Australia | September - December 2026

BILLIONS

People

The Kinh who Belong to the King

Reaching Vietnamese People in Japan

Returning to Southeast Asia with the Gospel

Places

Mission, Motorbikes, and Chopsticks in Vietnam

Generosity and Openness: Two Weeks in Vietnam

Open Doors in Vietnam's Villages

Participate

Building Business, Building the Church

"Tourists" with Prayerful Purpose

Serving Neurodivergent Children in East Asia



Vietnam

Mission, Motorbikes, & Chopsticks in Vietnam

Heart for Asia. Hope for Billions.

We are OMF International, founded by James Hudson Taylor in 1865 as the China Inland Mission. We share the good news of Jesus in all its fullness to East Asia's peoples. Our mission magazine, *Billions*, is published three times a year and is available digitally for free at **omf.org/au/resources/billions**

編者的話

From the Editor

Arriving in Hanoi, Vietnam leaves an immediate impression—streets alive with the constant buzz of motorbikes, the rich aromas of street food on every corner, and a vibrant energy that draws you in. Yet beyond the movement and color, what stood out most was the strong emphasis on family. Around places like Hoàn Kiếm Lake, families gather in the evenings, sharing time together in ways that reflect deep relational connection.

Among the younger generation, there is a noticeable eagerness to connect. Many are open, curious, and willing to engage on a personal level. This openness creates meaningful opportunities—but also highlights an important truth: sharing the Gospel here often begins with relationship and trust.

Yet when people genuinely want to know us, what an incredible opportunity it becomes to share the hope we have. As 1 Peter 3:15 reminds us, *"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,"*

The majority Kinh (Viet) people, who make up over 85% of the population, still don't know Jesus. The need is great, and the workers are few. Will you join in praying for more workers for this harvest? Pray for those who will go, to love, build friendships, and faithfully share the hope we carry—so that many in Vietnam may come to know it too.

Scott Brown
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CHRISTIAN PUBLISHING IN VIETNAM: *Why it's Vital to Mission and Church Growth*

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MISSION, MOTORBIKES, & CHOPSTICKS *in Vietnam*



*Vietnam is filled with people loved by God, and reaching them takes partnership, shares Peter.**

When you think about Vietnam, you just need to think about two things: motorbikes and chopsticks.

Motorbikes and the love of God

In Vietnam, there are over 100 million people and 77 million motorbikes. That's a lot. There are people everywhere. (I think most of them live on my street!)

The motorbikes represent this: Vietnam is a country full of people who are loved by God, but most of whom do not know the love of God—and many of whom do not even have the opportunity to hear about the love of God.

One of the main needs of the day in Vietnam is pioneering work—people who will bring the gospel to new communities, entering new areas, cities, towns, people groups, spaces within urban environments like cafes and sports groups—to make disciples, gather them into new churches, and raise up leaders.

And then to do it again and again and again.

Chopsticks and partnering with the Vietnamese church

It takes two chopsticks to eat (except maybe for my daughter, but that's another story).

Chopsticks show us the nature of partnership. It takes two! The Vietnamese church has a God-given mission to make disciples of all nations.

The Vietnamese Christians I've encountered have a real desire to share the gospel and are very open to partnerships with 'outsiders' who are ready to serve them with humble and generous hearts.

What does this look like? It might look like a prayer walk with a church leader like Jonathan.* Even before we came along, he'd been actively sharing the gospel. The baton of mission, as such, has been in his hand from the

WE CAN GET THROUGH MOST THINGS *when we depend on God and trust one another.*

very beginning. We've been mentoring him in multiplying disciples and starting a new church in a major city. For me, it's been a special experience to partner in mission with such an open, humble, and committed man.

(When a foreigner walks around, there is often curiosity. As a foreigner in Vietnam, you're often welcome to ask questions about things you're observing about life and culture. And with your fluent Vietnamese Christian friend, your conversation can deepen...)

Partnership might look like serving with an organization such as the Vietnamese Fellowship of Evangelical Students to equip and train students, or provide more informal training and mentoring. You might even work as a lecturer in a Bible college.

As for me, I'm having a lot of conversations with people who ask, "What is your job?" I can honestly say that I am a language consultant for a Vietnamese language course, where I train teachers.

Vietnam is a country full of people who are loved by God, but most of whom do not know the love of God—and many of whom do not even have the opportunity to hear about the love of God. We invite you to prayerfully consider joining our team!

Peter*
An OMF church planter in Vietnam

*Names changed for privacy and security purposes

GET TO KNOW US

5 things to know about OMF Vietnam

1. We're an emerging field—we're growing and maturing in structure and cohesion.
2. We work on teams, engaged in a variety of ministries including church planting, teaching, publishing, medicine, music, student ministry and missional business.
3. We're not the only instrument God is using in Vietnam, but we're being used by Him.
4. We currently have nine nations represented on our team—we're really global!
5. We're an intergenerational team—including seasoned missionaries a few years from retirement as well as newbies learning language and culture.

ARE YOU READY?

Thinking about serving in Vietnam?
We're looking for people who are...

- **Dependent** on God, passionate about Jesus and His church, and know the gospel.
- **Pioneers** willing to pursue a new work and make things happen.
- **Galvanizers** keen to connect and inspire people to serve.
- **Collaborators** able to work in a team and be a godly teammate for others.
- **Determined**, able to work hard to stick at projects and build deep relationships
- **Discerning**, able to wisely evaluate and assess ideas or plans.
- **Resilient**, able to handle loneliness at times, especially in a new work.
- **Creative**, because things don't always work the first time.
- **Flexible**, because projects can come and go quickly, and things can be ambiguous.
- **Teachable**, able to engage wisely with leadership and follow direction and advice.
- **Not idealists**—but have ideals, able to love God's church and work for its growth.

CHRISTIAN PUBLISHING IN VIETNAM:
Why it's Vital to Mission and Church Growth

A cross-cultural worker serving in publishing ministry in Vietnam shares the importance of quality Christian books written by local authors to the growth and maturity of the church in this Q&A.

In what ways have books played a role in your spiritual growth and journey?

Where I am from, there is a strong tradition of encouraging Christians to read. Having exposure to theological reflection from authors across distance and time—including texts from the early church fathers, reformation and the puritan time periods—was a blessing to my life. I am grateful for this heritage, as it laid the foundations for me to delve deeper into the wonders of who God is and what He has done for us.

What does your publishing ministry currently involve?

I'm involved in selecting resources to consider translating from English—quality books suitable for use within our context. This means connecting with publishers across the world to work out ways we can partner in translation projects. I'm also taking my first steps into writing resources in Vietnamese. Currently, I'm working on a manuscript for a podcast series that gives an overview of Christian theology. I'm learning a lot!

Please share your thoughts on the importance of Christian publishing in church growth in Vietnam.

Producing gospel-centered resources is an essential component in growing healthy churches which fulfill Christ's commission (Matthew 28:20). Across the world and across many centuries, Christians have wrestled with the nature of the gospel and how it is applied into their contexts. As an English speaker, I have many open doors to contemplate who God is, what He is saying through His word and what this means in everyday life. This is something I want to see opened up for Vietnamese Christians, too.

