

To my dearest brothers and sisters,
Greetings!

Thank you all for all your prayers and support during this time I've been off the grid! Here's a long overdue update on some things that have happened since my departure:

Transition and Change

A new era on the horizon...

The Japan Field has just undergone a leadership transition. At the beginning of July, the Sextons left for America. Please pray that they will have a blessed and encouraging time as they rest and fundraise. The leadership of the field has been transferred over to Kylie, whom many of you may have met!

With this, we open a new era of reform. In the last year or so there has been a wave of interest in missions to Japan. With 2 couples already fundraising to come, and others in the woodwork, now is time of laying foundations for a new era.

From ministry, training and policy, down to the buildings themselves, everything is undergoing evaluation and change.

Changing Responsibilities

The end of one chapter...

As my responsibilities change, my English teaching duties have also begun to come to an end for now. I have passed my Thursday classes to Chris, and my Wednesday classes are now only twice a month.

I'm grateful for all the opportunities and connections formed during this time, and will continue to pray for them.

I also finished off at Tachikawa Church! It's been good getting to know the kids and the congregation. I'm also very thankful for the platform and opportunities that they gave me.



Last Thursday English Class.



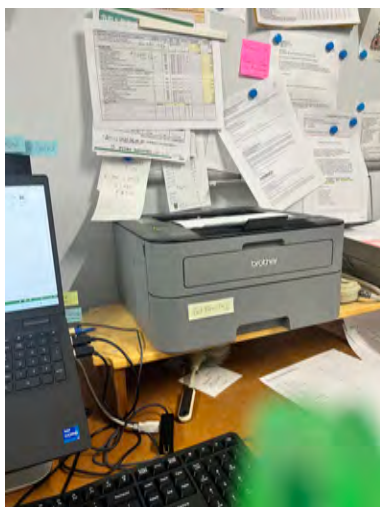
Former Kodaira Church Pastor retires.



Last Sunday at Tachikawa Church.

And the beginning of another...

New Role: Field Treasurer



Ah, the Treasurer's office, my second home.

Man, I did not see this one coming. Never in my life have I ever though 'I'd like to give *accounting* a go'.

Shortly after my return, I found myself learning the bookkeeping and the Japan Field finances to take over the role of Field Treasurer. 'haha, must be boring', you may think, but you'd be surprised at how hopelessly frustrating it can be. Sometimes the system feels like an old sick dinosaur -slow, old, and not quite working.

As I struggle to wrap my head around clunky banking (we weren't even signed on for online banking!), the Japanese tax system, and old software, I find myself often tested. The temptation to put head in my hands and groan, complain and rant endlessly is great, and I confess, I often give in.

But the more I complain, the more irritated and hopeless I feel. The more I dwell on the problems, the bigger they seem and the further God's goodness feels. So please pray, that I will not fall to grumbling and moping, but instead, dwell on the goodness of God.

In spite of the process, there is certainly light at the end of the tunnel! The sooner we can figure out and modernise these systems, the smoother and faster things can run in the future! And what better time than now to figure these things out!

Gakuin Church

Part of finishing at Tachikawa Church is wanting to commit to serving at one church instead of splitting my time between two. This year I will be at Gakuin Church. The consistency of going weekly has already made a difference in connecting with people! I will be serving in the High School group and really hope that it will be a place that the kids from the sports court can gradually be incorporated. They also have a young adults group, that meets every once in a while which I attend. I also hope to help more with their kids ministries.

Please pray that God will lead me in my time here, and that it would be filled with mutually encouraging Christian relationships.



Young adults group dinner.



High School Group lunch & games.



Sunday Kids: kids outreach event.

An Unexpected Break.

haha, literally.

June 1st: It was a hot Saturday afternoon out on the sports court. I was no longer any match for the 6th grade boys who had recently moved up into junior high, so hadn't been playing in their team games as often. But this day they insisted.

It couldn't be helped. I needed to pull my weight. After 15 minutes of being pretty unhelpful to my team, I decided my moment had come. The ball was coming past me, and my reputation was hanging on this.

Like a skilled NBA player, I turn in the air mid sprint, successfully pushing the ball from my opponent's grasp and into the hands of my own team, thereby proving my worth.

My mental self-congratulating was interrupted by the funny and distinct pop I felt in my ankle upon landing. 'How strange', I thought to myself as I tumbled to the ground in pain. As the pain subsided, I was able to remove myself from the scene, hopping to the safety of the bench.

Unfortunately, by the evening, though not increasingly painful, my ankle had swollen considerably and I was unable to put any weight on it. Probably just a bad sprain...

