October 2026
“Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.”
Psalm 90:1

Thank you so much for praying for our time visiting churches and supporters in the UK. We continue to be encouraged by the generous support of everyone.

Returning to Japan
Thank you for praying for our return to Japan. We arrived as planned on the 25th of September and we are temporarily living in the apartment above the church. **Praise God** that we have found a suitable car to buy from a church member and we are currently doing the paperwork. **Please pray** for good meetings with church members, the church Advisory Board and the staff team as we hear about what’s been happening in our absence and plan for the next term.

Encouragements from our time away
Praise God for the many encouragements at the church during our time away in the UK.
Praise God that the church Advisory Board, service leaders and others have taken on many new responsibilities and seem happy to carry on with many of them.
Mrs Rivercrossing was baptised with her daughter a few years ago at our church but had walked away from her faith. **Praise God** that she has had a change of heart and has been doing bible study with her daughter and her mother. **Please pray** for a growing faith for all of them.
Praise God that, every week, a good number of the congregation are memorising a couple of verses of scriptures. One of the regular ladies is leading us in a time of reciting the verses each week after our services. **Please pray** for a growing love for the bible among all of us.
Praise God that numbers in the English classes have increased and a number of new people want to do one-on-one classes with more bible study. **Please pray** for open hearts to hear the gospel and for wisdom for us as a staff team for how many one-to-one classes we can realistically start.

Challenges from our time away
Mr Middle-village is one of the Advisory Board members but has always struggled to come to meetings because of his very busy work schedule. Because of this he is planning on stepping down from all church responsibilities soon. **Please pray** that this will be an opportunity for him to concentrate on growing in his own faith and please pray that we can engage with him wisely in this.
Mr Longbridge is another Advisory Board member who has been preaching once a month. He is very enthusiastic but sometimes struggles on the topic in his sermons. **Please pray** that we can find a good preaching training course to attend as Advisory Board members and that he will grow in his gift of preaching.
Relationships between some of the church ladies remain strained. **Please pray** for forgiveness and grace where feelings have been hurt and wisdom for us in deciding when something needs to be said in these situations.

Discussions about church leadership
We are planning on proposing changes to our church leadership structure so that the structure is more Biblical, creates a good vision for the church as it grows and so that we can address some concerns that have been raised.
Please pray for Mark as he looks at the bible with the Advisory Board in the next couple of months and gets their feedback on our proposals.
Please pray that we will honour God’s vision for the church, that people will feel that their voices are heard and that they can get involved in a way that is manageable and uses their gifts.

Family
Praise God that Caleb had a good half-term in Hebron and enjoyed a big role in the play in Drama Week in October. **Please pray** for wisdom for all of us as we decide whether he will continue at Hebron into A-Levels. **Praise God** for a good start for Isaac at Nottingham University. **Please pray** for good fellowship and witness for him among his fellow students. This is now Grace’s final year in Southampton. **Please pray** for wisdom for her in what to do next.

Please pray that a difficult situation with a previous landlord will be resolved swiftly.

The Gelsthorpes – working for OMF leading a church plant in rural, northern Japan.
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Wedding
You may remember that two of our church members, Kaleb (US) and Elaine (Philippines) were married in February in our church. On October the 31st, we will hold a larger ceremony at the local Christian Camp Area including their friends and family from abroad. **Please pray** for smooth logistics and a very happy celebration of their marriage on the day. **Please pray** for safe travels for their relatives. For many of them, it will be their first time in Japan.

Thank you so much again for praying for us!

With love from Mark, Sarah, Grace, Isaac and Caleb



Praise God for a good time in India for Mark with Caleb



Sunday Service outside in the local park

Praise God for a two week break in Japan for Caleb. Please pray for a safe journey back to Hebron on the 2nd November as Caleb travels alone



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