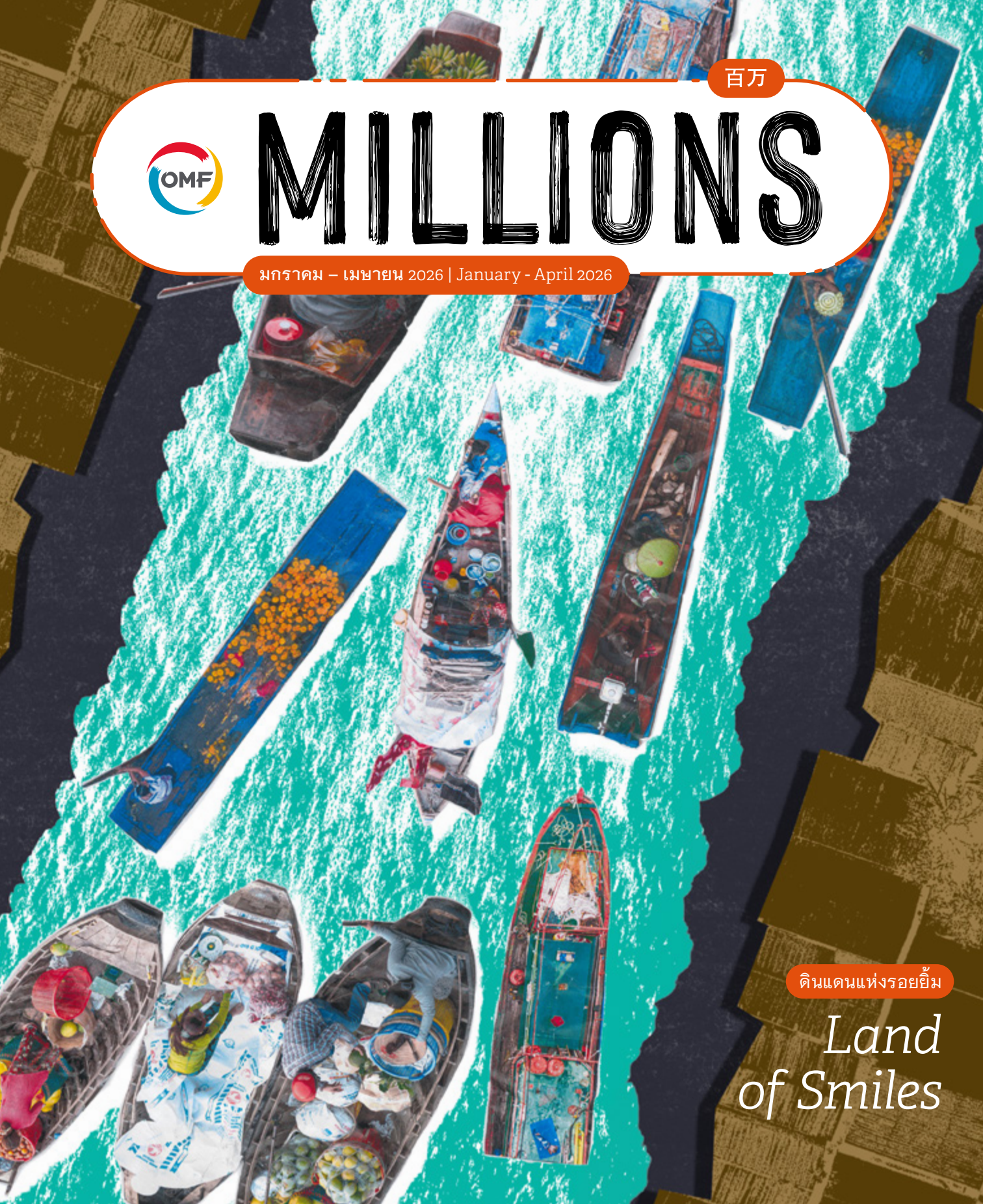
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MILLIONS

มกราคม – เมษายน 2026 | January - April 2026



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Land of Smiles

Heart for Asia. Hope for Billions.

