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Missionaries to



God's Provision

"The joy of the Lord is your strength." Nehemiah 8: 10b
Such wondrous joy God gives us as we serve Him! We are so thankful for all of you who have been praying for us and given financially so we can be here in Japan. God has been leading and blessing as we continue to work here in Saku. In the last letter we mentioned the difficulty with unexpected taxes and health insurance costs. God has been providing and they are being paid! Several individuals sent in gifts and a couple of churches upped their support. One family is starting to support us and another church is voting about it on January 15th. This was a surprise as it has been about 10 years since we visited this church on deputation. We know God is working through your prayers and giving. Thank you for being used by God in this way so we can continue to minister here!

New Folks

We are excited that Marissa has returned to Japan with her daughter-in-law Rose and three children. Our church is filled once again with the sound of little ones now and it is such a joy. They have a lot of adjustments to make including learning Japanese. We are excited to see Rose and her oldest daughter Samantha, who believed on the Lord last year, grow in the Lord and start the new converts/baptismal classes this next Sunday. **Please pray for Rose and her husband, Yuichi, as he is backslidden right now.**

Another lady, Mrs. Shyoko Maeda, who April met in the grocery store, has also started coming the last few months. She is from Taiwan and had accepted the Lord years ago while living in Taiwan but not been growing or going to church since moving to Japan. She is really enjoying being in Church with her one year old and will be starting the baptismal classes as well. We are very excited about this! Last Sunday her unsaved Japanese husband came to church for the first time in his life and desires to come again. **Please pray for Mr. Maeda to come and be saved.**



God's Blessing

The Lord blessed our Thanksgiving and Christmas church events. There was a lot of Flu around us, but the Lord protected us and we did not get it at all. That was such a big answer to prayer. The Christmas concert at the hospital went very well this year despite having fewer people to sing. Many people came and gladly heard the true reason for Christmas and received tracks explaining Salvation through the Christmas story. We are very thankful for this opportunity to be a witness in such a culture that is usually so stand offish toward anything "religious" besides Buddhist or Shinto traditions. We have been given the privilege to do it again next year and pray that this will continue.

Sad Reminder

This time of the year is very difficult in Japan, as many Japanese go to the temples for New Year's. They pray for luck. Some temples are even more prestigious than others and some will travel farther just to go to a popular temple. They will write out their wishes on wood and paper and give money to the temples to buy that special wood and paper. They start out the year full of hope that this year will be blessed in a new way. It is very sad to watch people buy things in the grocery stores for the god shelf for their homes and watch them go to the shrines and pray to deaf ears. They truly need to know the truth.

Upcoming Ministry

We truly would appreciate your prayers for this year as we begin **English classes** with a Bible lesson again on January 17th. God is opening new doors as we receive two new students this year in the children's classes. We pray that we will see these children and their parents saved. They so need the Lord and do not even realize it! Please also pray with us for our special **Valentine Sunday on February 16th** that we will have visitors and people saved. Mr. Maeda is planning to attend that day. Please also pray for God's working as we go out on Saturdays to pass out John and Romans with a track and church flyer. Pray with us that many Japanese will come to know Jesus.

Visiting Missionaries

We are excited for missionaries that are on Deputation right now who are heading to Japan! Brother Derry and His family and Brother White and his family are currently working very hard to get to Japan. Please pray for them. Brother White will be visiting us January 25th - February 4th. **Please pray with us that God will show him exactly where in Japan God would have him and his family serve.**

Abigail's Corner

We want to thank all of you who prayed for and sent in special gifts for Abigail's teeth. This was another burden weighing on us for which God has been truly working. Through starting a Bible study with Mrs. Mizuma, God led us to find a dentist that is more reasonably priced and is allowing us to pay regularly on it instead of a lump sum. Abigail was able to get her retainer that she really needed and through it, God gave us another opportunity to witness. Abigail's dentist assistant asked us to teach her English. She said she is also looking forward to the Bible time as well although she is Buddhist. April is teaching her on Wednesdays before prayer meeting. **Please pray for Yasuko's salvation.**

It is exciting to see how God is working in so many ways. Truly the joy of the Lord is our strength! That is our theme this year. No matter what difficulties or joys might come, we are comforted to know that our Savior is with us and that we have folks like you praying for us back home. We truly cannot thank you enough.

Michael, April, and Abigail Riffel