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Missionaries to



Philippians 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. We begin this prayer letter with a thankful heart to God and all of you who are our faithful supporters and prayer warriors. It was such a joy to get to see many of you as we traveled through 30 states in over 3 months. We are so thankful for God protecting us through 16,022 miles in the car and for all the good meetings. God blessed us with 3 new churches taking us on for support. This was truly a blessing.

Upon returning, the church had prepared a special welcome back Sunday for us that really made us feel at home. That day, April was able to lead a little girl, Hana, to the Lord. She had been coming to church for about two months. We were overjoyed as she really desired to come to church and even went to kids camp. Her family moved after camp though and she has not returned since. Please pray for Hana that she would be able to grow in the Lord in her new surroundings. Another highlight since we returned was the American Barbecue outreach. We saw many unsaved come and hear the gospel message. Please pray for God to continue working in their hearts to be open to the gospel.

Mission work is not all hype and glory. We came back to mail from the Government tax bureau. We always have been very open with them on all our income. But because last year was our 6th year here in Japan, they saw us now as permanent residents and suddenly said we had to start paying City and Prefecture taxes and income tax on our support for which we already pay taxes in America. They also required us to pay into the Japanese retirement program for the last 5 years, but thankfully we were able to get this waved. We are thankful for many missionaries in Japan helping us with research in the tax laws and advice and found that we are not alone in this and some other missionaries here are facing similar situations. Japan is socialistic, so along with the taxes was a huge hike in our health insurance which is now 5x what it was before. This has amounted to over \$500 more that we have to pay out every month and has brought our support down to 84%. We are really tightening our belt the best we can to meet this need and had already agreed to teach a few more kids English but that will only help a little. Having just returned from furlough we cannot leave the church at this time to raise more support, so please pray with us that God will bring in new support and meet this need in a special way. We really feel like the devil was trying to get us to quit, but know that God has a special plan and has called us here to reach people with the gospel.

Another trial we faced when we returned was people leaving our church. Two ladies had decided to move closer to their family in Tokyo so they can be better taken care of and another other lady left over a doctrinal difference. Then at end of August, a main family in our church who we had ministered to for 6 years suddenly left. They said they loved us but because of a difficulty with another member, they could not continue. Please pray for this family, as they are very precious to us and that the issue would get resolved. Please also pray for our church for special comfort through this difficult time. Our hope is in the Lord! We ended up writing a song through all this about the Lord's care in trials called, "He cares for you".

Through these times of joys and tears God's strength and comfort has been very real. We are so thankful for God's Word which guides and comforts us. God has given us more blessings. One young man in our church, Yuichi, came back from the Philippines in July and has been studying with Michael to get baptized. Please pray for his growth and for his wife, Rose, and kids to get their visas to come live over here. Marissa went back to the Philippines to turn in necessary paperwork for them to come and was able to lead Rose to the Lord! However, Marissa is very sick now with Dengue Fever so please pray for her quick recovery. This week, two Chinese ladies visited our church. The one, a Christian on a trip from China, brought her new friend. They came back again for prayer meeting and during prayer time, April was able to lead Mrs. Takano to the Lord! Praise God! Her Japanese husband though does not want her coming to church, so please pray she will be able to come and grow.

Abigail's Corner

Abigail enjoyed being in America but was very ready to be back. She is finishing up 5th grade and starting 6th grade. Recently she has been going to the dentist regularly as they recently found her mouth is too small for all her teeth and she has had 5 baby teeth pulled. The dentist told us she needs to have a retainer and braces for her teeth to be able to come in as so many are pushing up against each other and going in different directions. Please pray for this as the Japanese insurance doesn't cover this and it will cost \$6,500. We do not know how we could ever pay for that, especially now but we know our God owns the cattle on a thousand hills. If you would like to help with this, please mark your gift for Abi's teeth.

Thank you so much for your prayers and support.
For His Glory,
Michael, April, and Abigail Riffel