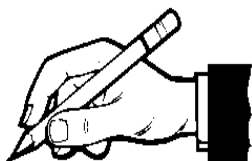


JAPANESE MINISTRIES

Deputation Report

*Ron & Debbie Galbreath
Joseph, Samuel, Elijah, Hannah*



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Dear Friends,

We have just been through one of the busiest years of our lives. In April of 2001 we returned to the States for almost 11 months of deputation. God blessed us with a full deputation schedule. Even during the month of December when it is so difficult to schedule, we were blessed with more than 3 services a week. We traveled through Washington, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and South Dakota.

On July 30, 2001, Hannah Elizabeth joined the Galbreath family. She was born on a Monday and hasn't missed a church service in her life. She's already traveled several states and across the Pacific.

We returned to Hachinohe on February 16, 2002. The very first Sunday after returning to Japan, we began holding services. The young Japanese woman who took care of Hope Church in our absence left for Tokyo on March 4th to get married. We lived out of boxes for a long time. With all the demands of ministry, we couldn't find any extra time to unpack.

Now, several months after setting foot back in Japan, we are finally getting around to completing some overdue reports, newsletters, taxes, etc. We look forward to giving you an update on what's happening in the lives of the people we are ministering to here.

Thank you for your support and prayers. You are helping us make a difference in a dark world.

Partners in the Harvest,

Ron, Debbie, and family



Eiji Takahashi*

As many of you know, we have been praying for a permanent church building for a long time. It has been 5 years since we had our first service here. Now with an average of 25 on Sunday mornings our church is one of the largest in Hachinohe, but still meets in our small rented home. Space is a premium in a crowded country like Japan. It is very difficult and expensive to rent meeting halls. One of our first goals for this term in Japan is to find land and build a permanent church building. Without a permanent place of worship, it is doubtful that this new church, in spite of all of our efforts to get it started, would continue to exist after we are no longer here.

Among the many hurdles we must jump in order to see this vision become a reality are finding affordable land to purchase and a Japanese architect to help with the design. Without a Japanese architect it is impossible to obtain the necessary building permits or know the Japanese building codes.

Within just a few days after we returned to Hachinohe a miracle began to take place. On a trip to visit one of our church families I happened to notice a new building going up. Normally I wouldn't look twice at a construction site, but this time, for some reason, I couldn't get it out of my mind. I felt that at the very least I should find out who was doing the construction and ask some general questions. I wanted to know how much it would cost to have a church building designed, and whether or not it would be feasible to use volunteers and American construction materials in the building.

For the next several days these thoughts kept rattling in my mind. I couldn't seem to shake them. On the one hand, I had this nagging thought that I should go and look up who was doing the building so that I could at least ask some questions. On the other hand, I kept telling myself that it wouldn't do any good anyway. Construction companies are interested in making money and our church is definitely not a place where they could make any. About two weeks

from the day I first saw the building, I happened to be driving through that same area of town. It was a slushy, snowy Saturday afternoon in March. I was in a hurry because I still had hours of preparation for Sunday's services. I hesitated, but thought, "It's now or never." I turned up the road and went to the construction site.

Obviously everyone had gone home for the day. The entryway was barricaded. I pulled the car off to the side of the road and looked at the sign. As required by Japanese law, the names, addresses, and phone numbers of the architectural firm and construction company were posted on the temporary fence that surrounded the new building. I copied down the name and phone number of the architect and headed for home.

Once home I mentioned to Debbie that I had copied down the information, but was hesitant to call. They probably would just put me off anyway. But then I thought, "What do I have to lose? If we're ever going to have a church building here, it's going to require a miracle. If God is in this, then He'll work it out. If nothing comes of it, we're no worse off than we are right now. If I'm going to call at all, I might as well call today."

I hung up the phone feeling like I had done all I could do. . . . Thirty minutes later the phone rang.

Even though it was late Saturday afternoon by that time, I called the number I had written down. A secretary answered the phone. I explained that I was the pastor of Nozomi Kirisuto Kyokai (Hope Christ Church), and that I was interested in talking to someone about building a church. Just as I had expected, they told me that the architect/owner had already left for the day and wouldn't be back until the middle of the following week. If I would like, I could try calling back then. They didn't sound interested at all in helping us.

I hung up the phone feeling like I had done all I could do. I doubted that it would be worth my time to call back the next week. Thirty minutes later the phone rang. It was the architect. He had been in another part of the building when I called previously. On his way out of the office, he returned to his desk and found a note saying that I

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had called. He said, "When I saw that you were a church, I called immediately. I have wanted to design a church for a long time. If you plan to build, please let me do the design." I told him that we didn't own any land and didn't even have any land in mind at this time. I simply wanted to get an idea of what the possibilities were, and what would be required so that we could plan for the future. I told him that if he were willing I would like to make an appointment to talk to him sometime. To my surprise, he volunteered to come over to our church/house immediately.

