

# The Stanford Family



Establishing Independent Baptist  
Churches in **JAPAN**



*"... I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." Acts 13:47*

January February 2019

Dear supporters and praying friends,

Let me begin this letter by apologizing from my heart for the delay since our last letter. We have been "extremely" busy here but there is no excuse for not communicating with you more frequently. I do thank the Lord constantly for your prayers and financial support. I know that our working together, supporting each other, is God's plan. I have not been fulfilling my obligation in keeping you informed about our family and the ministry here in Japan. Again, I beg your forgiveness.

Let me start In October of 2018. We spent most of the month of October in the US for our oldest son's wedding. Of course, that means the months before that were busy planning things from here in Japan. We had such a great time being a part of that special day for he and his wife. Though we were incredibly busy, we were able to get around and visit with a few churches in the south Atlanta area. It was great to be able to see some of you.

We returned in late October and got right back into our busy schedule. As I continue to do now, every day, if I am able, I work on our new church building we are renovating. We continue to be so thankful for how the Lord provided us with such a blessing in this property. But, the process of renovating the property and getting it ready to be used as a church and living quarters for the pastor has been quite a challenge. The work goes on so please pray for us.

November found us, of course, continuing the work on the new property. Also, we continued preparations for the upcoming Christmas season. In November, my wife, Joy, had again this year experienced another great blessing. For the last several years, she has been invited to speak at a nursing school here in our city. I got to know the teacher of their English class several years ago, and, since Joy worked as a nurse in the US, she invites her each year to speak to the class. Joy has included in her talk her testimony and we have been able to give a gift from us to each of the students including information about our church as well as a Christmas tract. Each year, In December the students sing for the patients and guests at the hospital next to the school. We attended again this year. The music is always beautifully done but yet sad. They sing songs and hymns about the coming of the Savior but most know nothing of Him. Please pray for them.

December, as it is each year, was very busy. All of our special Christmas services were well attended with several first time visitors coming. As we have done the last several years, we were able to give "Christmas gift packs" out to many people here in town. We distributed them at the hospital where Drew goes for therapy and treatment and at the handicapped work center where he works. We were so excited to see one of his co-workers and her mother come to our Christmas Eve service. Please pray for all those that received these packs that they will respond as they read God's Word.

Also, in the end of December we went to the Philippines and attended our second sons, Josh's, wedding. It is hard to believe that in about 2 months, I have officiated at the weddings of my 2 oldest sons.

The work renovating our new church building continues as well. This also consumes every "free" minute we have. I will send out this letter as is and will follow soon after with another letter with some pictures showing the progress. Again, I am sorry for not communicating better and I will get another letter out right away to catch things up.

In His Service,

Your Missionaries to Japan,

*The Stanford's*

Russ, Joy, Will, Josh, Drew, Ben and Hope

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