



*Ethel Wilson*

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**Serving at:** Baptist Megumi Chapel

September 2020

*“Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” I Peter 5:7*

The Lord put this verse on my heart as I began to think about writing this prayer letter. In these crazy and uncertain times, it's such a blessing and encouragement to be reminded that our Savior loves us and cares for us, and that we can always rely on Him. *Please pray with me that I will truly cast my cares on Him in a couple of particular challenges I've been facing.*

### Good News

July, August, and this first half of September have been times of blessing in the churches here. At Baptist Megumi Chapel, we've had 2 new gentlemen attending regularly with one of them in the process of joining the church. Attendance has been climbing back to normal at Toyohashi Grace Baptist Church, in spite of a few more weeks of online-only in August due to a resurgence of Covid cases here in Japan. One new family has recently begun attending. I've had the privilege of teaching Sunday School and helping with the music in both churches. Just recently 2 children from the Toyohashi Sunday School class trusted Christ as Savior at home. *Please pray for the Lord to continue to work in both churches.*

### More Good News

I asked you to pray about my next furlough, and the Lord has answered. Japan has now begun allowing foreign residents to leave the country with official permission to return. I believe the Lord is directing me to go ahead and take a brief furlough at this time. My home pastor and both pastors I serve with here are in agreement. It has all come about quite rapidly. I'll be departing Japan on October 5 and will have the opportunity to be at my home church's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and Conference a short time later. My first year teaching at the church's Christian school was the year of their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and also about the time that the Lord began working on my heart about surrendering to missions, so this milestone anniversary is very special to me.



I would very much like to visit as many churches as possible in the approximately 4 months that I plan to be in the U.S. I would especially like to visit churches that I have not visited in several (or many) years. There are STILL a few that I have yet to visit since deputation, and I would really like to reconnect with those churches. I know that conditions are very strange right now, but if your church is having regular services (or some variation thereof) and would like me to visit, please email me at [graceshines2japan@gmail.com](mailto:graceshines2japan@gmail.com) so that we can work out a time. *Please pray with me for the Lord's will regarding scheduling.*

There are still several details to be worked out, especially regarding the use of a vehicle, insurance for the vehicle, timing of flights within the U.S, and a complicated matter regarding my stateside driver's license. Also, though it has been over 2 years since I've been able to see my special needs brother, his adoptive parents feel that in the interest of protecting his and their health during this COVID time it would be better that I not visit at this time. *Please pray for these many details, and that by the end of my time in the U.S. I will be able to spend some time with my brother.*

There are also some additional financial needs associated with a furlough. Praise the Lord I will not need to pay rent in the U.S. while still maintaining my residence here. However, there will be significant increased vehicle and insurance expenses. I also have some bills here that would usually be paid in installments that I would really like to pay in full before departure. *Will you pray with me that the Lord will meet these needs as well as the continuing need for additional monthly support.*

In His Service,

*Ethel*

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## August 2022

Summer is always hot and humid here in central Japan. It will certainly be refreshing when it begins to cool down. However, I did have a wonderful opportunity for spiritual refreshment in June. Twenty-two missionary ladies from around Japan met for a time of fellowship and encouragement. What a blessing it was to be able to attend this special time.

## Ministry Updates

Thank you so much for your prayers for our monthly Kidz' Klub outreach. I'll admit that I was VERY discouraged when our June attendance was once again just 2 children. However, we later learned that there was some special city-wide school activity on that day that we had been unaware of. But praise the Lord in July we had our highest attendance ever, 18 children. We held a Summer Festival, with lots of games and prizes, in addition to our Bible story time. *Please continue to pray for wisdom, encouragement, and eternal results through this ministry.*

We are now planning for me to begin a new ministry with English classes in October. Our September Kidz' Klub time will be kind of a preview, with a focus on English. Then we plan to offer some free sample classes in the weeks following that, along with times to meet with parents for detailed information. The plan is to start out with elementary aged classes, but hope to be able to have some Jr/Sr High and adult classes also, as the Lord may lead. *Please pray that the Lord will use me to reach both children and adults through the classes.*

We also have a special evangelistic Sunday scheduled in October and will soon begin working on plans for the Christmas season. *Please pray that the Lord will guide and bless in these meetings.*

## Milestones

This summer brought a couple of milestone moments. In June, I officially hit 25 years as a missionary with BIML. What a blessing to have their years of experience in support behind me, and practical help from so many people in the home office. And then last week I celebrated another birthday, this year a somewhat major one. I'm thankful for the years that the Lord has given me and look forward to serving Him for however many years He may allow.

## Prayer Requests

- **Health:** Praise the Lord, my cancer check was once again all clear!
- **Personal needs:** I have a couple of unspoken prayer requests for some personal matters
- **Financial needs:** continuing needs for additional monthly support and some special needs (some previously known and some unexpected)

Financial pressures and strains seem to be continuing to increase worldwide. Please know that I'm praying for the Lord to continue to meet my supporters' needs as well as my own. Thank you once again for partnering with me through your prayer and/or your finances.

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*Ethel*

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## April 2022

It has been a beautiful spring here in Japan. The sakura (cherry blossom) season was a bit early this year, but seemed even more beautiful than usual. We have had some unseasonably warm temperatures recently. I've noticed that rice farmers are preparing their fields for planting that will start before long. *Will you pray that the Lord will prepare hearts just as these farmers prepare their fields, and that He will give many opportunities for the seed of His Word to be planted.*

## Move Completed

Praise the Lord, my move went smoothly. I'm so thankful for the place the Lord has given me. From my favorite chair, where I sit for my devotions each morning, I have a lovely view of some nearby hills/small mountains. It may sound silly, but one of the biggest blessings is having a parking space in which I can fully open my driver's side door. My previous parking space was a very tight fit.

I'm gradually getting settled in, though there is still much to do. It was such a blessing to have several members of the church family help not only with packing, but also with some initial unpacking and various set-up issues. Each move gets harder, and this one was quite exhausting physically. However, God has provided so many people who have helped in so many ways. There are still a few puzzle pieces to be figured out – trying to decide where everything belongs. I am so very thankful for several gifts that have been given to help with move expenses. However, there are still some financial needs outstanding. *Would you pray with me about those needs? Please note the change of address highlighted in red in the letter header.*

## Ministry Continuing

April was an especially busy month. On April 10 we had a visiting missionary speak for our Anniversary Sunday. In the afternoon, we had a concert service with special music from the missionary couple as well as several of our church members. Then the following weekend, we had our Easter Kidz' Klub activity on Saturday and celebrated Resurrection Sunday the following day. I was able to share for the Kidz' Klub Bible time using a set of Resurrection eggs.

*Would you please pray with me especially about our Megumi Kidz' Klub ministry.* We have not seen as much response from neighborhood children as we had hoped. None of the visitors from our first session have yet returned. It could be easy to become discouraged, but we know that every single child who comes (even if it's "only" our 2 regulars) is important to our Lord. *Please pray that the Lord will give us wisdom in planning activities, guidance in getting the flyers into just the right hands and homes, and encouragement for all who have been helping.*

Another ministry the Lord has allowed me to be involved with is our International Ministry. We have several people attending our English Sunday School class and our afternoon English service. We recently lost a few people. Some of our international students had to return home to Malaysia, and one of our ladies married and moved too far away to attend regularly. But we were blessed this morning with 2 new Malaysian students attending, invited by a fellow student who is very faithful.

## Prayer Requests

- **Health:** My annual cancer follow-up will be at the end of May. Please pray that all goes well.
- **Future ministry opportunities:** still planning to begin some English classes and ladies' ministries
- **Ongoing financial needs:** monthly support and a few special needs

I know that many of you are also struggling due to the current world situation and its financial effects. Thank you so very, very much to each of you who give sacrificially to support my serving here in Japan. May God richly bless you!

In His Service,

*Ethel*

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**Serving at:** Toyohashi Grace Baptist Church

## February 2022

Thank you so very much for your continuing prayers. It has been exciting to see all that the Lord has been doing here at Toyohashi Grace Baptist Church (Megumi Baptist in Japanese). We've had high attendance numbers on several recent Sundays in both the Japanese services and the English services.