We are OMF International, founded by James Hudson Taylor in 1865 as the China Inland Mission. We serve the Church and share the good news of Jesus Christ in all its fullness with the people of East Asia.

Millions comes out three times a year and is free for supporters. It started life as *China's Millions* in 1875, the title highlighted the numbers of people without the hope of Christ. In 2000 we changed the name to reflect East Asia's growing population. Today we still want to help all Christians get involved in God's global plan and to pursue every avenue to reach East Asians for Jesus.

Subscribe to get the magazine by email at omf.org/sg/resources/millions-magazine

編者的話

From the Editor

"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." (1 Corinthians 10:31).

As Paul aimed to bring unity in diversity among the believers in Corinth, he called for them to be ready to set aside their rights and preferences.Instead, he wanted them to be ready to humble themselves for the sake of others. His ultimate rallying cry for the Church? Do it all for the glory of God.

Today, as a global organisation with hundreds of workers from myriad nations serving in dozens of cultural contexts alongside the Global Church and local believers, similar challenges emerge. And our calling remains the same "the glory of God". Through our ministry, our work, our home life, our church life, our leisure time. We must not do things just because we can, or for ourselves, or evenly ultimately for those we seek to reach. Time and again we must lift our sights higher, our goal must be bigger, whatever we do, we must do it all to bring glory to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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新消息

News Updates



Prayer focus: Fukushima First Bible Baptist Church

In March 2011, members of Fukushima First Bible Baptist Church in Ookuma had to evacuate due to the nuclear disaster. It soon became clear that returning home would not be an option for the foreseeable future. After a year at a Christian campsite near Tokyo, they settled in Iwaki, about an hour south of their original home.

Today, they have a new church building and a missional café there. As free access to the power plant area resumed in 2022 and redevelopment continues, the church now holds monthly services in their original building in Ookuma and a small chapel in Odaka, another half-hour north.

Pastor Sato Masashi leads the church, supported by an associate pastor, a female evangelist and the former pastor who serves as advisor now. Ministries include gatherings for children, youth, young adults and seniors. A significant part of their outreach is their English ministry, where an independent missionary who is an OMF Friend and an OMF Serve Asia Worker teach weekly classes, reaching 30–40 non-Christians.

I am here for two years of training designation and involved in a variety of ministries, including kids and youth ministry, Bible studies and small groups, leading an English club at a local afterschool daycare (including sharing Bible stories), helping with church events and outreach in Ookuma and Odaka every Wednesday alongside the evangelist.

Praise God for the Christians in Fukushima First Bible Baptist Church and the ministries they have initiated. Ask that God would bless their outreach and that they would be a light in Ookuma and Iwaki.

Mitchie Groetz
OMF Japan

จากบราซิลสู่กรุงเทพฯ:
ดำเนินชีวิตตามการทรงเรียกของพระเจ้าในประเทศไทย

FROM BRAZIL TO BANGKOK: LIVING OUT GOD'S CALL IN THAILAND



As OMF marks 75 years of ministry in Thailand in 2026, Field Director Davi Pezzato shares his journey of following Jesus, lessons from the Thai Church and why more long-term workers are still needed today.

How did you first sense God's call?

I was just 16, sitting in a missions conference in Curitiba, a city in southern Brazil, when I felt God calling into my heart: "I'm calling you to go." Later as an 18-year-old law student, I saw firsthand how people far from Christ were struggling with injustice, anxiety and hopelessness. That's when I knew I didn't want to just 'have a career' — I wanted my whole life to join Jesus in his mission to restore us from our brokenness. From 18 to 24 I took part in several short-term mission trips in my own country. It was at the age of 25 that I had the first opportunity to visit Asia - where I served from 2006 to 2007 in Central Thailand. Learning the language, eating street food with locals, playing football and being welcomed into Thai homes changed my life forever.

