



The Evans family

taking the Gospel to Japan

March 2022

Dear Praying Friends,

April in Japan marks the beginning of the **A new school year**, many work transfers, graduates entering the workforce, the coming of Spring, and for us (hopefully) the end of the snow! This year was the **biggest snowfall** we have seen in our 30 years here and this greatly affected our life over the last few months.

When it snowed it really dumped and this led to hours of shovelling, even just to clear access in and out of the house. So much so, that Debbie for the first time ever, had to learn to use the snow-blower! The town was unable to keep up with clearing the roads, so on several occasions, people had to leave their cars abandoned on the side of the road and walk home. There were many accidents on the ice; at least 6 different church members had accidents (some were their first accident ever). By the height of the season, we had over 3 metres high of snow in our front yard, and 4 metres high at the church. For a month or two, all we could see from our living room window



Our two-storey house viewed from the street

was a snow-mountain, and no sunlight. As the snow accumulated on the roads and roadsides, narrow roads become difficult to navigate. Finally, when the weather warmed and the snow started to soften, many cars were bogged and a 5-minute trip to the shops at times turned into hours, as I had to dig either our car out, or more often the cars of neighbours, church members or passers-by! Amidst all that, God has been faithful, and the ministry here has continued to grow.



An abandoned car needing to be dug out

Compounding the difficulty was the resurgence of **Covid infections** that had started just before Susannah & Shuto's wedding. We realised how blessed we were in being able to conduct the wedding as planned (with restrictions), when just one week later, we

were thrust back into shutdowns, for over two months. The booster vaccine (jab #3) is currently being distributed across the country, and everyone is looking forward to the day that thoughts of Corona aren't central in all we do. For now though, it's still masks, minimal meals together, and hybrid services (partially online, partially in the building).



Two lanes on a divided highway, median strip to the right

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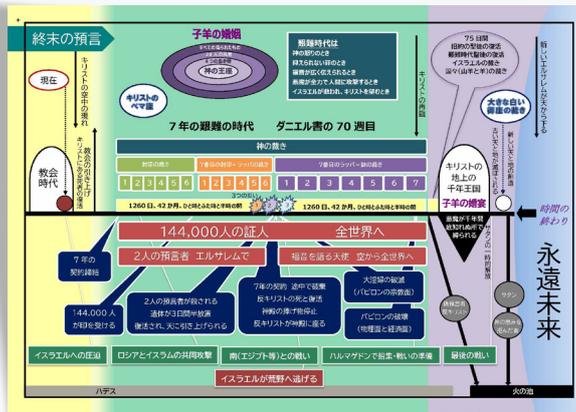
March held some special milestones for our family and ministry... firstly **Kiara** (our youngest) **graduated from university!** Congratulations to Kiara, who has journeyed through a university life plagued with shutdowns, online classes, and her own battles with seizures. The Lord also blessed her with an IT job, which she is slowly settling in to. After more than 50 entrance and graduation ceremonies (and all the hard work in between) we are no longer “officially” assisting our children through their education!



Celebrating Kiara's graduation

Another March milestone was that in my adult Sunday School class, I completed a 12-month series about **prophecy**. As we see the conflict in eastern Europe unfolding, we are saddened at the tragedy and loss of life, yet aware of how significantly the stage is being set for what God has already told us will happen. So much more are we reminded to look up, Maranatha!

Towards the end of the series, I took three Sundays with the entire church together to teach a “Journey through time.” This was the culmination of three years of teaching and with Susannah’s help, preparing visuals in Japanese. It was fast paced as we followed in just three one-hour sessions, God’s entire programme for the world, starting from Creation, right through the Old Testament,



Excited about the Lord's Return



*www.suzuranbbc.com
The new homepage*

the 400 years of silence, the New Testament, church history and prophecy, finishing with the new heaven and the new earth. Many commented on the blessing of “seeing all the pieces come together!”

March 27th was a special Sunday for our church. Firstly, in preparation for the day, we launched our all-newly made **church homepage** (www.suzuranbbc.com). Susannah (with technical advice from Benjamin) has spent much of the past year working on the new image, with a view to a more effective online presence. Then Sunday was our first day back with everyone back in the building after 10 weeks of lockdown... and everyone was so glad to be back together!

In Sunday School, it was the concluding lesson of the above prophecy series (which I had been continuing to teach online). In the worship service, the church took time to **celebrate 30 years since we arrived in Japan**. The actual date we arrived was January 18th, but had we moved to our current town (Kita Hiroshima) on April 1st, so this was perfect timing for the celebration! It was a special service which included testimonies from almost all the current members and lots of special music. It was such a blessing to see how far the Lord has brought the ministry! Our hearts continue to be

Serving the Lord in Japan since 1992

“And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us; and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.” Ps 90:17





Mrs Satoh in blue and her husband directly behind her, joined in with one of the special music items



The men of the church presenting us with a "Retreat to Refresh"



The next-generation team-in-training, celebrating 30 years with us

heavy both for the lost around us and for the next generation. Our thoughts are always towards leading the church to complete autonomy and a smooth transition. No doubt this is still a few years away, but so much groundwork is coming into place.

In the afternoon, we had our church **Annual General Business Meeting**. As a church, we took time to praise God for His blessings over the past year, and to focus on a proposed pathway ahead for the next 12 months. At this meeting, Sekito's new wife was received into church membership, and **Mr and Mrs Satoh** gave their testimonies in preparation for their upcoming baptism. There was not a dry eye in the auditorium as they shared how God had delivered them from the clutches of paganism and self-sufficiency, transforming their lives by the power of the gospel. They also asked for prayer for the salvation of their three adult children and their families. The Satohs (boldly) plan to mail them each a copy of their testimonies.

Another highlight from the day, was that the church had made special preparations to present Debbie and me with the opportunity to have a short **"Refresh Break"** from the ministry. Do pray for the young men & women of the church as they step up to the plate to watch over the ministry in our absence. Pray also for us as we take time to stop and refresh. Our hearts are full of rejoicing, and there is still so much ahead that we seek to achieve.

We are so thankful to our team of supporters who continue to stand with us as we strive to go forward for the cause of the gospel. There is much fruit and much rejoicing! To God be the glory.

Yours for much fruit in Japan that abides,

*Tony & Debbie,
and the Evans clan*

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