

# BVVB

May 2017

Editor Janelle Daum

Volume 15, Issue 1

## UPCOMING EVENTS FOR MAY AND BEYOND

### **Birthdays:**

#### **May 2017**

- 4 Reva Kooiker
- 5 Nevaeh Ebright
- 6 Ava Tiffany
- 15 Asher Rundus
- 16 Carlee Osberg
- 20 Janelle (Preston) Daum
- 21 Doris Conradson
- 22 Grace Tiffany
- 30 Trevor Skogan

### **Anniversaries:**

#### **May 2017**

- 11 Cory & Erin Hanson

### **Nursery:**

#### **May 2017**

- 7 Dee Olson & Dan Hanson
- 14 Scott & Nora Sittig
- 21 Marlene Smith
- 28 Aaron Skogan

### **Childrens Worship:**

#### **May 2017**

- 7 Lindy Johnson & Trevor Skogan
- 14 Matt Murphy & Hailey Skogan
- 21 Sara Tiffany & Cade Fox
- 28 Barbara Young & Kyle Skogan

**June 2017**

- 4 Dee Olson & Garrett James
- 11 LaDell Hanson & Megan Questad
- 18 Theresa Friesen & Cade Fox
- 25 Barbara Young & Kyle Skogen

**July 2017**

- 2 2D Gerdes & Trevor Skogen
- 9 LaDell Hanson & Hailey Skogen
- 16 Matt Murphy & Cade Fox
- 23 Barbara Young & Kyle Skogen
- 30 Doris Conradson & Hailey Skogen

**Scripture Reading:****May 2017**

- 7 Theresa Friesen
- 14 Lindy Johnson
- 21 Joan Murphy
- 28 Justin Tiffany

**June 2017**

- 4 Pat Lacey
- 11 Gene Preston
- 18 Lindy Johnson
- 25 Theresa Friesen

**July 2017**

- 2 Lindy Johnson
- 9 Gene Preston
- 16 Joan Murphy
- 23 Justin Tiffany
- 30 Pat Lacey

**Greeters:****May 2017**

- 7 Justin & Sara Tiffany
- 14 Doyle & Barb Young
- 21 Dan & LaDell Hansen
- 28 Lindy Johnson

**June 2017**

- 4 Dan & Joan Murphy
- 11 Ray & Dee Olson
- 18 Pat Lacey & Scott Sittig
- 25 Paul & Pam Osmanson

**July 2017**

- 2 Terry & Chris Kramer
- 9 LeeRoy & Ginger Nelson
- 16 Glen & Doris Conradson
- 23 Aaron & Erica Skogen
- 30 Gene & Judy Preston

**Ushers:****May 2017**

- 7 Scott Sittig
- 14 Justin Tiffany
- 21 Dave James
- 28 Gene Preston

**June 2017**

- 4 Paul Osmanson
- 11 Mike Kresak
- 18 Doyle Young
- 25 Scott Sittig

## **July 2017**

2 Doyle Young  
9 Terry Kramer  
16 Justin Tiffany  
23 Gene Preston  
30 Dave James

## **Events Calendar 2017:**

**Thursday, May 4, 7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.,** Women's Evening Bible Study (at various homes to be announced)

**Sunday, May 7, 9:30 a.m.,** Worship Service

**10:30 a.m.,** Fellowship

**10:40 a.m.,** Sunday School for the Whole Family

**5:30 p.m.,** Congregational Prayer Service

**Thursday, May 11, 7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.,** Women's Evening Bible Study (at various homes to be announced)

**Sunday, May 14, Mother's Day**

**9:30 a.m.,** Worship Service

**10:30 a.m.,** Fellowship

**10:40 a.m.,** Sunday School for the Whole Family

**Thursday, May 18, 7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.,** Women's Evening Bible Study (at various homes to be announced)

**Sunday, May 21, 9:30 a.m.,** Worship Service

**10:30 a.m.,** Fellowship

**10:40 a.m.,** Sunday School for the Whole Family

**5:30 p.m.,** Congregational Prayer Service

### **Newsletter Articles are Due**

**Thursday, May 25, 7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.,** Women's Evening Bible Study (at various homes to be announced)

