

**REACHING
THE OTHER 99**
church planting with you to reach the 99% in Japan

MARCH 2014 NEWS

Kevin & Kaori Laverman CHURCH PLANTING IN KAWASAKI, JAPAN

"They will sing of the Lord's ways, for his glory is great." Ps 138:15

www.LavermansInJapan.com



➔ Why We Go (and why you send)

Our 6-month home assignment is coming to an end. We return to life and ministry in Japan on March 26. As much as we'd love to stay and be part of your lives, we are compelled to go. Here's why:



Kevin shares his heart for Japan with our friends at Squaw Creek Baptist Church (Marion, IA)

hotel beds and homes, driven or flown 25k+ miles...all while chased by snow storms that thwarted our itinerary. And we do it all to be "sent away" to ministry among the hardest-to-reach people, in a cramped lifestyle and faraway place that's prone to earthquakes and disasters. We must be crazy!

"Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!" Isaiah 6:8

Twenty some years ago when I first raised support for a short-term missions trip to Japan, my mother prepared a collection can for my home church. On it was the appeal: "Send him away!" And some people might agree with that sentiment. Perhaps missionaries really should be institutionalized. We're clearly a crazy bunch. Just consider our lifestyle:

Just during these six months in the States, we've based out of two areas, visited sixteen states, spoken in countless churches and groups, stayed in dozens of

Or, people might come to a different conclusion in trying to make sense of us. When we tell those who ask that we've been doing this for 15 years (has it been that long?!), the response sometimes is: "Wow! You must really like Japan!"

It's true that we enjoy parts of life in Japan (see back). But this really isn't the reason we go. There are many parts of life in Japan that, frankly, are hard and quite stressful. Truthfully, it would be easier to settle into life in the States (where stuff fits), raise a child in a Christian environment, be surrounded by family and friends, and serve in local ministry.

So why do we go? It's really simple. We want to help the 99% unreached and

➔ continued on back

Japan's Cherry Blossoms (above)

For a few days in late March or early April, Tokyo is dressed in resplendent white and pink blossoms. What could be more glorious? The blossoms are a small testimony to the Japanese of a greater glorious God who created them.

PRAY with us thru the week

SUN Pray for Japan as they mark the 31st anniversary of the 311 earthquake, tsunami, & nuclear crisis. Ask God to turn hearts toward his Son, Jesus through this disaster!

MON Pray for a peaceful resolution to Japan and China's territorial dispute over the Senkaku Islands.

TUE Pray as we return to Japan on March 26 after 6 months of reporting in the States. Ask God for a quick re-adjustment to life and ministry.

WED Pray for a containment of the contaminated water leaks at the Fukushima nuclear facility, and for those who left everything behind.

THUR Pray for us as we call a new national pastor to Denen Grace Chapel. In spite of the leadership shortage in Japan, ask God to provide the right man to take over this ministry and allow us to move on with new church planting work.

FRI Pray for Kaori's health with hepatitis B. Pray for Justen to catch up with his homeschooling studies. Pray for Kevin to maintain healthy routines of diet, rest and exercise.

Additional support: \$119 needed monthly. See our website to give online.



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➔ The 3rd Anniversary of 311



Mudding out houses post-tsunami during relief work in Shioyama in March 2011

The day started like any other: a mild tremor early in the morning, but nothing unusual...until 2:46pm. By the time the day had ended a 9.2 quake had created a tsunami of unthinkable destruction up and down the eastern coast, a nuclear plant went into meltdown, 20,000 people had lost their lives, Tokyo was in gridlock and panic had begun.

I've wondered since then why God ordained that we should be missionaries at this critical time of hardship and opportunity in the nation's history. I pray that He is glorified through the small relief efforts we've been part of with so many other Christians and missionaries.

Recently while reading in Isaiah 59, verse 19 nearly took my breath away. "And from the rising of the sun, they

will revere his glory. For he will come like a pent-up flood that the breath of the Lord drives along." NIV

In light of the anniversary of 311, these words leapt off the page. Although this passage is messianic prophecy (not specific judgement for Japan), the reference to "from the rising of the sun" (Japan is called the 'Land of the Rising Sun') and the tsunami-like "pent-up flood" gave me goosebumps.

Certainly God is sovereign over a tsunami. Certainly he desires all nations



to know Him. Even through this disaster, He certainly can and will be glorified in Japan. Even now the people of the Land of the Rising Sun are coming to know the Risen Son, and revere his glory. Would you remember to pray for them today? ☞

☞ continued from front

lost Japanese find their way to God. And when we consider the small number of workers searching out these lost 126 million Japanese, and yet the big number of doors that the 311 disaster has flung open, how could we hesitate to go?

What's more, during these 15 years, we've seen God at work in bringing Japanese to himself. We've seen the joy of new Christians worshipping their Creator for the first time in our church plant. And we want to see even more. We want to see disciples built up and churches multiplied so that God might be glorified and Japan might "sing of his ways" (Ps 138:15).

Greater still, the divine love and call of our Savior is upon our lives. We live for Him who died for us. We follow God's leading, his gifting and enabling, and his shaping of our life experiences.

Are we just a little crazy? Probably. Are we also just a little crazy about Japan? Likely. But the reason we go is so that Japan will know and show His glory! ☞

Thanks for sending us and enabling us to go. We've enjoyed our time with you, our "mission possible" support team.

Might you also go? Or, might you also be a part of sending "crazy" missionaries to Japan? See enclosed brochure.

LIFE IN JAPAN

Think Destination: My Top 10+ Favorite Things in Japan

It always helps with the transition to remember what good things are waiting on the other side of the world!

10 - Punctual public transportation

We set our watch to trains that take us comfortably (well, mostly) and quickly anywhere in Tokyo.

9 - Amusing etiquette signs in English

Sometimes translation goes a little wrong and the comical wording makes me smile.

8 - An unpacked and put-away suitcase

That's a luxury we miss while in the States.

7 - Onsen (Hot Springs)

They're all around. If you're not shy about public bathing, onsen can be a great place to relax in God's creation.

6 - Prayerwalking

I've learned a lot about my neighborhood. And gotten hopelessly lost blocks from home despite GPS.

5 - Mountain climbing

We're surrounded by beautiful mountains. Another father-son climb is in the works for summer.

4 - Our neighborhood Denny's

Owned by 7-11. With service call buttons on the tables.

3 - Gas stations (most are full service)

2~3 attendants check, wash, fill, stop traffic for our exit and bow as we leave. Buying gas never felt so special.

2 - No need for snow shovels

Tokyo usually has a clear and mild winter. We miss the white stuff sometimes...although not so much lately.

And our number 1 favorite thing in Japan: Working amongst the people of our church plant. We miss and love the people at Denen Grace Chapel!

read online

☞ www.LavermansInJapan.com/blog