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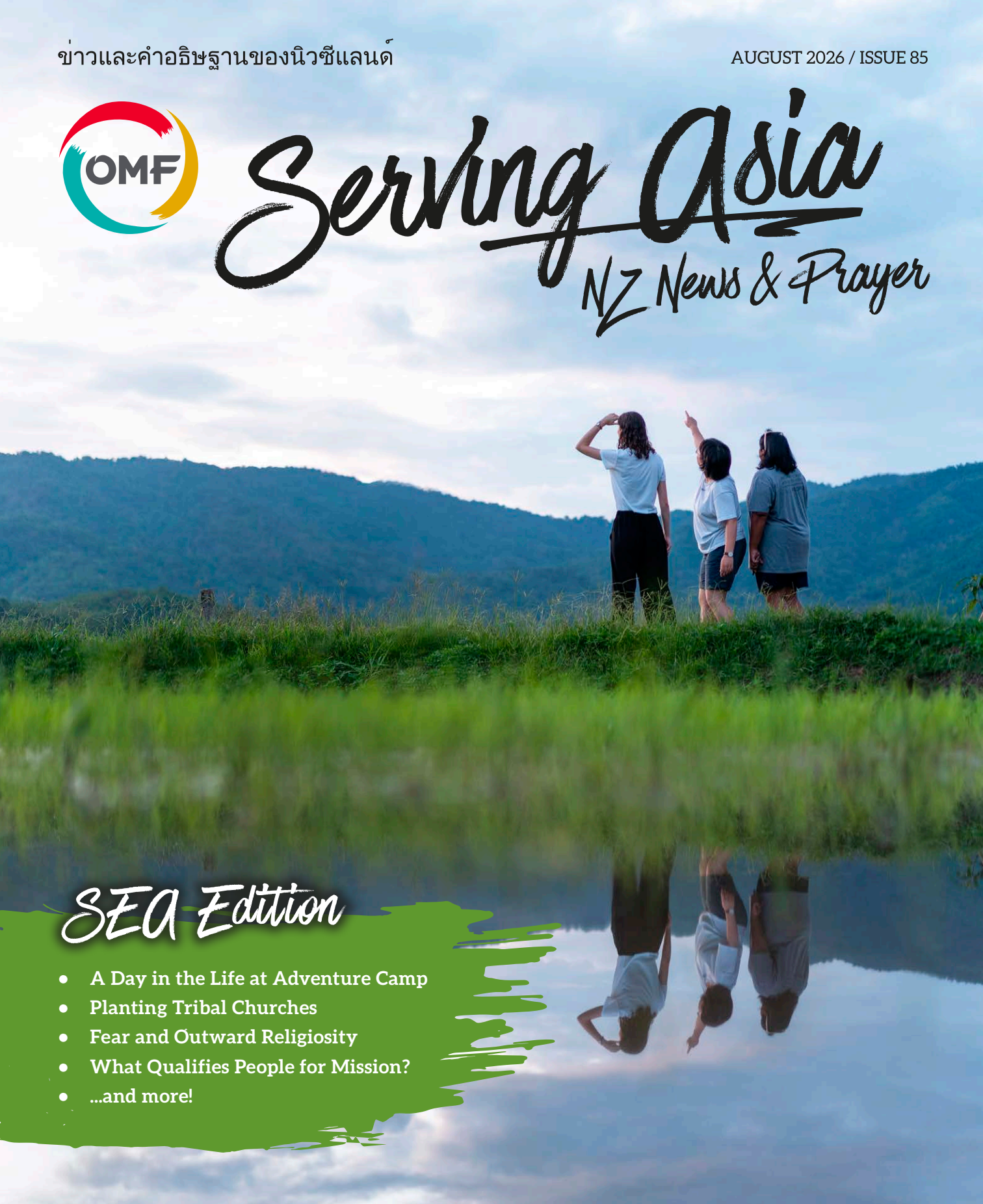
AUGUST 2026 / ISSUE 85

Serving Asia

NZ News & Prayer



SEA Edition

- A Day in the Life at Adventure Camp
- Planting Tribal Churches
- Fear and Outward Religiosity
- What Qualifies People for Mission?
- ...and more!

