



Feature Article

Finding and Caring for the Hidden

Rev. Jonathan Chan
105 Gibson Centre General Director



For five years, 105 Gibson Centre has been serving the needy. Yet sometimes it is hard to even imagine that there are needy around us because of the success stories of the community. The reality is, there are those who are "hidden" in the community. How do we reach out to the hidden and respond to their needs?

The Out of the Cold Program by Mosaic Interfaith is a program that had been hosted at the Toronto Christian Community Church for the past eight years. In 2019, it will be taking place at 105 Gibson for the first time. We are more than happy to offer those in need a meal and a warm place to get away from the cold winter nights when the temperature outside becomes unbearable and deadly. I can still recall how beautiful and relaxing it was when the OOTC guests stayed inside the Centre under a beam of sunlight several

years ago. They were waiting for their next bus and the Centre had become an impromptu bus stop for them. I was touched by the quietness and comfort of their waiting under the sun and in that instant, we shared a common humanity through the warmth and safety. I know that it was made possible through God's grace.

We are also planning for a Christian Counselling Centre, providing affordable professional counselling services along with educational and informative workshops for the community. Depression is common in the community with Asians and new comers being a hidden group. Youth is the age group that is affected the most. Because of the stigma and preconceptions of depression, it is not easy to find and help them. Yet statistics and personal encounters show that this is a much-needed service. It takes creativity and sincerity to reach out to them and for them to come forward. The Counselling Centre will be a non-threatening way to reach and heal human heart, emotions and relationships. This will be the last piece of the holistic services we offer in the mission we started five years ago.

As 2019 unfolds, let us offer a helping hand and walk a tiny mile with those in need.

We Found a Gym

Adam Shih

Adam is the Youth Ministry leader at the Japanese Gospel Church of Toronto. Years ago, they had an idea for an outreach project using sports as a basis, but as a smaller church, they did not have a space that was large enough to play sports. Hence, they started to search for gyms that were available for rental but encountered many closed doors as many facilities had been booked years in advance. Adam's wife introduced him to 105 Gibson Centre in 2017 and was able to secure a gym rental here for a monthly Saturday sports and children's program.

Even though the Japanese have established a tight community in Toronto, there are no sports facilities for their community. As time went by, Adam realized that using sports as a means to reach out to Japanese families was very effective and they were able to connect with non-Christian families too.

Currently they have 15 - 20 children and adults from different parts of GTA come and participate in their outreach program and thus enjoy their family time together. Adam is grateful for the space which 105 Gibson has provided, which is a substantial factor in making the outreach program happen. --Written by 105 Gibson Reporter



Our Mission is to serve the locals and those in need, and to share with them the compassion and hope of Jesus.
- Luke 4:18-19, Micah 6:8

MY experience with 105 Gibson

Out of the Cold Program

Johnson Zhong

105 Gibson Centre will be welcoming a new group of guests this winter through the Out of the Cold (OOTC) program. OOTC is organized by Mosaic Interfaith, a privately funded organization that partners with interfaith groups to provide hospitality that includes shelter and meals to those in need during the winter months. The Toronto Christian Community Church is one of the hosts in York Region and after 105 Gibson's renovation in 2018, there is more space and a shower room to serve them. We are ready to serve them at a better capacity for 11 weeks this winter.

Many of the guests are familiar with OOTC as they had been here before. Their backgrounds can be quite diverse. Some maybe homeless or unemployed. Some may be working but still face financial difficulties such as paying bills or paying for healthy meals. These basic necessities can be out of reach for them.

As they arrive, they prepare their bed, take a shower or may enjoy other services such as a hair cut, optometric check, physio or medical services before taking dinner as

a group. If it is not a busy night, our volunteers would sit and eat with them. Many interesting conversations have taken place over dinner. Over time, friendship and trust can be established, allowing conversations to move into a deeper level and into inquiry of the Christian faith. Although

it is not always possible to dialogue about our faith, we hope that we can live out and demonstrate our Christian faith to them through our actions and serving.



