



# Olson Family Christmas Newsletter

*Serving the Lord to Reach  
Unreached Language Groups in  
the Philippines and Southeast  
Asia with Ethnos 360*

*Issue #41, December 2023*

*"Why do the nations rage  
and the peoples plot in vain?  
The kings of the earth set  
themselves, and the rulers  
take counsel together,  
against the Lord and against  
his anointed."  
Psalm 2:1-2*

*"Where is He who has been  
born King of the Jews? For  
we have seen His star in the  
East and have come to  
worship Him."  
Matthew 2:2*

## ***Dear friends and family,***

Once again, we greet you in the name of our precious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, whose birth we celebrate!

Looking back on the year, we make this observation. As the world began to normalize on coming out of the pandemic, the pandemic concerns began moving into the background while geopolitical tensions began to take center stage. These concerns were always part of what we would monitor in our work, but now they have become primary. As advisors to our mission leadership on global trends, this is the main area of ministry in which we serve.

Before going into that, however, I will recap our year. In the beginning of the year, after passing through some minor ailments, I was able to once again attend our annual meeting at our headquarters in Florida, followed by a our risk management conference in Charlotte, North Carolina. Without going into detail on the important topics discussed in Charlotte, I will instead mention that for our one recreational day we were able to visit the Billy Graham Library. It is more than just a library, of course, as it has the refurbished home where Billy Graham grew up and also a full museum. The whole experience is very inspiring and encouraging, and I highly recommend the visit if you are planning to spend any time in that part of the country!

Since the 2 meetings were one week apart, but both on the East Coast, I took a week between them to stay with a friend and fellow missionary from the Philippines in the interim. It was a wonderful time. And of course I was able to visit our grandkids on the way out there.

In June we took an actual "vacation" out to New Mexico, to Santa Fe to see some of the Native American settlements there. This was also an encouraging time, and visiting with the native guide at the Puye Pueblo made me consider again the possibility one day of working with Native Americans. It is not in our immediate future, because we are confident that God has us in the right ministry for now, working for the safety of our fellow missionaries serving overseas. However, we want our hearts to remain open to whatever He will lead us to in the future. On the other hand, when you reach our age, you have to take each dream of an idea and weigh it against your responsibilities to serve God in light of the skills and experience you have behind you, in order to properly assess how you can serve Him best. So while we remain open, our hope is not in doing any one particular thing, but rather in taking on the mindset of being a servant of God in the environment we are in, wherever that may lead.

On the way back home we were able to stop and see some friends in Carlsbad and speak at one of our supporting churches there. It was fun to visit the place we launched out from to begin this journey 22 years ago. Going back there always encourages our faith.

In July we helped Isaac and his family move from their house in Florida to a new base in Texas, much nearer to where we live. Again, we just really enjoy seeing the grandkids and are glad to have them all much closer now!

Then in September we had another risk management conference, this time in Colorado Springs. I was one of the speakers, and I spoke about biblical examples of having hope in uncertain times at key points in history. In November, I was on the road again, back to our training center in Missouri, in order to help train the new missionaries that are preparing to go overseas. While there, I was invited to speak at 2 different churches in the area.

When I am not on the road, the work of the ministry consists of lots and lots of reading, with follow up reports to our mission leadership. The reading is not just news articles, but books and journals. Also attending webinars, and I have been invited to speak at a webinar once or twice. The topic is always international relations, foreign policy, geopolitics, etc. However, we are looking at these topics in light of how they affect global missions. Topical information from international media in this category is, for the most part, based on researchers working for companies that are looking to trade or do business. They analyze and project trends to develop risk assessments for financial investments. Ours is a slightly different emphasis – we are looking for understanding these things in order to develop an idea of the risk to people's lives, not finances, in places where we work. So besides keeping up with global news, especially Asia news, we end up reading a lot of the subscription journals, like The Diplomat and Foreign Affairs, as well as follow some of the best thinkers in these areas, like George Friedman, the team at Stratfor, Neil Howe, Peter Zeihan, and Admiral James Stavridis (see picture below).

