

OTAN

OUTREACH TO ASIA NATIONALS

TRAINING AND RESOURCING PERSECUTED ASIAN PASTORS
TO REACH THEIR PEOPLE



Spring 2021

TO PROTECT OUR NATIONALS AND STAFF, PLEASE DO NOT POST THE CONTENTS OF THIS NEWSLETTER ON SOCIAL MEDIA

- Celebrating 35 Years Serving Nationals In Asia
- Military Coup In Myanmar
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OTAN's

35th

Anniversary

CELEBRATING 35 YEARS SERVING NATIONALS IN ASIA

Responding To A Call



Otis Goodwin heard God's call to full-time ministry in 1977 while chopping wood for his family in Whitefield, Maine. When he came into the house from his chore, he told his wife, Roxann, that he believed God was calling him to go to school to become a pastor. Otis did not yet know the scale of ministry that God was calling him to, but he knew that he had always wanted to follow God faithfully and lead his family well.

While studying in Bible college, Otis became increasingly aware of the struggles faced by Christians around the world, especially for those in the closed country of China. It was in 1978 that he came home from one of his mission classes and informed Roxann of another call, "We are going to work in China," he told her. At the time, this was unthinkable. Missionaries were unable to enter China. It would truly be an act of God for this calling to be fulfilled. Although overwhelmed at first, Roxann knew that "God had His hand on us, and He had plans for us. What we needed to do was put our hands to the plow and move forward."

And they did just that. Otis graduated in 1982, and the Goodwins returned to Maine to complete an internship at their home church (Calvary Bible Baptist Church in North Whitefield, Maine) and begin raising support. After a brief time with a traditional missions organization, Otis began to focus on the passion that God had stirred in his heart, "Working with Nationals in China."

God raised up Outreach To Asia Nationals for the purpose of church planting in restricted-access countries in Asia. As explained by Otis, "OTAN was started in 1986 as I had just returned from a trip to China where I had the opportunity to meet many Christians. I saw the Chinese Christians struggling because of lack of Bibles, Christian materials, Biblical, doctrinal training, and financial support. The Lord impressed upon me the need to do something to provide and equip them to do the work of the ministry to their own peoples, and thus OTAN began."

God has accomplished much through OTAN, and it all began by one man's willingness to follow God's lead, wherever it would take him, he was not a pastor or full-time minister when he heard the Lord's call on his life. He was a humble owner of a convenience store, but he was willing to give God his heart and life. Are you open to God's call? Is He calling you today?

Otis Goodwin passed away in July of 2007, but OTAN continues to follow the pattern that he set for us so many years ago by training and equipping nationals to do the ministry. We are excited to see what opportunities God has in store for us in the coming years.

Quotes are taken from *My Incredible Journey* by Roxann Jewett Goodwin and other OTAN documents.

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MILITARY COUP IN MYANMAR

Believers Are Reminded Of Past Persecution

From 1962 to 2011, Myanmar was under military rule. Christians remember this time as one marked by persecution and heightened difficulty for believers. For the past decade, Myanmar has made strides to become more democratic, electing their officials, but on February 1st of 2021, the military held a coup and deposed the democratically elected leaders, taking control of the government of Myanmar.

So far, there has been no drastic impact on our national pastors, but there is a growing sense of dread. Please pray for the Christians who are trying to prepare for what this change may mean for them. Most importantly, pray for their hearts and minds to find confidence in the Lord, no matter what circumstances surround them. As Paul encouraged the church of Philippi, "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:7





VIETNAM UNDERGROUND BIBLE COLLEGE UPDATE

New Year, New Challenges

We are continuing our progress through our curriculum with our national pastors in Vietnam. Our Zoom classes continue to be rewarding for both our students and ourselves. We have completed the first two of ten books in the curriculum thus far. Looking at our progress objectively, we must expect that COVID will slow us down significantly. We hope and pray that we will be able to make up the difference in the coming months, but our first class will likely take longer to graduate than we had initially expected. Please continue to pray for the pastors as they invest time and effort into their studies while living in these ever-changing COVID times. Also, pray for the students waiting to join these classes after this group graduates. We have many pastors waiting expectantly for the chance to begin training.



PERSECUTION CONTINUES IN LAOS

Three Families Arrested



Three families met on a Sunday for the first time in their home village. The families had been walking to a village nearby, which was

over an hour away but had decided to begin a church plant together in their hometown. Included in the group of three Christian families were their young children. They gathered to worship, pray, study their Bibles, and seek God together.

The village officials were made aware of this meeting. In fear, hate, and anger, they came upon the families to stop the gathering. All three families were imprisoned, including the children, as they refused to recant their faith.

It is hard to imagine coming to a time of worship with a few other families and losing your freedom in the process, but this is the reality that many live with throughout Asia and increasingly in Laos. Please pray for the health and safety of these families, especially for the children.

As many of you remember, two families in Laos were recently evicted, and their homes were burned, forcing them to live in abandoned shacks. These believers are boldly returning to their village with permission from local authorities. They are using the funds that have been donated to salvage materials from their prior homes to rebuild. Any further funds received for them will go toward furnishing the homes and other necessities.

PASTOR TAIGA UPDATE

National Pastor Serving in Japan

Many of you may recall Pastor Taiga who serves with Pastor Tony Haug, our Ministry Manager to Japan in Shimonoseki. When Taiga took on this serving responsibility, his family disowned him as they considered his commitment to ministry a betrayal to their heritage and beliefs.



Taiga is now in his second semester of online Bible classes. He is leading the junior high, high school, and college students at Shimonoseki Christ Bible Church and is now the sole leader for the young believer Bible study group. In addition to his teaching, Taiga also helps with technology and media and has completely overhauled the church homepage, making it easy to watch all sermons and Bible studies online and on video. He assists Pastor Haug in visitation although that is limited now because of the COVID-19 situation.

He is doing a fantastic job and has now preached several times, growing more and more comfortable in the pulpit. Any contributions or support on his behalf would be greatly appreciated. Perhaps pray about becoming a monthly sponsor for Pastor Taiga.

All of our countries have national pastors like Taiga, who have committed their lives to their calling, often costing them great sacrifice. We challenge you and your family to pray about supporting a national pastor each month by sending a donation to one of our countries and designating it to Pastor/Worker support. National pastors are making a difference. Will you join them?



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HOW TO PARTNER WITH US

- If you were challenged or touched by any of the ministries and needs presented in our newsletter, please join us in prayer. We genuinely need prayer warriors to see the hand of the Lord in this ministry, for without Him, we can do nothing.
- If you would like to partner with us financially, you can do so via check by sending it to the OTAN office, P.O. Box 2440, Winchester, VA 22604. Please indicate what purpose the gift is to be used for in the memo line.
- You can also give online at otan.org by selecting the "give" tab and scrolling down to choose the ministry you would like to support. If you wish to designate your gift to a national pastor or a specific church within a given country online, just include that in the "add message" box on the screen's right.

An **easy, safe, and secure** way to **support OTAN's continued training** is Text-To-Give. (Text-2-Give # 540-274-5524)

- Open a text message to 540-274-5524 and enter keyword: **OTANtraining**, a space, then your amount (For example: OTANtraining 75)
- You will receive a text to confirm your donation and will be provided a link to set-up your device for text giving. Once you create an account and choose a method of payment, you are set to Text-To-Give any time in the future.
- Follow the directions, and you will receive a confirmation text and email with your receipt. Don't forget to save the number to your phone, so you can easily give again at any time.