



# Hikari! from Kevin & Kaori

Hikari means "light"

## Church Planting with the Lavernans in Japan

Light up the Darkness!

Sept 2009 Japan Partner Newsletter



JAPAN ADDRESS: 4-14-24-1 Futago, Takatsu; Kawasaki 213-0002 EMAIL: [lavernansinjapan@mac.com](mailto:lavernansinjapan@mac.com)



Denen Grace Chapel people at the baptism of D-san and S-san, July 2009

## Can you see the harvest yet?

*"Open your eyes and look...they are ripe for harvest." John 4:35b*

What do you see in the photo above? Just a group of asian people with a foreigner stuck in the front center? Kaori and I see God at work bringing in His harvest.

We know their stories. In each one of them God has been at work preparing them, bringing them into relationship with us, and then into a relationship with Him as they place their faith in His Son, Jesus. He gives us the privilege of celebrating their journey as we baptize them. They join our community of new believers all learning what grace is all about, and how to live for a Savior they've only recently met.

Take D-san (*next to me in the photo*) for example. His mother has a business as a Buddhist guide. His father abandoned them. His grandfather that lives with them has a severe drug habit. Not surprisingly, D-san himself has battled depression. But

since coming to faith in Christ recently, he's been steadily growing, changing, and healing. He was baptized last month.

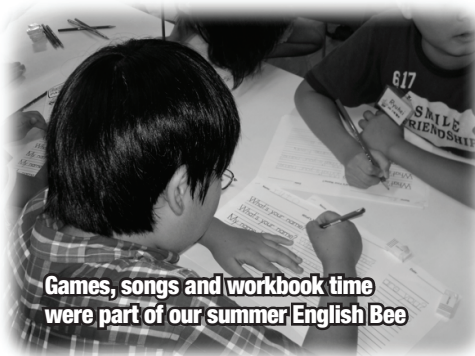
Or consider S-san seated next D-san. When we first met, she was just interested in petting our American cat (*see back*). But after a challenging seven years, she finally came to

church. And this time she was very open to the Gospel. She was baptized last month. She's growing in Christ and already a great asset in our church family.

One by one we see broken people coming to the Healer, and forming a new community. We see a harvest of souls. We see more that are ripe and ready. How about you? ■

### Kids English Bee

One of the big events in our summer was a kids English outreach. Short-term workers from Minnesota, Skyler and Erin Lanz, helped with preparation, promotion, setup and teaching. Altogether we had 24 kids involved in the eight classes. Some good relationships were started with parents and kids that we hope to build upon in the days ahead. Please pray for good followup!



STEP INTO JAPAN WITH US AT:  
[www.lavernansinjapan.org](http://www.lavernansinjapan.org)

### This Week in Prayer

#### PRAYER FOCUS Thru-the-week:

*We are preparing the church plant for pastoral leadership. Pastor Kondo and his wife will be starting at Denen Grace Chapel from January 2010. Please pray for needed startup monies for his initial salary and ministry needs. Please pray for this transition of leadership for the church as we begin working with a national pastor.*

#### Monday Decisions for Christ

In the last few weeks, a couple of new people have placed their faith in Christ after coming to church for about 9 months. Both were a part of our Basic Christianity Class, for which we asked you to pray. Please pray that their families will accept their decisions.

#### Tuesday Gospel Music Workshop

Our Gospel Music Workshop is starting up again this September. Some have been part of the group for more than 6 years. Pray that we'd see salvation decisions this term, particularly from among these veteran members.

#### Wednesday Swine Flu Outbreak

Swine flu is in Japan and in our neighborhood. As a part of a homogenous culture, Japanese people tend toward group panic easily. Pray that excessive fear over the flu outbreak does not impede our church work and gatherings this fall!

#### Thursday Financial Stability

The historically weak dollar has produced a lot of pressure on missionary support in Japan for us and others. 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:** \$386 per month



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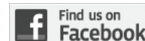
800-487-4224 [WorldVenture.com](http://WorldVenture.com)



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

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



### Flyer or Fryer?

We appreciated the effort of several Japanese Christian college students who braved the summer heat to pass out flyers for our Kids English Bee (*on front*).



**Suffering the summer heat to post flyers:  
a job well done, or well-done people?**

The group put some 3000 flyers into mailboxes in our community. Along the way, we stopped to pray at some key locations for Japan, the church, and the spiritual battle we are engaged in here.

Perhaps the greatest challenge of the day was bearing the oppressive heat and humidity of Japan this time of year. This was a FRYER of a flyer distribution! After 3 hours of walking about outdoors, we were ALL very well done! We ended the time together with a victory prayer meeting and time of worship. ■

## The Laverman Blog Spot

### 150 Years Later

*posted on July 13, 2009*

This is cause for celebration! 150 years after isolationist Japan opens the port of Yokohama to the world and Protestant missionaries begin evangelism activities for the first time in Japan, Yokohama throws a massive celebration...for the opening of the port. Meanwhile in a footnote event known only to the Christians, the church celebrates 150 years of Protestant missions in Japan at a portside hall. This latter event is the one myself and several members of our church chose to attend and be encouraged by.

Altogether around 14,000 believers attended the Protestant Missions 150th events over the two-day celebration in Yokohama. I wish the first missionaries could have seen the fruit of their work so many years later!

This fruit is hard to come by in Japan. Japanese pastors speaking at the event expressed disappointment that 150 years later, still less than 1% of Japanese are believers. Given so much time, they had hoped Japan would have been more responsive, like their neighbor Korea. One pastor mounted the platform and jokingly said "I think perhaps God must prefer kimchi to Japanese food."

**Our Denen Grace Chapel group at the  
150th anniversary of missions in Japan**



Still, I was encouraged that the Japanese pastors and speakers at the event also unanimously expressed faith that God was and is carefully preparing a powerful foundation upon which he will build a great revival. "He has not discarded us!" singer and songwriter Chu Kosaka said. "He is **SURELY** at work in our hearts." The church in Japan received a great call and challenge for the 50 years ahead. Let's expect that revival!

**www.lavermansinjapan.blogspot.com**

### ► 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 below. More info on Pastor Kondo is posted on our website.

### ► Our Favorite Missionary



**Keekee  
Feb 94~June 09**

We knew the day was coming, but that didn't make the decision any easier. After 15 years of being a part of our family history, it came time to let her go. Her recent grand mal seizures became as painful for her to let us see as they were for us to watch.

Keekee grew up in the suburbs of Chicago, moved to the outskirts of Tokyo, and was buried in far northern Japan. All without a passport. It was quite a life for a cat!

"Keekee" means "joyful princess" in Japanese. She certainly brought our family a lot of joy. And she even helped in bringing someone to Christ (*see front*)! What a missionary cat! We'll miss you, Keekee!

## My partnership

*with the Lavermans' work in Kawasaki #381*

**Additional Support Needed:  
\$ 331 per month**

**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:

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