Heart for Asia. Hope for Billions.

"We share the good news of Jesus Christ in all its fullness with East Asia's peoples to the glory of God."

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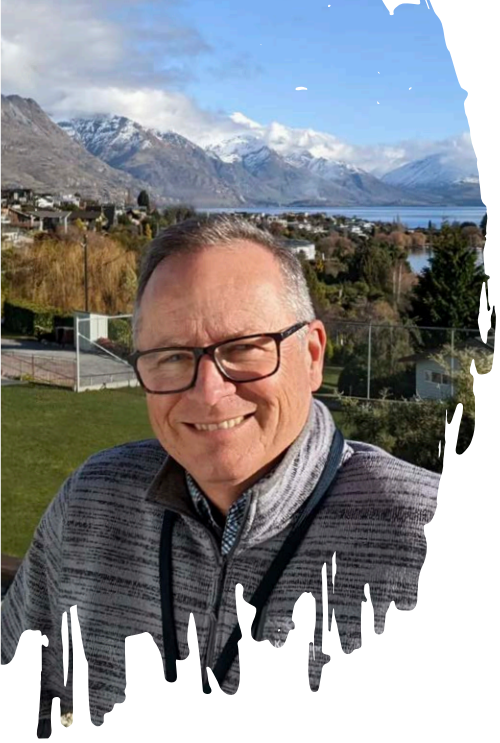


A Yarn with Johan

OMF NZ National Director

Dear Friends,

In this edition of our Serving Asia Magazine, we will be focussing on the people of Southeast Asia, where many people still need to hear about the love and grace of our Lord Jesus. It is a melting pot of religions- Buddhist, Muslim, Animist, Hindu and many others. Many people from the West love to go there to experience the novelty of different cultures, food and religion without seeing the deep spiritual needs of people to experience God's love for them personally.

The spiritual undercurrents of occult practices are everywhere in Southeast Asia, regardless of the surface religion. Many people have been involved with or been the target of practices such as idol worship, fortune telling, seances, voodoo dolls, curses and amulet trading.

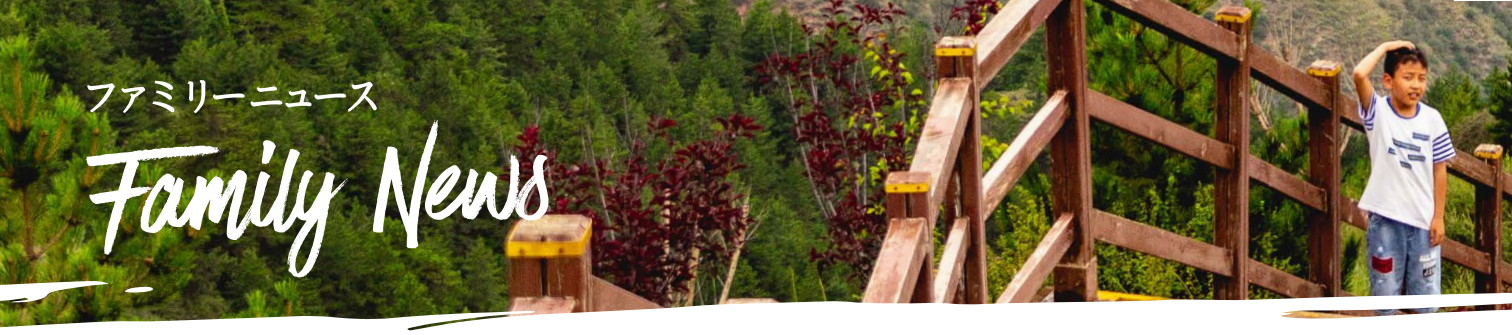
When we were working in Thailand, I was surprised one day to find out that a Thai teacher that we had known for years was making extra money on the side telling people's fortunes and recommending auspicious days for marriages and births. In some Southeast Asian countries, there is a thriving trade in amulets, which people wear on their bodies to make them more fertile, or to be protected from spirits or physical harm. Cars will often have an amulet hanging from the rear vision mirror to protect it from a crash. There are popular magazines which only posts pictures of amulets that are available for thousands of dollars. One of the ladies in our church kept amulets in a box in her room which she was reluctant to get rid of because of their high value and the spiritual attacks that might happen if she got rid of them.

