

Dear Friends,

The New Year frequently feels like a dance between tradition and change. We'll get nostalgic as the ornaments are taken off the tree and put away until next December. It may take us weeks to remember to write 2012 instead of 2011 on our letters and checks. We'll start daydreaming about the spring.

This will also be true for OC as a mission. We'll want to embark upon the New Year faithful to our roots and values. OC has a long and honorable history, and many of the principles articulated by our founder, Dick Hillis (who was a close friend of Billy Graham), are still strongly evident in our vision and strategy statements. But we are also a mission family with a stated commitment to the freedom to innovate. We promote the freedom to do (or not to!) try new things, or try to do "old things" in a new way. After all, the word "new" appears often in both the Old and New Testaments (see the second half of Isaiah and Revelation). Ways that we'll be innovating include making much of our in-house training available via distance learning, and experimenting with new expressions of "team."



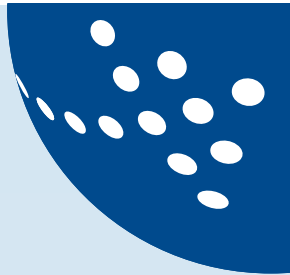
This photo of Billy Graham with OC's founder, Dick Hillis, was taken over 60 years ago.

We also envision this will be true of the worldwide church. An increasing number of missionaries who work in other countries and cultures will come from the Global South. More Christian workers will receive their funding from multiple, and often nontraditional, sources. New practices and professions will be enlisted in the worldwide effort to share the gospel of Jesus with the nations. The old and the new will both embrace and skirt each other as churches continue to be planted among every ethnic group in the world.

Russ and I need your prayers as we contemplate and make necessary changes in our own lives and work. We need to do this if we are to stay healthy and effective. Would you pray for us as we decide what of our priorities and practices we should keep, and which we should let go of to be able to change for the better? We want to learn the dance between good tradition and good change, enjoying the music without stepping on too many toes!

Grateful for the past, excited about the future,

Russ & Sylvia



God is on the Move!

As You Pray

Nearly four billion people don't even know to call out to the One who died for their sins. They are still waiting to hear the good news for the first time. Pray for additional workers for all of our fields.

Pray

for health and safety for our personnel and their national counterparts. There are still many unsafe places in the world for followers of Christ.

Pray

for our furloughing personnel seeking to connect with family and friends, for restoration and strengthened financial support.

Pray

for our 12 appointees seeking the support needed to get to the field, for pre-field training and transitions.

In 2012 OC International is celebrating our 60th anniversary as a mission agency. By the grace of God, beginning in 1952 with just three American missionary couples, OC's ministry has grown and expanded into a worldwide ministry which last year served more than 1,000,000 national church leaders.

To celebrate these 60 wonderful years, throughout this year we will be highlighting various aspects of OC's worldwide ministry. As we begin this year of celebration, I want to share with you the amazing story of four Chinese believers, apart from whose sacrifice there never would have been an OC International. Their story is below ...



Dick Hillis as a young missionary.

The year was 1950. The city was Shanghai, China. The Chinese Communists had taken over the city. Four American missionaries, Dick and Ruth Hillis and Paul and Madra Holsinger, were under house arrest because of an anti-Communist tract Dick had written. Over recent months Dick had repeatedly been charged with being an American spy or an agent of the Nationalist army. A number of missionaries had already been executed by the Communists, and Dick knew that at any moment the dreaded knock on the door might come ... the march into the street ... then a bullet in the back of the head.

The knock did come. However, the Communist leader did not bring a word of judgment and death, but rather a word of release and freedom. Two Chinese couples had approached Communist officials and offered to give their lives in exchange for the two missionary couples. Their offer was accepted, and within five hours the missionaries were on a boat leaving Shanghai. Within a year Dick Hillis was in Formosa sharing the gospel with 400,000 Nationalist troops who had fled the mainland, and the next year OC was born!

As a mission we owe our very existence to the sacrifice of these two Chinese couples. I am looking forward to meeting them one day in heaven and recounting to them the incredible things the Lord has done in nations around the world as a result of their sacrifice.

Dick Hillis, OC Founder, was fond of saying, **"It's amazing how much gets done when no one cares who gets the credit."**

President, OC International

Did You Know?

Sixty years ago OC began with one team of three couples on the island of Formosa, with no intent to become an international mission. Today we are:

- 10 mobilization centers (sending countries)
- 34 nations where we have resident personnel
- 74 teams
- 675 ministry personnel (60% non-U.S.)