

Partnership

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
AUSTRALIAN PRESBYTERIAN WORLD MISSION
WWW.APWM.ORG.AU



WHOSE CHURCH?

Late last year I had the privilege of travelling to Japan and was able to spend a day at the Presbyterian Church in Japan's Assembly. It was encouraging to be with church leaders who are determined to see the gospel go out among people who are resistant to its life-giving message.

I was also able to meet various church planters ranging from those in the heart of Tokyo city, to those in the outer suburbs, to those in areas affected by last year's devastating tsunami.

Only 0.55% of the Japanese are Christian and only 0.22% attend church regularly. What does Satan say to a church like this, that is relatively small? "Give up. You'll never get anywhere. This church won't grow." Satan repeats that message time after time across the earth wherever the church seems small.

But what does Jesus say to churches like these? What does he say to us? "I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."

(Matthew 16:18). That promise of Jesus sustains the church in any location and in any age.

Yet if we are honest, there are times when we think: "Jesus, why don't you build your church much faster or in a better way?" But it's not our church. The church belongs to Jesus. He is the one who is building it and we have the marvellous privilege of being involved in the greatest task ever given to anyone — making the name of God known everywhere.

To those who pray, to those who give — thank you! Jesus is using your prayers and your gifts to build his church. What a marvellous day it will be when we are able to see the final product! What a glorious day of praise to God that will be!

KEVIN MURRAY



SCHOLARSHIPS

One of the most effective things that we can do in cross-cultural mission is train nationals to minister to their own people.

APWM does this primarily through supporting theological education. Please consider sponsoring a student from one of the following countries.

BANGLADESH

In Bangladesh we support the Presbyterian Theological Centre in Gazipur which is the Bible College of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Bangladesh. We have no resident missionary, however from time to time we send Australians to teach short courses for ministers and evangelists. The cost of a scholarship for a student is \$1200.



PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL CENTRE,
BANGLADESH

VANUATU

In Vanuatu we support the Talua Ministry Training Centre, the Bible College of the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu, where the Connors and Williamsons serve. The four year Bachelor of Ministry program is Vanuatu's first indigenous Bachelor-level program. It offers a higher level of training at a fraction of what it costs to send an individual or family overseas for training. A full Bachelor of Ministry scholarship costs \$4000.



TALUA MINISTRY TRAINING CENTRE, VANUATU

INDIA

Vijai Tagore is a lecturer at the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Dehradun, India. APWM has brought Vijai and his family to Australia to study for a Master of Theology degree at PTC Sydney. They have ongoing support needs.



CAPTION

MYANMAR

In Myanmar we support the Reformed Bible Institute, the Bible College of the Evangelical Reformed Church of Myanmar led by the Rev Dr Thang Bwee. We have one resident missionary, Martin Eagle, who teaches at the college. We are very grateful that through current sponsors, the cost of student scholarships has been met. In addition we provide support for rural pastors for whom we only need a few more sponsors at \$480 for each pastor.



REFORMED BIBLE INSTITUTE, MYANMAR

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR A STUDENT OR CONTRIBUTE TOWARD A SCHOLARSHIP THEN PLEASE CONTACT APWM NATIONAL ON 9792 1373 OR EMAIL NATIONAL@APWM.ORG.AU

“AFTER THIS I LOOKED AND THERE BEFORE ME WAS A GREAT MULTITUDE THAT NO ONE COULD COUNT, FROM EVERY NATION, TRIBE, PEOPLE AND LANGUAGE, STANDING BEFORE THE THRONE AND IN FRONT OF THE LAMB. (REVELATION 7:9)”



UPDATES

THEY'RE OFF!

Please join with us in praising God for those that have recently commenced serving overseas:

- J & R (Camden PC, NSW) SIM, East Asia.
- Brian & Judy Cullen (Stanthorpe PC, QLD) APWM National, Vanuatu.

WIRA & DEBBY DHARMA

Wira and Debby Dharma are from Beecroft PC, NSW. They serve with GRN as part of the home staff team. They have recently been accepted by APWM National as missionaries.



DEBBY & WIRA DHARMA

JOHN & ROSE EVANS

John and Rose Evans and family are settling in well to life in Japan. They will be returning briefly to Australia early in the new year for Rose to give birth. If you would like to watch an interview with them then please go to www.vimeo.com/55045822

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

We currently have missionaries who are available to visit churches to build partnerships



PAUL & JENNY RAYNER AND FAMILY

PAUL & JENNY RAYNER (CENTRAL CHURCH, IPSWICH, QLD) PIONEERS, THAILAND.

Paul and Jenny have been visiting churches to build partnership support. They will be serving at the Grace International School in Thailand where Paul will join the teaching staff. Grace International is a school where many missionaries send their children, so Paul and Jenny's role

will enable other missionaries to reach out with the gospel. They can be contacted on 0413 451 140 or therayners@internode.on.net

KYM AND STEPHANIE SCHWARZ (EPPING, NSW) SIM,

Kym and Stephanie are seeking to depart for Ethiopia in early 2013 to serve in the areas of psychology and IT support. You can contact them at kym.schwarz@sim.org



KYM & STEPHANIE SCHWARZ
AND THEIR FAMILY

EAST TIMOR - LAND!