A friend of mine went door-to-door to share the good news of Jesus with people and came across a young man who lived by himself in a house. The young man was interested in knowing more about Jesus, but he could not commit to follow him because he had already made another commitment. He said that some years earlier he was very lonely and the spirit of the tree outside his house came to him in the form of a beautiful woman. The spirit offered to look after him if he committed himself to the spirit and allowed the spirit to rule his house. He told my friend that he could not commit to follow anyone else. He was in bondage to the spirit of his house. These things are common in Southeast Asia.

My hope is that the stories in this magazine will encourage you to pray fervently for the people of Southeast Asia and the Christians who are working among them sharing the Good News of Jesus, the only way to true peace and freedom.

God bless you,

Johan Linder
National Director



ファミリーニュース

Family News

News

Congratulations to the **Crowsen family** and **Takahe** who were commissioned and are now on the field! You can read about their prayer needs in the Praying Together pull-out pages.

We look forward to welcoming the **Nicholas family** back to New Zealand in August for Home Assignment.

We thank the Lord that the **Freeman family** had a fruitful Home Assignment. They have now returned to Thailand.

Stephanie Yao from Grace City in Auckland will be heading to Taiwan for a year through the Serve Asia program. Please pray for her as she serves on the field there.

Scott and Gabrielle have returned to the Thailand field for three months. You can read more about their recent work on page 13!

Happy Birthday

AUGUST

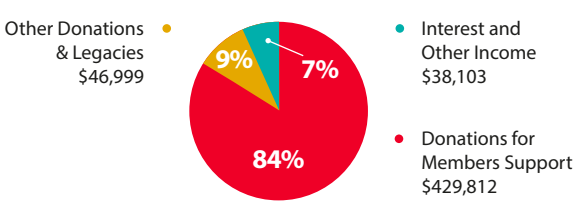
04	Pearl Nicholas
08	Tania English
11	Ruth Page
11	Lena Freeman
19	Allen McClymont
19	Alison North
26	Joel Collins
29	Helen Harrington

SEPTEMBER

10	Litsa McClymont
10	Georgia McClymont
20	Cristelle Nicholas
21	Simon Collins
23	Faye Hohaia
29	Peter Hwang

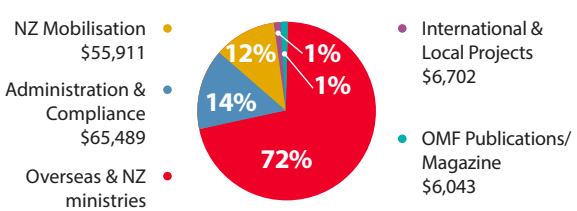
Finance and Funding (January – April 2026)

2026 Income
OMF New Zealand



Total Income $514,914

2026 Expenses
OMF New Zealand



Total Expenses $476,705

Our sincere thanks to all the people who have generously donated so that OMF workers can continue to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to East Asians, both here and overseas.

Pathways and Runways

PRAY SEND

In the Pipeline

Prayer points for these candidates are in the Praying Together pull-out, pages 9-12.
If you would like to support these candidates with prayer or finances, please email nz.admin@omfmail.com.

Daniel & Reeta
NEW ZEALAND

Waiora
SOUTHEAST ASIA

Please pray for our new appointees as they begin their journey into cross-cultural ministry. Pray that God strengthens their faith, gives them courage, and guides every step they take. Pray that the Holy Spirit prepares the hearts of the people they will serve, and that their ministry bears lasting fruit.



A Day in My Life in Adventure Camp Ministry



By Lee-anne Hill
in South Thailand

The call to prayer from a nearby mosque wakes me at 5 a.m. in my tent. I've slept well, but nerves stir as today I'll be leading the kayaking trip. Before getting up, I check the weather, hoping the wind will stay calm enough for beginners. I send a quick message to my mum, then forward today's prayer update with photos to our supporters. Even before the day begins, I'm reminded that we depend on God for strength and guidance.

