



Hikari! from Kevin & Kaori

Hikari means "light"

Church Planting with the Lavermans in Japan

Light up the Darkness!

June 2009 Japan Partner Newsletter



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Kevin together with Pastor Kondo looking to God's future as a team

Future Partners in Ministry

A missionary can only do so much. Eventually a missionary needs to bring a national partner into the work that's begun, and begin to turn over leadership if it is to grow in a culturally healthy way.

This is true in our ministry. The church plant has grown over the past several years, but the time is right for national leadership for the church.

Enter Pastor Kondo. He has a vision to work together with a missionary to reach more Japanese for Christ, and plant more churches. He's spent 18 years overseas, and 13 years in church planting work (a Japanese church) in Connecticut. He's in his 50's, but has the heart of a teenager in his energy for Christ. Last month, Denen Grace Chapel called him to begin as senior pastor from January 2010.

We had not anticipated God to work this way even a year ago, but Pastor Kondo's

passion for Japanese saved abroad who return to Japan, dovetailed with the vision for Denen Grace Chapel. We look forward to what God has ahead for us together.

Would you hold us in prayer as we discuss how our teamwork can more effectively reach more Japanese for

Christ, and lay the groundwork for future church planting together with Denen? ■

Missionary Downtime

BBQ & Bible. Messages & Mushrooms. Onsen & Octopus. Shrimp & Seaside. These are the makings of a missionary retreat. A few weeks back we enjoyed a rare break from the craziness of missions...to the craziness of missionaries. Our annual Japan Baptist Fellowship 3-day retreat was at a seaside hotel in Ibaraki prefecture.

Every once in a while we need to get apart from the work, and reflect on God's goodness and greatness in our life that empowers us in the work. Not having to be in charge, and getting a chance to hear a few messages in English is a great blessing!



Together with other missionaries around a Japanese-style BBQ grill

STEP INTO JAPAN WITH US AT:
www.lavermansinjapan.org

This Week in Prayer

PRAYER FOCUS Thru-the-week:

Next month we are planning a baptism service at an outdoor kindergarten pool. Kaori and I are meeting with new believers who are making this step of faith. Pray that God would protect their young faith in the days ahead and use their testimony in a powerful way before their unsaved families. Also pray for good weather that day!

Monday Kids English Outreach

We will be hosting short-term workers from the States in July who will be helping us with a Kids English Class outreach at Denen during the short summer vacation here. Begin to pray now for those who will come.

Tuesday Basic Christianity Class

We currently have five not-yet-Christians attending Denen Grace every week. This is a good proportion for the size of our church. Kevin does an evangelistic study with them. Pray for spiritual decisions from this group.

Wednesday Gospel Outreach

During the month of June, a special Gospel Workshop is planned on June 9, a joint Gospel Concert on June 20, and a mini gospel concert at Denen on June 28. Pray for deep spiritual hunger through Gospel Music at our church. God keeps opening doors!

Thursday Financial Stability

The dollar has rallied against the yen in the last few months, but the exchange rate is still quite pathetic overall. Pray that our support status would return to 100% this year.

Friday Justen's Schooling

It's true, our son commutes daily to his downtown Tokyo "office" in white shirt, tie and sport coat. "Office" is the term the teachers use for his desk. The dress code is the school uniform. Pray for Justen's safety in the VERY packed 40minute daily train ride.

Additional Support Needed: \$331 per month



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"The [Japanese] people walking in DARKNESS
have seen a great LIGHT." Isaiah 9:2

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OUR NET PHONE: (219) 232-5321 OUR SKYPE ADDRESS: **lavermansinjapan** OUR BLOG SITE: **www.lavermansinjapan.blogspot.com**

Small groups in a really small room

The room is only 6 x 6, but somehow we manage to squeeze a bunch of people in it. It's a good thing this is Japan! We've felt for some time of the need to offer more opportunities for our young people, and young business people to get together and study God's Word. So this summer we've begun a couple of new weekday groups in our "dining room," a really small room.