**Sunday, May 28, 9:30 a.m.,** Worship Service

**10:30 a.m.,** Fellowship

No Sunday School

**Monday, May 29, Memorial Day**

## **NEWS FROM THE MINISTRY TEAM**

MISSION OUTREACH TEAM APRIL 11, 2017 BRANDON VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

PRESENT: Jolene Benson, Theresa Friesen, Joan Murphy, absent, Dee Olson

SCRIPTURE: 1 Peter 3:15-18 The Message (MSG)

13-18 If with heart and soul you're doing good, do you think you can be stopped? Even if you suffer for it, you're still better off. Don't give the opposition a second thought. Through thick and thin, keep your hearts at attention, in adoration before Christ, your Master. Be ready to speak up and tell anyone who asks why you're living the way you are, and always with the utmost courtesy. Keep a clear conscience before God so that when people throw mud at you, none of it will stick. They'll end up realizing that they're the ones who need a bath. It's better to suffer for doing good, if that's what God wants, than to be punished for doing bad. That's what Christ did definitively: suffered because of others' sins, the Righteous One for the unrighteous ones. He went through it all—was put to death and then made alive—to bring us to God.

PRAYER REQUESTS were taken and missionary prayer cards exchanged.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

Matt has information for a 13 gallon garbage can (copper colored, step on, not stainless, too expensive) for women's bathroom and a microfiber spin mop for easier floor cleaning (in top three of top ten mops with thousands of reviews), permission obtained to order, plans to do it this week

April Love Offering (Furniture Mission) \$201

April 23 Gideons at service and offering

May 7 Crystal Springs camp speaker with short presentation and Love Offering. We have one adult and a camper planning to attend.

June is St. Francis House serving, signup sheet to pick a date preferred, servers and cooks

Menu: BBQs, Seven Layer Salad, beans, chips and Ice Cream (possibly pop, both ice cream and pop are treats to them)

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Spotlight on missions (in newsletter to keep people informed and updated on ones we support) and before the week of Love Offering.

Envelopes: As our team receives mail requests, Joan has collected the envelopes for those we send Love Offerings to and will put the month on for Mike.

Amanda Benson, missionary to Philippines: Mike and Jolene Benson will be traveling to visit her and will put out a basket for the congregation to put cards and letters in and they will take them to Amanda (save postage and the long time it takes for mail). They will be leaving May 28.

The team will be putting out tubs to collect clothing, shoes and medical supplies for Guatemala this month.

#### LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORT:

SP Vision: Pastor has three graduations and will give us dates he will be gone soon  
A plan for a welcome packet was decided and Justin will email it to Joan (a small bag containing various items).

Our church will be a referral church for Furniture Mission (Matt Murphy as contact)

WORSHIP: Music surveys in, not tabulated yet

Thursday, April 13 will be our Sedar Meal; Sunrise Service (Trek Awana kids will do a skit and Justin will play, high school students are possibly giving testimonies)

July (the first week – 2nd?) the Allen Family will be here

DISCIPLESHIP: VBS July 16-20 Over the Moat by Baptist Press

Valley Springs Lutheran had props we hope to use

April 8- Kites and eggs social Pre-K through high school, Chet Hsaio gave gospel presentation

CARE TEAM: Late May or June a church social

FINANCIAL: Mike gave a budget update and copies will be available in office, Matt and Mike worked through it to work on making changes to the categories as requested by the team; Mike will let us know when available

## **SPOTLIGHT ON BRANDON VALLEY BAPTIST MISSIONS**

By Outreach Mission Team

THE LOVE OFFERING FOR CRYSTAL SPRINGS IS MAY 7. May 7 we will have a representative from Crystal Springs Camp sharing about the camp we help support. This summer's theme is Stand Firm, Psalm 20:7-8. A full camping

schedule including family camp, kids and teen camps is available in the foyer. First time campers receive a \$25 off registration fee. We have a budget for sending kids to camp and any unused donations for that budget item are sent to Crystal Springs to help with camp scholarships. Please be aware of that if you make a designated donations for camp scholarships. Our love offering on May 7 goes to help with any needs or costs at the camp.