Bible teaching is a good example of this being worked out in the real world. It is very common to hear teaching on books like Mark or the occasional Psalm. However, as a younger theology student recently said to me, "Old Testament history and the minor prophets are very hard to understand and teach on. We need resources which will help to make that easier so that we can teach the whole Bible."

Responses like this are a call to action for the church. Churches in Vietnam need foundational texts they can access such as commentaries or systematic theologies. Producing books like this is an integral part of what we are doing in response to that need. This is why we have started a project to see a commentary, written in Vietnamese, for every book of the Bible.

We also want to develop good online content, to see churches strengthened in the gospel in an easily accessible way. That is one of the reasons we are seeking to develop our podcast series. Our hope is that this will work concurrently with resources



which we have already published, so that people can go deeper in loving God.

My long-term desire is to see local Christians raised up by the Lord to steer the growth of theological vision for the church in Vietnam. This is a crucial next step for the Vietnamese church, and I am excited that I get to walk alongside and witness this moment of growth.

Please share the story of a local Christian involved in Christian publishing.

Our company director has been a source of inspiration and encouragement to me, and has a wonderful commitment to seeing the gospel grow. For over ten years she has pursued a clear vision to see transformation across the landscape of Christian education in Vietnam. This vision led her to work alongside others to build a publishing company. From editing and proof-reading texts to negotiating contracts and overseeing business operations, she really is a gift to the Vietnamese church.

What are your top tips for those looking to get involved in Christian publishing ministry?

1. Understand your context. I say this in light of AI developments. There are positive uses for AI, but it can also be used to proliferate inappropriate resources—for example, what may be a good illustration in one context may have little to no meaning in another. AI-driven translation can be helpful, but can only go so far. Qualified eyes still needed to read through content, so that it retains theological integrity.

2. Take one humble step at a time. The Christian life is one step of humility after another. When it comes to serving cross-culturally in the development of theological resources, humility must be front and center. Too often we unknowingly—or sometimes knowingly—command a position of power. Resisting this is key to releasing local Christians in taking the lead.

3. Learn what exists and see where there is a need. You might be very passionate about a specific aspect of doctrine or a Christian life issue, but take the time and listen to what the church in your context is identifying as key needs (they might not be the same). Observe where there are gaps, and work together with local Christians and churches on how to provide the best resources for their needs.

Matthew*
A gospel worker in Vietnam

*Name changed for privacy and security purposes

PRAY

How might we pray for Christian publishing in Vietnam?

- Pray that the Lord would raise up a generation of pastor-theologians for Vietnam, and that they would speak and write wonderful works of God with depth into their own culture.
- Pray for Christian publishers to be open to the Lord's leading in selecting resources, developing partnerships and providing support for future writers and theologians.
- Pray for Vietnamese to be curious and grow in their seeking more of God and His Word in their lives.



OPEN DOORS IN *Vietnam's Villages*

Vietnam stretches over a thousand kilometers of mountains and coastline, and is home to more than 54 distinct peoples. Yet for over 40 of those groups, the good news of Jesus remains unheard, writes Aaron.*

Historically, the good news spread widely among a few minority groups living in the central mountains of Vietnam. In the north, there was also a significant turning to the Lord throughout the eighties and nineties through radio ministries.

Vibrant communities of Christians exist today in some places—but in other areas, there may not be a single church or gathering of Christians. Many have had very little opportunity, if any, to hear about Jesus.

The country is changing. In the past, it was very difficult for people to move around the country, and for foreigners to live beyond the largest cities. Today, many people from previously isolated communities are moving to new places for work and study.

It is now possible to live here and become neighbors who can share the good news with them for the first time. Visiting villages, sharing meals, and inviting people into our homes has never been easier!

We sense that the Lord is opening doors to make His name known.

Coming to faith through visits and cooking

Our village visits typically involve going with one or two local Christians, picking up a couple of chickens or ducks on the way, and spending the day with a family and their neighbors. Everyone contributes to prepare a meal using ingredients from their gardens, which we enjoy together.

Often there are openings to know people better, pray, and share the gospel. We have seen several people learn about and trust in Jesus through these times. Because a group of Christians are involved, it is easier for them to connect with a community and grow in Christ.

Noticing "different" neighbors

An exciting development has been seeing the Lord begin to call Christians from other ethnic groups to notice and reach out to their neighbors in need of Christ. There is an urgent need to help equip them for cross-cultural ministry within their own villages.

More workers to walk through more open doors

The Lord is doing new things among the various people groups of Vietnam in recent years. Many more workers are needed. Pray for the Lord to raise humble and gifted workers with a heart for the people of Vietnam to know Christ, who will walk through the doors He has opened.

*Name changed for privacy and security purposes

BUILDING BUSINESS, BUILDING THE CHURCH: *Business as Mission in Vietnam*

Missional businessman Joshua shares how a consulting framework is opening doors to one of Vietnam's least-reached groups—and why patience, trust, and genuine service are essential.*

What first led you to focus on reaching business people in Vietnam with the gospel?

I felt called into missions at the age of nine, and in my pre-teen and teenage years I was deeply influenced by a Chinese family friend who pointed me toward business as missions. I went on to build a career in financial analysis in my twenties, but it was not until I was 30 that missions abroad became a reality.

Over the past several years in Vietnam, I have served on a church planting team that helped establish what is now a thriving church of over fifty people, while also running my own small business. During that time, I saw how God uses businessmen and women to meet very practical needs within the church, especially finances and legal cover.

Business professionals can be difficult to reach, as their relationships tend to form around shared ventures and experiences. Even so, their strategic importance to the Vietnamese church, combined with their limited gospel engagement, drew me to focus here. My own business background, time in Vietnam, and lessons from both ministry and business failures left me well placed to try.

Our city is home to 8 million people, yet only about 7,000 are Protestant Christians—just 0.09%. A small fraction are business owners, who make it possible for many existing churches to function. Imagine how God might use them to multiply the church in Vietnam as more come to faith!

What is your vision for this new ministry venture? How have you seen God at work?

Our vision is to see businessmen and women come to faith in Christ and become connected to healthy local churches. We pursue this by providing a genuine business service that adds real value to our clients.

Our approach is to serve companies through a consulting framework, helping businesses improve operations by focusing on fundamentals that drive long-term success. Many of these principles align closely with biblical truth—good business practice often reflects the design of its Creator. The framework itself is not explicitly evangelistic, but the people delivering it are, and we proactively pursue conversations about faith.

These touchpoints create opportunities for conversations and friendship—and as relationships develop, we meet Vietnamese Christian business professionals. In our experience, most adult Vietnamese who come to faith do so through the influence of another Vietnamese Christian. Because of this, building relational bridges to local Christians is central to what we hope to see happen.

One man, Cornelius*, first encountered the gospel through this ministry. He didn't come to faith immediately, but the seed was planted. Later, hearing the gospel again through a Vietnamese Christian, he gave his life to the Lord and was baptized. Eventually his daughter followed Christ, too. At one point he told a group of ten fellow businessmen that the greatest value he received from our consultations was salvation!

What opportunities—and challenges—come with engaging business communities?

One of the greatest opportunities is the depth of relationship that can be built through business.

Relationships never begin in a vacuum. Most people form meaningful connections through shared values, interests or work. Business provides a natural context for all of these. When understood as creating mutual value where both parties benefit, it becomes a meaningful way to serve both practical and spiritual needs, building trust that is fertile ground for deeper conversations about faith.