Without a church building, our home has become a place for believers and unbelievers to come together to fellowship, explore Christianity, or grow in their new faith. We have an "open house" policy and people appreciate a place to unwind in this tightly-wound culture.

The youth recently took advantage of this small group time to wish Kaori a happy birthday. Since they start counting from 0 in Japan, we're not sure of her precise age, and she likes it this way! ■



The youth help us celebrate Kaori's ?? year birthday

▶ Special Project Need

Our church plant, Denen Grace Chapel, needs a bit of a boost the first few years to enable us to call a national pastor.

We have opened a special project with WorldVenture to subsidize in part the **first few years only** of the Pastor Kondo's salary. If you are willing to make a one-time gift as a church missions committee, or as a family, please send in the form at right. check here

See our website if you desire more detail, or online giving: **www.lavermansinjapan.org**

The Laverman Blog Spot

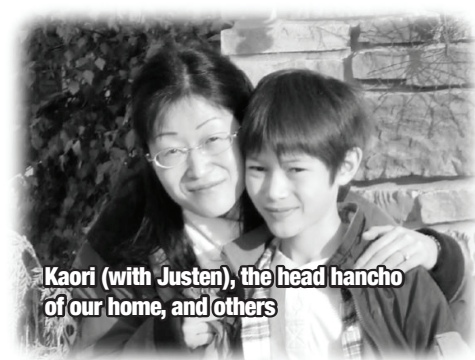
My wife's a blockhead!

posted on June 2, 2009

It's true. She's a blockhead. But before you start sending me emails, let me hurry to explain. Kaori recently accepted the responsibility of head of our block, or "hanchou" (yes, that also makes her "head hanchou"). Japan is broken down into ever smaller circles of government. The prefectural office...the city office...the ward office...and so it goes. At the end of the food chain is the neighborhood group. Within the neighborhood groups are individual blocks of, say, a dozen houses or a couple small apartment buildings. This becomes the "chounaikai" or block group.

The block group is responsibility for caring for the many somewhat smaller matters that concern these households. For example, policing the garbage pile, cleaning up the street trash, requesting the replacement of burned out street lamps, posting neighborhood announcements, collecting various donations and dues, and so forth. The head of the block group, the blockhead, is rotated amongst the households from year to year. This year it became Kaori's turn.

She's taken to the new responsibility eagerly. The awesome power certainly has



Kaori (with Justen), the head hanchou of our home, and others

not gone to her head. Quite honestly, she the nicest blockhead I've ever met.

Seriously though, it is a nice way to get around to meet the neighbors and get to build relationships. And that is always step one in personal evangelism. So...we are grateful to God for the opportunity. She might just want to stay Mrs. Blockhead for awhile! She quick to remind me, though, that this makes me Mr. Blockhead! ■

www.lavermansinjapan.blogspot.com

▶ Staying in Touch

We been trying out some new ways of staying in touch, including (better late than never, I suppose) social networking.

!We also send out occasional email updates. If you do not receive these updates, we'd really like to include you. Send us a short email and let us know your address today!



My partnership

Additional Support Needed:
\$ 331 per month

with the Lavermans' work in Kawasaki #381

Clip & Send

As God enables, I plan to commit \$ _____ ☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Annually.

- ☐ Enclosed is my first gift. **OR** This support will begin (month/year) _____.
- ☐ Send me their regular prayerletter and email updates (indicate email address below).
- ☐ Please send a form for automated giving to my address below.
- ☐ This commitment represents an adjustment in my current giving to the Lavermans.

OR, Enclosed is a one-time gift of \$ _____ for:

- ☐ The Lavermans' Special Project: New Church Pastoral Support Fund #6417-907.
- ☐ The Lavermans' support needs. ☐ Other:

Name or Group _____ Date _____

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Phone (_____) _____ Email _____

Make checks payable to WorldVenture and enclose this form (address on front). A receipt will be sent.