## **WALK TO REMEMBER**

Healing Hope Ministries will be hosting its 2nd Annual Walk to Remember, Pancake Feed and Raffle at the VFW in Brandon on Saturday, June 3 starting at 9:30am. The Pancake Feed will be from 10am-12pm and is a free will donation. The Walk will start at the VFW and then go up to the Elementary Track. No matter the length of life, every child leaves an impression on a parent's heart. We invite you to Walk, Share, Remember the life of a child. Whether you're a parent who has lost a child of any age, a family member, friend or caregiver of a child, all are invited to walk for any child gone too soon. If you'd like to have your child remembered with a memorial sign and their name printed on the t-shirt, please email [karri@healinghopes.com](mailto:karri@healinghopes.com) by May 10. T-shirts can be purchased for \$20 at [www.healinghopes.com](http://www.healinghopes.com) (pre-order by May 10). All proceeds will go to helping Healing Hope Ministries develop a Retreat Center for families who've lost a child at any age, to any cause of death.

Thank you so much! If you have any questions, please let me know. I appreciate your support!!!

God Bless! Karri

Denny & Karri Allen Healing Hope Ministries

## **REALITY CHECK WITH GOD AND YOURSELF**

### **Pastor's Reflections**

What if May did not come? Imagine what Spring would be like if the snows of Winter never melted? There would be no warmth during the day, nor any relief from the cold. Crops could not be planted or food for the next year and starvation would follow. Life as we know it would reach a point of stagnation. It would mean that the earth had changed its axis of rotation, leaving mankind in a permanent state

of winter for us. On the other side of the globe people would be in a permanent state of summer. They would experience no cold or wet because of constant heat. The land would dry and crack, and soon they too would starve but under opposite weather conditions. Isn't it interesting that the two extremes of hot and cold can cause the same ultimate end? I wonder who planned it the way it is?

One doesn't have to be a philosopher or a scientist to know that "times and seasons" are a regular part of life, no matter where you live. In fourteen statements found in Ecclesiastes 3, Solomon affirmed that God did all this to accomplish His will in His created world and in our lives. There is birth and death, planting and harvesting, hurt and healing, casting and gathering, embracing and refraining, getting and losing, tearing and mending, loving and hating. Life is like a doctor's prescription: taken alone, the ingredients might kill you; but properly blended, they bring healing. God is in control and when trusted He can use the times and purposes of life to bring meaning to us. There is a time and purpose for everything.  
- Pastor Merv

### TO MOM WITH LOVE

(Letters on Mother's Day)

Dear Mother: I am going to make dinner for you for Mother's Day. It's going to be a surprise - Your daughter, Angie, 8.

P.S. I hope you like pizza and popcorn.

Dear Mom: I got you a turtle for Mother's Day. I hope you like the turtle I got you this year better than the snake I got you last year. - Your son, Robert, 8.

Dear Mother: I wish Mother's Day wasn't always on Sunday. It would be better if it was on Monday so we would not have to go to school. - Love, Aileen, 9

### **Moments for Moms**

by jacqueline

A point to ponder: "In the darkest moments, when I feel inadequate, unloved, or unworthy,

I remember whose daughter I am and I straighten my crown." author unknown

## CHAIN OF LOVE

In Partnership with NAB

Dear friends at Brandon Valley Baptist Church,

We are excited to introduce you to Chain of Love Homes, our ministry that works in partnership with NAB and provides care and loving homes to impoverished and abused children in Brazil.

Although our ministry was founded over twenty years ago, we've realized factors such as distance mean some NAB churches in North America have been unaware of our ministry.

We are hoping to rectify that and strengthen ties.

Chain of Love Homes was founded by a NAB missionary couple from North America in 1994 to look after children in great jeopardy and to provide them a better life centered on Christ's love and Biblical principles. We have built eight houses on a campus in the city of Campo Bom, Southern Brazil. Each home has up to ten children who are cared for by two loving houseparents, a committed married Christian couple who may also have biological children living in the home. The ministry is now under Brazilian leadership.