We learned that the architect's name was Eiji Takahashi. He is one of the most highly respected and accomplished architects in our state. The building that we had seen was a \$20 million structure for a newspaper company. His company's commission just for the design of that one building was \$1 million. We were curious about why Mr. Takahashi should take such an interest in us. He was not a Christian and had never attended church. When he was 3 years old he said he had attended a Catholic preschool, the only exposure to Christianity he had ever had. The only explanation he gave us was that he wanted the privilege of designing a church.

I explained that we would be on an extremely tight budget and a completely unknown timeline. I told him that we couldn't possibly afford the cost of a Japanese construction company, so if at all possible we would like to bring volunteer carpenters from churches in the States to do as

much of the work that is permissible. Then in a sweep of boldness I said, "Would you be willing to design a church for us as a volunteer?" I was shocked to hear his answer, "Yes." Not only did Mr. Takahashi volunteer to help with the design, he said that he would be willing to oversee the whole building project. He also told us that he would use his influence to find companies that would allow our volunteers to do the wiring and

plumbing under their construction licenses if we could find qualified volunteers.

Since that time, we have had a growing relationship with Mr. Takahashi. He has actually become someone that we consider a personal friend.

He has helped us in our search for land and helped us deal with the city planning division. In the beginning he told us that he was not interested in religion and asked us to not try to convert him, but over the past few months we have had the opportunity to talk about faith several times. He even attended our Sunday worship service once. Mr. Takahashi's attitude has changed from saying that he is not interested in religion to acknowledging his need for God.

Please continue to pray for Mr. Takahashi's salvation, and that God will perform all of the miracles necessary so that a church can be built in Hachinohe.

*Names have been changed.



Our church family in Hachinohe, Japan

Memories of Deputation:

Eleven months on the road left us with some memories that we won't soon forget. We marvel at how God's hand led us each step of the way. Here are just a few of the thoughts that come to mind as we recall our visit to the States.

- Traveling full time with 4 kids under the age of 6. Whew!
- Driving thousands of miles with our whole family packed in a white Honda (Civic).
- Expanding to a Plymouth Grand Voyager (it's white, too).
- Seeing our Grandpas and Grandmas, aunts, uncles, and cousins.



The kids saw sheep for the first time in Buhl, Idaho.

- Traveling while pregnant, delivering Hannah on a Monday morning, and not missing a service.
- Driving through Yellowstone Park, the Grand Tetons, the Badlands (SD), and Mount Rushmore (SD).

- Ron spraining his ankle when he was jogging through the cemetery in Newcastle, WY. He was watching the mule deer and stepped into a pothole.

- Generous people all over the Northwest - helping with food, lodging, and kids' clothing.

- Getting vaccinations - 6 at a time! Ouch!



A cow moose in Alaska. This is not the one I ran into while jogging. I was too scared to take a picture that time.

- Running into a moose and her calf while jogging in Anchorage.

- Listening to Christian radio stations, something we never hear in Japan.

- Forgetting Elijah's shoes at a friend's house and having to get by without them for several weeks.

- Forgetting Ron's suit

at the church in Saratoga, WY and driving two hours to retrieve it. Debbie and the boys waited at McDonalds.

- In Wyoming going jogging one morning in June and finding a house with the yard all decorated with tinsel for Christmas. (The sprinkler had come on early in the morning spraying the trees and grass with water that changed into a beautiful display of icicles.)
- Around midnight one Sunday evening nearly hitting a big mule deer on the Interstate near Casper, Wyoming
- Bathing in the river hot spring in Saratoga, Wyoming

- Visiting farms, the kids getting to ride horses, milk goats and cows, see emu and sheep for the first time.

- Making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches in the car as we travel down the highway (just try it when you hit a bump in the road!)

- Never finding the "hidden" key to the cabin we were supposed to stay in for the night.

- At another place, finding the hidden key only to discover that they hid the WRONG keys!

- Birthday party for the boys.

- Taking the kids fishing at a trout farm! The fish sure were biting!



Emu in Deer Lodge, Montana

- Kids' first ever Thanksgiving and Christmas in the States.

- 9-11 – Driving in the car on the way from Bigfork to Stevensville, Montana for a Tuesday evening missions service. We just knew it had to be a hoax when we

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turned on our radio at noon and heard Paul Harvey.

- Visiting libraries and playgrounds all across the country.
- Driving on ice and snow in Idaho, Montana and Eastern Washington.
- Getting word from Japan that our church treasurer had suddenly quit the church. How could we train someone else to do the job from the States?

to be at the convenience store at the same time we stopped for a potty break after several hours on the road. What a surprise to bump into someone we know! A special thanks for blessing us with food supplies, too!



