

# OTAN

OUTREACH TO ASIA NATIONALS



**T**hough he fall, he shall not be  
utterly cast down; for the Lord  
upholdeth him with His hand.

*Psalm 37:24*



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Golden Bridge  
Da Nang, Vietnam

**TRAINING AND RESOURCING  
PERSECUTED ASIAN PASTORS  
TO REACH THEIR PEOPLE**



## NEWS FROM NEPAL

### A new year and a new resource

Happy New Year, dear friends of Nepal!

Thank you for your continued prayers and financial support for our ministries in Nepal. We are praising God for the lives that are being changed for the kingdom because of your faithfulness.

We also praise God that because of this ministry, our Nepali brothers and sisters can celebrate Christmas and begin each new year praising God. They are so joyous!

I plan to be in Nepal in February with Al Doomy, OTAN's Executive Director. We would appreciate your prayers for safe travel and for our safety in the country as we teach the Word of God to our national pastors.

Rosemary has been diligently working on creating a new curriculum, "How to Start a Children's Ministry: From Nursery through the Teen Years," which we will take on our next trip. Please pray for her as she creates this curriculum for the Nepali pastors.

~Pastor Gary, Nepal Ministry Manager

## WE'RE CELEBRATING IN VIETNAM!

### Mobile Bible College graduates twenty-three

Our first class of Vietnam MBC students is currently completing the final requirements for graduation! Following that, all 23 students that initially enrolled will be graduating in a service planned in February. We are so thrilled for them!

This level of study, equivalent to an associate degree, is so needed in Vietnam. Many pastors have little to no training. These pastors will now be in a better position to handle the challenges of ministry.

After the graduation service, we are planning an ordination service for 12 of those students, men who have been examined by the lead pastors and determined to be ready. Some of their elders and church members are planning on attending the ordination service. This will be an exciting time for our students, their families, and for their churches.



Please keep the Vietnam Mobile Bible College in your prayers. Many developments had to unfold to make the school possible (students, curriculum, teachers, and funding). God has truly provided for the needs at hand! "Now unto Him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Ephesians 3:20) be all the glory. That verse has become a reality in our school.

Our Vietnam lead pastors did a great job of choosing our first 23 students. Soon we will be asking them to select another group of students for us to train in the next term of the Bible college. In addition, God has blessed us with seven qualified teachers to teach in the school. Our long-term goal is to have some of our Vietnamese graduates teaching in the school. We look forward to training more nationals to reach more nationals!

~Jim, Vietnam Ministry Manager

*Please pray for these new graduates and for the special funding we will be seeking to assist five members of this group.*

*Spring Cleaning* **DAY**

**Saturday May 20**

A great service project for your family or group!  
To help out at our home office, call: 540-665-6418.

## TEACHING AND REACHING IN JAPAN

An update from Pastor Tony Haug

Most westerners do not realize that Japan, although an economic powerhouse, is also the largest unreached people group in Asia. Only 0.4 % of Japanese are evangelical Christians. In spite of its economic success, the hearts of the Japanese are in continual search for meaning and purpose in life.

Japan has one of the highest suicide rates in the world. Reasons vary from financial stress, depression, to pressure to succeed in school. In 2019, it was estimated that over 10 million Japanese were *hikkikomori*—a term for people who have withdrawn from society. Their main religion, a mixture of Buddhism (idol worship) and Shintoism (ancestor worship), has proven to be insufficient in giving the Japanese eternal hope and meaning in life.

We have served in this challenging environment for 35 years, striving to share the hope of salvation through Jesus Christ to these searching people.

Shimonoseki Christ Bible Church (SCBC) presently has two locations. I lead weekly group Bible Studies, counseling, evangelistic outreaches, and Sunday worship services. I am also training a young Japanese man to become a pastor. SCBC has been blessed with many Japanese lay leaders who help disciple and minister to the believers.