### Ministry Activities

December was, as always, a very busy time for ministry. On December 5, we had our Children's Christmas meeting. We were blessed with 6 first-time boys from the neighborhood, one of whom returned the next Sunday bringing his younger brother. December 12 was our main Christmas service in the afternoon. Because of Covid conditions, we hoped for about 40 people, but we had at least 60 in attendance. The pastor from nearby Gamagori Baptist Church (where I served in a transition time a number of years ago) preached, and their handbell choir played several pieces, even inviting me to join them for one song. December 15 was a Ladies' Fellowship with a craft time and then a devotional and tea time at the farm/greenhouse of one of our elderly ladies who could not attend. The group was small but the fellowship was warm (both spiritually and physically). Then on the 19th we held a Thanksgiving and Rejoicing service, praising the Lord for the new property that the church is purchasing (more on that in a future letter) as well as our International Christmas fellowship dinner in the afternoon, in place of our usual English service. The 26th was a praise service for the Lord's blessings throughout the year, and included a time of actually meeting for praise and prayer time on the new property, though our time was brief because snow was beginning to fall. Then as many churches do here in Japan, we held a New Year's Service on January 1.

We have also begun a new children's ministry, Megumi Kidz Klub, that we plan to continue on a monthly basis. This will be a time of songs, games, other fun activities, of course some snacks, but most importantly a Bible story time. Our first one was held on February 19. While we may have had more staff than children (with only 8 in attendance), 5 of those 8 were other first-time visitors from the neighborhood. The mother of one of the girls came also, and shared with the pastor that she recognized the story of Jesus, because her grandmother was a Christian.

### New Home

Thank you for your prayers about my housing situation. Move plans have progressed very quickly in the last month or so. **Please note the new address in the header of this letter.** The Lord has provided a rental condo unit for me in the town next to Toyohashi, cutting my commute time at least in half. While not as convenient to the church as I had hoped, it is very close to the expressway and to 2 train stations, making other travel very convenient when needed. It also meets the needs I had asked prayer for previously (size, accessibility, parking, etc.). Several members of the church family are planning to come help me with packing on at least one day, but *please pray for my physical strength* for the remainder that I'll need to do both before and after the move, and *for wisdom in many additional decisions and details.*

*Please also continue to pray with me for the funds needed.* Praise the Lord for some special gifts that have been given to help with moving expenses, but I'll still be doing a bit of "borrowing from (rather than robbing) Peter to pay Paul" in order to pay the initial deposits, which were even higher than I expected. I will also need the money for the movers by move day, which will be March 16.

### Prayer Requests and Praises

- **Financial needs:** ongoing monthly support needs and several special needs (moving and others)
- **Further ministry opportunities:** hoping to begin some English classes and ladies' ministries soon
- **My brother:** praise the Lord, Bub's eye surgery went well and he seems to be doing quite well. He just celebrated his 58<sup>th</sup> birthday.

May God bless you with a wonderful year for 2022, and may He meet all your needs.

In His Service,

*Ethel*

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**Serving at:** Toyohashi Grace Baptist Church

## November 2021

Thank you so very much for your patience with me. I must apologize for the extreme lateness of this prayer letter. I do not want to offer empty excuses, but please do allow me to say that there have been several reasons that this letter has been delayed. Those reasons could probably be best summarized by saying that the Lord's timing is often not as we expect it to be.

In my last letter, I shared that the Lord had given me peace about some decisions but also asked you to continue to pray for the Lord's guidance in my service for Him. I returned to Japan fully ready to speak with the necessary people right away about changes that I felt the Lord was directing in my ministry. HOWEVER, almost immediately following my return, the Lord showed me that HIS TIMING for those changes was not as soon as I thought it would be. Because of that delay, the Lord has also re-directed in some of what I will be doing. I thought the Lord was shifting my focus to primarily helping with MK education, but He has changed that as well. It has been a challenging period in my life as I've learned lessons once again about trusting the Lord's timing and direction. But trials and challenges are things the Lord uses to help us grow stronger in our Christian lives. **I praise the Lord for the ways He is still working in my life!**

### Changes

So what exactly are these changes? Well, the Lord has led me to serve with another Baptist church here in Central Japan. This is the church that I began helping in February of 2020, just as Covid was ramping up, the sending church of the church planters I was previously assisting. I began officially serving full time at Toyohashi Megumi Baptist Church (or Grace Baptist in English) at the beginning of October. Please know that this change comes with the full approval of my sending pastor, as well as my BIMi Field Director, of course. This was discussed extensively with my pastor while I was home on furlough, and he feels I will have many more ministry opportunities here. I'll share more about that in a future letter.

I had been helping with music in their mid-week service since June (since my other church does not have a mid-week service). Then beginning in July, I was helping a missionary family here with preparation and review prior to beginning homeschooling in August. There was much to do, since the children had been in Japanese school for the previous year. September and October became extremely intense and busy with helping in homeschooling, and then also with helping the family prepare for an unexpected furlough needed for them to figure out how to best meet some educational needs that neither the wife nor I are equipped to handle.

As you might expect, this change in ministry will necessitate a change of residence. The city of Toyohashi is about an hour from where I currently live, so I will need to move there to be able to truly minister effectively. I have been looking at apartments online, and have now also begun the in-person search for just the right place to live. Here's where a serious prayer request comes in. Moving is quite expensive here in Japan, with several month's worth of rent usually needed in deposits and fees. Honestly, I have been just scraping by financially with my monthly support for the last several months and was unable to raise any new support on my last furlough. Therefore I do not have any funds in savings to defray any of these expenses. ***Please pray that the Lord will provide all of the funds needed for the move and for setting things up in the new location.***

### Prayer Requests

- **Financial needs:** finances for the move, additional monthly support, other special needs
- **Ministry opportunities:** ladies' and children's ministry, English ministries, openness following Covid
- **My brother's health:** in addition to the health issue mentioned previously, he will be having cataract surgery later this month. It's hard to know just how this may affect him; please pray for it to improve his quality of life.
- **Finding the right apartment:** larger living room and bedroom (for ministry and guests), adequate closet space, easy accessibility, convenient parking space

As always, thank you for partnering with me to share the gospel in Japan. I could not be here without your help and your prayers.

In His Service,

*Ethel*

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April 2021

## Finishing Furlough

It hardly seems possible, but this furlough is nearly over, and I am working on returning to Japan. This has certainly not been a “normal” furlough, nor the furlough that I expected. Due to surgery, recovery, severe winter weather, and covid, I was not able to travel to many churches. I certainly enjoyed the time I was able to spend at my home church and the few other churches I was able to visit. I’m thankful for the technology that allowed me to watch services online (sometimes multiple services) when health and/or weather prohibited me from being there in person.

The Lord certainly provided guidance and care regarding the medical situation I mentioned in my previous letter. I ended up needing a fairly major surgery (a non-cancerous colon resection). That was followed by four days in the hospital and several weeks of recovery. The surgeon had to remove more than she expected, but the Lord kept me from some possible complications that might have prevented my being able to return to Japan.

I am currently traveling to return the car I’ve been leasing and will then be flying to Washington state before returning to Japan. I am very happy that I will be able to spend some time with my brother before I return. I am scheduled to depart the U.S. on May 7, arriving in Japan on May 8. I will need to self-quarantine for 2 weeks once I arrive.

### Praises

- Successful surgery and recovery
- God’s provision of a wonderful Christian surgeon
- Financial provision for my medical bills
- Rent-free places to stay during various stages of this furlough
- Safety while traveling (though travel has been limited)
- Being able to see my brother
- God’s peace regarding several decisions that needed to be made

### Prayer Requests

- Safety and health for the remainder of the trip. There are some health needs still to be addressed (mostly joint issues) that I feel will be better and more economically addressed once I return to Japan, but they make travel difficult. Please pray that the Lord will keep me from experiencing too much pain since I’ve been taken off my main pain medicine because it can complicate the problem that made surgery necessary.
- My brother has developed a health issue that is somewhat common in older people with Downs Syndrome. At 57, he’s considered in the older portion of the Downs population.
- Additional financial needs, including some non-medical special needs as well as additional necessary monthly support
- God’s continued guidance in my future of ministering for Him

Thank you all so much for partnering with me as I seek to continue serving the Lord in the country of Japan. I could not be there without both your financial support and your prayer support.

In His Service,

*Ethel*



A prayer letter from...