In every house we aim to create an environment as close as possible to the routine of an ordinary Christian family. The children study in public schools (homeschooling is prohibited in Brazil), help with daily chores, play, have fun, and are taught about the Bible. Many accept Jesus as their Savior and are baptized. The housemothers spend 24 hours a day on the campus and the house fathers must work off the campus.

We work in partnership with the Judicial System in Brazil: every child who comes to us is sent by judges. They were apprehended from their parents because of mistreatment, neglect, molestation, or several forms of abuse, etc. Some are orphans. Others are what we call orphans of living parents: in spite of having parents, they are treated as if they don't exist.

Chain of Love takes in children from birth to age 12. They don't return to their biological families until their parents regain the ability to safely have them back. In many cases, this never happens, and the children stay with us until they turn 18—the legal age in Brazil.

We aim to pass on Christian values to our children and teenagers and to teach



them to be responsible. Our goal is to see genuine transformation in all areas of their lives. We have a technical staff (a social worker, psychologist, tutor, and nurse) that assist our children daily.

When a teenager turns 16, he or she can take extracurricular classes (cooking, basic management, carpentry, etc.). We also refer him/her to the labor market so upon reaching age 18 they can live independently.

However, in some cases the young person is not yet mature enough at the age of 18 to live independently, and doesn't have a family to take him/her in. For these cases, Chain of Love created the Transition House on the campus where they can stay, given they are either working or studying, attending a Christian church, and saving part of their income for the future.

Chain of Love works with three main bases: the spiritual base (we are a Christian ministry), a complete fiscal transparency base (an international fiscal committee comes to Brazil every March for an audit), and a responsibility base (we save part of the money we receive so that we can have resources in case of an emergency). Although Chain of Love works side by side with judges, we don't receive support from the State or Federal governments (in Brazil there is the principle of separation of powers, which means the Judiciary and the Executive branches function independently). If we receive any kind of help from the governments, they would interfere in what we do and we wouldn't have free rein to preach the Gospel. We do have partnerships with other towns that send us their children and teenagers as they don't have any facilities similar to Chain of Love in their area. They send us some funds that help us pay some of the children's basics.

In addition to the eight houses on our campus (Transition House included), we also manage another home in the neighboring city of Novo Hamburgo. That city has a huge problem with children in jeopardy, so they invited us to manage that home. We decided to accept that challenge as long as we had total freedom to preach the Gospel and chose the houseparents who would look after the children, and also that there wouldn't be any political issues involved. They pay part of our expenses there.

Chain of Love is made possible through donations. Our local community helps us with food, cleaning products, toiletries, clothes, and shoes, etc. The number of donations varies every month. The majority of the funds we receive to continue

giving a better quality of life to our children and teenagers come from churches and Christian individuals in Canada and the US. They donate to our general fund (so we can pay our regular expenses) or they sponsor a child.

Sponsorship is more than sending money. It is about making a genuine difference and a heartfelt connection in a child's life. The sponsor is provided periodic information about his/her sponsored child and is free to ask anything he/she wants about the child. We encourage our children to write letters or thank you notes to their sponsors. Sponsors also play a role in the child's spiritual life through encouragement, sending Bible verses, and praying for him/her. We truly value the involvement sponsors have with the children.

We would like you to invite you to be part of this ministry. Please note, this invitation is not only about money: we value prayer, involvement, and connection. We ask you to pray and ask the Lord if He would like you to join us and we trust he will reveal to you your steps.

This is Chain of Love. More than an orphanage. A ministry for the Kingdom.

God bless you richly

Telmo Camargo

COL Executive Director

## **BRANDON STEGER**

We wanted to update you on our recent developments. The Lord has seemed to open a door for us to stay in Athens, Greece August - mid November. After this, we are planning on moving to Lebanon where we will likely serve in a Christian clinic among refugees for about 4 1/2 months. I wanted to give you an update and we expect to make a support letter soon. We do not plan on asking for money for us per-say but do hope that people will contribute to the ministries we plan to work with - our hope is to be very generous with the refugees and that American Christians will sense a call on their hearts to donate to the work we plan on doing with the refugees. The Lord has allowed us to save up enough for our expenses and we hope to give anything people donate directly to the refugee ministries. So, if your church has a heart for supporting refugee ministry, we would be happy to have you come along beside us. Of course, we deeply covet your prayer covering as Greece is a fairly dark environment and the enemy will be opposing any work

among those bound with his chains. An interesting read for anyone who would like is “A wind in the House of Islam” by David Garrison. It tells of how God has been moving among Muslims in our times. VERY exciting!!