What does your ministry in Thailand look like?

My wife Juliana and I have been serving in Bangkok since 2012. These days our lives are a mix of many things.

Living life among the Thai people means more than just working on projects. It's about entering the rhythm of everyday life. We eat sticky rice with our neighbours, join community festivals and street parades, laugh with kids playing football in narrow alleys, and learn how to celebrate life in ways we never imagined before.

Learning language and culture has been both exhilarating and humbling. Some days we're captivated by the beauty of Thai proverbs, dances, and flavours. Other days we stumble over tones in the language, feel clumsy in conversations, and realise we're like toddlers starting from zero. But even in weakness, God teaches us humility and patience.

Walking with low-income communities is where we've seen Jesus most clearly. We've sat cross-legged on the floors of small, tin-roof houses, shared simple meals, and listened as people told us their stories of hardship, creativity and resilience. These friendships have become holy ground.

Planting churches has been like planting seeds in soil that's both rocky and fertile. We've seen tiny groups of believers slowly grow into communities of faith — believers praying, worshipping and supporting one another, with the hope that one day they'll stand completely on their own.

"BUT EVEN IN WEAKNESS, GOD TEACHES US HUMILITY AND PATIENCE."



Church association work has allowed us to connect Thai congregations across Bangkok, encouraging pastors, helping churches share resources, and building unity in a city where Christians are still a small minority.

Refugee ministry has stretched us to see the global face of suffering. In neighbourhoods where families displaced from other nations are trying to survive, we've joined them in worship, prayed with them in their struggles, and advocated for their dignity in a world that often overlooks them.

And now, serving other missionaries has become another part of our calling. Leadership isn't about positions or titles — it's about being a good servant. Sometimes it looks like coaching and training, other times it's offering a safe space when life feels overwhelming. It also involves planning and making new strategies, keeping the focus on Jesus and creating opportunities to share his love.

What are some highlights?

It's hard to choose. It's watching Jesus manifested in places I never expected. It's sensing the Spirit's presence in a culture so different from my own, and realising God was already there long before I arrived.

It's sitting in a circle as a brand-new believer stumbles through their first Bible study — nervous, voice trembling — and yet their face shines with joy. It's being in a big meeting packed with more than 100 ethnic groups, all lifting their voices in worship as one family.

These moments remind me that this is not my project or my achievement. This is God's story unfolding — and the greatest privilege of my life is simply to step into it.

What are the biggest challenges?

One of the hardest things is time. Transformation doesn't happen fast. We live in a world of instant updates, but here change happens at the speed of trust. It takes years of learning language, culture and building real friendships before people begin to ask about Jesus.

Another challenge is sustainability. Walking alongside vulnerable communities means being present long-term, even when resources are tight and results are slow.

What have you learnt through living in Thailand?

Thai Christians have taught me perseverance. In a country where only a small minority follow Jesus, their faith is often lived out in small, quiet communities. But they carry it with courage, humility, and creativity. I've also learned the importance of sanuk (fun) in Thai culture — joy and relationship are never optional, even in ministry!

"WE LIVE IN A WORLD OF INSTANT UPDATES, BUT HERE CHANGE HAPPENS AT THE SPEED OF TRUST."

OMF has been serving in Thailand for 75 years. Why are we still needed today?

Because the task is not finished. Out of 68 million people in Thailand, less than 0.75% are Christians. And while the north of the country has seen growth, most central, northeast and southern provinces have little or no Christian presence. The need for the gospel is still urgent, and the Church here welcomes partnership that helps strengthen and multiply Thai-led movements.

What is your vision for the future of OMF Thailand?

Our vision is to see vibrant, indigenous churches multiplying across Thailand. I hope to see Thai believers not only reaching their neighbours but also see more Thai people being sent out as missionaries themselves into other nations. In 2026, as OMF celebrates 75 years in Thailand, we long to see partnerships with Thai churches grow deeper, and leadership increasingly in Thai hands.