After freshening up and gathering my gear (sunscreen, hat, water, gloves, and a change of clothes) I head to the kitchen. There's plenty to prepare - snacks, waterproof bags, first aid kits, and life jackets for the children joining us. I check on the cooks as they pack lunch to travel with us. In between tasks, I eat a bowl of boiled rice and pork to fuel the day. By 8 a.m., vehicles are loaded, and we set off for Thalane Wharf.

At the wharf, excitement builds as youth are assigned to kayaks. Joseph, a fellow leader, is co-leading for the first time,



and I'm training him as we go. The youth receive some basic instruction, and once life jackets are secured, we push off into open water. Limestone cliffs and mangroves rise around us, a beautiful reminder of God's creation. Fifteen minutes in, we raft up to listen to the first "story from nature," connecting what we see to who Jesus is. These moments capture the heart of Adventure Camp.

The morning flows smoothly, with a stop at Monkey Beach and laughter echoing across the water. But when we reach our lunch spot, I'm dismayed. The pine trees that once gave shade have fallen, leaving only a lone coconut tree. I feel responsible, even though it's beyond my control. We eat chicken biryani, and the youth splash in the warm water (more like a bath than refreshment!) but they are happy and still full of energy.

The return journey tests us. Through mangroves and narrow channels, I worry about missing turns. Jeff, our ministry leader, had assured me the route was simple, but I still feel anxious. When we finally exit the mangroves, I realise I did miss a turn and have led the group on the long route. Worse, the wind has risen and waves push against us. Even I struggle. Joseph and I start singing a Sunday school song:

"If you have Jesus in your boat, you can paddle home."

I pray silently for strength. Slowly, each kayak makes it back, some youth exhausted, some walking the last stretch. Yet I hear prayers and songs, even from those who don't yet know Christ.

As we head back to camp, tradition calls for a convenience store stop. A cold drink and sweet treat lift spirits. By evening, skits, songs, and games bring laughter. The youth shine with creativity, sometimes intentionally funny, sometimes not. As leaders, we gather afterward to share highs and lows. I apologise for taking the wrong route, but I also thank God for safety and growth.

Finally, I collapse into bed, earplugs in, mask on, exhausted but grateful. Adventure Camp goes beyond kayaking and fun times. It's about creating spaces where youth discover resilience, experience Christian community, and encounter Jesus. In these moments of challenge and joy, I see God at work, shaping lives through adventure.

Would you like to serve at an adventure camp? You can apply through the QR code on page 17!

3 STREAMS OF BUDDHISM

In the 3rd century B.C. Buddhism split into two main traditions, with a third developing later.



PRAY FOR BUDDHISTS

PRAY FOR Buddhists to have opportunities to learn more about Jesus and his love for them.

PRAY FOR followers of Jesus learning the languages, cultures and worldviews of Buddhist peoples to relate to them well and have good conversations with them.

ASK GOD to help Christians in Buddhist countries to always be ready to give an answer for the hope they have in them and to do this in ways Buddhists can understand (1 Peter 3:15).



LEARN

Church Planting in Thailand

By Scott and Gabrielle

We returned to Thailand after a 15-year gap; in 2010 our family was based in Manorom, Central Thailand, where Gabrielle helped establish an English Language Centre, and Scott took over homeschooling our children.

For three months we are here in North Thailand at the James Fraser Centre (JOFC), a discipleship and theological training centre for tribal people from the surrounding nations as well as from Thailand. The majority are Lisu, with some Lahu, Akha and Karen tribespeople. The students come for four years of intensive biblical studies, as well as mentoring and discipleship.

Classes are in either Thai or English and our role is helping both tribal staff in their teaching of English, and students in their learning and application of English. Gabrielle is an ESL teacher working with refugees from Myanmar in Nelson, NZ. Scott participates in the ESL Bible classes, working alongside national staff to explain Biblical concepts and enable English acquisition. He's also involved in maintenance (within 10 minutes of arrival he was assisting replumbing the student quarters), cutting back the rapid jungle growth around the property and whatever else would be helpful.