One of our prayer points over the last few years has been the need for land and a building for the congregation in Dili, East Timor. Each Sunday the congregation meets in the driveway of a church member under a blue tarpaulin. Rob Duncanson writes, "Many blocks of land were investigated until finally a block was found which was in a suitable location and large enough for the church's purposes." From that time you might think that it would be simple. All that would be needed would be to negotiate the price then go to the lands office and arrange the transfer of title, right? Not in Timor Leste.

Until recently there was no such thing as a written property title deed. That would not be a particular problem, but in a country where 30-50% of the population has died or been displaced in the last quarter of the last century and where land has been forcibly taken by invaders and perhaps squatted upon by locals, it is a problem. There is a barely imaginable tangle of land-rights issues and disputes which cover the whole country.

Local negotiations over price with the local landholder, his family and his village were fairly straightforward, but then the whole process had to wait in a processing queue in government departments for two years while they tried to cope with their overwhelming backlog of land rights issues."



DAVID BURKE & YAS SHIMIZU ON THE SITE OF THE LAND.

In early December we received news that the sale has now been finalised. Thank you very much to those who prayed and gave gifts to make this possible.

ARE WE THERE YET?

How often have we asked the question "Are we there yet?" Every journey has a beginning and an end. Sometimes they are short, easy trips. Others are long and arduous.

For Marilyn and I, that "journey" started about two years ago, when we both realised that God was calling us back to mission work. This time it would be to Vanuatu, specifically in Maintenance and Administration roles at the Talua Ministry Training Centre run by the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu. It's been a great journey so far, and as we pass milestones, we realise afresh how perfectly God leads and guides.

Our goal is to leave for Vanuatu in March 2013. To date we have 36% of our \$44,000 target pledged. Thank you to the churches and individuals who have pledged to partner with us in this journey. This means that we need pledges totalling \$29,000 before we can leave. We need further pledges of \$2417 per



ANDREW AND MARILYN SCHACHE

month. That's 24 people pledging \$20 per week. If you'd like to join our team then please contact:

Australian Presbyterian World Mission finance@apwm.org.au
Andrew and Marilyn Schache rvltn7vs9@gmail.com

MINISTRY IN JAPAN: FOUR CHURCH PLANTING SNAPSHOTS

GRACE CITY CHURCH

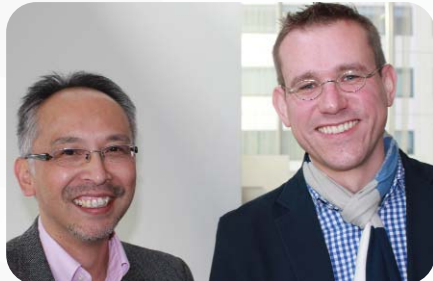
Pastor Makoto Fukuda leads the Grace City Church. The church is seeking to reach out to the younger generation to show them that Jesus Christ can answer their deepest questions. The congregation meets in a popular but expensive area of Tokyo which has many affluent married young couples. However, many of these people are so busy with work that there is little opportunity for them to hear the gospel. These people dream of working in the very heart of Tokyo but then discover that such success doesn't answer their deepest questions about life.



Many Japanese think that Christianity is a western religion. However there is a growing interest in Christianity especially among young people. In the last 3 years many non-Christian magazines have written about the connection between art, architecture and Christianity. The Japanese who live a more traditional life are more involved in religious ritual and harmony in life but they too find that these things fail to answer their life questions.

How does Grace City Church reach out? Through events such as a ballet that explains the Christmas story. Through music which connects with

people because of the Japanese appreciation of beauty. Through stress management seminars for the business community. Christmas is a good time for outreach because at that time many Japanese are more open to finding out more about what Christians believe.



CHURCH PLANTERS MAKOTO FUKUDA & GEERT DI BOO

Ministry in the city is very expensive and so many churches are reluctant to conduct ministry in the city centre. Grace City Church rents a modest floor space on a Sunday afternoon for 4 hours and pays AUD 1,000 per week!

GRACE HARBOR CHURCH

Japan is a nation of 127 million people and yet there are very few Christians. Consider Seima Aoyagi's story. Seima is from a Buddhist background. As a 17 year-old high school student, he met a fellow student who was the very first Christian he had ever encountered. As they discussed the claims of Christ, Seima came to see that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. It's hard to believe – he did not meet one Christian for the first 17 years of his life.

Today, Seima is a Church Planter serving amongst his own people. Under



SEIMA AOYAGI, ROSE & JOHN EVANS

Seima's leadership, Grace City Church is planning to plant a daughter church "Grace Harbor" with the aim of reaching out through church plants to the Tsukishima/Toyosu/Shinonome area. Seima is in the process of putting together his team as they pray and plan to commence the church at the beginning of 2014. The team recently rented an entire restaurant for an evening so that church members could invite their friends along to an informal meal and presentation. 150 non-Christians showed up and wanted to know more about the Church's plans.

