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## Shoe Box Christmas present

Samaritan's Purse is a global Christian charity organization that provides spiritual and physical aid to people in need around the world. Samaritan's Purse collects gift donation from the community and every December they send love to disadvantaged children aged between 2 to 14 by delivering Christmas presents to them.

Love crosses all religions, nationalities and cultures. This is the second year Tzu Chi New Zealand supports the Christmas shoebox event, Tzu Chi NZ also helped with gift collection in the Eastern suburbs of Auckland.

In November, volunteers collected toys, stationery, books, clothing and more. On 18<sup>th</sup> November, Jing Si Chinese Class students helped to pack these presents into the shoebox, sending love to disadvantaged children.

The hall became a factory on this day as the students carefully chose presents from their bags and the tables to put into the different shoeboxes for children of different age groups. Tzu Ching (Tzu Chi Collegiate Youth) reminded the students "Choose present carefully, what presents would you like to get? And how would you like to receive these presents?"

"Tzu Chi Loves You." The students shouted out their blessings to the children across the world, little seedings of love spouting in their hearts.

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## **Tzu Chi Scholarship Programme (Auckland Prizegiving)**

2<sup>nd</sup> December 2017 was a proud day for the students, families and teachers of the 44 recipients of Tzu Chi Scholarship Programme, as they gathered together in the Jing Si Hall to celebrate this occasion.

Tzu Chi volunteers welcomed the 188 guests with the song "Ni Hao!" at the 2017 ceremony of Tzu Chi Scholarship Programme. Volunteers handed out awards to 38 high achieving students of families needing financial aid from Dawson School, Mayfield School, East Tamaki School and Manurewa Intermediate School.

Sandy of Dawson School expressed her thanks to Tzu Chi in her singing performance. When Sandy's home were having a flea problem, Tzu Chi volunteers helped clean up their house. In addition, Sandy was awarded the scholarship this year to go towards school supplies and activities. Sandy's mother was very grateful for the care and love they received.

"My son is awesome. I am very happy. Today is my happiest day. I am really happy." Mohammed Hassan's mother said, she is proud of her son of Mayfield School. "I am very happy to receive the grant from Tzu Chi. I am very grateful to the teacher for the nomination. I also would like to thank my parents." Mohammed said.

"All the recipients and I are fortunate to receive Tzu Chi's student grants. I am very happy." Legacy, who attended Manurewa Intermediate School, is a hard working student whose effort was recognised by the school.

"One day the sun will rise...." The love of Tzu Chi is like the morning sun which warms the heart of the students and encourages them to move forward with their own efforts and creating a great future for themselves.

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## End Of Year's Blessing Ceremony

On 11 February at 11 in the morning, the 2017 End of Year's Blessing Ceremony started with the singing of "Sutra Opening Verse". Three local Dharma masters were welcomed and led the ceremony.

Our guests included Mr. Zhong Xing, Director of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Auckland, Ms. Liu Minru, the Secretary, Ms. Sharon Stewart, Chairwoman of the Audit and Risk Committee from the Auckland City Council, and her husband David, and John Dragicevich, Director of Civil Defence and Emergency Management from Auckland city Council. About 400 people attended the event.

In his speech, Mr. Zhou Zhongxing talked about the strong earthquake that had recently struck Hualien, Taiwan on 6 February, Tzu Chi provided immediate assistance, he commended that Tzu Chi's spirit of compassion and love.

The annual Year in Review is a highlight in the ceremony as volunteers and members alike were able to see the love and activities of Tzu Chi volunteers around the world. Tzu Chi New Zealand Year in Review was also a great chance for attendees to see the local events and activities and reflect back on the past year.

After the show everyone prayed sincerely for purity in one's mind, a harmonious society and a world free of pain and suffering. With blessings from Master Cheng Yen, representatives give everyone a 'hong bao' (red envelope), symbolising safety and wisdom.

Sarah, from Pakuranga Communicare was very interested in Tzu Chi's concept of pooling together small donations. She took photos of the bamboo coin banks to show her colleagues.



## Warmth in our palms

Ms. Yan, a Taiwanese native living alone in New Zealand, was sent to the Auckland North shore hospital, she was in coma for two days in the intensive care centre. Her daughter, Miss Feng (left) in Taiwan requested for help from Tzu Chi as she urgently travelled to New Zealand.

Although they do not share the same religious belief with Tzu Chi, the warmth and care of Tzu Chi touched the mother and daughter. We wish that Ms. Yan will recover soon.

## Ethical Eating Day

On 11 January 2018, Tzu Chi NZ took part in an international movement "111 Ethical Eating Day". Early in the morning, many people were gathered in Tzu Chi New Zealand,

"We must change the habit of eating, it is not just that eating meat is unhealthy, it is about showing compassion to the animals. As a result, the minds become imbalance and the climate also becomes imbalance.". Everyone in the hall listened to Dharma Master Cheng Yen respectfully as she talks about the benefits of vegetarianism.

During the event, Professor Wu Song Lian, the gold medalist carving master from Taiwan, was invited to give a demonstration of the art of shark fin melon carving and the "Reunion of Colourful Vegetables". He also shared his experience of vegetarianism.

Peter Low, who has been a vegetarian for 28 years, was invited to share the preparation of vegetarian Hainanese rice and sweet and sour sauce.



## End of Year Food Distribution (Auckland City Mission)

In celebration of the Christmas season, Tzu Chi volunteers in Auckland delivered hot meals and held a food parcel distribution to Auckland City Mission.

During the year, volunteers holds a fortnightly hot food distribution. These volunteers are busy office workers, apart from cooking the meals, they also buy the raw ingredients. The 100 food parcels distributed contain biscuits, juice, chocolate, cup noodles, bread, socks, water bottle, etc., consisting of a total of 12 daily necessities.

On 21 December at the City Mission in downtown Auckland, Tzu Chi volunteers work as a team in delivering hot meals and daily necessities to the homeless.

Vernon, one of the recipients shook the volunteer's hand excitedly and said "We are all very grateful for the food parcels, these items meant extra helps to us. Thank you and Merry Christmas to you all."



On 11 February during the End of Year Blessing Ceremony, Shang Lun's parents spoke about the incident, apart from expressing their gratitude to Tzu Chi, he also hoped that everyone would pray for Shang Lun.

"When I was helpless, the care of Tzu Chi volunteers had provided me calm and peace" Mrs. Li was grateful that due to the mishap her family has a chance to get to know Tzu Chi, it is their son who brought them into the world of Tzu Chi.

## Impermanence in travel

Mr. and Mrs. Li and their two sons from Taichung, Taiwan came to New Zealand for holiday. During the journey, 17-year-old Shang Lun fell ill. Mr. Li contacted Miss He in the tour group, Miss He said, "I thought of Tzu Chi immediately." Miss He requested assistance from Tzu Chi New Zealand.

The incident occurred in Hamilton, Tzu Chi Hamilton immediately sent volunteers to care for and assist the family. Due to the severity of his condition, the local hospital arranged for Shang Lun to be transported to Auckland Hospital by a helicopter.

Mrs. Li said: "Yesterday, the heart and lung function of Shang Lun has improved. I believe it is your good intentions that had helped him. Thanks Bodhisattva and thank you everybody. We hope to bring a healthy Shang Lun back to Taiwan. We vow to become vegetarian and the whole family will volunteer for Tzu Chi."

On 5 March, after hospitalized for one month, Shang Lun and his parents returned to Taiwan.



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