

## **JULY 2018**

“Suddenly there came a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone’s chains were unfastened.” **Acts 16:26**

### **Dear Friends,**

Thank you for your patient prayers for our dear brother Nguyen Van Dai (“David”) and his wife. Many of you know that David has been one of our leading Advocates in Vietnam, representing Christians and others whose human rights and religious freedoms were violated by the Vietnamese government.

In December 2015, David was arrested immediately prior to giving a talk on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and detained in an unknown location in pre-trial detention for 19 months. He was charged with anti-state activities in July 2017. Finally, in April of 2018, he was convicted, along with five other human rights advocates, of “carrying out activities aimed at overthrowing the people’s administration” and sentenced to 15 years in prison, plus 5 additional years of house arrest. You may also recall that David was arrested over a decade ago and served four years in prison, plus an additional four years under house arrest. Unfortunately, he never should have been arrested for any of his activities in the first place.

The good news is that last month, the Vietnamese government agreed to release David and one of his colleagues. For that we praise God. The “other” news is that they were exiled to Germany. Please continue to pray with us for David and his wife as they adjust to new life away from their homeland. Pray also that God will make a way for them to return to Vietnam, and for the release of four other colleagues—and over 97 other prisoners of conscience—who remain behind bars.

### **Growing the Team**

We are pleased to announce that beginning in August, the Advocates team will be adding Professor Patrick Talbot, initially in a part-time capacity, but ultimately, as a full-time employee. Pat, and his wife Kathy, first met Sam Ericsson in the early 1990s and have had a tremendous heart for the mission and vision of Advocates since our beginning. He worked as a law professor in South Korea at Handong International Law School (HILS) for seven+ years, and for the past five years in Jakarta, Indonesia at Universitas Pelita Harapan. With Pat’s addition to the team, we are excited to be able to better fulfill the “equipping” part of our mission with resources that will be made available to law students and attorneys as they seek to do justice, with compassion.

## Training the Next Generation

We are also pleased to be partnering with our friends from ADF and HILS for the third law student conference in Bangkok, Thailand, August 14-19. The theme of the conference this year is **Law and Truth: Sacred Calling of the Christian Lawyer** and we expect another great turnout of law students and young lawyers from across Asia who are on a path to future leadership in law, government or public policy.

Among the speakers will be me and AI Board member, Professor Jeff Brauch from Regent University Law School; Dr. Jeff Ventrella and Tehmina Arora from ADF; Dean Eric Enlow and Professor John Park from HILS; and Dr. Timothy Shah from the Religious Freedom Institute. We greatly appreciate your prayers for this conference as we continue to train the next generation of Advocates.

Please also pray for Pat Talbot, Tony Budidjaja and the team of Indonesia CLS as they will also be holding a law student conference on justice in Bali August 17-19. They anticipate over 100 law students from across Indonesia to attend.

## Protecting Religious Freedom

Please continue to pray for our advocates in Nepal as they face increased pressures from their government. The anti-conversion law in Nepal is set to take effect in August 2018. They will be filing a writ petition to keep that new law from being implemented as well as working on matters related to the court's decision regarding the Christmas holiday.

Please pray with us for this month's Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom that will be hosted by the U.S. State Department. Over 80 nations are invited to attend from July 24-26 and many side events will be held.

Finally, thanks for your continued prayers for the **50 Nations—1 Fellowship** conference in Berlin in October 2018. There are already 130 registered to attend from over 20 countries. We hope to see every nation in Europe represented, so keep on praying.

As always, thank you again for your prayer support for all the work of Advocates on all six continents, and for your financial support, which allows us to remain engaged in our efforts on behalf of those, like David from Vietnam, persecuted for their faith. May their prison doors be opened and chains unfastened.

May the Lord bless and keep you in His perfect . . .

Grace and Peace,



Brent M. McBurney  
President & CEO