## **THE REEDS IN BELIZE**

(Please see Missionary Board for Pictures)

March 2017

**DECISIONS ARE BEING MADE TO DAILY FOLLOW CHRIST!**

Thank you for being a part of our ministry team through your Faithful Prayers and Financial Support!

Please continue to pray for our health, strength, and for wisdom as we Evangelize, Disciple, Train Pastors & Plant Churches. God is answering your prayers and changing lives here for His Glory!

In our January letter, we asked you to join us in praying that Spiritual decisions would be made in 2017 here in Belize and God is ANSWERING your prayers! Just last Sunday we had a great morning of decisions after Jon preached a sermon titled “Eternity”. He had prepared this mid week and then there were two tragic deaths in the community. God worked in hearts and lives as many came forward for prayer, one for rededication, and one Salvation! The first week in March, two families decided to dedicate their children in San Pablo, committing to raise their children to know God and to daily live out their faith and share the Gospel! Jon preached on parenting. Many first generation Christian parents were literally excited to learn how the Bible teaches us to train up our children! Pray for these young believers as they continue to learn how to make daily decisions in obedience to Christ. Juan continues to apply what he is learning in his studies amidst some opposition. Jon thoroughly enjoys getting to train K’ekchi men from the Word of God! Pray that our village truck will be fixed soon to continue the rugged 200 mile weekly rounds.

This month please specifically pray for Teresa, who is newly saved, that her husband, Elvis, would be saved and they reunited and for the Salvation of Victor, Edwin and Roberto! Please also pray for approval, in an upcoming village leader meeting, that the Lord would open the doors for Jon to come in and preach and teach in 28 villages, among whom, it is currently “prohibited” if you are not K’ekchi.

# AMANDA BENSON

(Please see Missionary Board for Pictures)

April 1, 2017

What is Man?

## OUTDOOR EDUCATION!

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?

Psalm 8:3-4

As I looked out at the stunning view, I could think of nothing but the verse above. The God who created the beautiful mountain range fading from my view. The God who knows the number of grains of sand not only in my hand, but in all of the world. The God who knows the number of drops of water in the vast ocean. The God who formed the fish to swim in that ocean. The God who counted the stars and knows them each by name. The God who colored the coral reef and filled it with its own ecosystem.

This God knows me? This speck of dust on a planet that is a speck of dust in the incredible universe that God holds in the palm of His hand? This God knows my name? He knows the number of hairs on my head? He knows the deepest parts of my heart? He knows my hurts and joys, my strengths and weaknesses, my sins and victories? And He cares?

What am I, that God is mindful of me?

The month leading up to March break was one of the roughest months I have had with work since coming to the Philippines. I have been busy in the past and overwhelmed with the workload at times, but these were much deeper issues. I dealt with almost half of my 8th graders cheating on their homework, as well as some of my 6th graders beginning to do the same. I also dealt with some parent issues with a book we were reading in 8th grade English. This book has a very strong, clear message of redemption, and I believe this was in part an attack from the Enemy, hoping we would not be able to share this message now or in the future. Despite all of this, I was able to share the gospel clearly with the students, challenging them to know the Lord and to grow in their relationship with Him.

These issues weighed heavily on my heart. At one point, as we were dealing with

the cheating issue, and I thought another person was going to tell me they were cheating, I had the thought, “I can’t bear anyone else’s sins anymore. God, how do you handle this every day for every person in the world? Jesus, what must it have felt like for you to carry all of our sins on that cross?” The weight was heavy on me, and I was only dealing with a few people. But this incredible God we serve knows each of our sins, and bears them with us. Even better, He takes them from us and tells us to take up His burden (Mt 11:29-30). I’m so glad He is God and I am not.