In the last few decades the number of OMF (UK) workers in Thailand has declined. Why is this and what do you see as the role of UK churches today?

Some of the decline reflects broader trends — fewer people are choosing long-term cross-cultural mission, and churches often feel stretched with local needs. But the need in Thailand hasn't decreased. I believe UK churches still have a vital role:

Pray intentionally for Thailand.
Send workers who are willing to serve long-term, learn the language, and live incarnationally.
Partner creatively through digital media, theological training, and student exchanges.

Above all, remember: mission isn't about being a hero. It's about joining Jesus in his ongoing story of hope, love, and restoration.

Davi Pezzato
OMF Thailand Field Director



Thai Field Leadership Team

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Introducing the LAND OF SMILES

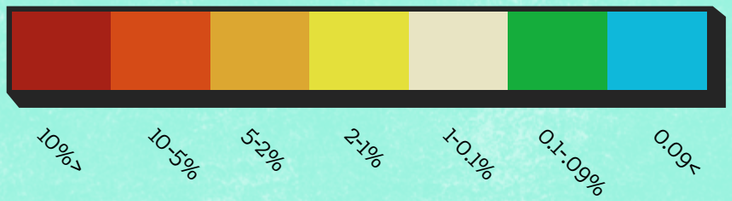
Known as the 'Land of Smiles', Thailand has an international reputation for friendly faces, amazing beaches and delicious street food. Formerly known as Siam Thailand was never colonised, a fact which Thai people are proud of. If you travel around the country, you'll find a landscape dotted with the glimmering golden spires of Buddhist temples and 7-11 convenience stores on nearly every street corner.

Over 65 million people live in Thailand and 93% of them identify as Buddhist. Buddhism is closely tied to national identity and many say that 'to be Thai is to be Buddhist.' Even as Thailand has roared into the modern world during the last century, the nation's Buddhist faith has remained resilient and church growth has traditionally been slow.

If you add up adherents of all Christian traditions in Thailand, the total only comes to 1.2% of the population. Protestants make up about 0.7% of Thailand's population, or less than 500,000 Christian believers. However, 45% of those Christians live in the three most northerly provinces of Thailand and another 12% in Bangkok. Some tribal groups in northern Thailand are majority Christian, while in many villages in the Northeast and South of the country, there is not a single church.

Encouragingly, however, the Church in Thailand is growing at 5-6% per year, slightly faster than overall population growth and two-thirds of Thai Christians are first-generation believers. All this means there are great opportunities to come alongside Thai Christians to share the good news of Jesus across the country, plant new churches and grow faithful disciples.

Key for heat map of Christian percentage



Chiang Mai

Chiang Rai

Lopburi

Bangkok

Bangkok is the most visited city in the world.

32.4 MILLION VISITORS IN 2024

After the US, Thailand is the world's second largest market for pick up trucks. They make up nearly half of the vehicles sold in Thailand.

Thailand has the highest rate of Facebook usage in the world.

OVER 65 MILLION PEOPLE LIVE IN THAILAND

IT IS ALSO HOME TO TIGERS, LEOPARDS, ELEPHANTS AND MORE THAN 850 SPECIES OF BIRDS

80 OMF Thailand Field is made up of around 80 long-term cross-cultural workers who focus on partnering with Thai churches across the country.

Thailand has the highest number of 7-11's in the world.

RELIGIOUS PERCENTAGES

93%	Buddhist
5%	Muslim
0.7%	Protestant
0.7%	Catholic
0.02%	Hindu
0.0003%	No Religion
0.1%	Other religions

Just in Bangkok Metropolitan area, there are over 60 golf courses.

หลายอวัยวะ แต่เป็นกายเดียวกันในพระคริสต์

Many Parts, One Body

Thailand is a unique blend. From the skyscrapers and traffic jams in bustling Bangkok to the serene beaches, mountains, and waterfalls in the South. Perhaps you have a favourite Thai cuisine, with a flavourful blend of sweet, salty, sour and spicy. Church planting in Thailand reflects this unique blend as well.

