

MISSION PRAYER

August 4, 2018

Attribute of God: Our Shepherd

Key verse: Ps. 23: 3...He guides me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

This month's focus is on: The Robison family, Mitsuo and Akiko Fujishima, Charlie and Yumiko Chen, Rev. Kazuo Ozaki, Roy and Nancy Toma, Nick and Erin Petkoff, and the Fong family

Missionaries: Jon, Maki, Aki, Leon, and Hugo Robison

Country: Japan - currently on home assignment.

Praise:

1. The Robison family was able to attend the JEMS annual family camp at Mt. Hermon. It was a great time to be with many like-minded believers in worship and refreshment.
2. As a missionary, Jon was allowed to sit in on some of the updates on JEMS direction and there is an exciting boost of attention on Japan missions. They are looking forward to how this will play out with their ministry in Japan as well as the other JEMS ministries in that country. The church in Japan has always been small, so it's great to see renewed passion for reaching the country in spite of its infamous 'missionary graveyard' nickname.

Requests: Please pray:

1. Western Japan has experienced torrential rain and mudslides, reports are projecting over 100 people will lose their lives from these disasters. Please pray for those affected, as well as for the response by the church. Since the tsunami in 2011, the church has been really responsive in meeting the needs of disaster victims. Please also pray that this would bless not only the victims and survivors, but be recognized by the people of Japan as the love of Christ, as communicated through His people.
2. The population in Japan is decreasing and there is little incentive in the culture to raise children. Families in Japan are stuck between a tradition of enduring suffering and a disconnect from family support and village values that would allow them to endure the hardships of raising a family. It is quite a paradox that in one of the most affluent countries in the world, so many people feel they can't afford to have children.
3. There is also the growing problem of families with lower incomes and single parent families, where the only parent is working most of the time (usually in a lower income job) and again, children experience disconnect. Japan has always needed the love of Jesus, but now it's coming to a head and Jon thinks that ministries that look to share Jesus with those that society is leaving behind will bring the gospel to the Japanese in a powerful way. Please pray with the Robisons that their ministry will be one of those when they return to Japan in January 2019.
4. As they prepare for their return to Japan, they are looking to raise \$2000/month in order to maintain a continued long-term presence on the field. By God's grace they've been able to raise \$375 of that monthly goal!
5. For continued safe pregnancy for Maki who is expecting baby number four late Nov. 2018, and the doctors are saying it's a girl.

Missionaries: Mitsuo and Akiko Fujishima

Country: Japan

Praise:

1. It will be five years next year since their return from the States. They will return to the U.S. next March and will be there for a year. Lord willing, when all their required support is pledged, they will return to Japan and continue their work for one more term (4 years).
2. They thank God for already providing housing through their dear friends in Salinas. Salinas will be their home base as they travel to visit friends and churches in various parts of the States.

Requests: Please pray:

1. For those who lost loved ones and homes in the recent torrential rains and mudslides in Japan.
2. For the people who are cleaning up their mud-filled homes (including volunteer workers)
3. For protection from heatstroke (over 200 have died).
4. For the Fujishimas as they prepare for home service. Please pray that God will provide a reliable vehicle they can use during the year.
5. As the Fujishimas begin planning their home service schedule.

Missionaries: Charlie and Yumiko Chen

Country: Japan

Praise:

1. The Chens praise God for His continued faithfulness. God has provided them what they need. He strengthens them everyday with fresh energy and health. His love spills out every time they laugh together or eat together.
2. Their schedule takes them to four locations in Chiba and keeps them quite busy. Charlie continues to teach English conversation class six times a week. Yumiko teaches a variety of classes: the mom and kids class, two Bible studies for seekers (one in English and one in Japanese), and the Toke kids study club. She also translates the Bible lesson for children in the English classes. Together they lead an English Bible study on Sunday afternoons. In addition to the teaching work, they seek to build relationships with non-Christians and seekers through their home ministry.
3. Earlier this month they were blessed to witness God working in the heart of one of their English conversation students. He had to undergo surgery at 74 years old and had to face his own mortality. He is not (yet) a Christian, and allowed the Chens to pray with him several times. The surgery was successful and he is recovering well. God has since placed in his heart a desire to read the Bible and learn what Christianity is about. **Please pray that God will continue to draw him and his wife nearer to Him and reveal the truth.**
4. Toke Chapel is the primary location where the Chens serve. The building where the church meets has had issues, and the congregation has been praying for a new building. They are amazed that in a short time, God provided all the resources necessary and the church was able to break ground at the new construction site at the end of May!
5. The Chens hosted one of the summer interns for two months. They were able to celebrate his birthday at a Korean BBQ restaurant.

Prayer requests: Please pray:

1. For the victims who lost loved ones and homes in the heavy rain that hit western Japan. Pray for protection from diseases and illness from the unsanitary conditions and that God will still use this for His purposes. Please pray for the churches in Japan that are reaching out to help victims and to share the Gospel with them.
2. The Chens are excited to make a 5-week visit to the U.S. this summer. They hope to visit each of you and thank you in person. They are grateful for your support and for helping them serve the people in Japan. Please pray that God will bless their time in the USA; give them enough time to visit churches, family, and friends; raise support, and take care of personal things.
3. God will continue to soften hearts of students of their ministries and that He will keep and work in each of them while they are back in the U.S.
4. That Charlie and Yumiko will be replenished with joy and strength in the Lord and be ready and energized to serve again in September.