New Beginning International Preschool, located in downtown Shimonoseki, was started in Shimonoseki to reach young families interested in giving their children a preschool education in English. My wife Marcia is the director of New Beginning International Preschool where she works alongside Rachel Phillips (lead teacher) and Marjorie Thornton (assistant).



Rachel Phillips, Marcia & Tony Haug, Janae & Josh Hofer

One obstacle the church in Japan has faced in evangelizing families with young children is the tremendous amount of time that public school activities consume. Frequently, school events are held during the same hours as the Sunday service. Students spend long hours not only studying at tutoring sessions but also in after-school sports activities.

Josh and Janae Hofer teach English conversation classes to children and adults. Some of Josh's classes take place at a local company. Josh and Janae have been using their gift of hospitality to invite students to their home for food and board games. Five of their students even attended Christmas service in 2022!

Janae also teaches second grade English to students who have graduated from New Beginning Preschool. The English classes include 15 minutes of Bible instruction, offering a means to share the gospel with the children.

*Pray for us as we look for ways to present the gospel to the Japanese in a cultural context that they will connect with and understand.*

## WHAT IS PERSECUTION?

By Dave Burt, Assistant Director of OTAN

In 1956, Jim Elliot and four other missionaries were spared to death in an Ecuadorian jungle. Their killers were Huaorani, an indigenous people of the Amazon. Jim and his colleagues were in the process of reaching the Huaorani with the gospel.

Being killed for our faith in Jesus is the most extreme form of persecution. But persecution takes many other forms: imprisonment, beatings, loss of home or job, rejection by family and friends, false accusations, insults, and hatred. Briefly defined, persecution of Christians is any activity or attitude intended to oppose or silence a believer's witness for the Lord Jesus.

With that definition in mind, you can see how persecution is a hardship faced by every true follower of Christ.

2 Timothy 3:12 affirms this: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

In OTAN's work with persecuted Asian pastors, we never hear them wish for persecution to vanish. Instead, as taught in 1 Peter 3, they ask us to pray for their joyful acceptance of persecution as part of God's plan to complete His saving work, both in and through them. Let's learn from our Asian brothers and sisters and pray for our own faithfulness in the persecution we face.

If you know the end of the Huaorani people's story, you know God used those five deaths to work miracles. Many others were called to serve cross-culturally. Some family members of the martyred-five returned to Ecuador with love and forgiveness and reached the Huaorani with the gospel. Today, many Huaorani believe in and follow the Lord Jesus. Only God could work such miracles out of such tragedy!



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Want to use the text-to-give option? Text "OTANtraining" and your gift amount to 540-274-5524 (example: OTANtraining 75).



Partner By Praying

If you feel challenged or inspired by this update, would you consider praying for this ministry? We're so grateful for the prayers of our fellow believers.

Want to learn to effectively pray for missionaries and their outreach? Visit otan.org/pray.



Partner By Going

Not everyone is able to go to foreign fields, but every believer can ask themselves the question, "Am I called to go?"

Is God calling you into the mission field? We'd love to talk to you about it! Connect with us at otan.org/serve.

**WHY WE GIVE TO OTAN**

Reston Bible Church first got involved with Outreach To Asia Nationals in 1986 when our missions director met Otis Goodwin and heard his vision for reaching the unreached in restricted countries.

Otis explained that nationals can get into countries or areas that a typical North American missionary cannot, that nationals can fully assimilate into their culture and share the gospel in ways that a foreigner is not able to, and that nationals already have relationships and contacts that a missionary would have to spend years forming. We wanted to widen RBC's vision for reaching the world by helping OTAN's national missionaries and pastors.

As OTAN has expanded into other countries, so has our support. Today Reston Bible Church supports nationals in eight countries: China, Laos, Vietnam, Russia, Myanmar, Thailand, Nepal, and North Korea. We count it a privilege to give to OTAN as they work to identify and train national workers to share the gospel of Christ.

~Cheryl Hurley, RBC Missions Executive Assistant