So, as I came up to March break, I was emotionally and physically drained. I had previously agreed to go to the beach with some friends, but I was wishing I didn’t have to go. But, God, in His infinite wisdom and care, knew what I would need back in January when I agreed to go (which was a God story in itself). He knew I would need to get away from my normal surroundings to go do nothing for four days. He knew I needed to be surrounded by His creation. He knew I needed time to relax, read, quilt, and listen to sermons. He knew I needed morning walks with Him on the beach. He knew I needed people to have spiritual conversations with. He knew I needed time to pray and just be with Him, surrounded by His creation. And so I am amazed that this God I serve is mindful of me. That He is a God who not only knows me, but cares for me. He provides. He sees. He loves. He refreshes. He strengthens.

My God is the Master Provider.

We are His children, created in His image. And He loves us deeply.

This is why I am here: to share this God with these kids, trusting that He will draw them deeper into relationship to Him. What a joy it is!

Praises

- My dad’s hospital stay was very brief, and he is doing much better.
- We had a good finish to the their quarter, and we’ve had a strong start to this last one! It’s hard to believe the last quarter is here!
- God has helped me be feel peace, even with a lot going on.

Prayer Requests

- Pray that God would provide more staff for next year. We have many open positions for next year.
- This week we have our school musical, and I’m playing in the pit orchestra. We

have long rehearsals this week. Pray for us as we finish up last minute touches and that we would have energy to make it through this week.

· The kids are doing their standardized testing this week. Pray that they do well and get sufficient rest this week.

## **ARLYN & MARCY NIES**

April 2017

### **NORTHLAND NEWS**

Where we have been and what we have been doing. Since we last communicated with you we have had several ministry opportunities. We praise the Lord for his protection and strength as we have traveled many miles.

In November we were able to volunteer at the first National Grandparenting Summit in Frisco TX. It was a great time of encouragement and challenge as we learned how to be Intentional Christian Grandparents.

We enjoyed a great time with our children and grand-children over Thanksgiving. The next week we started a major home remodeling project. It is still in process but we are making progress.

In January we attended the Children's Pastor's Conference in Orlando . We learned much about the blessings and challenges of children's ministry in our culture today. Between all of those trips we have had a wonderful time visiting clubs, Awana Ministry Directors, Pastors and Children's Directors. We are seeing many leaders building relationships with clubbers as they share the gospel and help the young people grow in their knowledge of Jesus Christ and His Word. We pray that what these clubbers will become lifelong disciples.

Recently we were part of a training team that met with a group of Southern Baptist Church Planters in the NYC area. These leaders come from many different cultures. They desire to plant churches in their communities. They want to use Awana in their strategy to start and grow these new churches.

### **Awana Ministry Conferences**

Once there were two strong lumberjacks. One day they decided to find out which of them was the stronger. So they went into a competition to chop as much wood as they could for 24 hours. The first lumberjack chopped and chopped 24 hours straight. He never took a break and he was so strong that he didn't slow down the

slightest. The other lumberjack, chopped with full force for two hours and then took a break for 15 minutes. He then went to work for another two hours before he took his next break. He repeated the cycle until the time was up.

When the time came to measure how much wood each of them had chopped in those grueling 24 hours the second lumberjack won.

The first lumberjack was visibly confused. He asked how the other lumberjack could win when they were both equally strong and he had worked 24 hours straight while the other took a break every two hours?

The second lumberjack responded, "From time to time you have to take a break to sharpen the axe."

We are glad you are able to take a break for a few months before club starts again in the fall. But, when was the last time you sharpened your axe ie, your ministry skills?

There are many opportunities to sharpen your skills as you minister with the youth the Lord brings to you. Check out [http://awana.force.com/apex/club\\_clinic](http://awana.force.com/apex/club_clinic). Another great way to sharpen your ministry skills is to attend an Awana Ministry Conference (AMC). See the list at the left for an AMC near you.