The challenges are real. Running a business and delivering genuine value requires significant time, effort, and skill. It is important that the service we provide is truly helpful and not a poor substitute for what clients could find elsewhere. Building and maintaining a strong offering takes sustained effort, and because this work touches people's livelihoods, it must be handled with care.

Interview by Ailsa Yule
OMF UK Communications Coordinator

*Names changed for privacy and security purposes

PRAY

How can we pray?

- Pray for and be patient with missionaries working in unfamiliar models such as this. Meaningful impact often requires significant groundwork before fruit is visible.
- Prayerfully consider getting involved from home. We engage retired business professionals whose experience adds credibility. This might give you a direct role in reaching an under-reached group!
- Pray that God would prepare hearts to receive the gospel and guide the right people to engage with this work. Pray for lasting blessings for the church in Vietnam as a result.

The Kinh who Belong to the King: CHURCH PLANTING IN ~~ATHENS~~ VIETNAM

"Athens moments" are the aim for each day in church planting ministry in Vietnam, Peter shares. In partnership with local Christians, teams enter Kinh communities, care deeply for people, and preach the gospel in engaging and relatable ways.*

An Athens moment

"It was just like Paul in Athens!"

It wasn't Athens. It was a tight, bustling local neighborhood in Hanoi, Vietnam's capital city.

Habakkuk* had just been prayer walking with a small team of Vietnamese Christians who had been sent by their churches to start a new, outreach-focused "pioneer church" in the area. Habakkuk had lived in that neighborhood for ten years, but something was different now.

We had done some training together on how Paul, in Acts 17, walked around the city of Athens with his spiritual eyes open. Paul had *entered* the community, *understood* the religious beliefs around him, and *cared deeply*, distressed by the idolatry he saw.

He then *preached* the gospel in a way that made sense to his hearers.

We wanted to do the same.

We immediately went out and put our lesson into practice as we entered what had been a familiar community—but this time with our spiritual eyes open.

"I didn't realize how many temples there were around my house, how much worship is going on," he admitted.

Like Paul, Habakkuk saw how "religious" his neighbors were.

Habakkuk and his family have committed to live in the area to sow the seed of the gospel and make and mature new disciples of Jesus, who can be gathered into new churches.

A fresh encounter

Having a fresh encounter with those around us as Jesus' witnesses is a constant need for all Christians.

Whatever our context, the need of the day is always to have new "Athens moments" of seeing those around us, or those in the next village, town, city, or people group with spiritual eyes—and to see ourselves as sent witnesses to them in Jesus' name.

First, our team's ministry is to *cast vision*. With a group of local church leaders, I explore how from the book of Acts onwards the central work of the church has been to go to lost people, show and share

the good news of Jesus, mature disciples, and gather them into transformed communities with healthy leaders.

In other words, the work of church planting.

Then, our team's ministry is to *walk alongside*. This looks like the mentoring sessions I've had with local Christians over the last year and a half, wrestling over how to put church planting principles from Acts into practice in modern Hà Nội.

"Hard to the gospel"

In the last century, the Vietnamese church has spread, surviving numerous occupations and brutal wars including the dark years of heavy persecution behind the communist "bamboo curtain."

Yet the 100 million strong majority people group, the Việt Kinh, remain largely unreached. Though they make up 86% of Vietnam's population, only around 1% in the south and 0.05% in the north are evangelical Christians—and in some places, the church is actually shrinking.

Kinh Christians have often described their people as "hard to the gospel."

Persecution remains in many places at family and local levels. A myriad of ideas and influences are found online by tech-engaged younger generations. Centuries-old commitments to ancestor worship and appeasing the spirits, mixed with Buddhism and framed by a Confucian worldview, run deep.

Open hands of partnership

Yet there remains hope. Many young urbanites are loosening their current spiritual roots while diving deep into education and entertainment. Our ministry partners have a God-given burden to continue the church planting they see began in Acts, with open hands of partnership to others like our team, who share their heart for their people to come to Christ. I thank God for each of them!

Our team's role is to return with local Christians to the streets of Athens, to learn from Scripture about why and how to witness. Through mentoring, training, and modeling, we head out together onto the streets of Hà Nội, into homes in Huế, and to community football pitches in Hưng Yên.

Together we sow, we water—but God makes it grow.

The Kinh who Belong to the King

What might the Kinh church do in twenty-first century Vietnam? Empowered by the same Holy Spirit of the days of Acts, like Paul in Athens, the Kinh church needs a fresh encounter with their neighbors as ambassadors of the King of kings.

May the Kinh church plant the gospel, which leads to new churches, who plant the gospel in new places, which leads to new churches, who... you get the idea! Pray for the Lord's enabling to *enter* communities, *understand* worldviews, *care deeply* for people, and *preach* the gospel in an engaging and relatable way.

Peter* has been serving in Vietnam with his family for six years, now focusing on church planting amongst the Kinh.

*Names changed for privacy and security purposes

REACHING VIETNAMESE PEOPLE *in Japan*

God has been at work in His church raising awareness of the more than 634,000 Vietnamese people now living and working in Japan—and in mobilizing Japanese Christians to bring the gospel to them.

While the church in both Japan and Vietnam is small, God's heart is to see all people have the opportunity to know of His great love and respond to it.

God has been at work raising awareness of the more than 634,000 Vietnamese people now living and working in Japan. While Japan's population ages and the birth rate falls, Vietnamese people are looking to find work overseas, to earn more than they can at home.

The needs of these two countries have intersected in a significant way over the last twenty years. Vietnamese people have become the second-largest immigrant group in Japan. For a country that for so long has been monocultural, this has been a huge shift.

From working in Vietnam to praying and evangelizing

A young Japanese man who studied Vietnamese as an undergraduate was sent by his company to work in Ho Chi Minh City. Almost fifty years later, he is now a pastor in Japan. He joined a group visiting Vietnam to learn more about the country and its spiritual needs—and prayed along the way.

After this visit to Vietnam, the group began to meet to pray for Vietnam and Vietnamese people living in Japan. This Japanese pastor has since translated a number of evangelistic tracts, seeking to put resources in the hands of Japanese Christians to reach out to the Vietnamese people around them.

Coming to faith while studying in Japan

Vietnamese people are also now one of the top groups of foreign students in Japan.

One student came to faith through a classmate while studying for her master's degree. A shared video of the Bible's story led to her purchasing a Bible for herself. Over time, she came to trust in the Lord and was baptized in the Japanese church she was attending!

Now, having spent time studying the Bible in seminary and serving with a Japanese church, she is looking to reach out to some of the many Vietnamese people living in Japan.

How you can pray

Pray that many Vietnamese people in Japan would have the opportunity to respond to the good news of Jesus, and find community in welcoming Japanese churches.

Pray that through Christian Vietnamese workers, more Japanese people would come to know Jesus as Lord and Savior, and reach out to their neighbors and friends.

Edited from an article by Anne-Marie Prescott
OMF UK Beyond Borders worker, with co-authors





Finding Identity, Purpose and Belonging: STUDENT MINISTRY IN VIETNAM

Students in Vietnam are navigating questions of identity, purpose and belonging, while facing pressures familiar to young people around the world. Ailsa Yule chatted with a worker involved in student ministry in northern Vietnam about sharing life and faith with students.

