Peggy is now in a place where she does not miss Ninja; where there are no more sorrows, sickness, death, or trials!

And God will wipe away every tear . . . there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying . . . no more pain (Rev. 21:4).

David Verwey closed the meeting by making a moving appeal for people to get right with God and explained to the unsaved why our sad feelings gave way to feelings of great joy. Everyone was sent home with Christian literature and a fresh challenge to focus on eternal values. We know that this is the way Peggy would have wanted it!

Only in Christ can there be farewells with holy laughter and pure joy! ❑

UPDATE - SUNETTE HUGO

Sunette with two ladies from the old people's home

Sunette Hugo, from South Africa, joined the Mission in February 2007. She has numerous opportunities to witness to the unsaved, as she works as an English Evangelism Teacher in various churches and homes for the elderly. She also helps handle about three thousand e-mails weekly and a vast amount of correspondence. She says, "It is mind-boggling to see how the Lord prepared, equipped and eventually guided me to Japan Mission!" Please pray for her continued good health, protection, spiritual growth and the hundreds of students she has befriended.

UPDATE - PRISON MINISTRY

The Lord has opened up opportunities for Japan Mission to minister to South African people in the prisons of Japan! Staff members visit people who have attempted to smuggle illegal drugs into Japan. Many are in desperate need of clothing, Christian literature and help to get in contact with family members. A number of them have recently come to know the Lord. Please pray that the Lord would transform the lives of these prisoners!

PRAYER REQUESTS

1. Please pray for the many whose lives were touched by the Service of Thanksgiving for Peggy. Join us, as we pray that the Lord would continue to be glorified through Peggy's death, as He was in her life.
2. David and Sue will be taking a number of meetings in South Africa during April and May. Please pray for their protection and the ability to be effective in communicating the vision of the work.
3. The Mission is in need of dedicated Christian English teachers. Please pray for the provision of well-qualified teachers of His choice.

"Call unto Me, and I will answer thee" Jer. 33:3

JAPAN MISSION

Called to Serve

March / April 2009

FAREWELL WITH LAUGHTER AND JOY

Peggy Verwey

Peggy Verwey, mother of Japan Mission, went to her heavenly home on Dec. 5, 2008. She donated her body to medical science and requested that we hold a Service of Thanksgiving, which was held on Dec. 18. It was easy to plan her 'send-off' because she wrote down what she wanted. She even chose Scripture readings, hymns and requested that people not wear somber black clothes. She wanted it to be a time of rejoicing!

On an ordinary work day, about 180 people from all walks of life, from all over Japan, crowded into a church.

Pastor Ken Chan brought a powerful message based on Paul's life: ***I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith*** (2 Tim 4:7). He spoke of Paul's unfaltering sense of purpose and powerful ministry while under very difficult circumstances. He pointed out the similarities of Peggy's faithful service of over a half a century in Japan. *"She stuck to her task and persevered joyfully until the end. She finished her course well and she kept the faith!"* he said.

Shortly before Peggy went to be with the Lord, Pastor Chan and his wife visited her in hospital and asked her some simple questions. Although her memory was deteriorating, she was able to answer his questions clearly.

"Peggy, who brought you to Japan?" She answered, *"Jesus."* Then he asked, *"Who died for your sins?"* Again she answered, *"Jesus!"* Then he sang a hymn together with her, *"My Jesus I love thee ... "* Some of the words are, *"My gracious Redeemer, my Savior art thou, If ever I love thee, my Jesus tis now!"* He was surprised to see how well she remembered the words, as they softly sang together. He came away knowing that the love of Christ was strong in Peggy!

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As part of the Service of Thanksgiving, Peggy's friends reflected on her life:

Mr. Nakajima, a close friend for over 50 years, related how he met Peggy Verwey in hospital when he was a tuberculosis patient. He thought that Peggy looked very beautiful and confessed that he and his friends used to refer to her secretly as Ingrid Bergman, a popular movie star! He still clearly remembered some of the messages that the Verweys and their staff delivered in the community hall of the hospital that led to his conversion.

"Because of Neil and Peggy's service, the Japan Mission was able to introduce 28 converts to my church over the years and some 10 are still active members!" he said. Mr. Nakajima now faithfully attends church with his wife, 4 children and 9 grandchildren! Tears filled his eyes as he told of how one of his daughters recently pointed an influential lady to God. She was later baptized and became a member of the church. *"So the work begun by the Mission is still being carried on by the younger generation!"* were his words of encouragement.

