

East Asia insight

OMF INTERNATIONAL SUMMER 2005

from OMF-U.S.
National Director
Neil Thompson



Hudson Taylor:
"I so want you to realize this principle of working with God and asking Him for everything. If the work is at the command of God, then we can go to Him in full confidence for workers; and when God gives the workers, we can go to Him for means to supply their needs."

REACHING EAST ASIA'S PEOPLES: WHATEVER IT TAKES

Throughout our 140 years as the China Inland Mission and later as OMF International, confidence in the faithful provision of a loving heavenly Father has undergirded the plans and ministries of thousands of CIM/OMF missionaries. God has more than met our needs.

As I began my role as the U.S. national director in 2001, we faced serious financial challenges. The reasons are varied and complicated, but income for OMF U.S. operations needed to be augmented by funds from the broader OMF family. We were grateful we were able to thus stay out of debt, but were determined to work and pray so that our operation needs would be met by income from within the U.S. I am pleased to say that we saw that goal met in 2004!

In addition to our regular prayer times, for several years we have gathered every Tuesday to pray especially for our donors, as well as the financial needs related to the vision and mission God has given us. Our missionary homestaff financial support has risen from 69 percent to 86 percent overall. Our U.S. team continues to pray and work hard to see their support needs fully met by committed financial partners.

As we move through 2005 and beyond, we still need to address some financial challenges. For example, our U.S. operational needs are largely met through a percentage of members' financial support. Understandably, members and their financial supporters want to see the amount needed from members decreased. While we rejoice that we have been able to reduce that number every year since 2001, our leadership team and board of trustees are brainstorming to find new ways to finance our critical mobilization, administration and member care ministries.

Recently, I read about a young man I'll call

"Jet." He showed interest when a foreigner first shared the gospel with him years ago, but his "belief" was one of praying only when he got into trouble. Shortly after meeting the foreigner, Jet left for college, still unbelieving but not forgetting what he learned that evening. During college he found his mind continually drifting to the question of the meaning of life. "The question confused me for many years," Jet said. "I couldn't get a satisfactory answer, so I drank alcohol and spent time with my friends to keep from asking myself the question."

But it wouldn't go away, so he set out to find an answer. He remembered what his foreign friend had said, and decided to see if Christianity offered a solution to his dilemma. When he visited a church he immediately noticed a difference. "The smiles of the people there... the smiles were just like the ones you give to your closest family members. I never saw such smiles outside the church," Jet recalled.

After a further period of searching, the love Jet experienced from various Christians drew him to Christ, and Jet's quest for life's purpose was over. He had found the answer. "I'm not living for myself," Jet says. "I live for God and the people around me."

Today Jet is in his late 20s and is helping lead a house church. Praise God that his journey is not rare among the Han Chinese. But at the same time, 1.2 billion people in China still do not know Christ. And throughout East Asia, hundreds of people groups still have not seen a similar church growth in their cultures. We want to see that changed. Our passion is to see an indigenous, biblical church movement in each of East Asia's people groups—so that the "jets" of their community can find a solution to the question of the meaning of life. Please join us in whatever way God leads as we mobilize to reach East Asia's peoples. ■

Bearing fruit that lasts

Two world Christians who know the joy of giving

Maggie Wilson, age 8
Blairstown, New Jersey

For Maggie Wilson's eighth birthday, instead of receiving gifts, she asked her friends to donate funds to her cousin, an OMF missionary in Macau.

Thirty of Maggie's friends attended her birthday party to enjoy cake and fun, but they also contributed \$250 towards God's purposes in Macau.

To Maggie's parents, Frank and Lilian, she is a miracle child. Several doctors had told the couple that having a child would be impossible—until Maggie entered the world when Lilian was 46 years old and Frank 50. When Maggie turned eight and decided to give up gifts for God's service, her parents were pleased to see her understanding of the importance of giving.

"We can all do our part in making a difference in other people's lives," said Lilian. "We can't all be missionaries, but we can pray for those who are and lend a hand in making it possible for them to go. We encourage other families to try a similar kind of alternate gift-giving. They will be amazed at how much blessing God can shower on those who love Him." ■



Rudy and Ileina Tolentino
Houston, Texas

"My parents have supported OMF all my life. I remember missionaries visiting our Philippines church and I saw their sincerity in their beliefs and their desire to see people come to Christ in Asia. My interaction with the missionaries molded my involvement today.

"I am not able to go to the mission field myself, so I make yearly donations to the OMF office to meet the needs of mobilization and promotional materials. For the past six years, I've supported media projects and believe the ability to get printed materials out is important. Recently, though, I have felt led to give additional finances to the missionary retirement fund and general fund.

