



CHINA
OUTREACH
MINISTRIES

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IMPACT

Together, Giving Christ to China's Future Leaders

Seize the Day

**Forever Loved:
One Chinese Student's Story**

Page 2

Ministering in the Midst of Fear

Page 6

What Can Your Church Do?

Page 8

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CONTENTS

- 1** WINDOWS OF OPPORTUNITY
Daniel Su Reflects on "Seizing the Day"
- 2** FOREVER LOVED
A Chinese Student's Testimony
- 4** SNAPSHOTS FROM COM STAFF 1
Making Every Moment Count
- 6** SNAPSHOTS FROM COM STAFF 2
Seizing the Day in the Midst of Fear
- 8** CHURCH PARTNERSHIPS
Will Your Church Seize the Opportunity?
- 10** NEW STAFF
- 11** CULTURE-WISE
Ministering in Times of Crisis
- 12** PLANNED GIVING
Establishing a Christian Will
- 13** GIFT BEARERS

We encourage you to keep this issue of *IMPACT* in your favorite prayer place that the content may guide you to pray steadfastly for our work together in giving Christ to China's future leaders.



A higher standard
a higher purpose

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Please share your stories!
How has God given you opportunity to be involved in the work of China Outreach Ministries?
Email Editor Tara Miller: tmiller@chinaoutreach.net.

Windows of Opportunity

By Daniel Su, COM President

Our "Seize the Day" theme for this issue of *IMPACT* was planned before the emergence of the COVID-19 crisis. While seizing the day has always been a foundational cry of our ministry, this theme has taken on powerful new meaning for us during the global crisis of the last few months.

At China Outreach Ministries, we realize that we have a window of opportunity to reach Chinese students and scholars, and we do not know how long this opportunity will last. Jesus told his disciples in John 9:4, "We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work." We apply this admonition in our own ministries by seizing the day—whatever that day may bring—to do his work.

A few months ago, the COM Leadership Center staff hosted a group of Chinese students from the Washington, DC, area as they came to visit Gettysburg and the Pennsylvania state capital. The Chinese guests also attended a church service here and were hosted by families of a local church in the Mechanicsburg area. Beth and I hosted two of them in our home. We got to know each other; we joked and laughed over mealtimes. I got to share with them my faith journey.

Soon after their visit, most parts of Pennsylvania were placed under a stay-at-home order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, and we could no longer host such visitors. This serves as a reminder that every day is a window of opportunity for us to cherish. Every day is a gift from God, and so is each of our lives.

In the following pages, you'll read stories of such windows of opportunity God has given to COM. Together with you, our ministry partners, we continue to seize the day. ■





Forever Loved

By Amy, a Chinese student in America

WHEN I WAS 12 YEARS OLD, I began to have a concept of God.

During a short visit to America with my parents as a child, I was in contact with a church. I learned that God exists, and he is the creator of the whole universe. I felt God must be loving because I saw that people prayed and got answers from God. Also, I was impressed by the passion and love of the fellowship, for it seemed different from the unbelievers.

Then we went back to China. Although I went to church with my parents, I didn't really understand the meaning of salvation. During that time, I was often confused about how I should live and the meaning of life.

When I saw someone who was addicted to pleasure or who succeeded by dishonest means, I would be swayed and

“I was really eager to be loved and could not resist the love of God.”

wondered if that was okay. When I was surrounded by successful cases, I wondered whether worldly success was what I wanted and what it would be like. I didn't like helping others because I thought it might take a lot of extra time and effort. That showed I was a self-centered person. Also, difficulties always made me feel hopeless and helpless.

When I came to America for further study, I fortunately found a Chinese church. I went to their worship regularly for several months, and then they asked me whether I wanted to be baptized. I wasn't ready to receive Jesus, so I didn't answer immediately. I still had many questions about the Bible, and I didn't think I could believe it when I couldn't understand it well. Also, I was worried about how my worldly friends would see me if they knew I was a Christian.

I asked one of the sisters in the fellowship how to improve my English, and she recommended Irene, a COM worker. Irene and I began to meet, and we talked about different topics for several weeks. In an English class, Irene gave me a gospel booklet called “The Five Great Mysteries.” It explains that all have sinned, and that God sent his Son, Jesus, to earth to bear our sins on the cross. I knew that sometimes I have wrong desires but that I cannot control them. The booklet said that sinners cannot save themselves. That made me realize why people need Christ.