Mrs. Toyo Hayashi writes a monthly tract for the Japan Mission. When she heard that Peggy passed away, she said to herself, ***Well done, good and faithful servant . . . Enter into the joy of your Lord*** (Mat 25:21).

She said, *"I discovered the secret of Peggy's fruitful life while living at the Mission headquarters many years ago."* Her room was opposite the room where Peggy used to have her quiet time. Hot and humid summers or icy wintry mornings did not seem to cause Peggy to waiver. Without fail, around 5:30 am, Toyo said that she would see the lights go on in the window of that room. During the bitterly cold winters, when no heating was available, Peggy placed a metal hot water bottle on her lap, wrapping herself in a thick blanket before she started to commune with the Lord!

"Her hidden walk with Christ was truly evident when she left her room to interact with people!" Toyo said. *"When special problems loomed, and Neil thought it was time to fast and pray, Peggy joyfully joined him!"*

Peggy distributed evangelistic literature and talked to people wherever she went. Even at 87, she never left home without tracts in hand. Many non-Christians, whom she befriended in recent years, were among those who attended the Service of Thanksgiving and seemed deeply moved.

Some 30 years ago, when Toyo left Japan Mission to be married, Peggy said to her, "Remember, '***The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable'"*** (Rom. 11:29, NKJV). That is in part why she continued to use her writing skills for the Lord. Over the years, Toyo has helped the Mission distribute about 25 million pieces of evangelistic literature!

Although in her eighties, she still writes an evangelistic tract for the Mission each month. Like Peggy, she wants to persevere to the end!

Neil Verwey spoke at the Service of Thanksgiving and thought that the only way he could get through his talk without breaking down was to speak on something very light.

He spoke on Peggy's love for cats. *"I am a one husband, one son, one plant, and one cat person,"* Peggy used to say. *"Although I did not care for cats, to my misfortune, two of our workers also had cats.*

"Peggy's cat was called Kitty and responded to only one word, 'fish!' When Peggy shouted 'fish', the cat would come to life and jump very high to grab a small dried fish from her hand! Someone took a picture of this and sent it into the newspaper. She later received a sum of money as a prize for having this picture in the newspaper!

"One day Kitty disappeared for three days. A cat-loving search party of three women from the Mission took to streets shouting "Fish! Fish!" I was sure that the neighbors thought that they had lost their marbles!

"Three days later, one of the threesome appeared and excitedly announced that she had found the cat. It was up a tree on a neighbor's property. A dog was tied up at the bottom, so the cat could not come down. There and then she tried to recruit me to rescue the cat!

"Not at all," I said. "It is freezing cold and raining! When it clears up, I will help you." I knew I had no choice when Peggy and the girl just sat and stared at me.

"I carried a heavy ladder and Peggy accompanied me. She asked the girls to boil some water so that they could bathe the frozen cat! The tree was near a retaining wall and a challenge to climb. Peggy had to hold the ladder for me to venture up the tree. I got a hold of Kitty by the scruff of its neck and lowered it to Peggy. To my surprise, she abruptly released her grip on the ladder and left me up in the tree! An elderly man who passed by helped me out of my predicament or I might have been up in that tree for 3 days!

"When we moved to our new headquarters in Ikoma, I asked Peggy, 'Considering how many years I have put up with cats, could we please make our new home cat free?' She reluctantly agreed.

"Afterwards, however, when we went for walks, she would be on the look-out for cats. She knew the cats in the neighborhood by name! She would talk to them in English, Japanese, and Afrikaans, telling them how fortunate they were not to be like the starving cats in India!

"I finally realized how much a cat meant to Peggy and secretly consulted with Sue, our daughter-in-law. A few weeks later, one Christmas morning, Sue arranged for Peggy to find a cat walking into the room with a ribbon around its neck!

"Since then we always made sure Peggy had a cat. A few cats later, Peggy received a house cat from a missionary family. This cat was so good at hiding in our house that on two separate occasions the seven Verweys looked everywhere but could not find her! Only when she was hungry did she finally appear! Peggy then named her Ninja.

"Peggy is no longer with me now, but she left her cat behind. Ninja and I had to put up with each other in the same house until a missionary family kindly adopted her.