It's been a wonderful thing to talk with students and hear about their faith journey and growth during their years at JOFC. For many it seems to follow a similar pattern; the first year is very difficult as they grapple with the self-discipline needed to study the Word and have a heart devoted to God. They struggle with the pull of the world and the desire to be making money rather than studying for 4 years. But as time progresses, they are challenged in their walk with God and develop a longing to become equipped to serve Him.

There are many tribal churches in this part of Thailand, a heritage from the work done by early CIM missionaries like James O Fraser and Isabel Kuhn in these tribal groups in China and Myanmar.

However, there is a real need for deeper teaching to help believers stand firm in their faith and grow in understanding. Please pray that doors would open for the JOFC students to teach and serve in these churches once they graduate.

This week we are travelling to a conference centre to help with a children's programme, as families involved in tribal church planting come in from surrounding countries for a week of teaching and prayer together.

We have so enjoyed our return to Asia - the heat, the food, the people; but most of all to see God at work in the lives of so many. Discipleship and thorough biblical teaching are close to our hearts, and we are blessed to see these at work at JOFC.

It has been such a gift to us to celebrate our 40th wedding anniversary this year, and to honour God by serving here.

Retirement: The Qualification of Willingness

By OMF Australia

After 22 years of service in Southeast Asia, Ana* reflects on what qualifies people for mission. She's seen hundreds of short and long-term workers and has found one requirement: God can and does use anyone who is willing.

More than 2,000 years ago, Jesus said that the harvest was plentiful, but the workers were few (Matthew 9:37, Luke 10:2). He urged His disciples to pray that God would send out workers into His harvest field.

The need remains. You may read this and pray that He will send workers. You might pray, and also go. Or you may feel that going—particularly overseas—is not for you. I wonder—what qualities or qualifications do you believe you need to serve in His harvest field?

Reflecting on my own journey and on the example of hundreds of short and longer-term workers we've hosted in our tiny corner of southeast Asia, I believe that the number one requirement is willingness. God can and does use anyone who is willing.

MULTIPLYING OUR WILLINGNESS

Having attended churches that supported missionaries, from the time I started earning an income, I started doing likewise. I began supporting medical or agricultural specialists working in places where formal academic Bible teaching wasn't feasible.

Later, when English teaching opened up as an option, God asked me if I was willing—and to prepare—to go to a place where encouraging people to meet God was risky, let alone translating His word into particular languages. I didn't know 'where' until I had almost finished my post-graduate studies and Bible college.

In time, our missional business model became much more diverse. We opened vocational training courses in hospitality and bakery, where students studied everything from a Christian perspective. Many came to faith and stayed after their training to grow in their relationship with God.

Our team now runs a café, bakery and guest house, and we are involved in office work and as well as Bible study and youth ministry. When our team organises a youth group outside of town, people of all ages attend.

HOW THE LORD BRINGS IN HIS HARVEST

Apart from willingness, what qualities should you have? Do you need to be young, physically strong, extroverted, scholarly, adventurous, courageous, confident, linguistically gifted (or all of the above)?

No. Just willing. Of course, God can use any of the abilities He has given you, but you don't have to be particularly young, strong, brave or gifted. You need only have confidence in God's faithfulness and sufficiency, not in yourself.

In our small corner, you can be adventurous, but it isn't essential. You can have all the conveniences of town living and you can venture out to places tourists never go to be an encouragement and blessing to various communities.

Every personality type is needed here. Different workers will connect with different local team members, students and others they meet. And as His worker, you can expect to be part of God's doing the impossible in big and small ways.

Yet there is no place on the harvest field for heroes or holiday makers. Willing servants who accept being part of a team will thrive; those unwilling simply will not. For the willing, in Him, you will do more than you could ever imagine, making, teaching and baptising disciples of Jesus.

You will be stretched and do things you never expected. You won't do a job with office hours. You will do whatever it takes to invest in making disciples. It's a life, not a job. You will experience His joy as the people meet Christ then grow up, strong and able to serve Him.



