



FEBRUARY 2025

## FAITHFULNESS, FAREWELLS, AND FINISHING

### Praises

- For good turnouts at all the Christmas events and being able to share the Gospel through them.
- For God's faithfulness over many years: the North American Baptist General Mission in Japan has been in Japan since 1951 when the first missionaries came over. Florence Miller, being one of them, just celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday!
- For the bittersweet farewells that both Shan and I are experiencing as we both prepare to leave the Osaka area where we've lived for many years.
- For the opportunity I have for continued education and being accepted to a two-year training course on Spiritual Direction.

### Prayer

- For finishing well, that the process of shutting down the legal entity would go quickly and timely for our still unknown departure date.
- That packing, moving, closing accounts, etc., will go according to God's plan amidst quality time with our friends.
- For both Shan and my preparations for home assignment this year.

*For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.*

PSALM 100:5 (NIV)



Sharing my testimony at Iki Iki Salon seniors group

Both Shan Reed and I are in a season of farewells. Last Christmas, we had our last Christmas events at the Komyo

Christian Church. Christmas Eve service was well attended, as usual. I finished up my volunteer work at the local senior community center, Iki Iki Salon, with the annual Christmas party. Since it was my last time to be with them, I was given most of the hour to present my puppets, etc. I made a video of the various photos I took from my nine years of volunteering and also shared my testimony. I shared the Christmas story with Lenny the Lamb and with my other puppets, Grandma Stella and Ducky. The Holy Spirit led me to be bold, and I shared about Christ more than I have in the past. Since then, several seniors have come up to me to greet me while I'm walking through the neighborhood to say that they appreciated me being there.



Shan Reed and I have also been enjoying visits to the Japan Baptist Conference churches. Shan has been giving powerful and encouraging words through her final sermon to the churches, taken from Ephesians 3:16-21, about being churches filled with God's love and power. I have been sharing my testimony. The churches have graciously shown their appreciation for not only us but for the many faithful missionaries of the past who have planted and built their churches. They are focusing their Deeper Life Conference in May on the topic of thanksgiving for the historical work of God through the work of the NAB in Japan. They understand and are very grateful for the many years that missionaries were sent from North America to plant churches and to help build the Japan Baptist Conference, which consists of eleven churches now.



*MIX Youth enjoying a time of praise*

I recently spoke to the MIX Youth in early January, talking about the spiritual battle for their minds and to “not sleep through life!” There was a good turnout, and many enjoyed the time of worship and discussions in smaller groups and playing games and eating together. It had been quite a while since I had been part of the youth environment, and so I enjoyed the energy and the atmosphere. I was encouraged by the young people and their responses to the message.

“Shan and Yuri’s Gospel Goodbye Party” was held on February 1, with around eighty people attending. The Anointed Gospel Choir and Wings Choir and our friend Cassandra Peake sang. Shan and I also gave short speeches. It was a wonderful time of praising God together. Both Shan and I were touched by all the people God has blessed us with by getting to know and share our lives with them.



*Teary hugs from two youth who presented us with gifts*

My prayer and hope is that I will be able to get back to Canada for the start of home assignment by Easter. This is all dependent on how fast the government can process our papers. There is a lot of red tape involved. The process has been a test of patience. As of writing this letter, I do not have a departure date yet; however, I have by faith set a moving date for the beginning of April to put my things in storage for a year in Mie prefecture. The plan is to come back to Japan in 2026 through partnership with TEAM. The next couple of months will be a busy time continuing to stamp documents, pack, move, de-register, close down accounts, etc. We very much appreciate your prayers for all the logistics to go smoothly.

There is so much to do before home assignment, so it still seems a distant future, yet it is coming up soon! Please contact me if you would like to set up a time for me to come and visit you or your church. I am so appreciative of your partnership with me via your prayers and support. Thank you!

*Yuri Nakano*

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