

REACHING THE OTHER 99

church planting with you to reach the 99% in Japan

FEBRUARY 2019 NEWS

Kevin & Kaori Laverman CHURCH PLANTING IN KAWASAKI, JAPAN

"Wherever you set foot, you will be on the land I have given you." Joshua 1:3

www.LavermansInJapan.com



➔ Standing on the Promises

Winter has had us juggling two major projects (below), a growing team, Christmas outreach, cleanup of Kaori's parent's Yamagata home, architects, builders and many church meetings, a frozen shoulder, a problematic eye, and a couple of root canals. But through it all, we're confident of this: we stand on the promises of God!



Our church leadership and missionaries at Denen Grace Chapels's February groundbreaking

For 18 years of church planting, since 2001, we've been confounded by a five-letter problem: S-P-A-C-E. In Japan, space *truly* is the final frontier. Where can we hold meetings, small groups, small services, outreach activities, Bible studies and counseling sessions? Homes are generally too small and too personal. We've used cafes, Chinese restaurants and community centers. We've opened our house and borrowed rental halls.

But the problems of stability, ease of use, and perception of visitors have dogged us over the years and slowed down our mission impact. What's more, we needed some space for collaborative office work, the occasional overnight guest, and a future pastor to live.

Fast forward to February 2019. Here is our groundbreaking for a small church + house facility. Right here in Mizonokuchi, God provided. In the photo, we're literally standing on the promises!

Notice, we're holding tools (although, Kaori with spade in center, looks like she is the only one doing the real work...often the case). February ground is pretty hard. (Though not as hard as the mission soil of Japan.) I love this photo. Because, while ultimately it is Christ

that builds his church, he allows us to have a part in the process! Each of us is a different tool in his hands.

I know there isn't much milk or honey flowing, but I like to think of this ground as the promised land. God's kept it for us all these years. And we have promised it back to him. When the land came on the market last September and Denen Grace first began to wrestle with the possibility of purchase, I crept to the spot regularly like Nicodemus at night, planted my feet in the middle and prayed, "Lord, if you keep this land for us, and provide the means for purchase, I will do my best to bring you glory here."

The realtor waited. The owner agreed. The price was set. Our tiny church prayed, and gave, and gave some more, and voted. The contract was signed. The land became ours (on loan from God). The building ➔ **continued on back**

About the photo above

In Kawasaki, winter is giving way to February plum blossoms and the promise of spring. Next up, the famous cherry blossoms of March.

PRAY

with us thru the week

SUN Pray for timely completion of the Mizonokuchi house + church facility, and for good relationships with new neighbors.

MON Pray for our partnership in church planting work with new missionaries, the Mitchells, Changs & Robisons (arriving March).

TUE Pray for provision of all needed funding for our Muko church project by March 31 (see back). We have a desire to reach this growing neighborhood through a new church start.

WED Pray for complete healing of Kevin's right eye. In January, he had minor eye surgery to correct a problem on the back of his retina. The ophthalmologist is pleased with progress since then.

THUR Pray for the faith decisions of several individuals in evangelistic Bible studies or preparing for baptism.

FRI Pray for Japan on the 8th anniversary of 311, the March 11, 2011 earthquake, tsunami and nuclear crisis. Pray for them to turn toward the unshakable foundation of Christ.

SAT Pray for our health and wisdom as we juggle major projects (see front and back) and many details that challenge our language skills and time use!

➡ continued from front

committee was formed. The facility was designed. Construction has begun. And the foundation is now done!

Everything will be done by the end of March. The upstairs will be residence for church staff, and the downstairs will be large, flexible ministry space with a tiny office, galley kitchen, toilet, and shower room. We'll finally be ready for your (overnight) visit! The land is right behind the local public school, near the train station, and close to our Sunday worship rental



location (called Cozy Hall). We'll use it (weekdays) in tandem with Cozy Hall (Sundays) to make a difference for Christ in Mizonokuchi.

I've asked the church to write favorite Bible verses on index cards that reflect God's promises. The cards are a great reminder of their faith journey.

One man chose John 17:3: *"Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ."*

Another wrote Psalm 73:28: *"But as for me, it is good to be near God! I have made the Sovereign LORD my shelter, and I will tell everyone about the things you do."*

Another loved this promise from Haggai: *"And in this place I will grant peace," declares the LORD Almighty.*

Justen designed a box for all these cards. We'll place it into the foundation of the entryway. Everyone who



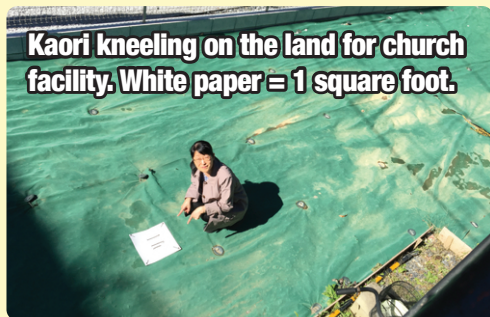
enters the church -- from delivery people and workers, to active kids, hectic moms, busy single professionals, and lonely older residents -- all will literally be standing on the promises of Christ...my King. (Through eternal ages let his praises ring!) ☞

Praise God for his firm foundations to build on. We look forward to the days ahead as the facility is completed, and filled with life and gospel witness. Pray with us for good relationships with neighbors and the impact to come! Now, off to find my work gloves...

VISION

REACHING MUKO

A New Church Startup Project



Kaori kneeling on the land for church facility. White paper = 1 square foot.

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

Musashi Kosugi (MuKo) is a rapidly growing area of 120,000+ in Kawasaki without an evangelical church witness. We want to move in and begin outreach in Muko this year. The land was purchased last October. We are currently raising funds to build the church + house multipurpose facility on the property. We're in the final wave of meetings with the architect and builder. Construction is on track to be completed this year. We will then move in and begin services and outreach to the community.

Currently we are at 85% of our total \$118k needed for this project by March 31. Might you be a part of Reaching Muko, too? See the website above for more details.



TWENTY in our 20th (for 2020 Vision)

Since we are on the topic of building, we have a "foundational" request. In our 20th year in Japan (we came to Japan in February 1999), 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 March. Can you be one? Below is the form to mail to WorldVenture. Or, begin a support commitment for us online from their website: worldventure.com (search for "Laverman")



↳ www.lavermansinJapan.org/vision



Our progress since last update:
1 new supporter. 12 yet needed @ \$20/month.