

## October 2021

'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'

Hebrews 13v5

### Youth Meeting

On the second of October, we held our second evening Youth Meeting in the church. **Praise God** for the nine children who came and for two mothers who stayed and chatted at the end. Two church members also helped to run the evening. Grace had an encouraging conversation with some of her friends who showed interest in joining a regular bible study. **Please pray** that interest in the Youth Meeting will continue as we plan to hold it weekly from November. Please pray that the three girls who came will come to a regular bible study.

### Grace's Exams

From the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October, we are staying as a family in the OMF Guest Home in Tokyo so that we can support Grace in taking her IGCSE exams. She took her first exam yesterday (History) at the British Council and is working hard revising for all the others. The exams are spread over a month so, after this first section, Grace will be travelling up and down to Tokyo on a regular basis (with the support of OMF colleagues while she is here). **Praise God** that the State of Emergency in Tokyo has been lifted opening the way for us to travel here together.

**Please pray** that all the hard work Grace has put in will be reflected in her results. **Please pray** that all the logistics of getting to and from the exams will work out well.

### Deputy Sector Leader Role

In early November, Mark will hand back the Deputy Sector Leader role for North-East Japan that he has been covering for the past few months. The role includes keeping in touch with and praying for the twenty or so missionaries in the region, making decisions on where people will work and sitting on the Field Leadership Team. **Praise God** for His help with lots of new responsibilities whilst also leading the church in Hanamaki. **Please pray** for all the practical details of organising the regional Members Meeting on November the 3<sup>rd</sup> and for a smooth handing back to Martin Ghent soon after.



### Our Neighbours

**Praise God** that we have good relations with our neighbours. Because the church is so close to where we live (about 50m away), we share many neighbours with the church building. A lady who works in the local COOP and is friendly with Sarah moved next door recently with her husband and three children. The middle child has been to English Fun Club a couple of times and we enjoy chatting to them when we see them. **Please pray** that God will use this relationship to draw them to Christ. Last week, a worker from one of the local businesses called in to thank me for returning something he'd dropped in the street (it wasn't me but was perhaps one of the church members). Every Sunday morning, we stand at the church entrance and greet everyone who passes by before the service. **Please pray** that God will use all these small acts to witness to those in our community.

### General Election

The Japanese parliament has been dissolved ahead of a general election to be held on October the 31<sup>st</sup> (<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2021/10/04/national/politics-diplomacy/kishida-lower-house-election-date/>). The ruling LDP elected a new leader at the end of September and many of the opposition parties have united in hope of toppling the long serving government. Important issues in the parties' manifestoes include growing tensions with China over Taiwan and a growing awareness of LGBT (including one opposition party campaigning for the legalisation of same sex marriage). **Please pray** that God will guide the electorate to choose leaders who can bless the church and maintain an open environment for the gospel.

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### **Hebrews 13v5**

#### **Meetings with local pastors**

**Praise God** for the many good opportunities we have to meet local Japanese pastors. Every couple of months, Mark meets a group of about five local pastors in the 3.11 Network (a network of churches committed to supporting victims of the Great Japanese Earthquake of 2011) for sharing and prayer. A

pastor from Aomori (the prefecture to the north of us) is also introducing Mark to online bible studies to share ideas about effectively sharing the gospel in a Japanese context. **Please pray** that our relationships with local pastors will grow and that God will use these friendships for His glory.

#### **Zoom prayer meeting**

Thank you so much to all those who joined us to pray in September. If you would like to join in October the details are below:

Saturday 30<sup>th</sup>, 9am until 10am

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81165487307>

Passcode: megumi202!

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

Love from Mark, Sarah, Grace, Isaac and Caleb