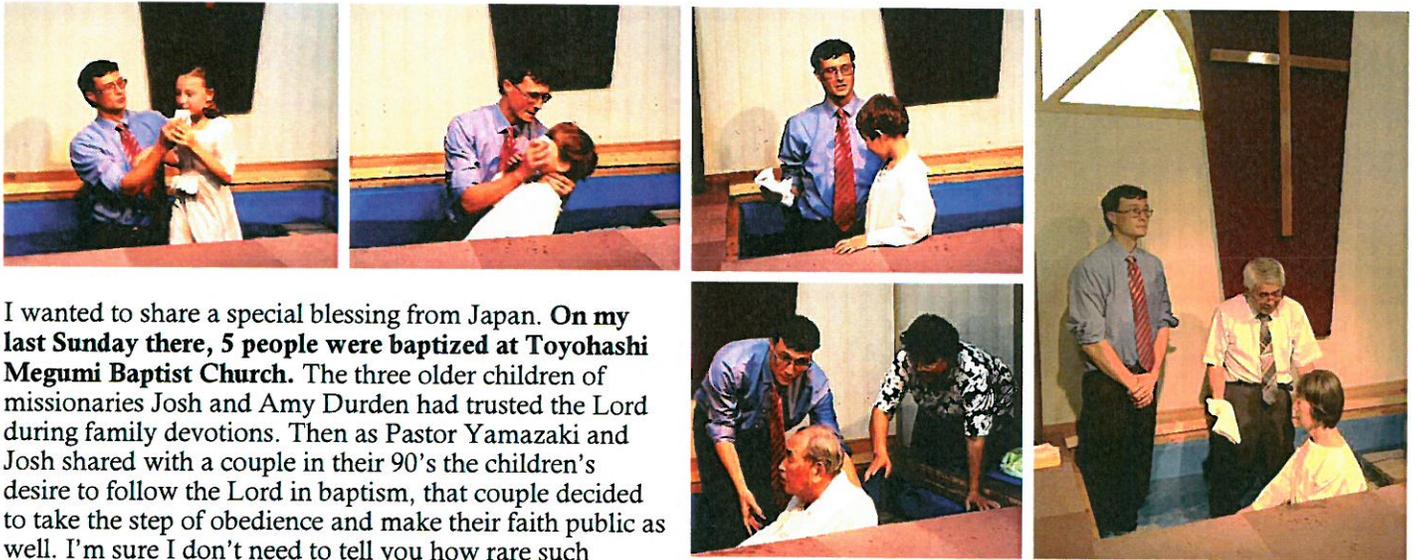
*Ethel Wilson*

December 5, 2020

Christmas greetings, dear friends and prayer partners. Thank you so much for your prayers regarding travel for this furlough and for other needs. I am so very thankful for the extra financial gifts that several of you have sent to help with additional furlough expenses.

It was a blessing to attend my home church's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and Conference, and then to participate in the Midyear Missions Emphasis of a nearby supporting church. I enjoyed reconnecting with many friends and former co-workers in both churches. I've also been able to stop in at a few other churches in my home area. However, due to a rather odd medical situation that has arisen, further scheduling is on hold for the moment.

I would really appreciate your prayers for this medical issue. *Please pray that the Lord will give the doctors wisdom regarding what path to pursue, and that He will give me wisdom in many decisions that will need to be made. Please also pray with me for the Lord's financial provision for these unexpected medical expenses, especially with medical costs being higher here in the United States.*



I wanted to share a special blessing from Japan. **On my last Sunday there, 5 people were baptized at Toyohashi Megumi Baptist Church.** The three older children of missionaries Josh and Amy Durden had trusted the Lord during family devotions. Then as Pastor Yamazaki and Josh shared with a couple in their 90's the children's desire to follow the Lord in baptism, that couple decided to take the step of obedience and make their faith public as well. I'm sure I don't need to tell you how rare such decisions are for people of that age, especially in Japan. **Praise the Lord for His working in hearts of all ages!**

Finally, a mundane but necessary matter. In order to be the best stewards possible of the funds the Lord provides, the friend who assists in mailing my prayer letters and I would really like to reduce the number of hard copies, sending primarily to those who do not have email, and to those who truly WANT to receive my prayer letter and ARE PRAYING for my ministry. We have carefully combed over our combined records, and I will be contacting some of you directly to ensure that you are not receiving double copies. **If you are praying for me and desire to continue to receive a hard copy** (even if you are not able to support me financially), **PLEASE contact me to ensure that we keep you on the mailing list.** Those who do not contact me and have never communicated with me may be removed from the list. Also, if any of you should need my mailing address for any reason, please contact me via email or the telephone number below since my schedule and location are rather unsettled at this time.

In His Service,

*Ethel*

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**Serving at:** Baptist Megumi Chapel

June 2020

It's hard to believe it's already mid-June. Thank you so much for your graciousness in waiting on this prayer letter. It certainly has been an interesting few months, and there have been some challenges and changes along the way.

## Challenges

I know that all of us worldwide have been affected by this new coronavirus in one way or another. Many churches here continued to meet during February and March because the congregations are generally small. However, once the country declared a state of emergency, two of the three churches I'm associated with went to online services; and the main church I've been serving with reduced to just the pastor's family for their services. I definitely struggled with worse-than-normal loneliness and with cabin fever at times. But what a wonderful opportunity to spend extra time in fellowship with our Lord. And how thankful I am for modern technology that allows God's Word to go forth even during these trying times. Our "lockdown" conditions weren't nearly as strict here as in many other countries, but we were encouraged to avoid non-essential travel, close contact with others, and closed spaces. Masks are already very much a custom here for cold and flu season, so wearing them is nothing new.

My health has been fine, including another all-clear cancer check-up in late May. I did have a slight health scare at the beginning of April though. I had begun to run a fever and developed a cough. Knowing that a respiratory infection can quickly take a bad turn for me, I went to the doctor fairly early. However, when they heard that I had been in contact with a traveling American within the two previous weeks, they became alarmed and sent me for a covid-19 test. **Praise the Lord, the results were negative, and the antibiotic that was prescribed took care of the infection very quickly.**

I also faced an unexpected financial challenge in late March/early April. I was very surprised to learn that my current city handles some things differently than the city in which I had previously lived. This resulted in a several unexpected past and current tax and national health insurance premium bills. **The Lord has already provided in some amazing ways to meet many of those needs.** But I will also be facing additional expenses to meet these continuing increased needs going forward. ***Please pray with me that the Lord would provide the needed increased monthly support to meet these and other needs.***

## Changes

*"As for God, his way is perfect..." Psalm 18:30*

In early May life changed from very quiet to very busy. I unexpectedly became the host to a dear missionary family of 6 who stayed in my home for a month as they are looking toward making a transition. My approximately 900 square foot apartment was a bit crowded with 7 of us, but we managed and are still close friends. ***Please pray that the Lord will continue to guide, bless, and direct the Durden family as they move back to Aichi prefecture.***

I had planned to begin a several-month furlough in July of this year. However, before I was even able to begin contacting pastors and churches to schedule meetings, travel restrictions began to be implemented. I'm so glad that none of the craziness of pandemics and other problems takes the Lord by surprise. I am still uncertain as to what my furlough plans may be. Before I leave Japan, I want to make sure that I will be able to return. ***Please pray that the Lord will give me wisdom as to when He would have me take my next furlough or other trip stateside.*** As many of you know, I try to visit my special needs brother once a year, but I have now not had the opportunity to see him in almost 2 ½ years.

The Lord also seems to be leading in a slight change in where and how I'm serving Him. In mid-February the pastor I have been serving under was asked by his sending pastor if I could serve with them for a while. Pastor Yamazaki (the sending pastor) spent a couple of months in the hospital, and he and his wife were asking if I could help with their English ministry and assist in some other ways for a while. I served with them until the end of March, and then services transitioned as I mentioned above. With the recent resumption of services, they are requesting that I be allowed to continue to serve with them part of the time. Thus for the foreseeable future I will be splitting my time between Baptist Megumi Chapel in Okazaki and Toyohashi Megumi Baptist Church. ***Please pray that the Lord will use me in these two sister churches and that both churches will be used to reach more souls for Him.***

In His Service,

*Ethel*

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January 2020



**What a blessing it is to share that Baptist Megumi Chapel has had its first baptism!** Mr. Yamamoto trusted Christ as Savior a few years ago, but he had struggled with the issue of baptism. However, on December 1 he made his commitment to the Lord public. A small house church sometimes has to get creative for baptism; a portable swimming pool set up in front of the Yoritas home functioned well. The Lord gave us a warm, sunny day, even though it was winter. Please pray for this new church member as he is battling some health issues.