The world is in a difficult place right now, and we need to be sober-minded in assessing what is before us. One overarching framework which I like to use for understanding current events is Neil Howe's book, "The Fourth Turning," or the sequel to it, "The Fourth Turning is Here" (this one's even better). In essence, it discusses how

## **Mailing address Texas:**

George & Ginny Olson  
2508 Wilshire Dr.  
Temple, TX 76502

Visit our home page:  
[www.reachthetribes.org](http://www.reachthetribes.org)

## **Email:**

george\_olson@ntm.org  
ginleeolson@gmail.com

**For information on financial  
support, please see the  
bottom of the next page.**



*Always fun to visit Isaac and his family!*



*The Billy Graham Museum had a mock up  
of one of the early tent revivals :)*



*Here Palawano kids are enjoying the  
community games that the church got  
started for them!*



*We enjoyed visiting the Puye Pueblo, where the Tewa people lived 400 years ago, although our guide told us there were still people living there 50 years ago.*



*Our last trip to Florida to see the grandkids, as they are all moved back to Texas now!*



*The work goes on in the Philippines! Here they are doing a translation check on the Isneg bible in Northern Luzon.*



*In Missouri where we go once a year to train the new missionaries before they go overseas!*

every 80-100 years going back to the Wars of the Roses in 1455, there has been a major crisis in Anglo-American society. In the current crisis, the effect happens to be global in its scope, just as it was in the last cycle, which included the Great Depression and World War 2. The lessons of history can show us a couple of things. First, the cycle still has several years to play out before the issues that are causing stress are resolved, so we probably still have a lot more pain to go through. That is a difficult and sobering reality. Second, however, we should know that ultimately these cycles do come to an end, usually followed by a period of peace and stability. There is no guarantee it will work out this way, but considering that in every other cycle going back almost 600 years, this is how things played out, we should look forward to a resolution. There may be quite a bit of pain on the way, but this is a necessary component of the process in order to resolve the issues and then move on. (That is, assuming the Lord tarries and the Second Coming is still some distance in our future, which we cannot make any kind of reasonable projection about.)

Why do we do what we do? I can offer some examples. The Palawano, where we served from 2008-2011, now has a thriving church that is reaching out all over the southern part of Palawan in the Philippines. The Isneg people in Northern Luzon have a bible and several missionaries serving there in multiple villages continuing to bring the Gospel to them in their own language. The Dinangat people of Papua New Guinea have just finished a translation check of the book of Matthew in their language. The Yanomamo in Latin America have heard the Gospel and have a bible, but their church is struggling to form a mature Christian community. The Guanano people in Latin America are awaiting distribution of new copies of the bible in their own language - an elderly missionary couple has to risk treacherous rapids traveling along a river bring the books to them. Gospel work among indigenous people in the Sahel is threatened by terrorism, but continues to thrive. In places all over the world, war, political disputes, economic hardship, disease, natural disasters, and multiple other obstacles often stand in the way of missionaries doing their jobs and the people receiving the good news. Yet God's Word still continues to go out and reach into all these areas. In the meantime, we have many young people still attending the training and preparing to go overseas themselves. Some of these young people I was able to meet and help train in Missouri this past November. We do not stop. We will continue to work to bring the Gospel to those who have not heard.

As we watch tensions unfold, we see growing trends. These trends are manifesting in Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the war in Israel, the tensions brewing in the South China Sea, inter-country disputes in South America, and internal political tensions in nearly every country around the world. These might constitute "the beginning of birth pains" as Jesus said in Matthew 24:8. The analogy implies that as in childbirth, contractions continue to come with increasingly painful intensity until the climax is reached. That is something to think about. Or, on the other hand, the cycle will play itself out and after we pass through this crisis period we will enter a new period of peace and stability. We don't know yet, but we trust that God in His sovereignty is working all things out according to His will.

So this Christmas season, as you remember the birth, life, death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord, please offer a prayer that God would continue to press His people to take His message to the ends of the earth!

***Blessings to you all in Christ this Christmas!***

George for all of us

George & Ginny, serving international missions in the Philippines, Asia, and around the world



*Our Filipino missionary friends are still very active in their feeding program for the urban poor in Manila!*



*I was blessed to be able to reconnect in person with my old CO, Admiral James Stavridis, when he spoke at Trinity University*

**Our ministry still needs your support, for which we are thankful. You can make a year-end tax deductible contribution to Ethnos 360:**

**1. On-line:**

[www.reachthetribes.org/financial.html](http://www.reachthetribes.org/financial.html)

-or-

[ethnos360.org/missionaries/george-and-ginny-olson](http://ethnos360.org/missionaries/george-and-ginny-olson)

**2. Call the home office** to set up ACH deposits at:  
866-547-2460

**3. By mail – send checks to:**

Ethnos 360  
312 W. First St.  
Sanford, FL 32771-1231

**Simply designate that the funds are “for the ministry of George & Ginny Olson.”**

**4. Follow these links:**

[www.ethnos360.org](http://www.ethnos360.org) or  
[www.reachthetribes.org](http://www.reachthetribes.org)

As you all know, our ministry depends on donations from faithful supporters like you all! Please consider joining our support team!