

REACHING THE OTHER 99

church planting with you to reach the 99% in Japan

SEPTEMBER 2018 NEWS

Kevin & Kaori Laverman CHURCH PLANTING IN KAWASAKI, JAPAN



www.LavermansInJapan.com



➔ BOLD People at the YMCA

After 6 weeks of traveling through our support network in the States, including to WorldVenture's 75th Celebration (above), we're now back in Kawasaki. I'm always amazed at how God ties scattered points of history and people together into one grand story. Here's a recent way that the YMCA has connected us ALL THE WAY BACK TO JAPAN!



WorldVenture beginnings in 1943 & 75th Celebration in July 2018

At a YMCA in Chicago on May 24, 1943, a remarkable event took place. Even as WWII raged on, and churches were in theological turmoil, 50 pastors and believers gathered to pray and form what is now WorldVenture, our mission organization. In July, Kaori and I were in Colorado for the 75th anniversary of our mission. Appropriately, it was held at the YMCA in Estes Park, and included times of concerted prayer.

Looking at the photos, styles sure have changed in 75 years. It took that long for conservative Baptists to be comfortable gathering for prayer in T-shirts! Things change, but unchanged is our commitment to be BOLD, to ask big things and do risky work in all corners of the globe. Risky enough that

life insurance companies won't gladly underwrite us (hopeless!).

But the gospel is our hope. *"Since we have such a hope, we are very bold."* 2 Cor 3:12

In our own corner of the globe, and time in history, at a YMCA in

Kawasaki on August 26, 2018, another bold group of people gathered. There in the rooftop pool, three new believers were baptized while our church of 30 watched and cheered. (We are thankful to have a YMCA in our neighborhood that allowed us to use its facilities for this purpose.)

I don't know if "it's fun to STAY at the YMCA." But I can tell you that it's fun to PRAY at the YMCA, and fun to BAPTIZE at the YMCA. What could be more meaningful to a church planter than this culmination of God's work?

You have to understand that baptism is a BOLD step in Japan. Christians make up only a tiny percentage (0.2%) of the population, and ➔ continued on back

About the photo above:

At the WorldVenture 75th Anniversary celebration at YMCA in Estes Park, Colorado. We may be 75, but have no plans to retire yet!

PRAY

with us thru the week

SUN Pray for healing in Kevin's right eye. There is some continued deterioration of the retina blood vessels. He's following up on treatment in Japan.

MON Pray for the newlyweds at Denen Grace Chapel. We are now anticipating a mini baby boom. Church growth at its best.

TUE Pray for Hokkaido in the wake of a 6.8m quake, and southern Japan recovering from devastating summer floods.

WED Pray for provision of a bit of land in Musashi Kosugi. We desire to reach this megatown through a new church start in 2019. (see back & watch for update soon.)

THUR Pray for several seekers in the church to begin evangelistic Bible studies with us and move toward baptism.

FRI Pray for our partnership in church planting work with new missionaries (Mitchells) and Changs (arriving mid-September). We have found good housing near us (PTL) in time for their arrival. Pray for their adjustment to Japan.

SAT Pray for provision in our Twenty20 project (see back)



At the YMCA rooftop pool just moments before the baptisms

➡ continued from front

social pressure is very high. So, while we have many in the church considering baptism, even with much encouragement, not all are bold enough to “take the plunge.” When we returned from the States, we met with each of the candidates a final time. Each expressed setbacks, struggles, and

doubts. It is very common in Japan. I encouraged them to be BOLD from Isaiah 50:7, “*Because the Sovereign LORD helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore have I set my face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame.*”

Together, the three took the bold step of faith. H-san, who I shared about last newsletter in “*Hamburger Evangelism*,” gave a moving testimony, along with M-san, a single woman, and S-kun, a 10-year-old boy with Christian parents. Keep praying for their testimony among Japan’s other 99.8%. Today was a big, bold start!

Let’s praise God for gospel boldness at YMCAs that inspired people in 1943 to start

a worldwide mission, and people in 2018 to start a life of public Christian testimony in Japan. BOLD faith changes everything! 🙌

In a future newsletter, I will share some excerpts from the baptism service testimonies of these three. Wonderful, God-honoring testimonies!



Denen Grace Chapel celebrated the three baptisms together afterwards.

VISION

REACHING MUKO A New Church Startup Project

MuKo, 120,000+ people without an evangelical church!



With our next church plant, we want to reach the city of Musashi Kosugi by strategically combining our housing with a first floor space for outreach and new church to gather & worship.

Brochure, Funding Updates, Timeline & Giving:

↳ www.LavermansInJapan.org/MuKo

We’ve shared this project throughout our support network in the States during the summer. Now begins the faith wait for response and commitments, and followup. Meanwhile, realtors in Muko have been helping us with our property search. We’ve realized anew how rare it is in Muko, and how tight the market is! Available land is either far too SMALL, far too EXPENSIVE, far too CRAMMED amongst other buildings, or just far too FAR from the train station to be reasonable access. We’re not that picky, but we need something within a 10 minute walk of the station and 65square meters in size. It’s been a time consuming and discouraging process of confronting these logistical realities. However, as I write, there is now one piece of land available that we just viewed that just might work. Keep praying! We’ll let you know soon.

2020 TWENTY in our 20th (for Vision 2020)

Since we are on the topic of boldness (see above), we have a BOLD request for you to prayerfully consider:

Our work in Japan is completely funded by Stateside giving partners. In our 20th year in Japan (has it really been 20 years already?), we really need to strengthen our support base, and build a solid foundation for the vision and years ahead. The cost of overseas living in Japan has gone up, even as many of our supporters have gone up... to Glory.



We’re looking for 20 new supporters to begin support of \$20 or more monthly from this month. Can you be one? Would you let us know? Below is the form to mail to WorldVenture. Or, begin a support commitment for us online from their website.



Our progress since AUGUST update
3 new supporters. 15 yet needed @ \$20/month.