Also, I saw that God showed his great love to people. I was really eager to be loved and could not resist the love of



God. I was eager to be close to him. I struggled and considered for a week whether to receive Christ or not. I asked myself: *Is it a correct decision? How might it affect my life?* Finally, I made the decision and prayed to receive Jesus Christ as my Savior.

Now that I am a Christian, I can feel inner peace because I know God is with me. Now I know the meaning of life is to glorify God, and I should live like Jesus. I understand that God who loves the world will take care of my future.

No matter what difficulties I encounter, God will hold me with his mighty hand and help me overcome them. I have received a lot of help and love from the brothers and sisters of my fellowship. When I am loved, I feel full of strength to love and help others. God enables me with his special ways, and I am becoming more loving because God loved us first. ■



Making Every Moment Count

COM staff have a short window of time with the students and scholars God brings to our ministries. Here are some true stories of what it means to “seize the day.”

■ One of our Chinese students, Di, recently sent me this thank you note: *It was truly beyond expression to have you as my guide, “teacher” and friend. And this three months being with you means so much to me. I didn’t feel alone but enjoyed the time a lot with your help and care. I will cherish this memory forever. And I really hope to see you again. Thanks sooo much for your help! Please be happy and healthy every day.*

— **Brenda Harris**
California

■ Just before returning to China, a visiting professor thanked us and said: *This year has been such a blessing to me. I not only got to know a lot of friends, I also learned so much about God and the Bible. I can’t wait to go back to my university to teach my students what I have learned.*

— **Glenn Kenadjian**
Florida



■ To celebrate the Chinese “Year of the Rat,” my husband Ben gave a sermon titled “To belong? Not to belong? That is the question!” (“Belong” is identical to “rat” in Chinese pronunciation.) The main message was that it really matters if you belong to the family of God or not. Ben weaved the message of the gospel with Chinese poems and his experimental work with rats in his research career. Scholars from the fellowship found his message both interesting and thought-provoking.

— **Rose Chiu**
Massachusetts

■ My coworker Gregg Smyrl’s mother, Betty, passed away at age 93 after a fruitful life journey. Ten scholars attended the memorial service. Since it was their first time attending an American memorial service, some were nervous about their dress options. They were afraid they didn’t look “sad” enough to express their condolences. When they arrived, they were surprised by people’s dress—including shirts with flowers and colorful dresses! When we left, a scholar told me that it was truly a celebration

of life with joy. Another scholar shared that Christian hope is so real and alive when facing death!

— **Fangying Nong**
Pennsylvania

■ *What I still want to say is, because of you guys, this city has become warm. My Chinese friend shared this during the mid-Atlantic winter before returning to China. He and I visited for two hours before he left. He had questions about the Christian faith, and I explained the love of Christ and that we have an important message—good news! When I asked him about receiving Christ, he replied, “not today,” though he was clearly touched during this parting conversation—as was I.*

— **Beau Miller**
Maryland

■ Dr. Wang is a professor in a premier Chinese university. And yet he was very open to the claims of Christ while living here. This is how he described his 12-month stay: *When I came to the US, I didn’t expect such rich experiences here. The FOCUS people greeted my family and me warmly, and it became routine for us to take part in activities. Sunday church and Bible study class were so interesting. My son loved to hang out with the children. He learned a lot about Christianity, and he loves Jesus! One year is too short. It’s so hard to say goodbye.*

— **Duane and Jodi Decker**
Washington and Oregon



Seizing the Day in the Midst of Fear

The COVID-19 global pandemic has changed the way that our campus staff teams and volunteers are ministering to students and scholars. Yet their commitments and passion are steadfast as they “seize the day” to embrace the opportunities the terrible crisis has presented.

■ A visiting scholar returnee in Wuhan participated in my online Bible study recently. He said that usually his family members and relatives thought he was weird to come to faith. When the epidemic spread, everyone was scared, but they saw his mood was still calm. So they began to think about his faith!

— **Danny Geng**
Washington

■ Thirty Chinese from Wuhan have come to our campus during the last six years and have returned to China. This has been a time to reach out and engage in communication with them. One of them contacted me and asked how to pray and asked me to pray for his family before I even reached out to them.

Also, one of our current students who became a believer last year has been able

to extend her stay for two more months due to the outbreak of COVID-19. She now has extra time to prepare to go back and reach out to others.