Missionary: Rev. Kazuo Ozaki

Reach Beyond Radio Ministry to Japan

Praise:

As 2017 ended, Rev. Ozaki was told that his personal support account was in a substantial deficit of -\$8,100.02! Taking this as an urgent matter, the mission wrote a letter on his behalf, asking for special prayer for this situation. When Rev. Ozaki returned in July from "Japan Trip 2018", his yearly trip for visiting churches and meeting their listeners, an amazing report from the mission was waiting. His deficit is now at -\$1,331.49! Your generosity and faithfulness to this ministry has allowed them to continue sending the message of love and peace to listeners who have been touched via radio and personal contacts throughout the years.

Thank God for all the lives that have been changed because of your faithfulness in praying and giving. May God bless you for being faithful stewards of God's gifts.

Missionaries: Roy and Nancy Toma

JEMS Japan Missions Director

Praise:

1. Roy returned last Sunday July 29th from his mission to Aso, Japan with their team. Their schedule was filled with opportunities for them to serve in the public schools, with church groups, and in the community.
2. Their team visited 1st-6th grade classes in the public schools and an after school program at two different schools.
3. In working with local churches, they were able to do a one-day VBS for a local church and a 2-hour English program for children, youth, and adults at a church in Kumamoto City. It was a blessing to encourage some local churches and to share the love of Jesus Christ through worship, crafts, and English conversation lessons.
4. In the evening they offered English conversation classes where they shared a "Word of Life" from God's Word and were able to have conversations about spiritual things.
5. On Sunday, July 22, they shared their testimonies, led worship and gave an evangelistic message at the morning worship serve. One lady, Saki, made a decision for Christ at the worship service. The next night Mari made a decision after the English conversation class.

Requests: Please pray for:

1. the seeds planted in the staff and kids at the public schools to produce everlasting fruit.
2. Pastors Yuichi and sue Watanabe to continue to have good health and a clear vision for the church.
3. Saki and Mari to grow in their faith and that they would hunger and thirst for God's Word and His righteousness.
4. God to finish providing the finances for the trip to fully support each member.
5. Thomas, Iris, Erika, Jared and Joanna as they seek the Lord for their future ministries, and more specifically, missions involvement.

Missionaries: Nick and Erin Petkoff

Country: Japan

Praise:

1. Praise simply for being in Japan! This has been a dream of Nick and Erin's for so long now and it's always reassuring to take a step toward what God is calling you to do. It has been almost 3 weeks since the Petkoffs landed in Japan and it has been a whirlwind all the way through.
2. Praise for all the support they have received on both ends of this move. With the help of their missionary friends and staff at TEAM, they've gotten a lot of logistics taken care of such as setting up a bank account, getting SIM cards for their phones, going through various orientation meetings and getting registered as residents of Higashi-Kurume.
3. The apartment they're in was thankfully already furnished when they got there so they could function relatively easily until the shipment of their stuff from the US gets there, but they are still working on getting some "new" furniture so they can really make their place their home.

Requests: Please pray for:

1. Nick and Erin to figure out the best method of transportation to their school every day (it's rather far and there isn't very easy access to get there).
2. God to help them push through difficult and awkward situations in order that they could start relationships and learn more about the culture in deeper ways than is even expected.
3. The Petkoffs to find a healthy balance in their life among studies, marriage, spiritual growth, etc. and that they can learn to be content in whatever seasons God brings them through.

Missionaries: Todd, Jayne, Ayumi Fong

Country: Japan

Praise:

1. Monday, Aug. 6, 2018 they begin their big adventure, bringing the gospel message to 300 children and their families through their English summer Camp program.
2. 90% of the children coming to camp this year will be basically unchurched, as well as a large percentage of their volunteer helpers. They believe this is the best opportunity they have to share the gospel not just in word, but in action.
3. Praise the Lord for the 30 volunteers who specifically stepped up to help with registration this year!

Requests: Please pray for:

1. A smooth program this year. Last year they had 200 children and it was challenging. With 50% more children, pray for safety for children and staff. Pray for good relations with the staff and administrators of the preschool they are using. Please pray for a smooth registration process so they can get the program started on time Monday morning.
2. Good weather. Japan has had the most brutally hot summer anyone can remember and it is taking its toll on everyone, including their team from the US. The good news is a passing typhoon is going to cool the weather significantly over the next few days, but it could be a direct hit on them, causing them to possibly need to cancel a day of ESC. Pray the typhoon stays offshore and provides only a cooling effect on the hot weather.
3. For open hearts to the message this year, that the children, their families and their not-yet-Christian volunteers be blessed with love and grace. Pray for the message of hope in Christ Jesus ring loud and clear through word and deed. Pray that they can all be ambassadors of the Kingdom of God, inviting all into the abundant life in Christ.
4. For the future. There are many things uncertain after this year of ESC. They believe God wants this ministry to continue but there are many challenges ahead. Pray the Lord gives them clear signs and a path to follow.

Our missionaries, Mitsu and Karen Nakamura are also involved in the ESC as it is also their home church. Mike Rodrigues and Haj Kanzaki of FACC are also serving in this ministry supported by the main short term mission team from Redwood Community Chapel in Castro Valley.

Thank you for participating in their ministry, the most important week of the year for them there in Tokyo. Your prayer support at this time is tangible and necessary. They are so grateful for each of you!

Short term missions:

Praise: Safe return of the HKSTM (Hong Kong Short Term Mission) - Teon Lee
also the NAOMI House team and for Jondy Natividad with On the Mission.

Please continue to pray for:

NAOMI HOUSE team member Marissa: On Saturday, at the Arizona airport returning home, the loop on her shoe got caught in the zipper of her suitcase and she fell on her left knee. This is after she fell and hurt the same knee at soccer practice the previous week. Her knee cap is fractured and will take 4-6 weeks to heal. She will miss the beginning of the soccer season and have to start school with crutches.

Holly Yamagata Aug. 2018 - Dec. 2018 Brazil