The ends of the earth

When we think of church planting in Thailand, most equate this phrase to geographical boundaries. However, church planting here is a blend of boundaries, including social-economic, educational and digital ones. OMF workers serve in a variety of ministries, from the low-income communities to the university. Some serve in rural settings, reaching out to the elderly and children; while others serve in cities, reaching out to middle-class professionals. And some go between the two different contexts. As OMF worker Sunny Yu shared, the different contexts allow her to 'meet people from various backgrounds and work with people of all ages.' Economic hardship and migration patterns also create a transient population, which may present challenges but at the same time expand ministry opportunities. Finally, some are engaged in digital ministry, which has allowed the gospel to travel through a virtual highway.





Many parts, one body

Church planting in Thailand is a mix of cultures, personalities, backgrounds, abilities and interests. Ministry can range from creative digital content to outdoor adventure camps, from theological training to leadership development. Our colleagues are from around the world, yet we also serve alongside local Thai Christians. OMF workers Hang & Vung Naulak who serve with Thai people share how it allows them to 'value their perspectives, honour their unique gifts, and openly share our life experiences, both the joys and the challenges.' Partnership isn't always easy, since it requires humility and patience, but ultimately it leads to unity. Partnership with Thai Christians may have various stages, which include equipping, empowering and entrusting. In Tha Sala Beach Church in the South, a man once unable to speak after a stroke is now preaching, a woman who once discarded Bibles is now leading worship, and a man once ashamed of his past divorce is now serving others through his business. This beautiful blend also includes churches and individuals like you, who partner with us.

Yielding fruit in season

Church planting in Thailand is a humbling blend of sweat and tears with joy and celebration, a reminder that sometimes our efforts are buried away like the mustard seed (Matthew 13:31-32) until God brings them to fruition. Church planters need time– to overcome language and cultural barriers, to build relationships and trust, to disciple and see transformation, to cast vision and witness growth. Yet God is faithful, and this is illustrated with a final testimony from OMF workers Ab & Clarine Mol: 'Three years ago we saw one lady come to faith who had a strong influence in her own village. She invited many of her friends to her house for an evangelistic event. Since then, more than 40 people in that little village have come to Christ and have been baptised, and since January 2025 we have opened a small church in this village where we come together for worship every week.'

Dave Chang
South Regional Leader
OMF Thailand

Pray for us:

- Pray for church planting ministries in the five regions (North, Northeast, Central, Bangkok, and South).
- Pray for Thai people to experience spiritual freedom, and for transforming discipleship to take place.
- Pray for unity in the body of Christ, as OMF workers collaborate with other mission organisations and partner with local Thai Christians.
- Pray for perseverance for OMF workers and their Thai coworkers, and for fruit that brings glory to God.

WORKING WITH STUDENTS

Michelle and Cherlyn partner with Thai Christian Students (TCS), discipling and sharing the gospel with students in university campuses across Thailand. They share stories of transformed lives and ways that you can pray for this ministry.

Young people are leaders of the future– in families, companies, churches and countries. Despite its seemingly slow growth, the Thai Church is indeed expanding, and there's a great need to nurture the new generation of leaders as they get involved and serve the Church. At a time when Thai economy and politics are bleak, young people are searching for truth, hope and a purpose in life. The gospel can meet them where they are. For all these reasons, discipling young people is a significant ministry in Thailand today. Seeing how the gospel can change lives spurs us to continue serving in this area. We are privileged to have the opportunity to influence Thai students in a short window of time– the four or five years when they are undergraduates. Though short, this is an important part of their lives, which can shape much of their future. We get to journey with them, and while it takes time, we get to see how God works in their lives over the years.