#### PRAISE AND PRAYER

- A very profitable trip to Ukraine
- An exciting time of training church planters in NYC
- Safety in travel.
- Visiting with pastors, Awana Ministry Directors, leaders and clubbers.
- That clubbers and leaders would finish well as the club year winds down
- That clubbers will continue to be disciplined throughout the summer.
- That leaders would be refreshed.

#### 2017 AMC

6-9 PM

Mon: Aug 28 - Minot ND

Tue: Aug 29 - Bismarck ND

Wed: Aug 30 - Huron SD

Thr: Aug 31 - Watertown SD

Mon: Sep 11 - Fargo ND

Tue: Sep 12 - Alexandria MN



Thr: Sep 14 - Pennock MN

Mon: Sep 18 - Thief River Falls MN

## **DARWIN & KAREN STOESZ**

(Please see Missionary Board for Pictures)

March 26, 2017

### Stoesz Ministry Update

The members of Nishibori Christ Gospel Church celebrated a wedding this weekend. Hikari-san is a young lady who has taught many kids in Sunday school for many years. She started coming to Nishibori Church when she was four years old. She will be missed as she moves to a different prefecture to start her new life with her Christian husband. Karen and Clara sang with the Sunday school kids and adult choir an arrangement of “Jesus Loves Me” in the wedding. Karen is hidden by the bride, but Clara is in the front row wearing a pink dress. If you would like to watch and listen to the song, please click here:

[https://1drv.ms/f/s!AphbRyOg2v\\_SkvFxMODWmFH5su9sGA](https://1drv.ms/f/s!AphbRyOg2v_SkvFxMODWmFH5su9sGA)

Another long-term member Shimura-san decided this month to move to where her husband has been working for the past several years. She also had been serving at Nishibori Christ Gospel Church since she was young.

These two ladies are doing what God is leading them to do. They shed tears as they left the church family that has nurtured them through these many years.

We live in an unreached country where less than 1% have a relationship with Jesus. Yet there are pockets inside the one percent in churches all over Japan where you will find multi-generational Christian families. Pray that more Christian families would become multi-generational. It starts with one Japanese Christian who then shares the Good News with another.

### Office Work

The leadership of SEND Japan accepted another budget that I have been hard at work creating. It takes effect April 1 as this is the beginning of the fiscal year.

Darwin continues to train his replacement for the year when we will be on home service.

### Christian Academy in Japan

Karen has been serving as secretary and as a voting board member for the last



few years at the school where the girls attend. With Karen's transition for a year of home service a new person within SEND was identified and accepted as her replacement on the CAJ board.

#### SEND Japan Men's and Ladies Retreats

Every year the SEND men and the SEND women have times together to share / learn / and grow with each other. Darwin served on the Men's Retreat committee this year in the planning of this event.

#### Home Service Plans

Darwin and Karen will be arriving in Wichita, Kansas on June 24th and will be living for a year in the Wichita, Kansas area. We are thankful that we have a house rented, we have a Christian school for the girls to go, and we have our main car for transportation. Here in Japan, we still have various details to work through such as, finding a renter to live in our house while we are gone and selling our car. Because the girls are older this home service, they have begun to voice feelings of not wanting to leave the only place that they have lived most of their lives. They are looking forward to seeing grandparents and cousins, but knowing they will have to make new friends in a new school is not sounding as fun as it did four years ago, when we came home for home service. Please pray that God will provide good friends for Anna and Clara and for the girls to grow in their faith in God, as they learn to trust Him to provide all they need.

#### Family

Anna went to Kyoto with the eighth grades of CAJ and is now making a photo album of her experience. She is also designing a spaghetti bridge for her science class. Clara performed with other 3rd graders in Charlotte's Web and sang in the choir last Friday at the CAJ Elementary Spring Program. She is biking to and from school with Anna and they are telling stories along the way. It is great to hear their stories during supper time.

#### Japanese Language Lessons

This morning in Sunday school they were talking about original sin and the term they said sounded like they said "Elephant of God", but after some research they meant "image of god". The kanji's are very close

#### Significant Calendar Events / Prayer requests this week

1. Monday Darwin is going to meet with Ron & Carolyn Hardy and give some

basic business orientation. They have returned to Japan to begin a new ministry.