A lot of your work is done by example, particularly in a context where words are just information, and information has very little value. You'll find it immensely rewarding when 'the lights go on,' and words travel from the head to the heart, and move hands to serve likewise.

You'll find that the Lord is in charge of the results—and there will be results. The rewards are great. You'll rely on God more. You'll face fear and realise that God is in control. You'll learn what grace is—in your own life, and as you extend it to those you are sharing life with.

God will equip you with the ability and stamina to do what it takes to bring in His harvest.

HARVESTING AS A TEAM

I can't help but wonder, how many people will be in heaven because I was willing to come and live here for over 22 years? I don't know. It's a team effort.

I've worked closely with perhaps a hundred local Christians, who are able to share Jesus in meaningful ways because they've studied and worked with us. Many hundreds of young people have experienced Christian community through our summer residential Bible schools.

Thousands of local people have studied English with teachers who know their names, care about and nurture them—perhaps the first Christians they've ever met. Across all this, it's a team effort. All aspects of our missional business have worked together, in the Lord's grace, to bring in His harvest.

I don't know what lies ahead. I do know that God has been faithful and sufficient throughout my life, so my future will be built on that same foundation. I am still willing to follow where and how He leads.

DANIEL'S* STORY

Daniel grew up in a village, where a young lady had met Jesus through our ministry (but that's another story). On her first trip home, she openly and happily shared what she knew so far about Jesus. When we visited a few months later, the joy on Daniel's face was evident, and that he wanted to know more. When he came to faith, he was threatened with violence and thrown out of home. So he tried to 'not believe' for a few years— but his father could tell! Jesus had changed him. Daniel came to live with our team to finish high school, and after graduation he joined our maintenance team. He was also baptised. Now, he teaches Sunday School training, helps run youth group, and helps lead in summer Bible school. He has a servant heart, always willing to drive anyone anywhere they need to go, to help local churches, and to help our team is all aspects. Here's to Mr Willing!

HOW YOU CAN PRAY

- I've been part of the furniture or fabric of His work here for so long that our team will feel the reset keenly for a while. Pray for the team as they continue working for His harvest.
- Current staff are able to fill all the roles I held—except for English teaching. Native speakers or near native speaker teachers are sought by the communities here. Pray for God's provision.
- Give thanks for the maturity and commitment of local Christians as they also go out to the harvest. May each one stand firm and continue to share good news joyfully and meaningfully.

**Names changed for privacy and security purposes*

PR AY

"Turn at Whitewash"



By Matt and Cristelle in the Philippines

A new laundromat opened recently just near our house. Its sign stands loud and proud: Whitewash. We can tell people, turn at whitewash.

Just like walls painted with whitewash, what is more easily seen in our part of the Philippines is the externals. Here, Christian placards are plastered on many t-shirts and vehicles. Pictures of religious icons hang on the walls as protective charms, rather than an exclusive statement of overarching belief. Alongside outward religiosity, fear runs deep. Fear of family/community reaction. Fear of the spirits. Fear of the deceased haunting family members.

A grandmother we visited one day was very interested to hear words from the Bible. She told us she was a die-hard Catholic.

"Who will keep the spirits of our dead ancestors happy if I convert to follow Jesus?" she said.

I asked her what people in her community's greatest fear was. She told me everyone feared drunk people at night with knives. Other friends have told us they're afraid of rapists.

Maripas lives with her extended family in a dark and hot house. The walls are decorated with pictures of religious icons. There is even a picture of Jesus. Yet her partner is not at all supportive of her reading the Bible or attending church. Maripas whispered to me last week that she could come along to our church event because she had told him that it was a farewell party for us at the beach. Despite these challenges, Maripas has chosen to follow God. Just before her baptism in January she snapped off her necklace that had acted as protection for her since she was young.

'God is your protection now,' the pastor reminded her.

