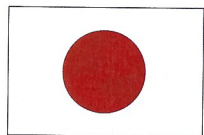
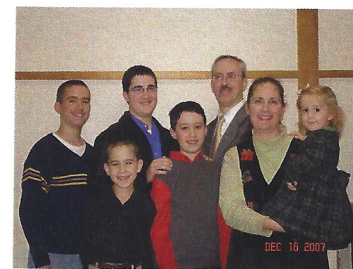


The Stanford Family



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

April 2020

Dear Pastor and praying friends,

First, let me apologize for the delay in getting this letter out. With all that has been going on in the world, I started writing it and as things changed, I would update it. I just kept putting off posting it. That is no excuse for not keeping our friends and supporters up to date. Please forgive me. As with each of you, these times have been a real challenge for us as a family and as a ministry. At our church here, as of now, we are having our Sunday morning services at our regular times. We have not stopped that service but are encouraging our people to be careful and we all wear mask. We discontinued all of our Sunday afternoon activities including; lunch, kids classes and adult classes, prayer meetings and fellowship times. Recently, we began doing our kids classes early on Sunday morning, before our regular service. Also, we have begun to live stream our Sunday AM service and our kids classes on Facebook. You are welcome to watch us on our Facebook page for the Agape Bible Baptist Church. We have been keeping up with the situation there in the US and with our friends around the world as best as we can. These certainly are challenging times but we are reminded constantly that the Lord is in control.

Even during these challenging times, we have seen the Lord bless in exciting ways. I am thinking of some of the dear people in our church. One lady has been coming and been a part of the church here for several years. Recently, we have seen obvious spiritual growth in her life. This has been such an encouragement to us. It is always a blessing when God puts someone "in your path" and you are allowed to be a help and encouragement to them. Then you are blessed to see them growing in the Lord. It has also been encouraging to see the faithfulness of the people in our church during these times. In Japan, they have not had the legal pressure seen in other places but there is a lot of "cultural pressure" here. We have seen the attendance of our services remain steady and have even had some first time visitors recently. We certainly would appreciate your prayers for Mrs. Furukawa. She is in her 80's and was one of the first people saved and baptized here. Recently, she suffered a stroke. It was sad not seeing her smiling face in church but we were able to visit her at the rehab hospital. Well, with the coming of the Coronavirus, we were no longer able to visit. Please pray for her. Her family recently moved her to a nursing home near our church. Joy and I were able to see her when we helped get her moved but regular visitation is not possible now. We look forward to seeing her at church again.

As far as our family goes, we are all doing well. Like many of you, we have faced challenges. At the time the virus scare was growing here, Joy had to go to Tokyo to renew her passport. Normally, this would be uneventful as we have had to make the trip to the US embassy there many times in the last 15 years. But, with Tokyo having a good number of cases of the virus, we were concerned. She made her trip, and the Lord protected her. Right now, there is only one case in our city. We remain very careful and follow all the guidelines the Japanese government issues. Most of all, we are trusting the Lord. Please know we are praying for you all. We are so thankful for your prayers and support. Pray that we will be used of the Lord here. Please pray for the people God has put in our path. Pray that they will submit to Him.

In His service
Your Missionaries to Japan,

The Stanford's

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