

Updates from Ray and Shelley Kwan - please add us to your safe senders list. Thank you!

[View this email in your browser](#)

**Kwan**  
*Quarterly*



*Updates from Ray and Shelley Kwan*



**"The Church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time. God became man for no other purpose."**

- C.S. Lewis, British author and Christian thinker

**Konnichiwa!**

*Dear Family and Friends,*

Greetings from the land of the rising sun... and earthquakes. We thank

the Lord for His protection during last week's 6.0 quake in Osaka. By God's grace, it was a short one and we did not personally experience any damage or injuries, but we know that people on the other side of the city and surrounding areas felt the shaking more acutely. We were reminded that God alone knows the number of our days, and also that He is the refuge, strength, and help that people in Japan (and all over the world!) need.

Other updates:

### **HATTA NISHI CHRIST CHURCH MINISTRIES**

Since our last newsletter, Ray preached two sermons, both in Japanese. The first one was on discerning God's will (Romans 12:1-2) and the second one was on fellowship (Acts 2:42-47). Shelley recently joined the worship service keyboard rotation, and Masanobu began participating in the children's Sunday School. Please pray that we would be faithful in these ministries and that the Lord would continue to grow and build up each member of our church and others with whom we come into contact.

### **ENGLISH OUTREACH**

Ray continues to teach three English classes at Hatta Nishi church. Each class includes a 10-15 minute Bible lesson (in Japanese). Praise God that a number of Hatta Nishi members have been inviting their friends, and a couple people from the neighborhood have come in response to flyers that were distributed! Please continue to pray for wisdom and clarity for Ray as he leads the classes; courage for Hatta Nishi members to invite unsaved family, friends, and coworkers; and the salvation of unbelievers who may attend the classes.



Osaka, Japan

## Highlights



In March, Shelley and Masanobu flew to Los Angeles for three weeks to help care for Shelley's mom (who has dementia) with Shelley's sister while Shelley's dad visited his own mom in Hong Kong.

---

## JOYFUL KIDS

From August 3-12, a team from our home church in Los Angeles, Immanuel Bible Church, will be in Osaka to help with the annual Joyful Kids VBS children's program. Please pray for the preparations both by the team in Los Angeles and Hatta Nishi church, as well as for faithfulness in teaching God's word to the next generation.

## JAPANESE STUDIES AND COMMUNITY

On Fridays, Ray, Shelley, and Masanobu have been going together to a local community center for individualized Japanese lessons. In May, Shelley and Masanobu began attending a Mommy and Me class in Japanese. Shelley enjoys getting to know other moms and kids in our area, and Masanobu enjoys growing tomatoes, playing on the playground, and singing songs. Please pray that as relationships grow, Christ and the gospel will be made known to those in our community.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

On July 14, Ray and a few Hatta Nishi members will travel to Nagoya to hear Dr. Paul Tripp speak at a Christ Bible Institute (CBI) Conference. Hatta Nishi Christ Church will have a church retreat from August 13-14. On September 23-24, Ray will go to Sendai for a Japan Bible Academy (JBA) seminar featuring Dr. Bruce Ware. Please pray for safe travels, good fellowship, encouragement, and for Shelley and Masanobu while Ray is away.

We thank the Lord for your partnership and support of God's work in Japan!



Ray's family drove down from Sacramento during Shelley and Masanobu's time in L.A.

---



Celebrating Shelley's birthday in April with Auntie Janice and Uncle Taka who visited us in Osaka.

---

By His grace,

*Ray, Shelley, and Masanobu Kwan*

#### PARTNERSHIP AND SUPPORT

We thank God for your partnership in making disciples in Japan!

For those interested in giving online or using a credit card, here's an easy way for you to do that on the IBC website: <http://www.ibcbible.org/missions/kwan-missions/>

We appreciate your support!



Dinner with Hatta Nishi friends and Shelley's aunt and uncle.

---



Ray preached in Japanese in April and June.

---

## ***Book Review: Multiplying Churches in Japanese Soil***

John Wm. Mehn  
*Reflections by Ray*

When I saw *Multiplying Churches in Japanese Soil* pop up on my Amazon recommendations stream, unsurprisingly, it immediately caught my attention. I looked at the sample, looked into the background of the author, and bought the book shortly after. I can tell you that I have absolutely no buyer's remorse.

The author has a Doctorate of Ministry in Missiology from Trinity International University which is, as you might guess, affiliated with

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School which has an all-star list of notable faculty and alumni. He has been a missionary in Japan since 1985 and is associated with a number of missions organizations.

