



June 2020

'You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence...' Psalm 16

Church building project

Thank you to everyone for your prayers and support for the church building project. **Praise God** for the money raised so far. The original budget for the renovation was £28,000 for the basic work and £38,000 including all the finishing (wall paper etc). So far, we have received £32,000 so (barring changes to the budget) we hope to be able to complete the renovation by July 26th as planned. **Please pray** for the money needed to complete all the plans.

The garage to the right of the main building will be extended backwards to make two meeting rooms which we can use for English classes, children's meetings and other groups. In the last week, the area between the church and the garage has been concreted and made into a wide corridor to link the two buildings. This week, the electrics and the floor in the main worship area is being installed. **Please pray** for efficient progress with the work and for safety for everyone on site. **Praise God** for the provision of talented volunteers including Martin Ghent (our regional boss who is leading the project) and Tim (a regular at our church who is experienced in electrics and maintenance).

We are very encouraged that church members are positive about the project and have been keen to visit the site. **Please pray** that they will be of one mind in their support of the project and excited about all that the Lord will do in and through this building.

Coronavirus situation

Praise God that the number of Coronavirus cases in our prefecture is still zero and the national cases have also dropped significantly (to less than 100 new cases per day). As in many other countries, there is still some concern that there may be a second wave of cases. **Please pray** for God's protection from the virus and for a swift end to infections. There are, of course, a range of opinions in the church and in society about how careful we need to be in our area at this stage. **Please pray** that we will be wise in applying the local advice for our area in the church and that we can implement our measures with grace and understanding.

Planning for the future

Our colleagues, the Laus (from Singapore), have now finished working for the church in Hanamaki so that they can prepare to move to Sendai and start their new posting. We are **thankful** for all of their ministry here in Hanamaki over the years. **Please pray** for a smooth transition for them and that God will give them peace through all the change they face. The Yonges, our leaders in Hanamaki, have just over a year left before retirement. Our plan is to use the move to the new church building in July as an opportunity to change our weekly schedule to something that will be sustainable for us as a family if we end up having just us in Hanamaki after the Yonges retire. There are always many ideas for events and ways to meet people that would be good to do. **Please pray** that God would give us wisdom so that we can create a sustainable plan for our ministry in the church. **Please pray** for a good and fruitful last year in Japan for the Yonges.

Church cafes

Despite the need for social distancing and some other restrictions, we are now holding our open church cafes every Thursday and once every two months on a Saturday. **Praise God** for the wide range of people who come to talk in English or Japanese. Mr S, a young man who was studying the bible with our colleague Daniel every week, has suddenly stopped coming and doesn't want to be contacted about Bible study. **Please pray** that we won't lose contact with him and that he will want to resume bible study. Mr Whitestone is a man in his fifties who is interested in all things international and has started coming to the cafe recently. Mark offered to do bible study with him recently and he's not sure if he wants to because he is also taking time to study Buddhism. **Please pray** that he will be open to studying the bible too.

**The Gelsthorpes – working for OMF in a church plant in rural, northern Japan.
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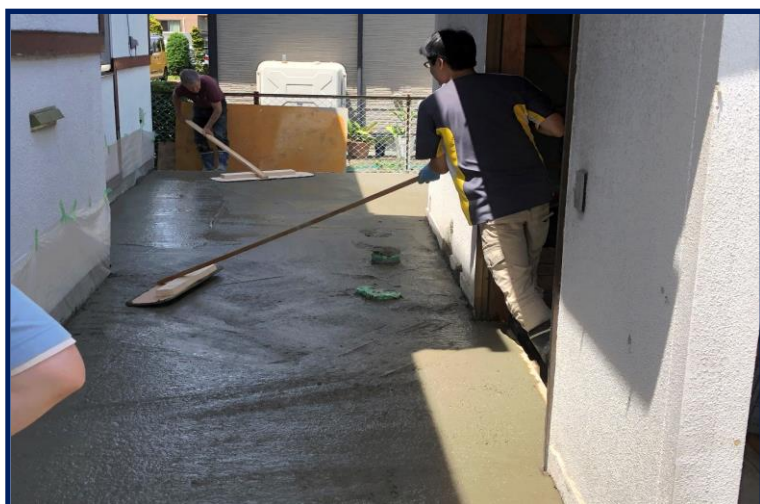
English Fun Club in the park

Now that the advice on meeting in groups in our area has become less strict, we have decided to hold our weekly English Fun Club in a local park. We are **thankful** for this opportunity to have fun outside and the four regular children who come are excited about the change of location. It can be hard to keep the children's attention though as they are desperate to go and play. **Please pray** that Mark can put together a fun program that will keep the children's attention. Recently, one of the children responded to the bible story at the end by questioning whether God really exists. **Please pray** for wisdom in responding to questions like this and that God will lead all these children and their families to believe in Him.

Thank you so much for praying and please let us know how we can pray for you,

With love from

Mark, Sarah, Grace, Isaac and Caleb



Smoothing out concrete at the new church building

The basic shape of the space between the garage and the main building is now in place.



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