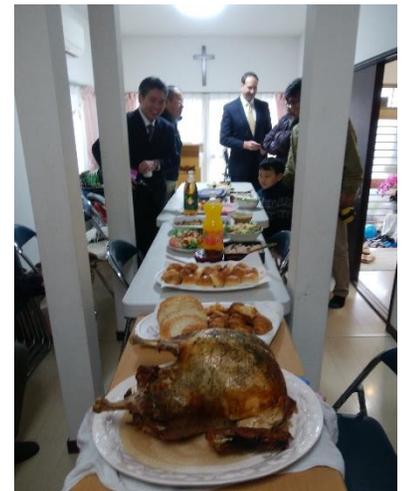


### Christmas Services

We were blessed to have two neighborhood boys come for both the Children's Christmas event and the main Christmas Service. A few other visitors joined us also for the Christmas service, including one special needs boy and his father who have been coming to children's English on Sunday mornings, as well as one of Pastor Yorita's co-workers and his family. **Please pray with us that visitors will return for regular services.**



The children seemed to enjoy the games, mini-cake decorating, and the manger-scene craft which reinforced the Christmas story told with paper puppets. The Christmas service included several music specials, and following the message, a Christmas luncheon, complete with turkey. **Please pray that those who came will remember the message of Jesus Christ that they heard during those services.**



**Thank you so much for your prayers, your faithful giving, and for the extra Christmas gifts and Christmas cards.**

In His Service, *Ethel*



*Ethel Wilson*

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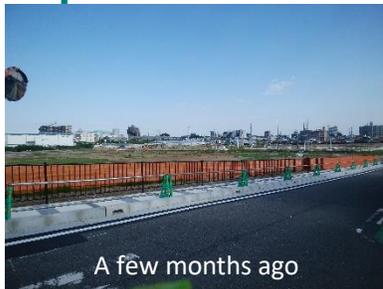
September 2019

## Opportunities

When looking for a location to start a new church, there are certain conditions that are often sought in Japan – nearness to a train station or a bus stop, visible location, well-traveled street, etc. The Yoritas had these things in mind when they began Baptist Megumi Chapel; thus they were a bit baffled when the only place the Lord opened up for them to be able to get a home in which they would be starting the church was tucked away in a residential area with no visibility. They also found that there were some additional challenges because it is an older area and most of the families have long-established ties to the local temple and/or shrine. They have served here faithfully for seven years despite these challenges.



Already under construction



A few months ago

Right next to this residential area was a large factory. However, a couple of years ago the factory closed. The ground was cleared and sat vacant for some time. This area is now being developed as a new housing area, with one of the entrances directly across from the street the church is on. We are very excited about the new opportunities for outreach

Same area now



Sign pointing the way to Baptist Megumi Chapel



that these new homes represent. The plans include over 350 houses being built – that's over 350 families to potentially reach with the gospel of Christ. Building began recently, and several homes have already been completed. **Please pray for us as we seek to reach this new area with the message of the Savior.**



View from directly in front of the church



View from the end of our street

On November 24 there will be a special outreach that I have requested prayer for in previous letters. We will be having a Christmas concert at a large community center very near the church and this new housing area. The concert will feature music from members of sister churches nearby as well as Pastor and Mrs. Yorita. Pastor Asada from Gamagori Baptist Church will be the speaker. We are in the final stages of preparing a flyer to advertise this event and our other Christmas services. **Please pray that we will have the needed strength and health for passing out these flyers, and that many people will come with open hearts.**

## Additional Prayer Requests

Here are some other things you can help me pray about:

1. New visitors, salvation of souls, and effective ministry at Baptist Megumi Chapel
2. Additional needed monthly support, especially as sales tax on many items increases from 8% to 10% starting in October
3. Guidance regarding the timing of, and financial provision for, my next trip home to check on my brother and visit some supporting churches
4. Guidance and details regarding a necessary change for my stateside "address of record"

Thank you so much for your faithful prayers.

In His Service,

*Ethel*

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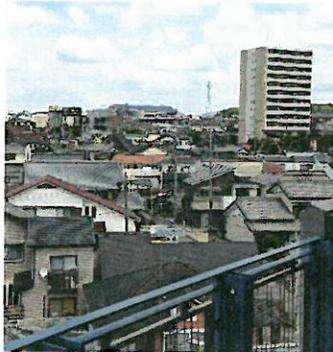
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May 2019

As always, I want to say thank you for partnering with me to reach Japan with the gospel. Each of my supporters, in both financial and prayer support, is a very important part of the team here. I am especially thankful for two churches who sent a special financial gift in April to help toward my upcoming vehicle expense and to help with medical expenses.

### Easter Services



Thank you so much for praying for our Easter services. We had printed 2000 flyers and were able to distribute all of them. It is legal to place items in mailboxes here, so that was our main method of distribution. I am so very



thankful that the Lord has given me improved health and reduction in joint pain so that I was able to distribute over 600 of those flyers personally over a period of several days. Nearly all the homes in these 3 pictures (all taken from my back balcony) have now received information about the Lord Jesus Christ and our church.



**Praise the Lord we had 7 children and 10 adults** (including the Pastor's family and myself), with 5 of the adults and 4 of the children being first time visitors. **Please pray now that some of these will return** to hear more of the message of God's love and salvation through His Son. One of the moms and 2 girls (her daughter and a friend) had to leave after the Sunday School time, but she lives in my apartment building, and I will be beginning English lessons this week with the daughter. **Please pray that this contact will lead to the Matsumura family being open spiritually.**

### Finances

I really don't like to talk much about finances. In my 22 years with BIMl and 18 years on the field, the Lord has never failed to meet my needs, and I know He never will. However, since some of you have asked specifically about my needs, I thought I would give a little more information about two requests that I've had before you for a while.

The first would be the replacement of my current vehicle. It is still running well, but it is 17 years old. As a single woman who is usually on the road alone, sometimes for long distances, I need to be wise in considering a replacement. There is an inspection due every two years that starts at nearly \$1000, IF there is nothing on the vehicle that needs to be repaired. That inspection is due at the beginning of July. It would seem to make more sense to put that money toward a newer vehicle. Last summer's move depleted any reserves I had, and I have not been able to put much aside since then. Through gifts from a couple of churches and the little that I *have* been able to save, I do have some funds available for a down payment. I would rather not have to make car payments, but I don't see any other option at this point. **Please pray with me that the Lord will provide all the needed funds for a vehicle** in His time and in His way. If the Lord should lead you to help with this special need, please make a notation to that effect with funds sent to BIMl.

The second area is monthly support. I am extremely thankful for the sacrificial support that many of you send regularly, or as you are able. In my previous place of ministry, I had a couple of supplemental income sources that helped meet the frequent shortfall of financial support, but that is no longer the case. My average support for the past year has been about \$900 per month below what it should be. Although I've been praying for 5 new supporting churches or individuals (and the Lord has provided 2 in the last year), there is actually a need for more like 10-15 new supporters. **Would you PLEASE pray with me SERIOUSLY about whether the Lord would have you join my financial support team?**

### Prayer Requests

In addition to the needs mentioned above, please continue to pray with me for the following:

1. **Health check-** May 30 will be my cancer follow-up and a check for another issue that is being monitored.
2. **Planning for a special outreach in November – Praise:** we were able to schedule the venue that we were praying about for this outreach; please pray now for plans for this meeting and for many to attend.
3. **Baptist Megumi Chapel** – new visitors, salvation of souls, and effective ministry

In His Service,  
*Ethel*

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**Serving at:** Baptist Megumi Chapel

March 2019

**Thank you** once again for your many prayers. Your prayers for our Christmas services were very much appreciated. We had 2 first-time visitors for our children's service and one for our adult service, as well as some returning visitors. One of the sisters who visited on December 9 indicated that she would like to come back, but due to school scheduling she has not been able to do so. Thank you also for praying for my November cancer follow-up. Everything was all clear.

### Health

The beginning of 2019 has been a very rough time physically. It started in early January with bronchitis (which always triggers an asthma flare-up), followed by an assortment of issues, and finally ending with me spending 10 days in the hospital with a deep vein blood clot in the beginning of March. It was a very frustrating time to have to miss being in the Lord's house for several Sundays. Everything has finally been resolved, and I'm very thankful to finally be feeling much better and to be able to be back serving the Lord in His local church. **Please pray that all will go well with my next cancer follow-up in Yokohama at the end of May** as well as another situation the hospital there is monitoring.