— **Meiyun Hoyle**
Virginia

■ When Kent State University canceled all face-to-face classes, not all the students could return home, especially the international students. The university moved the remaining students all into one residence building, and we helped Jenny move out of her dorm room and into another. The Chinese culture teaches mask-wearing to protect others. Although none of us were showing signs of being sick, we wore masks as a way of respecting one another. And

■ Before the virus had begun spreading in the US, I helped host a group of Chinese students from the Washington, DC, area and met a PhD student who later shared his experience with his American host family:

I was walking near my campus when a man drove his vehicle by me. He lowered his window and shouted: “Go back to China and take the virus back with you!”

The student thanked his American hosts for opening their home and their hearts to host him, but then he asked: “Aren’t you concerned that we might be bringing coronavirus to your family?” Of course not, the host family replied. They were just happy to have this rare opportunity to host their Chinese guests during their brief visit here.

— **Daniel Su**
COM Leadership Center



when we were all done, Jenny presented us with a small gift—a package of masks.

— **Glenn and Erin Niedergall**
Ohio

■ We have one returnee and his family living in Wuhan. Another returnee is a doctor fighting on the frontline. Both families were full of worries. So, we started online prayer meetings to support them spiritually. Others who attend our online Bible studies, although not living in Wuhan, still had to stay at home for most of the time. Suddenly, everyone had lots of extra time for God and ministries. One started an online Bible study with her relatives. One started to do Christian counseling with friends and seekers. And another started to serve her church by leading several online activities.

— **Yaofang Sunny Zhang**
Pennsylvania



Will Your Church Seize the Opportunity?

Staff and volunteers with China Outreach Ministries are reaching thousands of Chinese students and scholars each year with the gospel message of Christ. Yet there are tens of thousands more still to be reached on campuses where COM has a presence. And there are thousands and thousands more on other campuses across the country. The local church is key to closing the gap.

By Beau Miller, Director of Church Partnerships

I**N ALMOST 20 YEARS** serving in international student ministry (ISM), I've heard it over and over. We need to see churches more engaged in the cause of ISM. The assessment has been made in the context of the need for more laborers amidst a growing international student population in the US. According to the Institute of International Education, there are now

over one million international students, with 34% of those being from China, the largest sending country.

Are gospel-bearing churches ideally positioned to meet this need? Yes, for many reasons of which I'll name just a few.

A good ecclesiology reveals that the local church represents Christ on earth.

Churches have saints, who have a testimony and message of really good news! Further, the saints have vehicles, houses and apartments, homecooked meals, knowledge of the area, connections in the marketplace, and much more. Local churches have resources including facilities, outreach budgets, and attractive events.

Churches, even those that rent a facility or meet in homes, also have a geographical presence. There are approximately 4,000 colleges and universities in this country, meaning that there are usually Chinese students and scholars in the same area as evangelical churches, sometimes within walking distance. The "ends of the earth" have come to our "Jerusalems" (Acts 1:8).

Do churches have a unique opportunity to work while it is day, as Jesus urges in John 9:4? Yes, particularly so at this time. The US has more students and scholars from China than ever before, while churches also have tremendous freedom to demonstrate biblical hospitality and share the love of Christ. Will it always be this way? We don't know—so the "day" is now.

Further, due to recent changes in China that affect students here, as well as the new realities of social distancing, it's harder to draw Chinese students and scholars to large-group ministry events. This ups the ante for more individualized outreach approaches. And it is churches that have the best supply of people to

help with such time-intensive engagement.

Churches may be English-speaking, Chinese-speaking, or multicultural congregations. The point is that most churches can seize the day among Chinese students by ministering in either English, Mandarin, or both.

Not only do we have an unprecedented moment for outreach, but Chinese students are also a blessing to local churches. We are enriched by their presence and contributions and can have the privilege of partnering with them in ministry among their own countrymen.

How do you get started, or help your church further mobilize in ministry?

- 1** Begin with prayer, the foundation for which there is no substitute.
- 2** Look for a bridge to Chinese students and scholars in your area—a COM staff member or other ISM worker, an English-intensive program director, college students or faculty in your congregation, friendly international students, or a university international student office with service needs—someone who can help connect your church members to the students.
- 3** Find practical ways to meet the needs and build relationships with Chinese on nearby campuses. ■

COM is launching new training sessions to help individual churches (or a group of churches) begin or expand engagement in international student ministry.

We also offer a consultation session for church leadership to explore possibilities or further involvement in ISM. To inquire about one of these for your church, contact Beau Miller, Director of Church Partnerships, bmiller@chinaoutreach.net.

