



A Minute with the Masons



Japanese Evangelical Missionary Society

A newsletter of Michael & Chris Mason

Oasis Church / Kansai Christian School, Japan

Issue 84 January 2019

Dear Praying Family and Friends,

I know we are a bit late, but since it is still January, let us wish you all a Happy New Year. Here is a bit of an update on what is going on with us. Be sure to read until the end so that you don't miss the big news about some changes in our ministry here in Japan.

CHRISTIAN HISTORY IN JAPAN

Last November, friends from Michael's old church in Altadena, Stan & Janie Inouye, came to visit. One of their interests was in visiting the historic sites related to the persecution of Japanese Christian in the 1500-1600's. So, off we went to Kyushu for 5 days of exploring this amazing part of Japanese history. Although we had heard of the so-called "hidden Christians" in Japan, we actually knew very little of their real story, so we were surprised to see how prominently the story of the early Christians (along with their brutal persecution) is told throughout the region. Museums, monuments and historic sites are spread throughout the region, telling the story of the Christians in Japanese, English, Chinese and Korean. One of the most moving locations was the site of the famous "26 Martyrs of Japan." Forced to march from Kyoto to Nagasaki (about 600 miles), these Christians, including three young boys, were executed by crucifixion.



At Nagasaki Peace Park w/ the Inouyes

It is reported that one 13 year-old boy sang praises to God up until the moment of death. He is remembered as the "singing martyr." Our trip to Kyushu was both poignant and inspiring, and our only regret is that we didn't do this 20 years ago!

OASIS CHURCH

Christmas festivities at Oasis Church went well. Our candlelight Christmas Service, was followed by game time, a wonderful potluck, and Christmas caroling through the neighborhood. We were greatly encouraged when two of the families from the *kodomo shokudo* (Kid's Cafeteria) ministry joined us on that day. Unfortunately, they arrived AFTER the Christmas message! **PLEASE PRAY** that we would continue to build friendships with the families we meet through *Kodomo Shokudo*.



Christmas at Oasis Church

At the beginning of the New Year, we had our annual time of looking ahead to see what the Lord might have in store for Oasis Church in the coming year. New plans for 2019 include a monthly scripture memory program, an increase in the amount of time we spend in worship, and training to teach people how to prepare and lead Bible Study. **PLEASE PRAY** for continued growth in the church. More and more, may we let Christ and his Word become the center of all that we do.

KANSAI CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

The beginning of the New Year also means the beginning of drama season for Chris. This year's

production is called "Danny & the Shacks," a musical based on the life of Daniel and his three friends. **PLEASE PRAY** for Chris and Ikumi (her co-director) as they lead the kids in their weekly rehearsals. **PLEASE ALSO PRAY** for the 20+ students involved in this year's drama. As they practice their songs and memorize their lines, may the truth of God's word be planted deep in their hearts.



FUTURE PLANS

As we look ahead to 2019, some big changes are on the horizon for the Mason family. In June, Luke will graduate from Kansai Christian School. His current plan is to go to college in California. He has applied to a number of schools and is now waiting to hear back from them. **PLEASE PRAY** that the Lord would clearly guide Luke as he decides on where to attend university. Please also pray for God's provision of the necessary finances. Tuition has sure gone up a lot in the last 30 years!

Upon Luke's graduation from KCS, we will also be ending our time of service at the school. Chris has enjoyed teaching at the school these last 8 years and Michael has found much pleasure in serving as school chaplain. It will be sad to leave the school, but we are thankful for the many opportunities we have had to serve at KCS during these last 12 years. We trust that we have been a blessing to the students, staff and families that God has placed in our paths.

So, "What comes next?" you might ask. Well, after making a trip to the States to get Luke settled into his new school, we will return to Japan in Fall and begin transitioning into doing member care with JEMS. When we first came to Japan in 1997, we were the first (and only) career missionaries to Japan through JEMS. Since that time, God has been faithful to build the Japan Missions program, and we now have over 30 missionaries in the field. Chris has long had a heart to provide pastoral care and support for our fellow missionaries, so she will

begin to move in that direction. Her exact role and responsibilities are still a work in progress, but Chris is excited about this new area of ministry. Michael will also help out as needed, but his main responsibility will continue to be at Oasis Church. We know this is still many months away, but we ask that you **PLEASE PRAY** for the Lord to lead and guide us during this time of transition.



A recent gathering of JEMS missionaries

This change in ministry will mean that other things will change for us as well. First of all, we will need to raise additional financial support to cover the salary that Chris will no longer be receiving from the school. The additional amount we will need to raise will be roughly \$2,200 a month. **PLEASE PRAY** that even now the Lord would be stirring the hearts of those who are in a position to help us with this need.

A second change involves us moving back to Osaka. We are currently living in Nara (which is close to the school), but from next winter we would like to relocate to a location closer to the church. We are not looking forward to the prospects of having to pack up all of our stuff again, but being back in the city will make this next season of ministry much more efficient and convenient.

Anyway, we will keep you posted as plans and details unfold. For now, we just want to finish strong at KCS and get Luke set up for the next chapter in his life. As always, thank you for your many prayers and support. We could never do this without you.

Blessings in Jesus,

Michael & Chris

Michael & Chris Mason





3 Ways to Support the Masons



* On-Line Giving

You can make one-time, monthly, quarterly or annual donations with your credit card via the JEMS' Network For Good donation site. Links to the site can be found here:

www.jems.org/missionaries (click on the donate link under the Mason's bio)

www.masonsinjapan.com (the donate button is on the bottom of the page)

----- cut here ----- ✂

* Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)

Electronic Funds Transfer (ETF) Authorization Form for gifts preferenced* for Michael & Chris Mason

Monthly Donation: [] \$250 [] \$100 [] \$50 [] \$25 [] \$ _____

Starting Month: _____. I would like to transfer on: ____ 1st or ____ 15th of the month.

I authorize my bank to pay JEMS the amount listed above on the 1st or 15th working day of every month. This authorization will remain in effect until I notify JEMS in writing that I wish to change or discontinue the contribution.

Name (please print) _____

Signature _____ Date _____
(required for EFT payments)

☐ I have enclosed my **voided blank check** from the bank account to be used for the EFT withdrawal.

Please place this **form** and your **voided check** in the envelope provided
and mail to: JEMS, 948 E. 2nd St., Los Angeles, CA 90012.

** While a donor may express a preference for a gift, IRS regulations state that tax-deductible gifts must be under the complete discretion of the non-profit organization. Please contact JEMS if you have questions.*

----- cut here ----- ✂

* Send Support by Mail

☐ Here is my gift of \$_____ preferenced* for Michael & Chris Mason

☐ I want to save a tree! Please send me the Mason's prayer letter via e-mail

☐ Please remove me from the Mason's mailing list

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Please make **check payable to "JEMS"** and leave the **memo line blank**.
Your check, along with this form, can be mailed to the JEMS office in the provided envelope.

** While a donor may express a preference for a gift, IRS regulations state that tax-deductible gifts must be under the complete discretion of the non-profit organization. Please contact JEMS if you have questions.*