



# Catherine Lee

Link Letter no. 86 | June 2022

**Contact details:**

Email: [catherinelee234@yahoo.com](mailto:catherinelee234@yahoo.com)

Blog: <https://catherinelee234.com>



**Location:** Taiwan



**What I do:** Working with the Taiwan Episcopal Church, supporting the church, chaplaincy and kindergarten ministry of the Diocese of Taiwan.

Dear all,

Calling all link churches, friends and family in the UK – I'm on my way!

Yes, flights are booked and, all being well, I leave Taiwan on 7 July for six months in the UK until 7 January. Link church clergy and friends, if you'd like me to come and visit, and can also offer accommodation, please get in touch and arrange a date. I'm hoping to stay in my mother's home in the Troutbeck area of the Lake District over the summer; she's recently moved into a care home in Grange-over-Sands on Morecambe Bay, so I'll be visiting her there. From September onwards, I'll probably start moving around the country visiting you all.

The Lake District is a great place to spend the summer, and its mountains remind me of the mountains that encircle Taipei. Both are very green, with the same huge quantities of rain (sigh!), and it seems the only thing missing here is the sheep. Instead, we have trees, bamboo and endemic silvergrass covering the slopes. Being a small island 100 miles from the mainland means we have a lot of endemic species of plants, insects, reptiles, birds and animals; it's fascinating to discover them all!

One result of the pandemic is fewer organised weekend activities, and more people are using their free time to explore Taiwan's huge network of hiking trails, including the recently established Taipei Grand Trail (TGT). This is a 92-km circuit of the mountains around the city, arranged in seven sections, each taking four or five hours to complete and requiring a selfie to be taken with the Chinese character atop each of the 12 marker posts, which, when put together, make a phrase describing the trail. So far, I've done the TGT twice, each time over seven-to-eight days, once over Chinese New Year in the rain and mud, and then again over weekends in April, mostly in the sunshine. Highlights were the endemic Taiwan Blue Magpie, orchids, tea plantations and views of Taipei down below. It's a wonderful way of encouraging people to get out and explore the world around us, as there's just so much to see!

Taiwan has about 9,000 endemic species in total (compared with about 90 in mainland Britain), reflecting its isolation from the rest of Asia, on the Pacific Rim of Fire. We're well used to life on the edge,



*Marking the Dragon Boat Festival in early June.*

**Support Catherine Lee:**  
[churchmissionsociety.org/catherinelee](https://churchmissionsociety.org/catherinelee)

**With Jesus  
With each other  
To the edges**

geographically, politically, culturally, and now in this pandemic too. Outside of mainland China, Taiwan was the first country to see a major outbreak of COVID-19 in January 2020 (with border restrictions imposed since March 2020), and we're also the last to open up again, as Omicron now surges through the country. We're quickly adapting to the new policy of "living-with-Covid". Fortunately, vaccination rates are very high, and summer is coming. Currently, we're in the middle of the plum rainy season, with torrential rain all day every day. Hardly conducive to being outside more, though it's good practice for my summer in the Lake District!

CMS has a new strapline: "With Jesus. With each other. To the edges." "The edges" is what defines Taiwan, and always has. And with this new surge in COVID-19, many are finding themselves living more on the edge than ever, facing sickness, isolation, loneliness, economic hardship and anxiety. Our chaplain and church members have been busy delivering food and care packages to those in need, both local people and students. For our COVID-positive students, stuck in their rooms for seven days of isolation, their care packages contain instant noodles, cocoa and oatmeal – and when it turned out that many have no easy access to boiling water, the chaplain came to the rescue, accessing kettles for them to use.

Friday 3 June was the Dragon Boat Festival (see the rice field dragon boat photo), marked by eating traditional foods such as zong-zi: sticky rice dumplings wrapped in bamboo leaves, steamed or boiled, with a variety of fillings. We're giving out three each to our 30+ students who receive food coupons from our student chaplaincy, a little bit of festive cheer in anxious times. Zong-zi have also been delivered to our local junior high school students affected by COVID. For those on the edge, students away from home or local families in isolation, the help of others is vital, and the church is here to show we care.

So, what else is new? Well, with the elderly members of our church encouraged to stay home and join in online worship during this current COVID surge, it is mostly our students and young people who are now running our services at Advent Church. Our services follow the more traditional style of Anglican liturgical worship, and are appreciated by those seeking quietness in their busy lives. I'm often reminded of Jeremiah 6:16: "This is what the Lord says: 'Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.'" For many in our churches, the "ancient paths" of Anglican prayer and worship are not old and outdated but seen as "new" and full of meaning. They're the "good way" that leads to Jesus, where we find rest for our souls. And as our news reports continue to be filled with the pandemic, war, gun violence and environmental crises, that is exactly what we all need at this time, rest for our souls.

"With Jesus. With each other. To the edges." Thanks CMS for the challenge. Let's go!

Your prayers and support continue to be much appreciated; thank you, and see you soon!

Catherine Lee



*Photos from top to bottom: Selfies on the Taipei Grand Trail, with Chinese characters making up a phrase about the trail; Seeing the beauty of many species on the Taipei Grand Trail.*



## Going further with Church Mission Society

**CMS on social media:** Want to connect more with mission and God's kingdom through social media and join our vibrant community? Follow us on **Facebook** ([/churchmissionsociety](https://www.facebook.com/churchmissionsociety)), **Instagram** ([@churchmissionsociety](https://www.instagram.com/churchmissionsociety)) and **Twitter** ([@cmsmission](https://twitter.com/cmsmission)).

Please note that opinions expressed in link letters are those of mission partners, not necessarily of Church Mission Society.

If you would like to discuss your mailings with us or to receive this link letter on a regular basis, please email [supporter.care@churchmissionsociety.org](mailto:supporter.care@churchmissionsociety.org) or call 01865 787400. Church Mission Society is a mission community acknowledged by the Church of England. Registered Company No. 6985330 and Registered Charity No. 1131655 (England and Wales) and SC047163 (Scotland).