Pray for Our New Missionaries

■ Stan and Jennifer Pawlowski, Campus Staff, Virginia

Following relocation from their current home in Spartanburg, South Carolina, Stan and Jennifer will be serving at Virginia Polytechnic University (“Virginia Tech”) in Blacksburg. Stan and Jennifer have worked extensively in missions within China, including periods with Christar and Mission to the World. Stan earned an MA in intercultural studies from Columbia International University. He has had an interest in China from a very young age and has developed expertise in Kung Fu. Jennifer earned a BA in special education and music from Furman University. She taught in public schools for many years and recently has been teaching English online to Chinese students. In addition to church ministry in China, they worked with orphanages, offering sports/martial arts training and equipping workers in how to serve special needs children. They also have experience in Business as Mission through the creation of a business platform. Stan and Jennifer have been blessed with two beautiful adopted children of Chinese heritage.



■ Carl and Carla Sanders, Campus Staff, Maryland

Having served for the last seven years as volunteers with Chinese students, Carl and Carla now join the staff team at the University of Maryland in College Park. As a child, Carla was introduced to China through her grandfather, who had been a missionary in Inner Mongolia and her aunt, who had taught for 40 years in a Hong Kong seminary. Carla earned her BS in Bible and English from Pillsbury Baptist Bible College. She also works part-time as a naturalist at an educational farm. Carl is a teacher and ordained pastor. He received his doctorate in theology and master’s in New Testament from Dallas Theological Seminary. He also has a master’s from Central Baptist Theological Seminary and a bachelor’s from Pillsbury Baptist College. Carl is currently a theology professor at Capital Seminary and Graduate School and has previously taught at other seminaries and universities. Carl and Carla have four children and three grandchildren.



Ministering in Times of Crisis

Translating the Chinese characters for “crisis” gives us challenging insight for ministry.

危机

CRISIS = wēi jī =
danger + a changing point

Times of crisis often bring anxiety, fear, and new urgency. Crisis brings people to a point of seeing things differently and creates impulse for action. For someone in crisis, the pending danger compels change. These moments present crucial points for impact in ministry.

COM staff members, volunteers, and financial supporters are discovering the opportunity these occasions bring to share the hope of the gospel.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, many Chinese students and scholars have felt vulnerable and no longer self-sufficient. They face the prospect of racial stigma. The world around them no longer feels safe, and there is an acute absence of peace. The danger has brought them to a changing point.

As ambassadors of Christ with a message of good news, we have the opportunity to offer hope and faith perspective in times of crisis. As we reach out to Chinese students and scholars at this changing point in their lives, we help them find new direction. We embrace the opportunity to lead them to hope, to peace, to new life.



Your Life-Giving Legacy

Establishing a Christian Will

By Kirk Zuercher, Director of Development

IN ANY STAGE OF LIFE, we often demonstrate what is most valuable to us through our giving. Establishing a written will is a vitally meaningful way to seize the day. By planning now, you can continue your giving commitments beyond your lifetime.

As you consider preparing or updating your will, these are some encouragements to keep in mind:

- Your will is a lasting testimony to your family of what is important to you.
- There is joy in knowing that you can continue the ministry work you have begun, long after you go home to be with the Lord.
- You are obeying God’s command to faithfully steward the resources he has entrusted to you.

You can provide for your loved ones and still support designated ministries with a simple bequest of a fixed amount or a percentage of the remainder of your estate once both you and your spouse pass on to glory.

Through your gifts to China Outreach Ministries, you are an essential part of giving Christ to China’s future leaders. You seize the day by investing your material resources in our shared mission. Why not consider making this part of the legacy you can leave behind, too? Together, we will continue to reach and impact Chinese students and scholars, seeing God change lives for eternity.

If you would like more resources for establishing a will, contact Kirk Zuercher at kzuercher@chinaoutreach.net or 717-591-3500. Thank you!

Gift Bearers *Special gifts and contributions to the ministry of COM*

In Memory of

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Why I Give to COM

“Unprecedented opportunity to reach Chinese scholars for Christ compels our response.”

—Shared recently by a COM donor

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As You Pray

Will you please join us in praying for the work of China Outreach Ministries at this moment in world history? As we all continue through this difficult time of life since the onset of global crisis, we also give thanks for new ministry opportunities. We ask for God's purposes to be accomplished through us—whatever the new day may bring. We encourage you to use the articles in this issue of *IMPACT* to guide your prayers. May the Lord also bless and keep you.

