



NOVEMBER 2024

MOVING FORWARD WITH THANKS

Praises

- I have officially signed a partnership agreement with TEAM Japan.
- I was able to attend a TEAM ladies' retreat to get to know the women missionaries (including fellow NAB missionary Iris Hung!) and also to visit the TEAM office in Tokyo to get some orientation.
- For a stimulating and helpful conference called Mie Senkyo Forum that focused on the state of the Church in Japan and how to address the various issues it faces.
- That the ladies' seminars at the Kyoto Rakuyo church and the Aichi region churches were well attended and went well.
- That a small team of four from Magnolia Baptist Church in Anaheim, California, could visit and encourage the participants of the short homestay English program that several of our Japanese friends took part in several years ago.

Prayer

- For good health and good daily rhythms as we enter a busy season at the end of the year with Christmas events.
- That Shan Reed and I would finish our term well as we start preparing for home assignment this coming spring. Pray especially for Shan as she is not planning to return to Japan as a missionary after her home assignment.
- That logistics regarding the closure of the legal religious status of the mission will continue to move forward smoothly.
- For wisdom as I mentally prepare about logistics for my next assignment in 2026, which will include a move away from my current location to the city of Tsu in Mie prefecture.

Let your eyes look straight ahead; fix your gaze directly before you.

Give careful thought to the paths for your feet and be steadfast in all your ways.

PROVERBS 4:25-26 (NIV)

At the time of writing this newsletter, I am in Mitaka city, Tokyo, at the TEAM Japan Center getting oriented to this mission organization the NAB is now in partnership with. I officially signed the partnership agreement in October with them as an "appointee." I will become a full global worker with them after my home assignment is over in 2026. Yes, this means I will be going on home



At TEAM Center for some orientation.

assignment sometime in the spring of 2025 . . . possibly in April or earlier depending on how long it takes the Japanese government to process the closure of the legal entity of the NAB General Mission in Japan.

I am thankful that I could attend a two-day conference called Mie Senkyo Forum (October 14-15, 2024) where we were challenged by the grim state of the Japanese churches, but also spurred on to take action by breaking down denominational lines and seeking greater cooperation with one another. Another important point that was made and struck me was the message to get out of our churches and go where the least reached are and to



Many pastors, leaders and believers came to attend Mie Senkyo Forum to be spurred on to be missional

be more missional rather than insular. I was very much encouraged by these messages, and I pray the many Japanese pastors and leaders will take positive steps to courageously go out and be more missional. Another reason I'm thankful I could attend is that I will be working in Mie prefecture when I come back from home assignment in 2026. This conference helped me to connect with several others who have ministries in this area. God has reminded me of a vision or desire that was percolating in my heart around ten years ago regarding a center where people could come for spiritual direction and find a place of rest and spiritual renewal. I had received the benefits of spiritual direction while I was in Edmonton and want to pursue more training in this area. In Tsu city, Mie prefecture, the JBC have a Christian Education Center that has three floors, which is not only its home office building but had been well used in the past as the location for the Tsu English Center where for many years Bill and Luci Lengefeld taught English and managed the building. It was also used as a dormitory for Mie

University students and others to stay for short periods, etc. The English school no longer exists, and since Covid, there are no students living there anymore. The Tsu Baptist Church uses the lower floor of this building. Please pray for the JBC to decide how to use this building in the future and also for major improvements that need to be made to the building to make it safe and attractive for people to come and utilize its facilities.

I am also giving thanks for the ladies' seminars that were well attended at both the Kyoto Rakuyo Baptist Church and the three churches that participated in the Aichi region. There was positive feedback from the women who participated.



Because Shan Reed and I are planning to leave Japan for home assignment around the same time, we will not be able to facilitate these seminars while we are away. Please pray for wisdom and ideas to keep the lessons learned in these seminars stay fresh and not totally forgotten during this time.

I am also thankful for a small group from Magnolia Baptist Church (Pastor Mike McNeff, Corey and Brenda Wilde, and Keiko Yoshimura-Brand) who came to visit us here





in Osaka and many other places, to come pray and encourage the many contacts they made via their English homestay programs. Their visit was short, but they were able to visit many of the JBC churches and talk with many of the pastors. This visit from a sister NAB church has encouraged the JBC pastors that even though the legal entity of the mission is closing the relationship with NAB churches is not! Hallelujah! Keiko Yoshimura-Brand has done an excellent job of spear-heading this ministry of reaching Japanese via homestay programs at Magnolia Baptist. I was personally encouraged that they could also attend the 25th anniversary concert of the Wings Gospel Choir I am a part of. Gospel choir is a great avenue to reach people with the Gospel via the concerts and also the participants of the choir. Several gospel choir members have been saved over the years because of this ministry. Over a hundred people came to the concert. It was a fun



evening celebrating the faithfulness of God through 25 years of Gospel ministry for the director of the choir, Manabu Adachi, and his wife, Kyoko. They love Jesus and want to use the gospel music medium to reach more people for Him.

The Christmas items I see in the stores remind me that this season is quickly approaching. I love this time of year, but it is also very busy. Please pray that I would have good healthy spiritual and physical rhythms. My puppets come out around this time of year, and their voices are a bit “rusty.” I’d appreciate your prayers for the various church visits and community events and opportunities to share God’s love and truth during this season. So far I’m scheduled to give a children’s message to the children at the Chita Nozomi Church, as well as main message on November 10 and also at Kasugai Jinryo Church on December 1. I will give a testimony on December 8 at the Suzuka church, and December 19 will be the annual Christmas party with the seniors from the community center. This will be my last time with them. Please also pray for Komyo Christian Church as they plan for Christmas. This will be the last Christmas that Shan Reed and I will be with them. The church is in need of encouragement, as it is struggling with fewer members attending.

Thank you for your prayers and support!

Yuri Nakano

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