Stories from students

I think of a student from another faith who was interested in the gospel and accepted Christ during high school. She came to our Bible study in the university regularly and we could follow up with her. She experienced a breakup and later went back to her previous faith. Over a span of 10 years we kept in touch with her. When she was going to another country for her masters, she asked if we could help her find a church there. It was there where she reconnected with God and started growing in her faith. She was eventually baptised—on the very same day, exactly 10 years after she had first believed in Christ.

In our university ministry, there are always new students coming in every semester. The dynamics of the group change and there are always new things to look forward to. This past year, we had a new student. Somehow, people are drawn to him and he's a good influence on his friends. Although he's a fairly new believer, he is not ashamed of the gospel and shares his faith openly to them. He often brings his friends to our Bible study group and also encourages them to work out instead of taking drugs. We are thankful for Christian students like him who can influence others for Christ.

Working together

We partner with TCS to reach students on campus. TCS is fully supported by the local churches and graduates, and the staff team are mostly Thai. As we work alongside them, we have learned so much about how to reach Thai students and nurture them. The team works together to come up with new, relevant and Bible-based resources in Thai and tries to keep everyone updated on the latest trends and content that the students are into. Since 'fun' is an important element in Thai culture, we learn from Thai staff as they incorporate 'fun' into Bible studies, workshops and even in the discipleship process. Staff would spend time hanging out and playing games with students, and share important life lessons through these informal times. We also partner with local churches to get contacts of new students. We hope that the students who come through TCS will go back to serve and build up their local church.

STAFF WOULD SPEND TIME *hanging out* AND *playing games* WITH STUDENTS

Prayers are so important and keep us afloat. We pray with the Thai staff every week and value all prayers from supporters and partners back home. We believe it is through prayer that we can see lives changed through the gospel, and that the staff team and missionaries can have the strength and discernment to continue journeying with Thai students through their faith journey, and the ups and downs of life.

Cherlyn Oh and Michelle Goh

Please pray for:

- Wisdom for the TCS staff to know how to journey with students and relate with this new generation, who are constantly bombarded with all kinds of distractions and voices.
- Christian students to manage their time well, that they would be able to cope with stress and pressures of being a student in this challenging time.
- Christian students to love God's word and have a strong faith in Jesus, that as true disciples of Christ, they can live out their faith and be a positive influence for Christ on the campus.

มีส่วนร่วม! โอกาสรับใช้ในประเทศไทย

TOP FIVE OPPORTUNITIES

Prayerfully consider these opportunities to join us in God's mission in Thailand. If they fit you or someone in your church, we'd love to hear from you.

Church planters
1-3 years, 3+ years

We're looking to grow our long-term church planting teams across Thailand. You could join a worker like Angelika serving in a slum and nearby church, helping kids with homework, providing nutritious meals and sharing Bible stories. Or work with missionaries like Jon & Phoebe, who together with a nearby pastor, are starting a new church in a remote village.

There are also short-term opportunities (2 weeks- 6 months) to support these teams, including by teaching English, running kids' programmes, or simply building friendships.

Student ministry
1-3 years, 2 weeks -11 months

In one city, our team has built a trusted relationship with a university, which has led to hundreds of students learning English and exploring the Bible. Through students coming to faith in this ministry, a church has started, and to keep growing this work, we need more long-term missionaries.

Short-term opportunities are also available to help students practice English, run fun activities, attend campus Bible studies and build friendships.

Care for Third Culture Kids (TCKs)
2 weeks, 1 year

Support missionary families with homeschooling in English, Dutch, or Portuguese. You'd get to know a missionary family, help their children and explore ministries in Thailand. We also need teams to run fun programmes for TCKs during our annual conference (June) and training events. Your practical care for missionary children enables families to keep serving the Thai Church.

Adventure camps
2 weeks, 3+ years

Jeff's love of rock climbing led him to develop an adventure camp ministry for Thai youth. These camps create an ideal environment for sharing the gospel and encouraging new leaders. You could join a small team of adventurous short-term workers to support these camps twice a year (April and October).

