



## MISSIONARIES TO JAPAN

MODERN-DAY MACEDONIA

"AND AFTER HE HAD SEEN THE VISION, IMMEDIATELY WE ENDEAVOURED TO GO INTO MACEDONIA, ASSUREDLY GATHERING THAT THE LORD HAD CALLED US FOR TO PREACH THE GOSPEL UNTO THEM."  
ACTS 16:10

Covering September 2023

### Our Last Month in Hokkaido

Dear Partners in the Work of God,

Glory to God! He has given us a victorious finish to our six-month term as the interim pastor of the Immanuel Seisho ("Bible") Baptist Church of Nayoro, Hokkaido. We are writing this praise report from our new home and church office in Kisarazu, Chiba, where we are getting ready to begin soft-opening services at the Kisarazu Kibō ("Hope") Baptist Church, our first church plant in Japan. This report will cover all that God did in our final month in Hokkaido, as well as a summary of what He has done in our small rural town during our last six months there in one of the northernmost communities in Japan.

### Danielle's Journey

As this was our last full month in Hokkaido, we decided to take anyone who came to our afternoon service to fellowship at one of the many scenic locations around the church every Sunday. It was a great blessing to spend this extra special time with those we have had the honor of serving for the last six months. To our surprise, we had a returning regular on Sunday, September 17. This elderly man is still an unbeliever, but he came faithfully before the pandemic. He has only started coming on special occasions since, but it was a great blessing to be able to minister to him in church every Sunday during the latter half of the month. On the 24<sup>th</sup>, we had Bro. & Mrs. Yamagami join us for a service, as they will be taking care of this church during the month of October until the Smith family, the missionary pastor of this work, returns at the beginning of November. They graciously honored us with a surprise send-off on that day. Bro. Kai, one of the faithful regular attendees at our church who has been growing rapidly in his walk with God in recent days, walked down the aisle that day during the invitation to make the wonderful decision to rely on God's strength to overcome challenges rather than his own. The week following was our final classes with our English students. Those who have gotten saved made a craft with a verse of Scripture in it to remind them of who they now are in Christ, and those who are still unsaved were witnessed to once again. Please continue to pray for these children. October 1 was our final Sunday there, and God gave us a wonderful service, as the majority of those we have had the privilege of connecting with thus far in Hokkaido came to worship with us. A part of our hearts will always be with these people, and it was painful to leave them after investing six months there. We trust that God will continue to build this wonderful church for His honor and glory.

*Our last month in Hokkaido was a bittersweet time. I was filled with all the excitement of moving to a new city to begin a work of our own, but that also came with so many sad goodbyes. Though Hokkaido took me completely out of my comfort zone, I grew to love it. I will miss everyone there so much! I've loved all the students I've had the privilege of teaching English to and, of course, everyone who visited our church. I'm so thankful for the salvations that we had the privilege of seeing and the many new friends who helped us navigate life in Hokkaido. I faced many "firsts" during our time there: my first souls led to Christ in Japanese, my first experience as a pastor's wife, my first experience as a children's ministry leader and church pianist, as well as cooking for a group on a weekly basis. I learned so much during my time there, and I'm so glad that God gave us the opportunity to serve in Nayoro. Thank you so much for your continued prayers as we take what we learned and apply it to our upcoming work in Kisarazu, Chiba.*

We first arrived in Japan's northernmost island and prefecture of Hokkaido on March 30 of this year and immediately began our work of covering for the Smith family during their furlough to the United States. In many ways, Hokkaido acts as a different country from the rest of Japan, though they speak the same language. They have a completely different history and climate, and they even have roots with different people groups and thus a different culture and way of life. In addition, living and ministering in rural Japan comes with vastly different challenges than in Japan's megacities, which my wife and I have only experienced before coming to Nayoro. The last six months have been a time of trial and growth, being completely taken out of our comfort zone, yet simultaneously bearing the heaviest responsibility we have had thus far. There are people who have stopped coming since our arrival who were coming regularly before. We have had weeks of services where it was just my wife and me, and on those days, we committed to worship Him as if the room was full, as our God is worthy. Though we have never felt so weak and insufficient, God has taught us that indeed, His strength is made perfect in our weakness. **In the last 6 months, we have seen 13 Japanese children and 3 Japanese adults trust Christ as their personal Saviour, with 2 of them following in believer's baptism. We have seen a Japanese young man grow rapidly in his walk with God and remain strong in his faith even after we left.** As we make our transition to Kisarazu to face the even greater challenge of planting a church from zero, we are going with more faith than ever before that God will work in spite of our weakness so that He alone may be glorified, just as He did in Nayoro. **Our first soft-opening service will begin right away on October 22, by faith and for His glory, as we begin our outreach here.** Please pray that God would be glorified through the Kisarazu Kibō Baptist Church!

Your friends and co-laborers to Japan,  
Go and Danielle Oishi

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