How did you get involved in student ministry?

I always felt drawn to serving young people. Through a friend, I began joining student gatherings in Hanoi, and later a teammate connected me with the general secretary of the Vietnam Fellowship of Evangelical Students (VFES). When VFES formed a team in northern Vietnam, I was invited to join and help grow the ministry there.

Can you give us a sense of what students in Vietnam are searching for or interested in?

Like young people from other countries, many Vietnamese students are searching for identity, belonging, purpose, and emotional support amidst academic and social pressure. Many feel isolated, anxious about the future, and disconnected from family or close friendships, while also being strongly influenced by digital culture and individual self-expression.

What does student ministry look like in Vietnam?

Just as Jesus modeled, we mainly disciple individual students and small groups, training them through real life and trusting them to lead. We also aim to engage with non-Christian students through sports and English ministries.

What unique opportunities or challenges does student ministry in Vietnam involve?

We have the opportunity to provide faith communities for students that offer purpose, emotional support and genuine relationships. Busy schedules, strong digital influences and the difficulty of living out their faith in a secular environment are the main challenges for students.

What would you say to someone considering student ministry in Vietnam?

Are you available and flexible (enough) to spend time with young people and genuinely journey with them? Do you want to see a society transformed by the gospel? Then student ministry in Vietnam could be a great fit for you!

How can we pray?

Please pray that God would strengthen and expand the movement of students following Jesus in Vietnam.

Interview by Ailsa Yule
OMF UK Communications Coordinator

"TOURISTS" with Prayerful Purpose

Robin and Helen Hicks have been leading an online prayer group for Vietnam for five years. Their mission journey shows the various ways God works in and through both 'goers' and 'senders.'



How did you come to faith in Christ?

I (Robin) came to faith while studying at Melbourne University. Helen was also studying at Melbourne University at about the same time. We didn't meet until we both became part of a Navigators community ministry for university alumni.

How did the Lord lead you to lead the online prayer group for Vietnam?

After finishing as a secondary school science and mathematics teacher, Helen completed a TESOL online course to improve her skills in English teaching at our local church. She was invited to participate in a cultural exchange program to provide professional development to local school teachers in East Asia. She went on several annual trips until 2020.

An opportunity arose for us to go on a short-term trip together in 2013 to serve alongside a couple in East Asia. After that, we helped to coordinate OMF VIC's short term mission program for about three years. In 2021, we were invited by the couple we had served with in East Asia to coordinate an online prayer group—and Vietnam was one country that didn't already have a prayer group. (We hadn't yet been to Vietnam, but that changed in 2024!)

How have you seen God work in the lives of those who are praying for Vietnam?

On a visit to friends and relatives, one lady was able to meet with a couple who were serving there and was able to connect them with people living in the area whom they were wanting to reach. Another prayer group member has been praying for her people in her home country and has helped our group understand more about Vietnam's culture.

What led to your visiting Vietnam? What encouraged and challenged you?

As we led the prayer group, it seemed difficult for us to understand the country without experiencing it ourselves.

We joined a tourist group tour to Vietnam in 2024 and arranged to meet a couple we had been praying for. It was such a blessing to meet with them, even if briefly, to get some understanding of the challenges they faced living in a large, crowded city.

The tour also gave us a better appreciation of village life. The rural areas of northern Vietnam are where Christians are fewer in number, and more difficult to reach. Christians often face resistance,



and there are few opportunities for fellowship.

We decided to return to this area on another tour in 2025 and travelled to the northernmost parts of Vietnam.

Answered prayers help us keep going. The people who are serving need our prayers. It is a partnership. God's work isn't only among the people who are sent, but the people who are upholding them at home in prayer.



PRAY

How might we pray for Vietnam?

- Pray for Vietnam's churches as they proclaim the gospel cross-culturally and intergenerationally. Pray for all cross-cultural workers engaged in learning a new language and culture.
- Pray for workers with young families as they adapt to living in large, busy cities. Pray for good health, wisdom and provision for their children's schooling.
- Pray for isolated Christians living in rural areas as they face challenges, and for the itinerant pastors who travel to rural areas to support and encourage them.
- Pray for the small communities of Christians in more remote areas of Vietnam, and for those who support these small churches.

PRAYER GROUP

Join our Online Prayer Group for Vietnam. Last Thursday of each month. 7:30-8:30pm (AEDT/AEST).

Contact **au.prayer@omfmail.com**

PRAYING THROUGH *the Lord's Prayer* FOR VIETNAM

A church planter invites us to pray for Vietnam's 54 ethnic groups and 100 million people, based on the Lord's Prayer.

"Be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people," writes Paul in Ephesians 6:18.

What a wonder that we can all approach the throne of grace on behalf of our brothers and sisters amongst the peoples of Vietnam, and on behalf of the millions who haven't yet tasted His amazing grace.

I invite you to join in this prayer for Vietnam's 54 ethnic groups and 100 million people, based on the Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in Heaven...

As Your loved children we dare to call out to You for the peoples of Vietnam. Our hope for the peoples of Vietnam on earth is that You are the Lord in heaven—sovereign on Your throne, free to act according to Your will, perfect in love and power to bless.



Hallowed be Your name…

May Your beautiful name be revered and treasured above all the gods and the ancestors of Vietnamese beliefs, all the spirits that hold people captive, and above every authority—seen and unseen—which lays claim to people's lives. We bless you for the many in Vietnam who confess the name of Jesus as Lord. We seek you for the many more who haven't yet received Him. We seek You further still for those who are yet to hear that precious name for the first time.

Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven…

May the liberating power of Your kingdom be unleashed in Vietnam. Where there is shame and unforgiveness, bring the release of salvation in Jesus. Where there is injustice, corruption, and oppression, bring righteousness and new church communities where all are one in Christ.

May Your will be displayed in the faithful lives of every Christian. May Your generous inclusion be seen as many from Vietnam's different peoples, tribes and languages live as citizens of Your kingdom. Let Your kingdom come as Your church proclaims the gospel, makes disciples, and plants churches in places yet to experience the light of Your love.

Give us today our daily bread…

Father of good gifts, give to Your children amongst Vietnam's peoples all that they need. May Your church's generous heart grow and grow. Let it be said of Your church "that there were none among them who had any need." (Acts 4:34) While those without You chase money and "success," may Your people be known for their contentment and righteousness, and as those who have all they need added to them at just the right time.



And forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us…

Your people have tasted a gift too often unknown in families and communities across Vietnam—forgiveness. May it be the spiritual heartbeat of our brothers and sisters to receive Your forgiveness afresh each day and to offer it to one another as a forgiven family.

May those from other cultures who serve Vietnam's peoples seek forgiveness for when their attempts to help actually hurt. Let grace be the aroma of Your church that smells sweet to the peoples of Vietnam whom You love.

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one…

We praise You for the heroes of faith in Vietnam that inspire us to holy living. We're humbled by those who bear reproach for the sake of Jesus and haven't given in.

Heavenly Father, who finishes all that You start, complete Your work in the churches of Vietnam we ask. God of glory, protect them through the armor of faith from the schemes of the evil one. Let Your people's good deeds shine like stars. May we, Your worldwide church, stand strong in You and Your mighty power until our King returns.