Leonora's walls also sing of the spiritual reality she lives in. Matt and I have been meaning to talk with her about an idol on a shelf in her room, as well as a framed picture of the Santo Niño (Baby Jesus) on her wall. Leonora has spent her life seeking blessing and prosperity. She told me one day of the money she gave to sponsor an idol parade. She was assigned that year's parade for a particular statue, and also had to pay for many, many people to eat in honor of it. Religion is not cheap, and pleasing the deities doesn't include grace.

After Leonora's granddaughter began attending church, Leonora watched carefully. A couple of years later, she came along to church too.

We began opening the Bible with her and slowly she started to make sense of things. One week she said to us that she used to be very angry, but now that anger was gone. But slowly and surely, she really did show a big change in her life. We weren't sure whether to believe her or not. Her daughter-in-law in Saudi Arabia began doing video call Bible studies with her too.

Despite the different names for fears, fear also grips our country too. Fear causes me to panic, to not think straight, to focus on things that are not healthy.

"I would be too afraid to stop my car in Gisborne if I was driving through," someone once told me.

We may not stick a palm branch to our door to ward away spirits, but our habits speak of our fears too.

Pray that the gospel message proclaimed would confront spiritual beliefs and strongholds of the evil one. Pray that believers would find the freedom through God.

Opportunities to serve everywhere

GO PRAY SEND



Throughout this magazine you will see stories of people who have gone overseas, short-term and long-term, and those who have stayed and served in New Zealand. Whether you want to stay or go, there is an opportunity for you to serve. You can also head to opportunities.omf.org where there are currently 275 options!

Scan the QR codes to read more about these opportunities to serve the people of SEA:

ADVENTURE CAMP MINISTRY IN THAILAND

Use your passion for adventure and the outdoors to share the Gospel with Thai youth. Organise and lead adventure camps that serve as evangelistic outreaches, introducing participants to Jesus Christ in a culturally sensitive way. Mentor young Thai Christians who assist with the camps, equipping them to become leaders in their communities and churches.

Scan for more info and registration!

SERVE ASIA LAUNCH IN THAILAND

This course is a four week discipleship training course designed to be taken as part of a Serve Asia placement but is also open to Serve Asia alumni or others interested in developing their practical understanding of world mission. Participants come from around the world and will be serving in different countries and ministries across East Asia's peoples.

Scan for more info and registration!

KEEN TO JOIN OUR OMF TEAM AS AN INTERN?

Email nz.bridgemission@omfmail.com for more information.

TEACH IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

There are currently more than 500 international schools in Southeast Asia and the demand from the local population for the English-medium education that they provide is increasing rapidly. The teaching staff is usually comprised of a mixture of local and expatriate teachers. You will have the opportunity to build relationships and share your faith with colleagues at work and friends that you make in the area where you live. The region is developing fast and becoming more urbanised. However, much of the traditional culture remains. Many young people go to the cities to study and there is a big demand for university/college education.

Scan for more info and registration!

IS YOUR CHURCH INTERESTED IN SENDING A SHORT-TERM TEAM?

We can tailor trips to individuals and teams!
Email nz.servasia@omfmail.com for a chat about how we can help equip you and your church for mission.

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT ANY OF THESE SHORT-TERM OPPORTUNITIES...

Scan the QR code or go to **opportunities.omf.org**

or email nz.servasia@omfmail.com

Ways to Be Involved 関わる方法

MOBI LISE

...career path, parent's expectations, finances, family, feeling inadequate, Bible knowledge...

...are you drawn towards serving in mission but face seemingly endless hurdles to get there?

You aren't alone. Join us in our online workshop discussing **Barriers to Mission** and hear how others have overcome these hurdles. Whether you are thinking about serving overseas or here in NZ, you will be encouraged to journey with others and learn from experienced mission leaders.

BRIDGE MISSION
EQUIP • KŌRERO • GROW

Scan here for our upcoming events!