"OMF is an organization I know and trust. I trust that OMF knows what they are doing with my donation, so I let them do their job. I view my giving as a calling. I encourage those looking to find their role in missions to first pray. Seek God's will in your life, see the gifts He has given you and ask Him how to use them.

"When I look back at my parents' giving, I see a generation who viewed themselves as recipients of the missionaries that came.

However, as the second and third generations rise up, we need to put behind the receiving mentality and look more towards giving." ■

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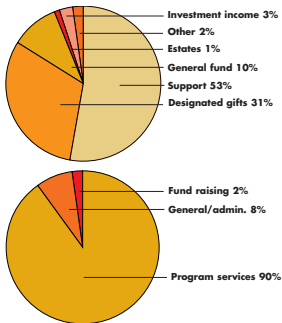
Audited
statement
available
upon request

INCOME 2004

Missionary Support	\$5,639,705
Designated Gifts	3,228,396
General Fund	1,066,541
Estates	121,922
Investment Income	310,403
Other	184,677
TOTAL	\$10,551,644

DISBURSEMENTS 2004

Program Services	\$8,965,314
General/Administration	844,734
Fund Raising	161,292
TOTAL	\$9,971,340



100th Anniversary of the Death of Hudson Taylor

From his obituary June 3, 1905: "In his death China lost one of her best friends and greatest benefactors. He loved the Chinese with a Christlike love, and spent himself on their behalf with Christlike devotion. He lived for China and he died for China. From first to last his one grand aim was to bring this great people to Christ. He was a man of God, raised by God for a great work, and wholly devoted to the work which had been given him to do." One Chinese evangelist on hearing of his death said: "Dear and venerable pastor, we too are your little children. You opened for us the road to heaven."



G O D A T W O R K I N E A S T A S I A

Hudson Taylor's vision 140 years later

It began June 25, 1865 on the beach at Brighton, England. Hudson Taylor was wrestling with a dilemma: every month a million Chinese souls were dying without God. But what was he to do? The decision was to start a mission agency that would send workers to the unreached interior of China. In Taylor's words, "Then and there I asked Him for twenty-four fellow workers, two for each of the eleven provinces which were without a missionary and two for Mongolia."

The China Inland Mission was born. In June we celebrate the 140th anniversary of that momentous day. In the intervening years, much of the world—including the CIM, now OMF—has changed. But God's faithfulness has never wavered, and God's work through OMF presses forward into the 21st century.

Through the years, God has used OMF to transform the lives of thousands of people, start churches, translate Scriptures and other Christian materials, meet medical and physical needs, start schools and train East Asian believers in their own missions outreach—all in the name of Christ and for the glory of God among East Asia's 2 billion people.

*Join us in celebrating 140 years
of God's faithfulness—and pray
for His work to continue for
many years to come.*

Weddings hilltribe style

The Krung and Brao hilltribe Christians of Cambodia have been developing a revised wedding ceremony that preserves their traditional symbols and rituals but also honors God. If fact, they are reevaluating the entire courtship process. Traditionally, boys and girls are allowed to sleep together in their parents' houses before marriage, which can lead to unwanted babies and the spread of AIDS. Now, Christians are working on ways to keep the "marriage bed honored by all." (Heb. 13:4). The traditional wedding ceremonies include drunkenness and spirit worship. In the new Christian wedding ceremony, traditional symbols like the playing of gongs, lighting of candles and blessings from elders are included.

Big things happening in Big Village

Three serious attempts have been made to establish church groups in villages north of Kratie town along the Mekong river. After a time all three groups fell apart. On two occasions, this happened when Christians died suddenly and mysteriously, which convinced locals they were being punished for believing in the "Jesus God." But now something amazing is happening in Big Village. A few families have banded together to worship Jesus, and have sought out the church in Kratie to come and teach them. Almost every testimony they have given points to the protection they have in Jesus from the evil spirits.

Believers in Laos multiply

January 2005 marked the start of the annual 40-day corporate prayer and fast for Laos, which focused prayers for Laos both inside and outside the country. Key leadership materials have been produced and distributed, including a set of 50 color drawings illustrating biblical truths. Chinese Christians have come to Laos and are making good progress in reaching out to the Chinese community. Some house churches in China are planning work among unreached tribal groups in northern Laos. Reports indicate that more people are hearing about Jesus and believing than ever before. Despite ongoing persecution, Lao believers continue to grow in boldness and willingness to share the gospel, and churches are being started in tribal groups, such as the Lanten.



China

RESOURCE
PACKET

As God pursues China's millions, He is pursuing faithful men and women who will give themselves to serve among the Chinese. The China Resource Packet will equip you with a knowledge of this nation loved by God. Included in the Packet are a workbook, PowerPoint, brochures, videos, interactive DVD and prayer guide. Available August 2005. Cost: \$30.00. Pre-order from OMF Books at www.us.omf.org/resources.

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