Peter*
OMF church planter in Vietnam

*Names changed for privacy and security purposes



GENEROSITY AND OPENNESS

Two Weeks in Vietnam

A short-term team went to Vietnam to bring the good news of Jesus to new friends in unexpected places—and returned with many insights on the humility and generosity of the country's people.

It started with food—sharing the gospel with new friends. We had explored the local KFC a few times because it had a very unique menu compared to what we've seen in Australia. Each time we went, we were joyfully served by a young woman named Leah*, and she would give us discounts for visiting again.

On our last day, we asked if she must work there every day.

She told us no, that she didn't work every day, but it must be fate that we kept running into each other.

As we left, that comment really stood out to us. We decided that we should go back, because maybe God had an opportunity for us to share about Jesus with our new friend.

When we returned, we told Leah that we thought there was some truth to what she was saying. We brought an Aussie souvenir to give to her. We shared that we believe in a God who has a plan for our lives, and how we were on a mission trip in Vietnam to share about Jesus.

Being close to Christmas, we told her about its significance, how it leads to Easter, and how Jesus coming and dying for our sins means we can have eternal life if we trust and follow Him.

Leah was very receptive and interested in watching some of the Jesus movies we sent via Instagram! We've been connecting with her since returning home. Pray with us that God will put more people in Leah's life who can share the gospel with her, and her curiosity about Jesus will grow.

This taught us that gospel-sharing opportunities can happen anywhere—that we should always be mission-focused, looking to share Jesus wherever possible.

If we can share about Jesus at a KFC in Vietnam, we can share about Jesus in Australia—and anywhere.

Recalling precious words

We stayed at Anna's* house for a couple of days—a lovely lady who cooked some of the best foods that we had during our entire trip! What was even more special was that she would come and share in conversations with us after every meal, making us feel super welcome and cared for.

One evening, we chatted, found out more about Anna's story, and shared our faith with her. We



discovered that in the past, someone had visited her and given her a Vietnamese Bible.

Amazingly, she could remember John 20:29, which reads, "Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believed.'"

The next morning, she was beaming with joy to show us that verse in her Bible.

During our daily devotions on our last morning, Anna joined us and was determined to find every single verse that we looked at in her own Bible and read it in her own language. She carefully peeled apart the pages in her Bible (they had been damaged by floodwater). It was so encouraging to see her eagerly listen and pray. Before we left, she gifted us with bags that had symbols from her culture.

Humble and generous living

What also stood out to us about the Vietnamese people was their immense generosity with their resources and time. Everything was shared in community, and people looked after each other.

We were warmly welcomed into family homes. One of the pastors worked extra jobs, and our host had spent all weekend and night cooking, so they could provide lunch for us when we visited. Another family bought extra tableware and an extra table just to welcome us.

They gave everything they had just to make us feel welcome. While we came to Vietnam to bring the gospel, we actually returned with many insights on humility and generosity.

I felt such an overwhelming sense of peace and softness, having experienced the love and humble living of the beautiful Vietnamese people. This feeling is something I'm keeping in mind as I continue to listen to God and let Him pave the path for my future.

A Serve Asia short-term worker in Vietnam

*Names changed for privacy and security purposes

PRAY *for Vietnam*

- The backgrounds of Vietnamese people impact how they engage with and understand the Bible. There are many different influences on their worldview, including Buddhism, karma, ancestor worship, and Tao. Pray for missionaries in Vietnam who navigate this complexity as they share the gospel.
- Pray for the Vietnamese people, that their eyes will be open to see that Jesus is the only way to eternal life. Pray that more mission workers will share the gospel, because they are so eager and ready to hear it.

SERVING NEURODIVERGENT CHILDREN IN EAST ASIA

A registered psychologist focused on working with neurodivergent children spent weeks in East Asia, training a young local psychologist to deliver interventions and collaborative care for these children and their families.

More than a career

I grew up in a southeast Asian country and attended a Catholic school throughout my childhood. It was in this environment, surrounded by Christian friends, that I came to know Jesus. I was baptized at the age of 19. At 20, I moved to Australia to pursue a degree in multimedia design and subsequently worked as a UX designer.

When I was in my mid-twenties, I felt a prompting to study psychology. After more than a decade of balancing part-time study with part-time work, I finally became a registered psychologist. My work was focused on working with neurodivergent children.

I believed God would use my skills for more than just a career, so I sought ways to serve Him through my work. An opportunity arose through Serve Asia to work with neurodivergent children in East Asia, and I felt led to apply for it.

A vision for a sustainable, accessible and joyful space for kids

Currently, there is a lack of safe indoor spaces for children in that part of East Asia. These spaces are especially important during the harsh winter months. The team I joined is working to build an indoor child development center where children of all abilities can grow, learn, and play. Their vision is to create an accessible, sustainable, and joyful space for children of different ethnic backgrounds and different abilities to thrive.

The team also manages a rehabilitation and therapeutic center for children who are neurodivergent or have physical disabilities. My work primarily involved supporting neurodivergent children and training a young local psychologist to deliver interventions and collaborative care for these children and their families. I also engaged with parents, helping them understand autism and providing strategies to support their children.

> I BELIEVED GOD WOULD USE MY SKILLS FOR MORE THAN JUST A CAREER, *so I sought ways to serve Him through my work.*

One of the most memorable moments for me was seeing hope and understanding grow in parents and the local psychologist, as they witnessed the progress autistic children made through guided support and skill development.

The flying banner of the Lord

I have learned that prayer is essential. We all know this is true, but this trip deepened that truth in my heart.

In December 2022, while praying, I received a vivid image in my mind: an angel seated on an eagle, flying in the sky, lifting a banner, while people on the land rejoiced, shouting, "Hallelujah." The scriptures that came to me were Exodus 17:10-12 and 17:15-16.

Since then, I have been praying for the banner of the Lord to be lifted across all the earth.

On the day that I was leaving to return to

Australia, during a prayer walk, I looked up and saw a figure in the clouds—a large angel seated on an eagle, right before me. I wasn't looking for it; it simply appeared. For me, this was a powerful encouragement that God had guided this prayer and was indeed working victoriously.

This experience reminded me that we are called to partner with God in prayer. I now take the privilege of coming into God's presence in prayer much more earnestly than I did before, with a deeper understanding of its power, essence, and the importance of prayer for the nations and to pray for us to fulfill the Great Commission.

The many ways to express God's love

Another lesson I learned is that while Western psychological approaches are not always directly applicable in different cultural settings, the love of God transcends cultural barriers. It was wonderful to see the children make developmental progress in such a short time and bring hope to the families.

Psychology is one of many ways to express God's love to others—and the same is true for other vocations, occupations and skills.

A Serve Asia Worker in East Asia

PRAY

Pray for East Asia

- Pray for strength and wisdom for workers as they reach out to the local community and disciple East Asian Christians to live in alignment with God's Word.
- Pray for spiritual and emotional refreshment for workers in East Asia. Pray for protection over them and their families—physically, emotionally, and spiritually.
- Pray for the Lord's provision for ministry needs, and for favor with local authorities so that work and projects can continue smoothly and be successfully completed.
- Pray that workers' labor in East Asia would bear abundant fruit, and a full harvest would be brought into the Kingdom of God.



