



A Minute with the Masons



Japanese Evangelical Missionary Society
A newsletter of Michael & Chris Mason

Sakai International Bible Church, Japan
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Dear Praying Family and Friends,

Greetings from Nara, Japan. Today there was an interesting story in the newspaper about a young couple who were recently married in a wedding ceremony conducted by a robot. Yes, a robot! So far, our jobs do not seem to be in jeopardy, but if they ever teach a robot how to preach, we could be out of work!

All joking aside, here is a brief ministry update from the last few months.

Sakai International Bible Church

Easter- In April, David and Junko Cheng were in Japan with their family, and Junko offered to sing at the church. This was a huge blessing to us as they happened to be here on Easter Sunday. Junko performed during the worship service, also sang and shared her testimony during the afternoon potluck. Many visitors came to hear her sing, but they also heard the Good News that Jesus is alive. **Please pray** for the 6-7 non-Christians who attended the Easter service.



Junko singing at SIBC Easter Service

Seeking Jesus- James 4:8 promises that if we come near to God, then God will come near to us. For this reason, in the last few months we have been experimenting with new ways of seeking

Jesus during our Sunday worship services. Among other things, this has included waiting on the Lord in silence, and taking time to listen to the voice of God. Although the newness of these activities creates a bit of awkwardness as times, it is our desire to point people to Jesus and lead them into genuine encounter with Him. **Please pray** for fresh hunger among the people of the church.



Chris with church friends

Leadership Team- In April we said goodbye to Takeaki Shibuya, a long-time church leader, translator and friend. He and his family have recently moved to Australia where we know God will use him in mighty ways. **Please pray** that God would raise up people who can fill the hole he left, especially in the area of translation. **Please also pray** for the remaining members of the leadership team. Besides the two of us, there are two godly men, Yasushi Noji and Hiroaki Kanayama.

Wisdom- For the past 2-3 years, SIBC has been experiencing financial difficulties. Although this is mainly due to the global financial crisis that has had a huge impact on the church, we believe that the real issue is not one of money. Rather, we believe that the Lord is using our current situation to get our attention about something else that He wants to do. What that is exactly, we are still uncertain. Is He leading us to a different location? To a different set of priorities? Or possibly even to a new

paradigm for doing church? **Please pray** that we would have ears to hear what God is saying.

Baptism- We are currently planning to have a baptism service in mid-June. **Please pray** for newlyweds Muneaki & Kayo Murata as they take this important step in their walk with Jesus.

Kansai Christian School

Chapel Time- Michael continues to enjoy serving as school chaplain and speaking at the monthly all-school chapel time. Since the beginning of the year, he has been doing a message series called "Who Am I?" The goal of the series is to help the students discover their identity in what the Bible says about them, and NOT in what the world might say. So far, there has been wonderful feedback from student, staff and parents. **Please pray** that the Holy Spirit would work in the hearts of the young people to lead them into authentic friendship with Jesus.

Building Update- As KCS nears the end of its first year in their new facility, there are still many building projects that remain unfinished. **Please pray** that the Lord would provide the necessary funds to purchase an intercom system, add a restroom to the elementary building, asphalt the driveway, and finish renovating an old building into a usable classroom. Of course, if you or your church would be willing to help out with some of these expenses, that would be a wonderful blessing. Please contact the JEMS office for more information. Thank you.



The main KCS building. There is still a smaller building that needs renovating.



Recent church event

Summer Plans

It is time once again for us to make a short trip to America for a time of home ministry and much needed rest. As usual, we do not have time to visit all of our supporting churches, but here is our tentative schedule of where we will be. If you are in the area, we would love to see you.

Jun 27-Jul 3: JEMS Mount Hermon Family Camp
Jul 11: First Presbyterian Church, Spokane, WA
Jul 25: Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood
Aug 1: West Los Angeles Holiness Church
Aug 8: First Presbyterian Church, Altadena, CA
Aug 15: Victory Fellowship, Torrance, CA

Of course, we would **appreciate your prayers** while we are in the States. It is usually a very hectic time for us as we have a lot of traveling, meetings, appointments, and fun to fit into eight short weeks.

Please also pray for SIBC while we are away. In our absence, the rest of the church family will assume the various responsibilities that we typically cover from week to week. While this is a good opportunity for them to grow and serve, many of them are already very busy. Therefore, **please pray** that the extra service would be a joy, and not a burden. **Please pray** especially for the two leadership team members (Noji & Kanayama) as well as for those who will be preaching, sharing testimony and leading worship.

Thanks again for your prayers and support. May the Lord bless you all.

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