### Ministry

Due to my health issues I was unable to begin teaching Sunday School at the beginning of the year as planned. However, as we start the new school year (and Sunday School year) in April, the plan is for me to begin alternating weeks teaching the Bible lesson. I will also continue helping with music, memory work, English ministry and whatever else will be of assistance. **Please pray that more children will begin coming.**

### The Church

I wanted to share with you a bit more about the church. While the name may be Baptist Megumi Chapel, the church was started as a fully independent Baptist church. The church was begun in 2012, but is still a very small work, meeting in the pastor's home. They were able to find a house that had space that they could convert into an area for the church to meet, though that meant giving up what would have been their living room and part of their dining room space. Although over the years they have had several people attend for periods of time, currently there is mainly one gentleman attending semi-regularly besides the Pastor's family and myself. Some have moved on because of work transfers, some have faced opposition from their families, others have simply quit coming for unknown reasons. I think often of the parable of the sower. Please pray that the Lord will send us people with hearts prepared as good soil for receiving the Word of God, and that He will enable us to till the soil and prepare the ground in other hearts. **PLEASE pray for the church to be able to minister to more souls and for the church to grow.**

As is often the case in Japan, Pastor Yorita is a bi-vocational pastor. He works for a shipping company full time, alternating day shift and night shift week to week. Despite this hectic schedule, his messages are challenging, and he is always encouraging and upbeat about trusting the Lord's timing in what He is doing with His church. Mrs. Yorita works part time as well, assisting at the pre-school of Gamagori Baptist Church (our sister church in a nearby town). They have 2 sons who will be entering 7th and 5th grades in April. Junior high can often be very challenging for Christian young people in Japan. **Please pray for the Lord to continue to strengthen and encourage the Yorita family.** I am so very thankful for the blessing they have been in my life, especially during my recent hospital stay.

Recently Baptist Megumi Chapel was featured one Sunday during the Missions Emphasis Month of Gamagori Baptist Church (where I served in 2007-2008). We moved our service to the afternoon so that we could join them in their morning service. I had the opportunity to share a testimony of how the Lord has led me to return to this area. I was then very encouraged to be reminded, as Mrs. Yorita shared her testimony, that they had been praying for someone to be able to come and assist them, and that she especially had been praying about assistance in precisely the areas that I'm able to help with. What a blessing that the Lord gives encouragement just when we need it.

### Prayer Requests

In addition to the needs mentioned above, please continue to pray with me for the following:

1. **Easter services** – we have printed 2000 flyers and are currently working on distributing them
2. **Planning for a special outreach in November** – especially for the details of location
3. **Wisdom and finances for replacing my vehicle** – timing, type of vehicle, and many other details
4. **Necessary additional monthly support** – whether through new supporters and/or current support increases

In His Service,

*Ethel*

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April 2018

As furlough rapidly draws to a close, I wanted to be sure to give some updates before I return to Japan. I also want to thank you for your many Christmas greetings and for some special Christmas offerings. What a blessing it is to have such a wonderful prayer and financial support team.

### Travels

Things have not always gone quite as planned, but I know that the Lord's plans are always better than mine. I had asked you to pray about my vehicle situation. Over a week after I returned to Virginia in January, the organization from which I've been leasing finally had to send me a different vehicle and haul the first one back to their shop.

I had also asked you to pray about scheduling of visits to churches. From the end of February through most of April I have been traveling. I was able to visit two churches that had been supporting me for a few years even though I had never visited them, several others that I had not been back to for a long time, and a couple of churches that were new to me. My travels took me through Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, to Michigan to drop off the van, then back home to Virginia. In addition to churches, I've also been able to visit many dear friends – some from the church in Yokosuka, some from college, some from my sending church who have moved away, and some who are former students. There were wonderful times of refreshment, some sweet times of reconciliation, and blessed times of catching up with people I hadn't seen in many years (some over 30 years). I was also blessed with the opportunity to speak with several people who are interested in missions.

### Transitions

For reasons of His own, the Lord kept me at my home church through most of the month of February. During that time I spent much time praying about whether my future includes continuing in Yokosuka. After much prayer, as well as consulting with my home pastor, my BIMI field director, and the new pastor of Yokosuka Baptist Church, we have all come to the conclusion that the Lord would have me move on to another ministry. The Lord has not yet shown me where that will be. However, I have spoken with my pastor and my field director about several possibilities for other locations in which I might serve the Lord in Japan. ***Please pray with me that the Lord will show me soon where my next place of ministry is to be.***

I am ticketed to return to Japan on May 15 (arriving May 16). I plan to be at Yokosuka Baptist Church for a few services, and then plan to visit several other ministries. ***Please pray that the Lord will give me safety in travel.***

### Needs

Once the Lord directs me to my next place of ministry, I will need to make plans for the move. Moving in Japan can be quite expensive. Please pray with me for the provision of the ***finances needed for the move***. I would ask that you also pray with me about ***a few specific items concerning my new home: size*** that will allow me to host people in my home, ***rent*** that is affordable, ***access*** that is easier on me physically, and ***parking*** that provides easy access to my residence.

I will also probably be putting a lot more miles on my 16-year-old car during this transition time. ***Please pray with me that the Lord will keep it running well and keep me safe on the roads.*** Please also pray with me that the Lord will provide needed funds when that car needs to be replaced by something newer. ***I am very thankful that one of my supporting churches gave me a sizable Christmas gift specifically to start on my vehicle fund.***

The alternative to gas, road tolls, and additional mileage would be train fares and possible car rentals. ***Please pray that the Lord will give me wisdom.*** I am also still in need of some ***additional monthly support.*** Your prayers for all these details and in so many other things mean so much to me. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate each of you, my dear prayer partners!

In His Service,

*Ethel*

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# Rejoice

## WORSHIP THE KING

Christmas Greetings to everyone who is a part of my prayer support team and financial support team. I praise the Lord for each church and individual who partners with me to help reach Japan with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Thank you so much for your prayers.

Currently I have the blessing of being able to visit with some dear friends in the Chicago area, former members of Yokosuka Baptist Church. Another former YBC family are members of their church, and I will get to see them on Sunday. On top of that, a current YBC member (sister of the lady where I'm staying) is visiting from Japan, and another former member and her two sons will be arriving on Saturday. What fun to have a mini Yokosuka Baptist Church reunion here in the US. Then on Christmas Day I will be flying out to Washington state to visit my brother as well as other family and friends.

With my Pastor's blessing and approval, I spent some additional time at my home church in November and early December. It has truly been a blessing to reconnect with many church families and to get to know some new families. I have also had the blessing of singing with the choir and especially enjoyed being able to sing in their Christmas concert.

During the month of October, I was on the road a good bit. I flew to Missouri to pick up a van from an agency that leases vehicles to missionaries. I visited dear friends and their church (a long-time supporting church) in Perryville, Missouri. From there I traveled to BIMi to meet with my Field Director. Then I made my way up to Wytheville, Virginia for a wedding, and then a Missions Conference at the same church. My next stop was Troy, Ohio to meet up with a family who are on deputation, planning to serve in Yokosuka soon. While there I was blessed to be able to stay in the home of a family who visited our church in Japan for a Christmas concert several years ago. Finally I made my way home to Fairfax, Virginia, only to get on a plane three days later to fly out to a supporting church in Lewisville, Texas, where a former student would be preaching that Sunday, and to attend an alumni fellowship of their Christian school in which I used to teach. It was a very busy month, but full of many blessings, including being able to see, and even stay with, friends that I hadn't seen in many years.

Prayerfully, I will be able to begin more travel and visit various churches once I return to northern Virginia in January. ***Please pray for scheduling and for the vehicle that I have been leasing*** (it is currently in the shop, for the third time). While the vehicle repairs are covered by the agency from which I lease the car, I do have some extra financial needs at this time including the actual lease fee for the car and a significant increase in my health insurance premiums during the time I'm in the states. ***Would you please pray with me about these financial needs?***

As I've visited a few supporting churches, I've noticed that some who post pictures of their missionaries have an outdated picture of me, in some cases my original picture from deputation (which was nearly 20 years ago). Since I had pictures taken for a new prayer card, if you would like an updated picture, please email me and I will be glad to send you one.