GOD'S DELIGHT IN *His Mission in Thailand*

As a short-term worker prayed through the streets of Thailand during a recent mission trip, she discovered how much God delights in His mission, His workers and His people.

Reading the Bible together every morning—we focused on the book of Acts—was like the engine room of our trip. It was when we learned so much and found encouragement. The time together in His Word informed our days and all the things we learned and stories we heard.

In the first few days, I noticed just how much God delights in His mission. He provides so much for His workers, both foreign and local. One missionary had been cured of a chronic illness before moving to Thailand. We also heard about a radio station that almost shut down because of lack of workers—then God provided a dedicated and passionate local worker!

READING THE BIBLE TOGETHER EVERY MORNING WAS LIKE *the engine room of our trip*

The book of Acts tells a story that is no different. God has delighted in His work of bringing salvation to the nations for so long. And best of all, He has poured out His Spirit on us so that this marvelous work might be known.

As we visited churches that looked a little bit different to home, or met people who didn't speak the same language as us, I felt encouraged and refreshed by being in fellowship with brothers and sisters in Christ. How amazing that we are all connected by the same Holy Spirit!

From disheartened to renewed

Going on a prayer walk was another highlight of the trip. We walked around praying over so many things, including a local temple. We saw many idols, offerings and spirit houses. We also learned about the damage that the drug trade and prostitution do to lives. We all felt disheartened.

Near the end of the walk, we saw a small, plain building displaying a cross and went to investigate. It was a Christian seminary running short ministry training courses! We met briefly with some teachers there and prayed together.

As we drove away, with hope renewed, I reflected that though the temples might be grand and ornate and churches seemingly small and unimpressive, God has made the body of Christ, us, the dwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Praying deeply through big questions

As our team read the Bible together, we asked big questions and prayed deeply about them. One question was, "How do missionaries justify asking people to go through suffering and pain in order to follow Jesus?"

We had a helpful discussion about this with two



JESUS IS THE GREATEST TREASURE, AND THE GOSPEL *brings real and lasting*



missionaries who joined our Bible study one morning. We looked at Acts 17 and were reminded of Paul writing to the Thessalonians, "We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thessalonians 1:3) The Thessalonians faced pressure and violence for their faith—yet the product of that is joy.

One of the missionaries kept repeating, "It's worth it." Jesus is the greatest treasure, and the gospel brings real and lasting joy. It was a blessing to witness, and be guided by God's love and Word all the way.

An OMF Serve Asia Worker to Thailand

PRAY

- Praise God for the recent growth in the Shan church as bigger groups are coming to faith
- Pray for wisdom and strength for Shan Christians to continue to live for Jesus and share the gospel, even as they face persecution
- Pray for wisdom, open doors and new opportunities for missionaries as they continue to plant churches





A JOURNEY WITH GOD

on Two Continents

Growing up in Japan and Germany, sixteen-year-old Josia Messer shares how he came to faith in Christ, why he loves his church and what he's looking forward to seeing God do next.

A New Life in Christ

When I was five, my sister was baptized. I was curious about what it meant, so I started asking lots of questions about being a Christian.

I learned that sin separates us from God, but Jesus died for us on the cross. I began to understand who God really is and how much He loves me. I realized that God is like a loving Father. He doesn't need me, but He still chooses to love me.

I grew up in a missionary family, which was a huge privilege. I saw how much my parents trusted God. I think their example is one of the main reasons I became a Christian too.

The verse I saw every day

A Bible verse was hanging in our kitchen, so I saw it all the time. My parents chose it when they got married:

"But seek first the kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." (Matthew 6:33)

I didn't really understand the verse until I was about 13. Then I realized that my parents had chosen it long before they became missionaries. It was like God's promise for their lives. Seeing it still encourages me today.

Where I can be honest and be myself

I was nine when we moved from Japan to Germany. At first, I was pretty heartbroken because I had left the place I called home. I had never lived in Germany before, so I didn't know what to expect.

Looking back, moving was a really good decision. I believe it was where God was leading us.

In Germany, we found a church with a big youth group. I made friends who became like brothers and sisters in Christ. I had never really experienced friendships with other Christian kids my age, so it was a huge blessing.

My friends encourage me in my faith, and I can

see God working through them. Church is also a place where I can be honest and be myself. It has helped me continue following God, even when life gets difficult and I feel like giving up.

The band and I

When I started playing the drums at the age of eight, I loved it immediately. However, once I realized how much practice it required, I began to feel discouraged and wanted to quit. During that time, my mum encouraged me to persevere, reminding me that I could use my talents to serve God.

When we still lived in Japan, my dad, brother, and sister were often involved in worship with other members of the church. After moving to Germany, I saw other people serving in the worship band, which motivated me to practice the drums more seriously.

I started serving in the children's worship team when I was about 11. Later, I joined the youth worship band and began playing during the regular church services as well. Now I also co-lead the youth music team.

"The biggest miracle I've ever seen"

About six months ago, I saw what I believe was the biggest miracle I had ever experienced.

Just before her A-level exams, my sister developed terrible pain in her hands. The doctors couldn't find the cause. We prayed a lot, but the pain kept getting worse. It was difficult to watch her suffer, and we were worried that she wouldn't be able to start university.

Then we went on holiday to Japan, where my sister visited a Japanese chiropractor. He found the root cause of her pain and gave her the right treatment. After that, the pain finally disappeared. For us, this was a real answer to prayer. She is now studying music and maths to become a teacher.

Thinking about my future

Alongside her current role in the organization, my mum is studying for an MBA in Leadership and Change Management. I find these subjects really interesting, especially because I enjoy working with numbers and thinking about how things could be done better.

I've found a university where I could study Japanese and International Business Management at the same time. This would help me prepare to share the Good News with Japanese people in the business world, which sounds like a great fit for me.

I don't know exactly what God has planned for my future yet, but I trust that He will guide me. If He calls me to become a missionary, I would be open to that too.

Josia Messer
OMF Australia Communications Intern



安息主怀

To Glory



Ray Cunningham

1923-2026

Legacy for Generations to Come: A Tribute

After almost 103 years, Ray Cunningham leaves behind a legacy that has touched countless lives and will continue to bear fruit for generations to come—in the churches, in the scriptures translated into local languages, in the lives transformed by the gospel and in the generations who continue to follow Christ because one faithful missionary answered God's call.

Ray came to Sarawak as a missionary in 1948 and faithfully served until 1990, dedicating 42 years of his life to minister with deep love and unwavering commitment among the Kayan, the Kenyah, the Kelabit, the Lun Bawang, the Penan, the Iban and Chinese communities.

His missionary journeys took him into some of the most remote places in Sarawak, helping to establish Christian witness and ministry in communities such as Lio Mato, Long Geng, Long Seridan, Long Lellang, Long Banga, Pa Tik, Long Peluan and many others.

His work in translating the New Testament into the Kenya-Lepo Tau language and producing literacy materials has enabled thousands to read the scriptures in their own language and has brought both spiritual and educational transformation to many rural communities.

Today, many churches stand as living testimonies to his faithful ministry.

Edited from an address by Rev Bina Agong, President of the Borneo Evangelical Mission Sarawak.

"Is Jesus your Lord, Master and Savior?"