We stopped to get this picture on our drive through the Grand Tetons. We were on our way from Idaho Falls, Idaho to Dubois, Wyoming.



We all got to visit Mt. Rushmore in South Dakota for the first time.

- On a dark, rainy evening in front of the church that we are scheduled to speak in.... locking the keys in the van, with the engine still running.



A park in American Falls, ID. The park was just across the street from the church where we stayed several nights. There was a public library across the street, which also blessed us.

- Setting off the car alarm at 11:00 at night in Anaconda, MT, and not knowing how to get the horn to stop honking!
- On Christmas Eve, running into Pastor Sinclair (Plains, MT) when we were on our way from Spokane to Whitefish. He just happened

- Locking up the briefcase without knowing the combination to open it.
- Pizza, tacos, olives, salad bars, granola, Wheat Thins, Triscuits, cottage cheese, and Mercedes Dormaier's "leather britches"!
- For the kids, trying their first A&W root beer float.



Soaking in the Saratoga, WY hot spring. We're sitting in the water where the hot spring flows into the river. It was as warm as a hot tub even though the air and river were cold.

Packing luggage and kids back to Japan. We changed planes in San Jose, but some of our checked bags went on to Mexico!



Funny Things Kids Say and Do

Samuel, just a few days before his 4th birthday: Look! If I stand on my tip-toes, I look like I'm 5.

Joseph and Samuel saw a pool table for the first time at Othello Assembly and wanted to know how to play the game. Debbie promised to show them after dinner. Later, that evening, Samuel said that he wanted to know how to play the "water game." Debbie, thinking hard, couldn't figure out what he was talking about. He insisted that she had promised to teach him that "water game." Then it dawned on her that he was talking about pool!

We stayed several nights in the church in Casper, Wyoming. During the daytime we worked on reports, etc., while the kids played in the nursery. They also became good friends with the secretary and maintenance man. One morning, Samuel woke up and said, "Is the cemetery in yet? She's my best friend!!"

We sat down for breakfast one morning, but Elijah's oatmeal was

too hot for him. He has what we call "nekojita" in Japanese. That is literally translated, "cat's tongue" and describes someone who has a low tolerance for hot food or drinks. Anyway, we told Elijah to take a small bite from around the edge of the bowl and "blow on it" before he put it into his mouth. He proceeded to blow his nose over his spoon of oatmeal!

Joseph: Do you know what I wanna be when I grow up?

Mommy: What?

Joseph: An inventor!

Mommy: Oh, what kinds of things do you want to invent?

Joseph: For one thing, I wanna invent a toilet that doesn't make noise and wake everybody up at night!



the mailbag

"We are thankful for servants such as you—your dedication to what God has given you to do. Our prayers are before God on your behalf and the ministry He has placed you in. Pray you are able to reach many souls with the message of salvation in Christ." — Dennis and Susan

"We enjoyed your recent visit. You were a real blessing to us. We sure got a lot more insight into what you are doing and the many trials you go through. May God bless and protect you and your family. I pray that God will bring in many souls for His kingdom." — Shores Fellowship Church

"What a privilege it was to have you and your precious family with us for the missionary service! You did a super job and your ministry is appreciated. We will pray for you each month. God bless you guys!"

— Worland, WY

See photos for this letter in color!

VISIT OUR HOME PAGE AT:

<http://www.japanmin.com>

If you'd like to receive our e-mail

newsletter, just send us a note at

harvest@japanmin.com

PRAYER AND PRAISE:

PTL that an 18-year-old girl made a decision to follow Christ. We featured her in our fall newsletter about 2 years ago. She was demon-possessed and dangerous at the time, threatening to take the lives of our children. Please continue to pray for her, as she still struggles with an abusive situation at home. But, we've seen God work a real miracle in her life.

Please pray for Mrs. Keiko Muraki, a woman in her early 40's. She has several large tumors and will be going in for surgery. She has peace about the situation and is believing God for a good outcome.

Please pray for Mr. Muraki. He has nearly destroyed his family with his gambling habit. He stays

away from home for weeks on end without anyone knowing where he is. Pray that he gets his life back in order before it's too late.

Praise the Lord for bringing Grandma Riyo through a great trial of her faith. We were afraid that she might even turn back to Buddhism from following Christ. Her relationship with her daughter-in-law has also improved.

Pray for a lady in her 30's, the daughter of a family in our church. She is living in Tokyo and having an affair with a married man. Pray that she comes to her senses. We're thankful that she quit her job at a bar. Please pray that she will start going to church, and get her life straightened out. Please pray that God would also give her stressed-out parents peace in this storm.