Finally let me update you regarding the situation at Yokosuka Baptist Church. Praise the Lord the church has called BIMi missionary Mike Pinson as pastor. He and his wife plan to move to Japan in January. The other couple I mentioned, the Edwards, plan to go over in January also. ***Please pray for their visas, for a smooth transition, and for church growth.***

I pray that the Lord will give each of you a wonderful, blessed, Merry Christmas.

In HIS Service,





*Ethel Wilson*

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**Serving at:** Yokosuka Baptist Church

March, 2017

## Japanese Ministry

I continue to praise the Lord for His work in our Japanese ministry. Megumi, who trusted Christ as Savior on Christmas Day, followed the Lord in baptism on January 8. I am working with her on a discipleship Bible study. It is exciting to see her desire to study God's Word and to see her learn so many things that are so completely new to her. I have also started a discipleship Bible study with another of our Japanese believers who was saved through a sister BIMI military church, but has changed jobs and is now living here in Yokosuka. She has been attending our church for quite a while; please pray that she will join the church and become an active part of the ministry here.



## Other Blessings

It was exciting to see another of my former pre-primary students be baptized, along with her older sister. It's such a privilege to have had a part in the lives of these little ones.

I was also excited to learn of how the Lord is working in the lives of a brother and sister who were a part of the church planting ministry I was first involved with here in Japan. The brother has surrendered to full time Christian service, and recently left his job in order to train for the ministry. The sister has recently been saved and is in discipleship Bible studies. What a blessing to see how the Lord is working in these lives all these years later.



In February, we had our annual Missions Conference. It was a privilege to have my BIMI Field Director, Bro. David Harris and his wife and son here. YBC is praising the Lord for an increase in our Faith Promise Missions Commitment, even though we are losing a large number of families to military transfer this year.

## Spring Revival

April 16-19 we will have a revival with Evangelist Bob Jones. The revival will start on Easter Sunday, when the choir will also present a very short cantata. *Please pray that God will use the music and the revival preaching to work in many hearts.*



## Upcoming Furlough

Lord willing, I am planning to take a furlough from the latter part of August to around the end of the year. I would love to be able to visit all of my supporting churches as well as some new churches. However, since that will not be possible, I would like to concentrate on several churches that I have never revisited since deputation (1998-2000), a couple of churches that have taken me on for support without me ever having visited, some others that I have not been to in many years, and some new churches as I continue to pray for 5 new supporting churches. I've had a problem with losing a number of email addresses in computer transitions; therefore, **if you are one of those churches and would like me to visit from September to December, please contact me at the email address given in the letterhead.**

## Praises and Prayer Requests

### Praise the Lord for the following:

- Peace and direction regarding the matters for which I asked you to pray for wisdom
- Guidance from the Lord to postpone trying to move until after my furlough

### Please pray with me about the following:

- *Good results on upcoming medical check (cancer follow-up)*
- *Scheduling of meetings and all other furlough details (especially the need of a car)*
- *Five new supporting churches*

As always, I continue to praise the Lord for my prayer and financial support team. I pray that the Lord will bless each of you.

In His Service,

*Ethel*

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December 2016  
**Ministry Blessings**  
**Japanese Ministry**



How we are rejoicing in the way the Lord has recently blessed in our Japanese ministry! Two dear ladies and one high school girl have been saved recently. **Yurina** trusted Christ the second Sunday she came to YBC and was baptized the very next Sunday. **Ena** (pictured in the center) accepted Christ on her very first visit, the Sunday after our Revival. Our Deacon's wife, Ms. Ruby (left in the picture) and I had the privilege of going through the plan of salvation with her. And **Megumi** came with one of our Japanese members on Christmas Sunday and trusted the Lord as her Savior that day. It was exciting to see how the Lord had used her friend Ms. Hideko to lay the groundwork in preparing her for making that decision. Please pray for the growth of all three of these dear souls and that perhaps the Lord would allow me to disciple the two who live in this area.

**Christmas Cantata**

Praise the Lord for His blessings and help for our choir, drama team, and the director getting everything ready for our Christmas cantata. The attendance was good, and there were two rededication decisions following. Please pray that the message of the concept of "If Jesus Had Not Come" will continue to echo in the hearts of all who were present.



## Banquets and Revival

We enjoyed a great time of fellowship during our Thanksgiving and Christmas banquets. And the Lord worked in many hearts during our December Revival with Evangelist Richard Harper.



## Praises and Prayer Requests

Praise the Lord for the following:

- The extension of my stay (visa renewal) was granted for another three years.
- I just received another clean bill of health from my cancer doctor.
- The dollar to yen rate has once again improved.



Please pray with me about the following:

- ***I still need wisdom regarding some ministry matters.***
- ***I still need to find a new place to live (with fewer or no stairs, easier on my knees).***
- ***The Lord has put it on my heart to pray specifically for 5 new supporting churches.***

As always, I am very thankful for all of you who support me faithfully financially and with your prayers. Thank you for the many Christmas cards and extra financial Christmas gifts. May the Lord greatly bless you for the abundant love you have shown to this missionary.

In His Service,

*Ethel*



*Ethel Wilson*

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September 2016  
**Ministry Blessings**

**Praise the Lord for His wonderful blessings during VBS in August!**

Starting with 57 children on the first day, and going to a high attendance of 70 later in the week, we had the privilege of touching the lives of 89 children over the course of the week. **There were 19 who prayed to trust Christ as their Savior, and 4 who received counseling regarding assurance of salvation. 7 of those who were saved were Japanese children** (4 of my students and 3 visitors). **Please pray for the spiritual growth of all of these new believers.** Please also pray that new families may be reached through VBS follow-up.



It was a privilege to serve as a co-director alongside another of our ladies. But an even greater privilege was being one of the teachers as the children rotated through lesson time, crafts, science, games, and snacks.



We had a great staff who worked together well. And all of the kids seemed to have a great time.



Because we are very limited on space, we had to get a little creative. We were thankful that the city hall was willing to give us permission to use a nearby park for our game time. And our science sessions were held outside in our small parking area.



**Prayer Needs**

Would you please pray with me about the following things:

- *for our choir (and this choir director) as we prepare for the Christmas cantata scheduled for December 4*
- *for continuing need for wisdom regarding some ministry matters*
- *for diligence in seeking to find a new place to live*
- *for a much-needed increase in average monthly support whether from current supporters or from new financial supporters*
- *for approval of the extension of my period of stay in Japan (essentially visa renewal)*

In His Service,

*Ethel*

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**Serving at:** Yokosuka Baptist Church

June 2016

*“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:” Psalm 103:2*

One of our men preached on this passage recently. What a great reminder to count our blessings!

### Ministry Blessings

I mentioned in my last letter the salvation of one of the boys I used to teach in the pre-primary Sunday School class. What a blessing it was to see him be baptized recently (picture on the left), along with a sister and brother who were also in the same class. It is so exciting to see these little ones take this step of obedience.



The Lord continues to bless here at Yokosuka Baptist Church. Our attendance has been high, with the Sunday morning service averaging nearly 120. We continue to see people saved regularly, and have had **at least** one new member or member family each month so far this year. One that was a special blessing occurred recently—a young man from the states, who had visited with his mother and sister several times in years past while they were here visiting his Japanese grandparents, has returned to spend a year with his grandparents. On his first Sunday here he joined our church, and did so ready to serve the Lord—in fact he joined the choir that very evening.

Perhaps the biggest blessing—**our Japanese lay leader was able to lead his elderly mother to the Lord recently.**

### Personal Blessings

On my annual trip home to visit my brother, I was able to make a brief stop at my home church. What a blessing to be there for their Ladies' Seminar. It was so nice to reconnect with my home base, albeit briefly. Then I was able to attend a Majesty Music conference in another state. This was a blessing that I hope will help with the choir and music ministry the Lord has given me. The time spent with my brother was a blessing too. He is doing well.

My most recent health check once again showed no significant changes. I praise the Lord for this blessing also.

### Prayer Needs

**Please pray for our Vacation Bible School, August 8-12.** We have several new children registered already along with most of our regular church kids. Some of my Japanese students' parents have expressed interest in them coming; please pray that some will come and that the Lord will open their hearts and give them understanding.

Please also pray about the following matters:

- for Ms. Fukuda, whom I had the opportunity to speak with for an extended time during our most recent ladies' soul-winning, to open her heart to the message of the tract she received and to come visit our church so that we might be able to share the gospel with her more fully
- for wisdom in some ministry decisions that are on my heart
- for guidance in finding a new place to live that would be easier on my knees (that is, fewer stairs)
- for an increase in average monthly support and/or more favorable yen rate once again

In His Service,

*Ethel*

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March 2016

Greetings once again from Japan. Having recently had another follow-up check and receiving a clean bill of health, I praise the Lord for the opportunity to continue serving Him in 2016. I just celebrated my 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Japan at the end of February.