My father Ray Cunningham had only just turned 18 in December 1941 when Pearl Harbor was bombed, and Australia went to war with Japan. By June the next year, he had been sent overseas into the Owen Stanley Mountains to serve on the Kokoda Track. Like most Australian soldiers, dad spoke very highly of the help they received from the people of Papua New Guinea, but there was one man in particular who had a huge impact on dad's life—Keke Mareva.

Dad described this encounter in this way:

We were surprised to meet a young man who spoke English well. We asked him, "Where did you learn English?"

He replied, "At the mission school."

"Which mission?" we asked.

He said, "The LMS (London Missionary Society), but we say LMS means Lord, Master and Savior. Is Jesus your Lord, Master and Savior?"

He explained how we could ask Jesus to come into our heart and be our Savior—not only from the Japanese, but from all the consequences of our sin. This encounter affected us for the rest of our lives.

When we said goodbye near Port Moresby, Keke asked me to "ask the Lord to make me walk without sticks." (Keke used to crawl to school because he had been born a cripple in both feet.) I promised I would—but every time I prayed, I thought I had made a mistake.

Three years later, Keke wrote to me, "We can praise God together because strength has come to my legs and I'm walking." After that, I developed a stronger desire to study the Bible and serve God.

Preparing to meet God—and flying instead

In 1944 dad's unit returned to Wagga Wagga in Australia, where he learned to build bridges. It was here he first met Evelyn while she was at home on holidays from her first year at Sydney University.

There still was to be another year of war, and his unit was posted to prepare camps to invade Borneo on June 10, 1945. He was to be the first off the landing craft to clear the beach. That night, he wrote letters to his parents and was prepared to meet God. (He survived that day.)

Two months later in August, dad was chosen to leave the next morning to return to Australia in a Catalina flying boat. The aircraft flew a few hundred feet above the trees over the incredibly beautiful and rugged jungles of Borneo, where he could clearly spot the villages and rivers—and little did he imagine that he would go on to spend over 40 years living there.



Upon returning to Sydney, he studied for two years at Sydney Missionary and Bible College, then applied to serve with Borneo Evangelical Mission (BEM). He'd been in Borneo a number of years when on September 28, 1953 he married my mother Evelyn.

Life and service in Borneo

Together, my parents made adjustments to living in remote parts of Borneo. There was no running water or electricity, no roads or phones—only a two-way radio. Most transport was by river, and eventually, a light aircraft gifted by the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Over the years, they visited many villages, teaching the Bible and translating it into local languages. At the time nothing was printed in local languages. My mother's training in literacy enabled her to analyze the structure of the language and work out an accurate orthography.

The next step was to make reading primers to teach people to read in their own language—and this resulted in a lot of excitement. She started teaching the children but it wasn't long before the adults wanted to learn as well! With literacy came the ability to produce literature and materials to help people understand scripture and apply the teaching to daily living.

Serving side by side with the Iban

The "life story" my dad wrote in 2017 reveals their strong partnership with local Christians:

God raised up a talented Iban lady to work with us, who produced tracts on current topics, beginner's courses and manuals on sharing the gospel, and on living in community. These were printed by a local printer. One Iban man told us, "Thanks be to God for those wonderful lessons. They are invaluable in understanding the Bible and sharing the gospel with others."

Unique beauty in every nation to be brought into God's kingdom

By the time they retired, dad had worked in Borneo for 42 years and mum for 38—but it was not to be the end of seeing the fruits of their labor. In 2015, dad had a special joy:

There is unique richness and beauty in every tribe, culture and nation to be brought into the kingdom of God. I witnessed a demonstration of this at the Gempuru Besai (Big Gathering) held in Sibu in 2015—over 4,000 Iban from various parts of Sarawak and from various Christian denominations gathered to celebrate their eighteenth Gempuru Besai.

Kathy Macfarlane,
daughter of Ray and Evelyn Cunningham

抵達 *Departure*

Returning to Southeast Asia with the Gospel

*Vin and Emily, with Elijah and Luke**



What began as a growing burden for people with little access to the gospel became a clear sense of God's call for Vin and Emily to leave their medical professions, and move to southeast Asia—where God is already at work.

For many years, God has been faithfully shaping and directing our family toward cross-cultural mission. What began as a growing burden for people with little access to the gospel became a clear sense of His call for us to leave our medical professions in 2018 and move to southeast Asia. This calling was further confirmed through prayer, Scripture, and God's consistent leading through His people and OMF.

While we experienced the expected challenges of serving in a security-sensitive context, God steadily grew in us a love for the people, language, and culture, along with an increasing desire to see lives changed by Jesus.

We still remember simple but significant moments—sharing meals in homes, opening the Bible with friends curious about Jesus, and witnessing how God uses ordinary conversations to draw people toward Himself.

One passage that often informed our ministry was Jesus' parable of the lost sheep (Matthew 18:12–14). In it, the shepherd leaves the ninety-nine to search for the one that is lost. It reminded us that no life is overlooked by God and strengthened our conviction that Jesus' heart is directed toward those who have yet to hear His voice.

When we were unexpectedly brought back to Australia in 2020, we were reminded that God's mission is never hindered by circumstance. In that season, He continued to open doors for ministry and taught us fresh dependence on Him in new and humbling ways. After a period of serving locally, we are now thankful for the opportunity to return to Asia.

Looking back, we can see God's faithfulness woven through every stage of the journey—through prayer, the support of churches and friends, and His constant care and guidance.

As we prepare to serve in southeast Asia again, we look forward to reconnecting with old friends, building new relationships, and continuing to share the love of Christ in everyday life.

One thing we have learned is that God is already at work in places where the gospel is not widely known—He goes before us and prepares the way! We can therefore follow Him with confidence, trusting Him to transform lives through His Word and Spirit. We also trust that He will use His people to live out the good news of Jesus in its fullness, and that local Christians will be discipled and equipped to grow His church and carry the gospel to their communities and beyond.

*Names changed for privacy and security purposes



PRAY

Pray for Vin and Emily's family, and southeast Asia

- Pray for the family as they transition into a new season—for unity, wisdom, and joy as they settle back into the culture and rhythms of life in southeast Asia.
- Pray for meaningful relationships and open hearts to the gospel. Pray for protection, provision, and perseverance in the Lord.
- Pray that Jesus would be glorified and that many would come to know the hope and grace found only in Him.

Return to Japan: God's Perfect Timing Amidst Uncertainty

Wendy Cumberworth



Wendy spent years serving as a missionary in Japan. She then returned to Australia to gain work experience in management and leadership, study the Bible and serve at a church. Her heart for Japan remained and now she's going back...

I spent six years as a lay missionary in Japan with an independent international church and the school connected to it. I then spent a number of years in Sydney serving at a large church, doing Bible and Christian college study, and gaining work experience in management and leadership positions. I also connected with Japanese communities in churches in Sydney.

Throughout all this time, I had a heart for Japan—and to minister there once again.

When I was made redundant a second time, I asked God if it was "time yet" to go back to Japan. That led to a connection with OMF, whose values and workers' testimonies (in Taiwan particularly) resonated with me the most amongst the mission agencies I explored. At the same time, I needed to leave my apartment of six years, and God provided a much cheaper furnished place in the same area.

It seemed like I was ready to go in all ways except finances.

Building trust in God

God took me through a season of more than a year of trusting Him for finances and places to live each time I didn't meet financial clearance for the next Orientation Course deadline (sometimes at the last minute, but God always faithfully provided for me).