We are also looking for a long-term adventure camp coordinator to eventually take over Jeff's role. Could it be you or someone in your church?

Digital evangelist
1-3 years

We need someone with experience in digital marketing to partner with local Christians as they share the gospel on social media, engage with enquirers and help connect them with a local church.

Explore summer football camps, teaching, microfinance programmes and many more opportunities at omf.org/thailand

อธิษฐานเผื่อประเทศไทยรับใช้

Praying for THAILAND

We believe prayer is vital to our work in Thailand. Will you join us in praying for:

The OMF team

- Thank God for Davi who is in his first year as Field Director in Thailand. Pray for him and the leadership team as they adjust and get used to new working patterns. Pray that God would bless their ministry and that they would be encouraged as they work for him.
- Give thanks for OMF workers in Thailand who are serving the Lord in their ministries. Pray for those who have arrived recently as they learn the language and culture and those who have been serving over many years. Ask that they would persevere in their ministries, and would see the Lord working in the lives of those around them.
- Pray for the Lord to raise up more workers for his harvest field in Thailand. There is still much work to be done, so please pray that the Lord would put on people's hearts a desire to see the Thai people reached, and the opportunity to go and serve there.
- Give thanks for the OMF sending office in Thailand and all the missionaries sent out from Thailand or serving cross-culturally in their own nation. Ask that God would bless their work and bless them as a team.

The Thai Church

- Give thanks for Thai Christians who faithfully live out their faith and bear witness to Christ in their communities. Pray that the Lord would strengthen, embolden, and encourage them as they live for him.
- Thank God for the church planting work going on in five regions of Thailand. Pray for unity as OMF workers collaborate with Thai Christians in this work. Ask that they would have perseverance in the work, and that it would bring glory to God.

Student ministry

- Praise God for the many student ministries happening in Thailand and for OMF workers who invest their time in discipling and reaching Thai students. Pray for young people as they handle the pressures of being a student in a society bombarded with distractions. Pray that they would find their identity in Christ and live for Jesus on their campus.

TO THAILAND, FROM THAILAND



'When will Thai Christians start sending cross-cultural workers?'

This is a question I've heard often– especially from Thai believers who are passionate about sharing the good news of Jesus. It's a question I used to ask myself too. After all, the gospel has been in Thailand for nearly 200 years. Shouldn't we be sending people out by now?

When I stepped into a role focused on mobilising the Thai Church for cross-cultural work, my eyes were fixed on sending Thai believers abroad—just like many workers from the West who travel far to serve in East Asia. But over time, I've come to see that God is working in a different way in our context.

Instead of sending Thai believers across borders, God is raising up people to serve cross-culturally within Thailand. Today, five of our eight Thai OMF missionary families or individuals are serving within Thailand among the Shan, the Chinese diaspora, Thai returnees and blessing Muslim communities. This is a different model of cross-cultural work from those who came here from the West, but it's no less significant.

God is also stirring hearts to reach Thai people living overseas. At first, I hadn't considered this. But as I reflected on the gospel movement in the Book of Acts, I saw a pattern: the apostles began by sharing the good news with fellow Jews. Through rejection and persecution, they were led to bring the message to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46). In a similar way, Thai believers are now sensing a call to reach Thai people scattered in other countries– those who may be more open to hearing about Jesus than they were back home.

This movement fits beautifully with the vision we hold: 'Through God's grace we aim to see an indigenous biblical church movement in each people group of East Asia, evangelising their own people and reaching out in mission to other peoples.'

God is in control. AND I BELIEVE THAT, IN TIME, THAI CHRISTIANS WILL RESPOND TO JESUS

The Thai Church may be growing slowly, but God is in control. And I believe that, in time, Thai Christians will respond to Jesus' call– sharing the good news with their own people and reaching out to others.



Off Wichaphon
OMF Thailand Homeside Executive Director