Exploring Mission Palmerston North & Christchurch

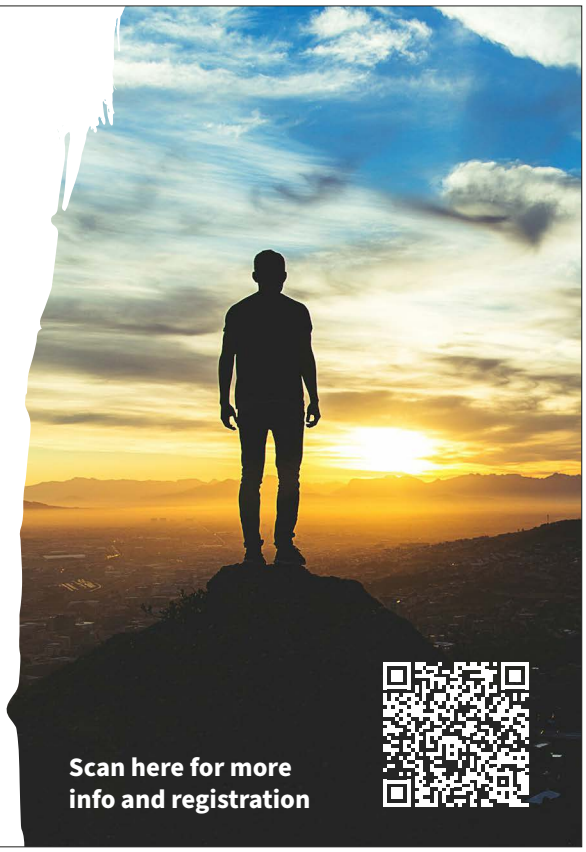
What is God's Purpose For Me?

Have you ever considered what you will leave behind at the end of your life? What is your life purpose? Is it shaped by God's purpose for the nations and his church?

Join us as we consider these big questions:

- What is God's purpose for the nations?
- What is God's purpose for his people?
- What is God's purpose for me?

In this interactive workshop we will reflect on scripture, hear about the unreached people groups of the world, and reflect on how God has shaped and equipped us personally for his missional purposes. Be encouraged by stories of everyday people involved in God's plan for the world. There is lots of time for personal reflection and you will come away with a renewed focus.



Scan here for more info and registration

For more upcoming events...
visit omf.org/nz/get-involved/events/ or scan the QR code!



Ways to Give

奉獻方法

Email nz.admin@omfmail.com to set up an **automatic payment** from your account

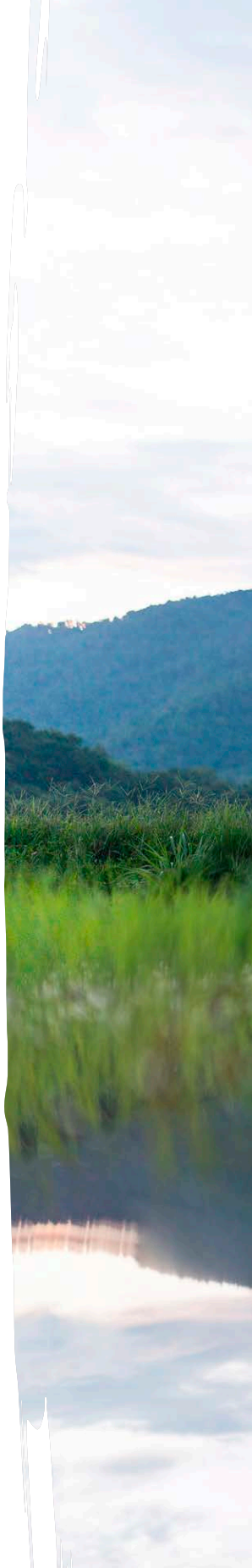
Give online at omf.org/nz/giving

Direct credit into our OMF NZ Homeside Trust bank account 03-0104-0415462-00 for donations **for use in NZ** and email nz.admin@omfmail.com

Direct credit into our OMF New Zealand bank account 03-0104-0415454-00 for donations **for use overseas** and email nz.admin@omfmail.com

Call the office on 09 630 5778 to make a **credit card payment** over the phone

Leave a legacy:
Would you consider leaving a gift in your will to God's mission work? By including a gift to OMF as part of your estate plans you will ensure that the people of East Asia continue to hear the good news of Jesus long into the future. For more information on leaving a legacy, please contact Pam: nz.admin@omfmail.com or ph 09 630 5778



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