

Baptism

It's always exciting to baptize people on the mission field! In Japan especially it is a bold, public proclamation, "I'm following Jesus!" **We baptized three people**, two of which were my eldest daughter, Journey, and my youngest son, Orion. It is always a great time of rejoicing to not only see you children believe and be baptized, but also to get to be the one that baptizes them.

I was also so thrilled to give that same privilege to one of the fathers in our church as he baptized his daughter. It is awesome to see fathers stepping up in the church as leaders! Praise God!

"I don't know what I believe"

After a Sunday morning message, Yuki and Kaori had a conversation with me that I've had several times before in Japan. "You all are so nice, we love coming here, and we love the concepts of Christianity. We realize the next step for us is to become Christians, but we are Japanese and don't believe like you guys believe so we don't know if we should keep coming." Honestly, this is so hard to hear. This is often the state of Japan. It doesn't matter how many Japanese Christians they've met, Christianity is a foreign religion and not part of their belief system. So I asked them, "Well... what do you believe?" Yuki, the husband, shifted in his seat, leaned back, and looked up at the ceiling and said with great heaviness, "I don't know..." This is often the true heart of Japan. Not really a Buddhist, not really Shinto, not really even atheist. Just a fog of "I don't know." For the next 1.5 hours I worked through the fog with him. At times he spoke very slowly and thoughtfully, other time he and his wife's eyes filled up with tears as they wrestled with the most important decision of their lives. The conversation did not end with their salvation, but it did end with a decision to keep learning, to keep the door open to Jesus. I ended with Romans 10:9-10, 13 and it seemed like Kaori, the wife, would've believed, but she wouldn't do anything without her husband. I say all this to remind you of the spiritual fog Japan lives in, and an earnest request for your prayers for the Japanese to come to Christ.

Believers singing for the Lord!

In spite of the spiritual fog in Japan, the glorious gospel breaks through! And as more Christians step into leadership roles here, the ministry grows! One of the most encouraging ministries that has been growing lately is our music ministry. In just the last few months, we've had several people join the music ministry. One Sunday, after lunch, I heard the sweet sound of a few believers singing songs of praise. This was unprompted by me. It wasn't scheduled. It was just spontaneous worship by Japanese and international believers. I stepped into the room for a moment and began to cry. I told those that were singing, "Since God spoke to me about coming to Japan when I was 17, I dreamed about a day I would hear believers singing songs of praise to King Jesus with a true heart to worship. Today, that dream has become reality." Praise be to Jesus! Haha, I'm starting to tear up again. What a great, great God we serve!!!

Summer Break

Before the Awana program took a summer break, I preached a simple gospel message. In the invitation, several got up and walked to the back to speak with a leader about accepting Christ. Some got up because others did. Some got up to learn more. And one got up to believe, but then tragedy struck as the child's parent came up and said they would talk about it with them later. That child has yet to make a profession of faith. Pray they will!

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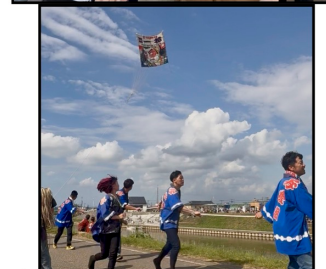
Hill Family JAPAN



Baptism Sunday!



Hajime is a friend that has been attending church and I've been witnessing to. He invited us to the Shirone Kite Festival, and a group from the church went to cheer for his group. Please pray he will believe!



Young people singing for the Lord!

Will preaching at Awana



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