SHIN URAYASU CHURCH

Craig and Ree Colbourne from the USA are long term missionaries to Japan. What keeps Craig going? The promise of Jesus that He will build His church! However this takes time. There's a Japanese proverb "Three years on a rock," meaning that you have to be in a place and stay there to be eventually accepted. Perseverance is respected in Japan.



Craig and the team he works with are seeking to reach out with the gospel to the people of Shin Urayasu, many of whom live in high-rise apartments. The church doesn't meet in a purpose-built building but in one of the apartments in a high-rise. On Tuesday mornings a playgroup is held which involves singing, games and a story from the Bible read by Karen Darda (Church Missionary Society, Australia). The team is aiming to start 3 more churches over a 10-15 year period.

SENDAI

Daisuke Kimura served as a pastor in Tokyo for 7 years before God led him to Sendai, one of the parts of Japan that was so badly affected by the tsunami on Friday, 11 March 2011. Kent Muhling from the USA, has been in Japan for 7 years, working first as a church planter and then as a pastor in Kansai before also going to serve in Sendai.

The city has largely recovered from the devastation caused by the tsunami. However there are still many people who don't have homes and who don't have any work. On the inside there is still a lot of pain and sadness caused by the tsunami. Many people who lost homes on the coast have moved into Sendai city itself. These people not only lost their homes but also their communities. Family, work, home and community were all lost at the same time. For many of these people, life has lost its meaning.

Daisuke serves with Kent and together they are planning to plant a Church in Sendai. Daisuke says "We anticipate starting public worship in about two years. First, I want to get to know the city very well and know the things that happen here. I want to taste the pains and the joys of the people who live here. After that we'll be preparing for the sort of ministry presented by the opportunities before us."



KENT MUHLING & DAISUKE KIMURA

SHORT TERM MINISTRY IN JAPAN?

Have you ever considered serving as a short-term missionary in Japan?

The Japan team to which APWM belongs has many needs:

COVENANT COMMUNITY SCHOOL is a small school of approximately 30 students. The school needs the following teachers for at least 2 years:

- **PRINCIPAL** – someone with teaching and educational administration experience.
- **INFANTS, PRIMARY AND HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS.**
- **TEACHING ASSISTANTS**

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

TEACHERS: Applicants need to be mature Christians with at least a bachelor's degree, outgoing and enjoy teaching in a fairly informal setting. Ideal team members would serve for at least two years.

MUSICIANS AND ARTISTS: Community Arts Tokyo is growing an English Language Arts teaching and outreach program in Tokyo. Musicians and artists of all kinds can serve brief internships up to two years or longer.



Chiba also has active music outreach programs including Gospel Music clubs.

HANDYMAN OR SKILLED CARPENTERS: Handyman skills can be put to use here, especially in the earthquake area.

MUSIC THERAPY: Plans are in hand to carry out a "pilot program" for music as a way of reaching and healing Japanese children traumatized by the 2011 earthquake.

COUNSELLING: Japanese language would be helpful, but skilled Biblical counselling is sorely needed in Japan. Counsellors could train local church leaders or do direct counselling.

MAKE AN OFFER: Many interests and skills can be put to work here. The team enjoy finding ways to put committed Christians to work in areas they love.

You would either serve at your own expense or raise team support to cover your costs. To find out more, contact APWM National or email Kevin Murray kevinmurray@apwm.org.au

BIBLE TEACHING IN EAST TIMOR

BY YAS SHIMIZU

In early December 2012 a small team from Sydney: Rev David Burke, Rev Wilson Fernandes and Mr Yas Shimizu, travelled to East Timor to conduct a Preaching and Bible-Teaching Conference.

Yas is married to former APWM missionary Nerida (Bell) and is a student at PTC Sydney. We asked him to share his reflections on the Conference.

"Those who attended the conference were young & old, male & female, and eager to learn. There were some cultural similarities with my home country, Japan: politeness, shyness, group-orientated and humid weather. Not everyone seemed to own a complete Bible, some had very thin Bibles which were probably not the whole Bible. All meals were prepared by church ladies using wood fires to cook in an outdoor kitchen.

During the teaching sessions I saw the importance of getting feedback from locals and adjusting teaching plans each day to meet the local people's level

of understanding and needs. I saw the importance of knowing the Bible well to teach others. I had the opportunity to preach in public for the first time, and received very encouraging feedback.

It was interesting to hear that a number of people had been sent overseas for theological training. A Brazilian missionary family had sent two young men from Dili to a Presbyterian Seminary in Brazil for 5 years on scholarships. This family's 10 year-old ministry will end soon because two trained young ministers will take their place. The majority of local Presbyterian churches don't have church buildings in the villages. Most ministers and preachers are full time workers in secular fields.

Another thing I learned about cross-cultural mission is the importance of being flexible when facing the difficulties of cultural and language differences, and also the inconvenience of the physical environment such as no clean drinking water, flushing toilets and the risk of disease."



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