This experience helped me to learn to trust God more, and how to be humble and vulnerable to accept help and provision from others. I also had time to build stronger relationships at my sending church, The Well Church and at Sydney Japanese Evangelical Church, which I was also part of.

It is God who works in and moves people's hearts towards Him and His will. Our job is just to tell the story. In my case, it was telling the story of partnering with OMF to share the gospel in Japan with the 99% who do not know Him.

Still, I started wondering if it really was God's will for me to go. I kept taking steps forward as I could, building relationships, writing prayer letters, attending Bible studies, studying Japanese... Until God provided in His timing, or else showed me otherwise.

God's perfect timing

When I first applied to serve with OMF in Japan, my parents were healthy and very supportive of my going. Then my father got







diagnosed with dementia, which progressed quickly. This led to him moving to a nursing home.

During this time, my previously estranged adopted brother reconnected with our family. He has started attending a local church, and God is rebuilding and restoring his life and relationship with us.

Just recently, my father passed away. Although I grieve my dad's passing, I am glad to know he is with Jesus and not suffering any more. My mum remains very supportive of my serving in Japan, and is well supported by her church and people around her.

I can see now that it was God's kindness that I was able to be in Australia during this season in my family—spending quality time with my dad, supporting my mum and reconnecting with my brother. God keeps showing me His timing is perfect.

Certain things in the midst of uncertainty

Although I am not sure where exactly I will be located for ministry, I am excited to be close enough to continue the relationships I started building the last time I lived in Japan.

While some of these dear friends have not yet accepted Jesus, others have started studying at Bible college, planting their own churches, or working in ministry in various locations in Japan!

I look forward to building new relationships with Japanese people to show them God's love, and tell them how much God loves them and longs for a relationship with them to give them eternal hope.

I'm also excited to build relationships and serve with other missionaries, churches and Christian organizations—and see Japanese Christians encouraged, growing in their faith and using their gifts for God's glory.

PRAY

- Pray for Japanese people who hear the gospel—that their minds may be open to Jesus, and that they may turn to Him wholeheartedly as Lord and Savior.
- Pray for Wendy's ministry to be a good fit with the experiences and skills the Lord has given her, and that her placement may be the best one to give Him glory.

抵達 *Departure*

Helping Missionaries Thrive in Southeast Asia



*Nathan and Jemimah**

After decades of adventures, Nathan and Jemimah asked the Lord, "What's next?" They found themselves back in mission—this time in southeast Asia.*

It was a new season in our lives, so we went for a long drive—16,000 kilometers across Australia to mark the end of an 18-year mission leadership role for Nathan* and to enjoy God's creation together. It was a beautiful time to reflect and remember.

Looking back, we remembered how the gospel changed the trajectory of our lives in our teen years. We're so grateful for God's amazing grace in welcoming us into His family. Soon after Nathan and I (Jemimah) met in our early twenties, we began the adventure of cross-cultural marriage. We'd seen the Lord's faithfulness as we worked in the public space, in mission across Australia and overseas, and in raising our family.

By 2023, Nathan had concluded his leadership role, I had finished lecturing and we'd entered a season of helping care for our aging parents and seeing our sons married. We then asked the Lord to show us how He wanted to use us. Mission kept coming up.

In Singapore, while on holiday, we happened to walk past the OMF center and began wondering—what if we were called to move to Asia? After a call, a coffee, and an interview, Nathan was all in. I wasn't quite ready, but after praying, I was led to take a step and trust God. The steps continued, one at a time. We spent time with missionaries, having conversations, praying and seeking God's will.

In 2025, we started missionary training in Australia, and our journey with OMF officially began.

By early 2026, life looked like this: packing up our home of 28 years, farewelling loved ones—and moving to Asia! We were excited and daunted as we left all that was familiar for the work that God had given us.

Our roles with OMF include providing strategic leadership support and pastoral care to workers serving in southeast Asia, and English language support where needed. We aim to help each person to thrive in their ministry, community and home life, for His glory. We look forward to building relationships, supporting and visiting workers who are reaching out to bless people in their communities with the good news of Jesus.

He is so good! Our hearts are full.

*Names changed for security purposes

PRAY

Pray for Nathan, Jemimah and workers in southeast Asia

- Pray for the love of Christ to guide our thoughts, words and actions.
- Pray for warmth, wisdom and discernment as we walk alongside workers; that we would listen, encourage and pray in such a way that lives and ministries flourish.
- Pray that Christian workers in southeast Asia would be sustained and strengthened through God's Word and the Holy Spirit.

3 WAYS YOU CAN PRAY FOR *Vietnam*

01

Breaking of barriers and divisions between people

Pray for the Holy Spirit to break down the mission barriers between various people groups, particularly between the majority Kinh and other minorities such as Hmong, Nung and Tay. Among the Nung and Tay, only 0.01% are Christians. Pray that God's people will eagerly reach out to those who are not of their own ethnic group. Pray for pioneering ministries in urban and rural church planting among the 87 million Kinh, as well as church development and discipleship ministries among the Hmong.

02

Plethora of opportunities to pioneer

Give thanks for the relatively open doors to the gospel, and for a new generation of workers committed to church planting among Vietnam's minority groups. Give thanks for initiatives such as a mission-focused church plant formed in partnership with a local church, an English and music center, and community building activities such as brunches where biblical doctrine and ecclesiology are discussed. Pray for God's protection and provision for a small Christian international school and an independent Christian publisher.

03

Discipleship in the Vietnamese church

Southern Vietnam has traditionally had more Christians, including amongst the Kinh. Census data tells us, however, that the church is currently shrinking in numbers. Pray for strong discipleship structures in Vietnam's churches, that church members may share the gospel and raise healthy leaders, who will then lead and plant healthy churches. Pray for theological educators to come and serve in Vietnam's Bible colleges. Pray for families to be equipped to disciple their children, and for workers like Peter* who are focused on this.



QUIZ

How Much Do You Really Know about Vietnam?

1. How do you say "Hello" in Vietnamese?
A. Cảm ơn
B. Xin chào
C. Tạm biệt
D. Chúc mừng

2. What is the population of Vietnam?
A. About 50 million
B. About 75 million
C. About 100 million
D. About 150 million

3. Approximately how many motorbikes are registered in Vietnam?
A. 10 million
B. 30 million
C. 50 million
D. More than 70 million

4. Vietnam is home to the world's largest _____
A. Coffee exporter
B. Cave
C. Rice field
D. Temple
(Hint: It's a natural wonder!)

5. Vietnam celebrates New Year twice.
☐ True
☐ False

6. The Vietnamese language is written using the Latin alphabet (the letters we use in English).
☐ True
☐ False

7. Turtles are a common household pet in Vietnam.
☐ True
☐ False

8. When was the first complete Vietnamese Bible published?
A. 1916
B. 1925
C. 1934
D. 1958

9. Which city is the capital of Vietnam?
A. Ho Chi Minh City
B. Da Nang
C. Hanoi
D. Hue

10. What is Vietnam's most famous noodle soup?
A. Bánh mì
B. Phở
C. Cơm tấm
D. Bún chả





Answer: 1:B, 2:C, 3:D, 4:B, 5:True, 6:True, 7:False, 8:C, 9:C, 10:B