The following Monday, at my parents' insistence, I travelled to the nearby orthopedic hospital to get it checked out. Having heard that broken bones hurt so much you'd definitely know they were broken, I was in some solid shock and denial when the doctor. Especially since he started asking if I could come back that evening for hospitalisation to get ready for an operation on Thursday. It was all such bad timing too! I had so many things lined up -had scheduled the beginning of some community kids' outreach with a pastor, was going to help at a kids event the seminary had planned, had managed to get an in with an interpretation team that would hopefully get me connected with the local primary school! Everything down the drain!

Alas, I feel as though my dedication to a new life of positivity in hope and joy is often tested. But despite the initial uncertainty of surgery abroad and a dreaded lonely hospital stay, God was good!

I enjoyed my hospitalisation. As a small hospital, it had a small group of rotating staff that I quickly grew familiar with, daily physio sessions that were filled with conversation. Everyone knew I was foreign (because of my name), and a missionary, because I put it down as my occupation/status on my form, and it made for great conversation!

I'm still heading over there for some physio sessions, so please pray for opportunities!

Also thank you so much everyone who was praying for me during this time! I've been making a very swift recovery!



Nope, that diagonal line is not supposed to be there.



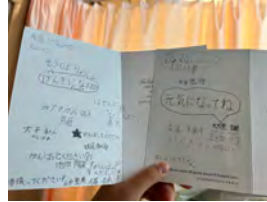
Probably just a sprain...



Getting wheeled in for surgery.



Nice titanium plate and 11 screws to keep things nicely together.



Kids from the sports court signed get well cards.



Nice nutritional hospital food.



Discharged after about a 10 day stay! Was already walking with one crutch!



Lindsay prepared a warm welcome home.

He Got Baptised!

Thank you for praying!

Not sure if you all remember Mion's boyfriend, Sho, but he was baptised early in June! When I first met her, she had just started inviting him to Church. It's been very encouraging to see his faith grow and his willingness to serve! He doesn't come from a Christian home, but his parents also came to his baptism!

Please continue to pray for him -that he'll continue to grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord! Please also pray that God give him courage and opportunities to share his faith with his parents. Mion's mother is hoping to start meeting his mother to read a book together -so please pray for that too!



Picture taken after Sho's baptism with Mion's family and friends. He's the one in white t-shirt with the flowers. Mion's grandmother was also baptised. She's sitting in the front row in the purple. Miyuki, a friend from Church, in the blue blouse holding the flowers was also baptised. They were the 3 June baptisms! I'm sitting in the front because this was the day after I hurt my ankle so I was hopping around and they felt sorry for me.

Sports Court

Don't stop praying!

Please never stop praying for the Sports Court! At times I am unsure and discouraged -at the mention of something Christian they withdraw or brush you off. But there are also times I'm completely certain there's much at hand -like when a kid sternly assures me they believe in a God.

Please please pray for them. Please pray for me. For opportunities. Often, I do not know how to start. Or other times, how to follow on (when I see them reading the Gospel comic). I often feel so powerless -like I need to do more, but am lacking severely in time and resources. Please pray that God will give me courage and wisdom.

It is currently summer here, with this summer being notably hot. In this weather, many kids are staying home, so recently things have been more quiet than before. With my ankle, I'm not allowed to start running and jumping until September, so I've been forcibly retired to the bench. The weeds around the court have really taken over though! Some are about knee height -so I've taken to doing some weeding and praying instead.

I'm really praying that the kids from the court can connect with the church.



Before ankle break.



Centipede spotted whilst weeding.



Kids reading Gospel comic.

Friends and Community

Please pray for us all!

Community and friendship has been a wonderful blessing from above during this time. It really is a God given place of encouragement and learning!

Lindsay

Lindsay arrived back at the end of April to begin her 4 year term. As mandated, she has begun her 2 years of full time language study. It's wonderful to finally have her back!

Please pray for her as she attends language school. Please pray that she will pick up the language swiftly, and also for community and opportunities there! She's already making lots of progress!

Kylie & Hannah

Kylie has taken on the role as the new field director for Japan. Hannah has also come to Japan to help with all the work. As the Japan Field moves toward a new chapter, there is much to be done. They are both working so hard and juggling so much work. You can see though, that God has gifted them with their many gifts and skills, for such a time as this.

We spend a lot of time in the office together and I often dine at their table. It is such a joy and blessing to share their company

Please pray that God will give them wisdom and strength, as they juggle stressful situations and many responsibilities.

Mion

Mion got back to Japan around the same time I did after an exchange program in Korea. At the end of March we planned a Sports Day for some team sports and fun for young adults. She invited her university's Christian group, but also many of her highschool friends who weren't familiar with Christianity.