My Volunteer Story

Sandy Lam

I was introduced to 105 Gibson Centre by my sister-in-law Louisa (who volunteers here too) at a time when I was searching for something more in my life, something that would make a difference, a new purpose after a career in the corporate world. God had given me so many blessings in my life and I was unsure of what I could give back.

I was immediately welcomed by Pastor Monica and assigned to Reception where I started to learn about operations. Soon after, she embraced me into the Abundant Life Program (now 105 Gibson Abundant Life Institute), and it was funny as I was the only English-speaking volunteer in a primarily Chinese-speaking program! I discovered that

transitioning from corporate life to community service was easy, a huge amount of fun and my Chinese speaking skills, interspersed with English, was blossoming!

Three years later and I am now the Volunteer Coordinator, I am seeing the transformation in the community and the Centre becoming busier; the excitement and the energy is contagious. I have been able to see and hear the many stories of how people's lives being touched by the love at 105 Gibson; these have become my inspiration. I have seen the happy faces and smiles from our users, the volunteers and the staff; these had become my motivation.

What began as an uncertain adventure, has evolved into an amazing community of inspiration, support, fun and joy. I thank God for the privilege to be able to serve and to witness His works at 105 Gibson.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



105 Gibson Centre is always in need for volunteers who have a heart to serve the community.

Tax Clinic positions from March to April:

Roles include Tax preparer, Receptionist and Telephone scheduler. For more info, please visit 105gibson.com/what-we-do/foodbank/#tax-clinics or email taxclinic@105gibson.com

Out of the Cold positions from January to March:

Roles include Registration, Kitchen help, Hospitality, Games and Services. If you are interested in helping at OOTC, please sign up at 105gibson.com/what-we-do/foodbank/#cold

For other volunteer opportunities, please visit 105gibson.com/get-involved/volunteer

Upcoming Events

105 Gibson in Action

A series of **Arts and Crafts Nights** were held at the 105 Gibson Cultural Café in November and December. Guests took home their own seascape acrylic painting or a miniature Christmas cake.



Singing instructor June Tang and her students hosted a **Fundraising Concert** on November 24, singing songs from different TV shows. Over \$2,700 was raised from the concert to support the Centre's programs and services.



105 Gibson Abundant Life Institute Christmas Lunch on December 6 was filled with laughter and joy as members enjoyed a delicious lunch. Different classes also performed on stage.



A Great Light was this year's theme for the **105 Gibson Community Christmas Celebration** on December 15, representing Jesus' birth bringing forth a light to the people in darkness.



The **Christmas Dinner and Celebration for Newcomers and Neighbours** on December 16 was packed as guests and volunteers all mingled.



105 Gibson Abundant Life Institute Birthday Celebration will take place on Saturday January 19 from 2 - 4 pm. Activities include singing, games, dancing, sharing, cake cutting, refreshments, and photo taking. Fee is \$5, please register at Reception.

105 Gibson Abundant Life Institute Chinese New Year Celebration will take place on Saturday February 9 from 11 am - 5 pm. Program includes ALL student artwork exhibition, Chinese instrument performance, Chinese opera, Chinese dance and more. Please contact the Centre for more information.

The 105 Gibson **Thrift Store** mini sales for winter boots and accessories will take place on Saturday March 9 from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. Regular hours are Wednesdays and Sundays from 12 - 4 pm.

Free Tax Clinic 2019

From March 2 to April 28, a group of trained volunteers will provide free tax return services for individuals and families who meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Individual income less than \$35,000
- Family income less than \$50,000
- No business or rental income
- No investment income
- Foreign properties less than \$100,000

Every Saturday and Sunday from March 2 to April 28
Saturday: 9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Sunday: 2:30 to 5:30 pm
English, Cantonese and Mandarin services available.

BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

Please leave a message at 905.946.8787 ext 168 or email taxclinic@105gibson.com if you meet the above criteria to book.

Supporting 105 Gibson

We welcome you to join our efforts in blessing the community through partnership, donations, and volunteering. Visit our website for more information.

Youth Services **A Meal Together** celebrated Christmas and wrapped up the school year on December 20. The students were treated to a scrumptious meal in addition to games and karaoke time.