### Challenges of Doing Missions in Japan

---

Getting right down to it, I found this book to be extremely helpful and refreshing. Over and over again the author makes observations and gives insights into challenges of doing missions in Japan that I have found to be true myself. Here is just one example:

*"The underlying reasons, namely the lack of faithful application of essential biblical principles, are paralleled in churches of other countries and among other people groups. But each of these reasons for the lack of healthy growing churches may be reinforced by Japanese culture and even some Japanese church practices."*

In doing missions, there needs to be a respect for culture, but in areas where the culture conflicts with biblical principles, the Bible must take priority. In the past, missionaries made the mistake of completely disregarding culture but I feel that the pendulum has swung the other way and there are times where the culture takes priority over biblical principle. My brothers, these things ought not be so. There is much more to say about this but I need to resist the temptation to get into too much detail in a short review for a newsletter.

### A Book with Solutions

---



Masanobu enjoys playing at his school playground every week.

---



We recently reconnected with Soga-san from Hamadera Bible Church - his wife and son are in the same Mommy and Me class as Shelley and Masanobu!

---

The author not only makes keen insights in the challenges of doing missions in Japan, he also provides solutions. There is a whole chapter on strategy as well as a chapter where he gives examples of churches that he believes are doing things right. It was nice to see a friend's church mentioned in the book. He was one of the speakers at a conference that Japan Bible Academy (which I am a part of) put on. His church, Oasis Chapel, was mentioned for the work they did to help survivors of the 2011 disaster in the Tohoku region of Japan.

### One Church for Every 14,000 People

---

I do want to mention one simple statistic that I saw in the book that I found insightful. The author mentioned that there are about 9,000 churches in Japan. I did a little math and discovered that there is about 1 church for every 14,000 people. I did the same math for the United States and discovered that the ratio is about 1 church for every 1000 people or so. In other words, the "church density" of the US is about 14 times that of Japan. Here's another way of putting it. If you take away 93% of the churches in the US, you would know what Christianity in Japan feels like. I did a lot of estimating and rounding but I hope that this difference gives you an idea of the lack of presence that the church in Japan has and why we are out here.

### Concluding Thoughts

---

There are too many good things to say about the book for me to write them all down here. The book itself, not just a review of it, deserves to



Celebrating Ryo-chan's birthday with Hatta Nishi friends.

[Click to make an online gift now](#)

#### PRAYER REQUESTS:

- 1. Biblical Church Growth in Japan:** That the Lord would continue to build up each member of our local church, and grow His universal church, to the praise of His glory
- 2. Relationships:** That we would have deeper fellowship with believers and be faithful ambassadors of Christ in our community
- 3. Upcoming Events:** CBI Conference in Nagoya (July 14), Joyful Kids outreach at Hatta Nishi (August 7-10), Hatta Nishi church retreat (Aug.13-14), JBA

be read. I'm not saying I agree with everything in the book, but I found myself highlighting and sharing with Shelley perspectives that the author had more times than I can remember. I would say that this book is a must-read for anyone interested in doing ministry in Japan.

Seminar with Dr. Bruce Ware in Sendai (September 23-24).

### Did You Know?



The Tokaido Shinkansen high-speed bullet train line between Tokyo and Shin-Osaka is the most heavily travelled high-speed rail route in the world.



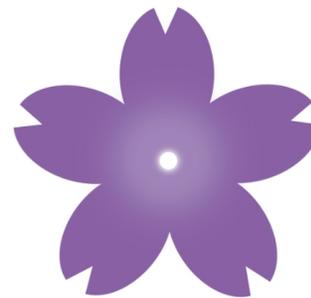
Mickey Mouse is very popular in

Japan - there are even *kamaboko* (fish cakes) with the character!

To support the Kwans in Japan long-term:

- Give online via PayPal or credit card at [www.ibcbible.org](http://www.ibcbible.org)
- Make checks payable to **IBC**. Write "IBC Missions - Japan - Kwans" in the memo line and send to:

IBC Missions - Japan - Kwans  
**Immanuel Bible Church**  
1254 19th St.  
Santa Monica, CA 90404



**Our mailing address is:**

Ray and Shelley Kwan  
Bien Court 4B, 3 Cho 292-3  
Otori Higashimachi  
Sakai City, Nishi-ku, Osaka 593-8324  
Japan

[Add us to your address book](#)

To support us, go to <http://www.ibcbible.org/missions/kwan-missions/>

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

The MailChimp logo is displayed in a white, cursive font on a dark gray rectangular background.

MailChimp.