### End of 2015

The end of 2015 was a busy time with our Thanksgiving banquet, a Wednesday through Sunday Revival with Dr. Ron White and two wonderful young musicians, our Christmas cantata, Christmas banquet, and New Year's Eve service. As I mentioned in a previous letter, the Lord is allowing me to serve as the choir director at present, so December was **especially** busy with preparations for the cantata just one week after the revival.

I wanted to share four particularly special decisions from that time period with you. Following our Thanksgiving Banquet, Mutsumi, who had been attending for a few months, trusted Christ as her Savior. Soon after that Micah (whom I used to teach in the pre-primary class) decided to trust Christ as his Savior. On the same day, a Korean man who, for about a year, had attended regularly with his saved wife and their children (whom I also taught) finally made the decision to accept Christ. And then, one of our dear Japanese ladies who had been saved for quite a while decided to be baptized in early December. We were very excited to see her take this step of obedience, but we were very sad that soon after that she and her husband transferred back to the US.

### Beginning of 2016

The Lord has been greatly blessing in the beginning of 2016 too. We have already had several people saved, and have seen over 10 people baptized. We also had a Valentine's banquet, and we just finished one of the most important events on our church calendar—Missions Conference. I am currently at our BIMI Field Conference in Kobe, Japan, held in conjunction with the Kansai Independent Baptist Bible School's week-long Bible Conference.

Another of the areas I help with at Yokosuka Baptist Church, is the preparation of banners, invitations, and other printed materials. Thus these recent months have been very busy for me with the preparation of Thanksgiving, Revival, Christmas, and Missions Conference/Easter invitations, as well as our 2016 Theme banner and a banner for Missions Conference. In addition, I was able to work on designing new signage for our church to make it more visible to those walking or driving past.



I continue to be involved in teaching English classes (2 days per week), secretarial duties (1 day per week), arranging the pianist and translator schedules, playing the piano, translating, directing the choir (as previously mentioned), Ladies' Soul Winning (twice per month), and helping with anything else the Pastor requests. I am also enrolled in a 3-year video Bible course and am very thankful that I will be finishing this semester.

### Looking Forward

I would ask you to pray for the following upcoming events: **Easter Sunday** with a special music package by our choir, and **Vacation Bible School** in August. The choir is working very hard in preparation for Easter, and the VBS co-director and I are already busy planning and preparing for VBS. Please pray that God will work in hearts during both of these special times.

In His Service,

*Ethel*

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October 2015

## Visiting Japanese Churches



In August and September I had the opportunity to visit two very special Japanese churches. In August, I was able to spend a few days up in the mountains. While there I was able to visit a church pastored by one of the graduates of the Kansai Independent Baptist Bible School (started by BIMI missionaries many years ago). It was a sweet time of fellowship with Baba-sensei, his wife and daughter, and three of their church members on a Wednesday night. They were getting ready to celebrate their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a church the following Sunday.

because friends who were members were getting married at the church. He later began attending the church, and in time trusted Christ as Savior. Following his conversion, he began inviting his hair salon customers to church. The lady in the peach sweater finally began to come, and a few months later, she trusted Christ. Another lady (the one in the dark blue shirt) was lead to the Lord by retired missionary Roland Simeonsson and his wife at their lake-front cabin further up in the mountains, when she visited the lake with her husband who likes to fish. She just went along for the ride, but met someone who was fishing for souls. I had just visited the Simeonssons that day, so meeting this lady they had led to the Lord was an extra blessing.

It was such a blessing hearing the salvation testimony of each person present. The gentleman at the right first came to church



Then in September I was able to visit the Gamagori Baptist Church, which was started by Bro. Roland Simeonsson. Bro. Simeonsson was speaking at the church's 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary. What a blessing it was to see once again how greatly the Lord has blessed this church over the years! It was also exciting to be there for the sending out of a church planter who was trained for the ministry in the Central Japan Baptist Bible College (a ministry of Gamagori Baptist Church and Toyohashi Baptist Church). I served in Gamagori for a year before coming to Yokosuka (and taught English in their pre-school for several years before that), so it was wonderful to fellowship with dear friends who became very special to me during the time I lived and served there.

My heart is still very much in Japanese ministry. However, I also thoroughly enjoy serving in a military church, and still believe that the Lord would have me continue serving here at Yokosuka Baptist Church. ***Please pray that the Lord would guide us in goals, ideas, and plans for reaching more Japanese souls for Him, along with U.S. military, civilian employees, expatriates, and those of other nationalities as well.***

## Thank You

Once again I want to say **thank you** to all of you who are part of my financial support team, and **especially** to all of you who pray for me. I mentioned in my last prayer letter than another mass was being checked for cancer. What a thrill it was to read the doctor's report, "no indication of malignancy"! I will go for follow-up checks for my previous cancer and for this new area once again in November. Thank you for continuing to uphold me with your prayers.

In His Service,

*Ethel*

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July 2015

## Ministry Updates



**February—I had the opportunity to lead Ayano to the Lord.** Just like Rie whom I led to the Lord in January, it was on her first visit to the church, but she had a background of knowing some things about Christianity and salvation because of Christian friends and going to a Baptist church with her home stay family in New Zealand. Please pray that she will come back to church so that we may help her grow.

I also had the opportunity to host BIMI missionaries Ron and Barbara Parrott in my home. It was a blessing to have extra time to fellowship with them.



**March – May**—It was once again my turn to teach the pre-primary Sunday School class. Near the end of that time **one of my students trusted Christ as Savior**, led to the Lord by her mom. In March, I was able to attend our BIMI Field Conference for fellowship with other missionaries from around Japan and to hear great, challenging, encouraging preaching.

**June**—From the end of May through most of June, I was able to be in the States for a mini-furlough. I spent about 10 days with my brother and his family, and then attended the wedding of two young adults who met here at Yokosuka Baptist Church. Following that **I was able to visit a few churches in the Midwest**—some supporting churches, and (prayerfully) some potential supporting churches. Two of those churches are pastored by former students. What a blessing it is to see the Lord using these men in the ministry! It was also a blessing to be able to visit a college roommate, several friends from my home church, and a friend from college that I hadn't seen in the MANY years since I graduated.

**July**—This month has been a time of trying to get some rest to recuperate from the trip (this old body doesn't handle travel like it used to), get some ongoing medical attention, get back into the swing of things here, and help with preparations for our **Missions Conference coming up August 5-9.**

**Yokosuka Baptist Church**—God continues to bless here at YBC. **We continue to see people saved**, including one other Japanese lady. Our average attendance for all services is higher than it has been in several years. Of course, it's not all about the numbers, but this is certainly an encouragement because it means more people are having the opportunity to hear the gospel and to grow in and serve the Lord.

**New area of ministry**—The Lord has lead in allowing me to serve in a new area of ministry—**choir director.** We have been without a director for most of this year because our director's husband was transferred back to the US. At first I felt that the Lord was telling me to wait, and knew that my schedule wouldn't allow me to take over. As my schedule shifted, He began to burden my heart about this ministry. Pastor Navato was in agreement with me taking this on. **Please pray that the Lord will guide me and use me in this new endeavor for HIS honor and glory.**

## Health Update

My last cancer check was shortly before my trip to the US, and results I received after returning indicated that all is well regarding the original cancer. However, in a regular check of another area, a spot was discovered that the doctors are mildly concerned about. I am in the process of tests to have this checked further. Please pray that it will be nothing, or at most a benign mass. Whatever the outcome, I know that the Lord has it all under control.

## Apologies

I do apologize for the lapse of time since my last prayer letter. Between ministry, daily life, travel planning, and travel time and recovery, time just somehow got away from me. Thank you as always for your faithfulness and support, even when you don't hear from me as often as you would like. Please continue to keep me and the work of the Lord here in Japan in your prayers.

In His Service,

*Ethel*

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January 2015

*“As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him:  
for he refresheth the soul of his masters.” Prov. 25:13*

### Praising the Lord

I have some news that I know will be refreshing to your souls as my financial and prayer supporters. It is always my prayer that I will be a faithful messenger in sharing the gospel. I remember being told by my home pastor that the Lord often rewards faithfulness in handing out tracts by giving other unrelated opportunities to share the gospel and lead people to Christ. Recently, I had such an experience.

