

Mobilising Youth for Mission

In view of the Church's contemporary challenges in mobilising more youth for global missions, Lawrence Tong will discuss the pitfalls and opportunities that this enormous task presents. He will share from his own field experience as well as from the ministries of Operation Mobilisation.

Lawrence Tong was appointed the International Director of Operation Mobilisation (OM) in 2013. He graduated with a degree in communications from Biola University (Southern California), where he also served as Summer Missions Director of the Student Missionary Union. Lawrence also holds a master's degree in business administration from the University of LaVerne (California). Lawrence's leadership journey in OM has included serving on the Board of OM Singapore, as OM country leader for Taiwan, as director of OM's third ship, Logos II as well as in financial development with the OM Ships office in Florence, South Carolina. He is also recognised to have led the fast-growing work of OM in China with a significant focus on welfare and agricultural programmes which have won them recognition from the Chinese government. Lawrence is married to Susan, from the United States, and they have two grown sons, Joshua and Benjamin.

While we live in a world of constant change, some things remain unwavering since the time when modern missions began (Hudson, Carey, et al) – the call of the Great Commission, the urgency to send out workers into the ripened harvest as well as the challenges in galvanising Christians towards missions. In Asia where most nations would be categorised as the Global South, mobilising youths for missions has its own unique challenges (along with the opportunities):

1. Sustainability
 - a. Spiritual youthfulness of the church
 - b. Financial constraints
2. Cultural
 - a. Family (filial piety)
 - b. Community expectations
3. Millennials
 - a. A generation with misunderstood characteristics