



Yunnan Province is situated in close proximity to the Golden Triangle area of southeast Asia notorious for drug and sex trafficking and for drug abuse. Naturally, the Lin Cang area which is within Yunnan Province has felt the affects.

How does the church respond? The senior pastor (seated in the center above) of one of the churches in the Lin Cang area and the two church leaders on either side of her tell of their church's involvement in drug and HIV/AIDS prevention education and of their outreach to individuals and families affected by HIV/AIDS. In the past, they and the members of the congregation would have believed that this social and health crisis had nothing to do with them. However, our Chinese partner, the Amity Foundation helped to change that attitude. The church leaders attended a workshop organized by Amity and began to realize that they had a responsibility to learn more and to provide education about these matters within both congregation and community alike. Now their education efforts are helping church and community members to understand how the disease is spread, how a positive change of behaviors can protect both individuals and society and how it is safe to care for those afflicted with the HIV/AIDS virus.

Moreover, the church members have now become involved in a ministry of caring to individuals who are HIV positive and their families. Based in their understanding of what it means to share God's love in action, the church members make regular visits to HIV positive patients and their families, providing a listening ear along with emotional, spiritual and practical support. This love offered without any strings attached, makes a difference in the lives of these individuals and families as pain, guilt, regrets and despair are transformed in forgiveness, love and hope.

In these efforts, the church is also cooperating with government officials from the Health Bureau.

1. If you were a leader of the church in the Lin Cang area, how would you feel? If you were member of the church in the Lin Cang area, how would you feel?
2. If you were a leader of the church in the Lin Cang area, what would you do? If you were a member of a church in the Lin Cang area, what would you do?
3. If you were a member of a family affected by HIV/AIDS, how would you feel about this church and what would you do?
4. If you were a non-Christian living in the Lin Cang area, what would you think and feel about this church and about Christianity? What would you do?
5. In what ways do you see this outreach to individuals and families affected by HIV/AIDS as a Christian witness? In what ways can working together with the government be viewed as a Christian witness?