2. Tuesday and Thursday the Stoesz family will do some family events during CAJ Spring Break.
3. Friday, March 31 is the last day to do certain financial transactions and still get them into this last year's budget.

Thank you for your continued partnership in our ministry here in Japan.  
Darwin & Karen & Anna (13) & Clara (9) Stoesz

April 15, 2017

### Stoesz Ministry Update

Happy Easter. He is risen! He is risen indeed! Because He has risen we are here in Japan for without the resurrection we would not need to be here.

Karen used her flute and her voice to glorify God on Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and she will sing the Hallelujah Chorus in church on Sunday. We really do have much to be thankful for. You may view and listen to one of her songs by clicking here: [https://1drv.ms/v/s!AphbRyOg2v\\_Sk4JX-H\\_BYyayFTV4Nw](https://1drv.ms/v/s!AphbRyOg2v_Sk4JX-H_BYyayFTV4Nw)

Darwin would like to request prayer for a lunch I am having with Mr. Tsune on Wednesday, my Japanese teacher. Pray for good conversations that lead to the Gospel.

### Office Work

I am in the process of getting the new required support figures to the SEND Japan missionaries. I have the US office missionaries done, but I have Hong Kong, Canada, and Taiwan missionaries to do early next week.

Darwin continues to train his replacement for the year when we will be on home service. Darwin will completely hand off the business manager responsibilities on May 27th after the conclusion of the SEND Japan May Business meeting.

We have turned over our team leading responsibilities over already on April 1.

### Christian Academy in Japan

Karen will continue as a CAJ Board member till the end of the school year. She has enjoyed this ministry very much the past few years. Anna and Clara's last day of school will be June 9. Anna will celebrate her 8th grade graduation on May 26th.

### Home Service Plans

Darwin and Karen will be arriving in Wichita, Kansas on June 24th and will be living for a year in the Wichita, Kansas area. We are thankful that we have a house rented, we have a Christian school for the girls to go, and we have our main car for transportation. Here in Japan, we still have various details to work through such as, finding a renter to live in our house while we are gone and selling our car. Because the girls are older this home service, they have begun to voice feelings of not wanting to leave the only place that they have lived most of their lives.

They are looking forward to seeing grandparents and cousins, but knowing they will have to make new friends in a new school is not sounding as fun as it did four years ago, when we came home for home service. Please pray that God will provide good friends for Anna and Clara and for the girls to grow in their faith in God, as they learn to trust Him to provide all they need.

#### Family

Anna is having fun playing basketball for the Christian Academy in Japan Knights on the Middle School A team. She enjoys the time and the interactions with her friends.

She has made a spaghetti bridge for a science bridge contest on Friday. Pray that it will stay together long enough to get to school. This is the fourth version of a bridge that has continued to change.

Clara made a lunar space vehicle out of edible products. She had a lot of fun working with her team.

#### Japanese Language Lessons

Darwin called a plumber this last week and accidentally said, “My exit is leaking.” instead of “My faucet is leaking.” The lady was very patient on the phone as we figured out my mistake. Unfortunately, the plumber has never called back. I hope he calls back soon as the faucet still leaks.

#### Significant Calendar Events / Prayer requests this week

1. Monday Darwin is going to meet with a missionary getting ready to leave on home service.
2. Monday Darwin is having lunch with a first term missionary.
3. Monday a car shop is delivering two vehicles that SEND missionaries recently purchased.
4. Karen has a CAJ Governance meeting.

5. Tuesday Karen has Japanese class.
6. Tuesday Darwin will be assisting in setting up CAJ Thrift Shop shelving.
7. Wednesday Darwin will meet with Mr. Tsune and Mr. Kanazawa for lunch.
8. Wednesday Darwin needs to take a couple of car trips to CAJ with Thrift Shop stuff for sale.
9. Friday is PTA member's day for Thrift Shop.
10. Saturday is CAJ Thrift Shop clean up.
11. Saturday Anna has two basketball games in Yokohama.

Thank you for your continued partnership in our ministry here in Japan.

Darwin & Karen & Anna (13) & Clara (9) Stoesz