It was intended as an outreach activity, which she really has a heart for. She feels very comfortable with assembling a group, but was nervous about the Christian aspect (a short talk I was tasked with), and was worried that they would react horribly. We prayed.

It went well! A good turnout and everyone had a good time. No aggressive aversion to the Christian bit, and one of them even approached me afterward to talk about their grandmother who was a Christian. People said they were excited to attend another event should there be one!

Please continue to pray for Mion, that God would continue to grow her heart to reach the people around her and give her courage to share her faith.

Yukie

Yukie is Mion's older sister, who I've grown closer and closer to. She's walking with God and has a heart of the young adults in Church (both her and Mion are from Gakuin Church). She feels there is a lot of busyness in their lives and not enough for them spiritually to supplement Sundays (for those that don't have work on Sundays and can make it). She's recently started a monthly online girls prayer group.

She came over a few weeks ago, and we've been talking about a time of fellowship. Maybe reading a book together, or a Bible Study. Please pray for her. She doesn't feel that she is a leader, or someone who starts things, but God has again and again, provided for her, whether it be with people to support her or resources. She believes that if it is His will, he will provide this time also.

She is currently praying for a new job. She is currently a care worker and works shifts -her current job has been increasingly physically and mentally draining for her, and she's been seeing her health decline. Her current job also often requires her to work Sundays, or Saturday night shifts, so she cannot come for the service. Please pray that God will provide!

Mana

Mana is a second year student at the Seminary next door. We did some classes together last year, and we've really found a friend in each other! She often visits me at the sports court and it's always such a lovely time of fellowship. We discuss the things we learn in class, our walk and ways to proceed in ministry. We also play and talk to the kids together. I'm really blessed by her fellowship and really thank God for putting her in my life!

She's currently home on summer break, but please pray for her! Life at the Seminary can be quite demanding, and sometimes lonely (she's the only one in the single girls' dorm)!

Kiyomi sensei

Kiyomi sensei (honorific used for pastors), is the new pastor at Kodaira Church, where I have been teaching English. She's come over a few times for tea, and we talk and pray for each other. In the face of an aging and shrinking Christian population, she really sees the need for outreach, and I want to help her.

Please pray for a kids' English event, on the 22nd. Please pray that this will be a good start. Please pray for me as I prepare the program.



Lining up at 6am to get Kylie's driver's license converted.



Stopping by a waterfall after meetings with the JHC Board.



Caught in a sudden downpour!



Sports Day for young adults!



Trying to do some home grilling with Debbie and Alecia (a missionary who will be joining us in the next few years!).



Fellowship dinner on Sunday night. A new Christian has recently joined our English service.

Help from afar!

Help in a time of need.

We've been so blessed here by brothers and sisters from afar stopping by to offer their help, gifts and expertise!

Debbie, a young lady from Tasmania, came to help me after my injury kept me confined to the bed/couch for a while. Jan and her husband, missionaries, came to look into setting up language acquisition programs for the future of the field. Cori, a missionary headed for the regional hub in Europe/Middle East stopped here on her way to Hungary to offer her interior design expertise for the upcoming renovations. In the coming months, work teams will be coming from America to begin some work on the buildings.

We have been so so blessed.

But speaking of the buildings, upcoming construction, and work teams, please pray for things that will be taking place here. Please pray for the logistics of things, opportunities and favour with external contractors, and a blessed time for the volunteer work teams that come to serve. (Please pray for me as well as I do some interpreting in all of this.)



Cori, a missionary headed for Hungary looking at colours and samples for the building renovations.



Jan, teaching us a bit about language acquisition.



Debbie, come from afar, to help a sister in a time of need. And BAAN! Who came to look at our landscaping!

Please Pray for Us

Please pray for us during this time as we learn to trust and rely on God. It often feels like there's so much work to be done, with early mornings, late nights, never ending things to do and fatigue. Oftentimes feeling stretched thin and stressed, like there's more to do, more expected, and not enough time or energy to do it well or at all.*

Some things feel cumbersome, frustrating, and eat up so much time (like the finances, and all the administrative changes -the things that people probably don't find interesting in newsletters 'did you go to Japan to push papers?'). But they are necessary, to lay a strong foundation, so that strong work can be done.

Admist it all there is so much blessing and goodness. We learn to have more grace for each other, learn to care for one another, and see how the body of Christ works together.

Thank you all so so much for all of your prayers! We really have been blessed by them, and we really need them!

*Pst! We could always use some help, and we have job for everybody!