One Thursday, as part of my office duties, I visited the police station to turn in our application for a permit to hand out tracts for the next month. There was an unfamiliar officer on duty at the permit desk, and instead of merely accepting the application with the attached bilingual tracts, he commented on the title of the tract—“How to Go to Heaven.” Since he seemed truly interested in whether we can know for sure, I handed both him and his assistant their own copy of the tract from my purse. I wasn’t sure they would accept it there at work, but I was glad that they did.

I then proceeded to a nearby stationery store and noticed that a song from Handel’s Messiah (which I love) was playing. As I made my purchase, I began to discuss the music with the owner. He told me he had sung the Hallelujah Chorus in choir when he had gone to a Christian high school. (There are several of these, colleges too, throughout the country, originally started by missionaries; but many are now Christian in name only.) Once again, I had the opportunity to share a bit about our church and give him a tract.

We have not seen any of these men come to church yet. However, the very next Sunday, we had several other Japanese visitors in our service. Following the morning service, the wife of one of our deacons came to me with one of the Japanese visitors, saying, “She wants to know how to become a Christian, but I can’t explain in Japanese.” So this young lady and I went into the Pastor’s office, and I explained the plan of salvation to her, using the same gospel tract I’d been handing out just days before. She had previously attended a Japanese Christian university and her fiancé is a Christian; therefore, she already had some background to help her understand what we were talking about. After we went through the gospel plan carefully, she prayed to trust Christ as her Savior. Praise the Lord!

### Thankful

*“Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain.” Prov. 25:14*

A study note for this verse made me think about my supporters the other day. I am so thankful for the many faithful financial supporters that the Lord has given me who are NOT like the verse above—NOT like clouds and wind that fail to bring that which is promised. Your gift of promised support is such a blessing to me, enabling me to be here on the field serving our Lord. I know that many churches have been going through difficult financial times, and I appreciate your sacrifices. I also appreciate the faithful prayer support of those who cannot or do not feel led to support me financially at this time. Together, all of us are a team.

### Health Update

Shortly after my last prayer letter, I ended up in the hospital once again—this time with pneumonia (and this time a different hospital). I often wonder what the Lord has in mind with these various illnesses and hospital stays. I am thankful though that I was able to give a tract to a lady in her 80’s who was suffering from lung cancer and had been given a very discouraging report from her doctor. She was not open to talk with me about spiritual things, but I’m thankful that she was at least willing to receive a tract and said that she would read it.

There are so many needs here. Please pray that the Lord will continue to use me to help reach the Japanese people. Please continue to pray also for our military families, that we will be able to reach many of them as well. Thank you again, for being part of my support team. May the Lord bless you for it.

In His Service, *Ethel*

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Summer-Fall 2014

I must apologize for the lateness of this letter. Wow, October already? I don't know what to say except that time simply got away from me. Please know that I appreciate your prayers and your support, and will try to do better in keeping you informed of how you can better pray for me and of how things are going in the ministry here in Yokosuka, Japan.

### Ministry

The Lord continues to surprise me with the things He has for me to do. Recently that includes becoming one of the two regular teachers for the Pre-Primary class, alternating every few weeks. (You may remember I helped fill in last year while the previous teacher was out for the birth of a child.) I didn't realize how much I was missing teaching Sunday School until I received the materials and began looking through them. This may not be my "preferred" group, but what a precious opportunity it is to be a part of training these precious young ones in the things of God.

English ministries continue, but I LONG to see more fruit from them. Please pray that the children's hearts will be open and receptive to God's word, that I will be faithful to include the Bible time in every single class, and that families will be reached through these children. It encourages me that many Japanese adults' testimonies include first hearing about God and His Word through a missionary English teacher. However, sometimes it's hard to be patient and take the long view.

I continue to assist in the church office, and have recently added a few more responsibilities in that area. It is my prayer that even the mundane tasks of office work will be used by the Lord for His glory and honor. I also continue to assist with interpretation and in the music ministry.

### Health

One of the areas in which I continue to covet your prayers is in the area of my health. My cancer checks have continued to be clear. However, I have been struggling with some other health issues, including a 10-day hospital stay in late May for a bowel issue. I praise the Lord for His goodness. The problem was fairly serious, but the doctors opted to try to avoid surgery (successfully, praise the Lord), and treated with IV antibiotics and IV nutrition, nothing but water by mouth for several days. I am VERY THANKFUL that I did not have to go through another surgery. I have also been having increased problems with knee pain, and some other joint pain as well. I have started going to another type of doctor for therapy for these issues. Please pray that it will be effective.

### Praises

I praise the Lord for the many souls that have come to Christ here at Yokosuka Baptist Church. We have had one Japanese lady and a young man whose mom is Japanese come to Christ in the last few months. While our Japanese lay-leader was counseling with the young man, I was able to talk with his younger sister and confirm that she had already trusted Christ as her Savior.

And while it has been sad to say goodbye to so many of our members who have been transferred to other bases, it has been a blessing to hear of many of them finding good local churches to join in their new locations. It has also been a blessing to receive several new members into our church, including two more families who were members here previously and have returned.

### Prayer Requests

1. For God's blessing on our fall and Christmas activities and services
2. For salvation of souls, growth of Christians, changes in lives, and for new members to join us
3. For the re-building of our Japanese ministry in God's perfect timing
4. For continued health needs and strength to serve the Lord
5. For consistent adequate support

Once again, THANK YOU for your continued prayer support, financial support, and patience.

In His Service,

*Ethel*

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Spring 2014

It's cherry blossom season again in Japan, and I am reminded of how different things are this year compared to last year. Last year I enjoyed the cherry blossoms on a day pass from the hospital, with a scarf on my bald head, and was still recovering from my chemo burns. This year I'm able to enjoy them with new hair growing on my head, no hospitalization, no more chemo, and best of all, another "no sign of cancer" report from my doctor. Praise the Lord for all He has done! I am so very thankful that the Lord has granted me more time to continue to serve Him here in Japan.



## Updates



**Travel**—I enjoyed being able to spend about three weeks back in the U.S., primarily to celebrate my brother's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday and take him on a little trip. In spite of snow delays, we were able to enjoy several days visiting my home church and the D.C. area as well as visiting my "Japanese daughter" in Pensacola, Florida. Before returning to Japan, I was able to visit several friends who have transferred to the San Diego area from our church here in Yokosuka (Aquino, Balares, and Kadoya families at left), visit West Coast Baptist College and try to be a blessing to several young people there, and see two dear Christian friends.

**Missions Revival**—It was a blessing to have Dr. David Snyder, General Director of BIMl, as our main speaker. His messages were a challenge and a blessing to my own heart as well as to our church family. Three people prayed to trust Christ as Savior. Three of our children (plus one of the newly-saved adults) surrendered for baptism, and four individuals surrendered for full-time service. Please pray for all of these as they continue to follow the Lord.

**BIMl Field Conference**—It was also a blessing to be able to attend our BIMl Field Conference, which included the missionaries to the military as well as missionaries to the Japanese this year. Our conference was held in conjunction with the Kansai Independent Baptist Bible School Bible Conference. What a blessing to sing hymns and hear messages in Japanese as well as English, to see so many faithful Japanese servants of God, and to fellowship with other missionaries!

On the way home, I was able to visit the church in Anjo (in Central Japan) where I assisted when I first came to the field. I was able to share a testimony of how the Lord has sustained me through my cancer battle. What a blessing to see the work that the Lord is doing there and to see how it has grown!

**New Members**—While it has been sad to say goodbye to several members being transferred, the Lord has already brought some new families and singles our way, including one family who were members here previously. We have several other families and singles who will be transferred in the next few months. *Please continue to pray that the Lord will allow us to reach many new incoming families and singles.*

## Thank you

As always, I want to thank you for partnering with me in seeking to reach souls for Christ here in Japan. Your prayers and your continued financial support allow me to continue to serve here. Please pray that the Lord will give "fruit that may abound to your account." (Phil 4:17)

By His Grace,

*Ethel*

## Prayer Requests

1. For our Easter Cantata—for many visitors to come and for God to speak to many hearts.
2. For continued good health and strength to serve the Lord
3. For salvation of souls, growth of Christians, changes in lives, and new members to join us
4. For the re-building of our Japanese ministry
5. For continued adequate support