

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

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Konnichiwa!

Dear Family and Friends,

Cooler weather, *danjiri* festival music, and persimmons mean it is fall in Japan! We thank the Lord for the privilege of being among His workers in this field, and we praise Him for the sacrificial love, generosity, and support you continually offer to us and to Him. Some reflections on the past two years are included below our update. We also look forward to talking with many of you in person when we are in California from October 7-30!

JOYFUL KIDS IBC MISSION

From July 29 to August 8, we joined Hatta Nishi Christ Church members in welcoming this year's mission team from our home church, Immanuel Bible Church. It was our joy to host one of the team members. Praise God that the gospel was shared and

"When I get near to God, and discern the excellence of the character of the Lord Jesus, and especially His power and willingness to save, I feel desirous that the whole world should become acquainted with this Savior."

- Ann Judson, *one of the first female American missionaries (served in Burma)*



Osaka, Japan

Highlights

new kids from the neighborhood, during the Joyful Kids VBS outreach program on August 2-5. Please continue to pray for the salvation of the children and the continued spiritual growth of Hatta Nishi members.



Introducing the IBC team.

DISCIPLESHIP IN AN AGING SOCIETY AND AN AGING CHURCH

In August, Ray preached on 2 Timothy 2:1-2, highlighting the importance of discipleship for the spiritual health and sustenance of the church. This is especially critical for churches in Japan, where the majority of pastors are over 50 years old. The majority of Hatta Nishi church members is over age 60. Please pray that Christians in Japan would actively train up the next generation of faithful disciples.



We were encouraged by all the team members, including Sharlene who stayed with us.

JAPANESE LANGUAGE UPDATE

Ray graduated from language school on September 27! One of his final assignments was to write an opinion letter to the editor of *Asahi Shimbun*, the second largest, daily national newspaper. He wrote on the need for fathers to focus less on work and more on the family. It was selected and appeared in print the day after classes ended!



Celebrating seniors for *Keiro No Hi* (Respect for the Aged Day) with a musical performance at Hatta Nishi.

Ray also has been attending local Japanese language clubs several times a week to build his conversation skills and create opportunities for evangelism. He has already fielded questions on whether the words of Jesus were accurately recorded in the gospels, the Trinity, and more!

Meanwhile, Shelley and Masanobu have been reading many Japanese books from the local library. They hope to have more play dates and join a “mommy and me” class in the near future to integrate with the community.



Ray preached on 2 Timothy 2:1-2, highlighting the importance of discipleship.

IN CALIFORNIA THIS WEEK!

We will be in California again from October 7-30, coinciding with Ray’s older brother’s wedding. We will be in Los Angeles for about a week, then in

advance if we are not able to see you in person.

PROCLAIM CONFERENCE IN TOKYO

From November 2-3, Ray will be in Tokyo with two younger Hatta Nishi members for the Japan Bible Academy's Proclaim Conference. Please pray for safe travels and an encouraging time in the Word.

As always, we thank the Lord for your continued interest and support of His church in Japan!

By His grace,

Ray, Shelley, and Masanobu Kwan

WOULD YOU CONSIDER FINANCIAL PARTNERSHIP?

Thank you for making it possible for us to serve the Lord in Japan! Would you please prayerfully consider partnering with us financially on a regular basis?

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/>

Thank you for your consideration!

Year Two in Review

We completed our second year in Japan a couple of months ago. It was probably the most challenging, yet rewarding, year of our lives. The obvious reason being that a certain little boy named Masanobu entered our lives.

The little guy has influenced our decisions this past year in many positive ways.

Travel

First of all, he influenced our travel plans for the year. Our original plan was to not go back to the States for



Ray's former Japanese school classmate, Ryo, was baptized at Hatta Nishi in September!



At the Hatta Nishi annual church retreat.

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PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Time in California: That we would use our time wisely, stay healthy, and encourage the people we interact with.

2. Language: That we would continue to grow in our ability to communicate effectively.

3. Transition: For a smooth move from school to practical ministry.

However, since we felt there is a responsibility and joy in sharing our son with our families, we decided to go back last winter to California and to Hong Kong in the spring. Masanobu and his great-grandmother got to meet each other and we even had the priceless opportunity of taking a picture of four generations of Tongs/Kwans.

Preaching

He also influenced Ray's preaching. This past year or so, Ray had the privilege of preaching three times in our church's main service. Two of the sermons were "inspired by" our son. One of the sermons was entitled "A Charge to Fathers" and was about how God-glorifying fathers need to cultivate their relationships with their Heavenly Father, their earthly fathers, their wives, and their children. The other message was entitled "Passing on the Torch" and was about the discipleship model found in 2 Tim 2:1-2.

Language Acquisition

Another area Masanobu has influenced us is in our language acquisition. Undoubtedly, he impacted our schooling (Shelley stopped just before he was born and Ray's study time was significantly reduced to care for the family) but on the other hand, he has also created opportunities to practice conversation with others, including strangers. There seems to be nothing as disarming and magnetic as a young child.

Stay Tuned!

We obviously can't write about everything God has done and taught us this past year in this short newsletter but hopefully you were encouraged by what we could fit here. A lot of changes will take place this next year since Ray finished school and he will move from theory to practice so we would appreciate your prayers for God's strength, wisdom, and guidance as we look forward to what our great God and Savior has in store for us this coming year.



Japanese books are traditionally read from top to bottom and right to left (the opposite of English books).



It is common for people in Japan to use umbrellas for shade.

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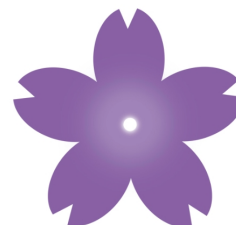
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