PRAYER REQUESTS

1. After their parents died, the Nishiyama children stayed on the right path. They got married to Christians, and now the grand children also attend Sunday school and church. Pray that this will continue for many generations to come. Please pray for the oldest son, Munehisa, his wife and children who are not yet saved.
2. Please pray for God's guidance and protection for each of the members of the Verwey family. Pray that they would be faithful to sow the seed of the Word wherever the opportunity presents itself.
3. Pray for the English Evangelism Ministry, as workers start a new teaching term in September. Melissa Fallon has decided to return to Australia. A new worker from the USA, called Daniel Troyer, will take her place. Please pray for Daniel, as he desires to be a good witness in this new teaching situation.
4. Ferris and Karen Liske are volunteer workers who will come from the USA to work with Japan Mission again during September and October to help with many tasks, including maintenance, painting, office work, hospitality, speaking at meetings, witnessing and doing evangelism. Please pray for God's wisdom, strength and protection.

JAPANORAMA - ROCK BREAKING SEED

Years ago, a little 'cherry seed of life' fell on a rock, germinated and sent its hair-thin roots down one of the cracks of the rock. As the roots clawed their way down into the rock and increased in size, the cherry tree grew bigger and stronger. It appeared that these roots became so powerful that they split the rock. Every spring tourists from far and wide travel to Morioka, Japan, to see this plucky cherry tree in full bloom, standing in the middle of the rock it had split in two.

God's Word is like the 'cherry seed of life'. It can penetrate the coldest and the hardest heart and split it wide open to reveal the glory of God! You may be sowing the seed in hardened hearts. Do not despair! ***"Is not My word like a fire?" says the Lord, "And like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?"*** (Jeremiah 23:29).

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

JAPAN MISSION

Called to Serve

September / October 2008

A LAMP DISPELLING DARKNESS

Hideharu Nishiyama (son of Hideki)

"Gomen kudasai" ("I am an honorable nuisance"), Mr. Hideki Nishiyama said one day as he opened Neil and Peggy's front door and announced his arrival. "How can I start a church in my village?" he eagerly inquired. "You need to pray a lot. You could also go from house to house distributing tracts," we suggested. "I am already doing that," he said. "Some think I am paid by the Americans to fight Buddhism!"

"Then it might be time to start a Sunday School," we suggested. We had seen churches started at the side of the road by this method. "If I round the children up, will you come over and show us how a Sunday School should be run?"

The next Sunday morning, Hideki walked through the streets of the town of Horimizo, announcing the Sunday School as he beat two pieces of wood together. Clang! Clang! Clang! Driven by curiosity, the children followed him. When he thought there were enough followers to fill his house, he took a short cut home. In front of his house he bowed deeply and addressed the curious crowd of children!

"Nichiyogakko yarimasu kara ohairi kudasai!" ("Please be my honorable guests and step inside for Sunday School!") With this he threw open the door.

We arrived a little later. Looking at all of the shoes crammed into the entrance way, we knew the house was jam-packed. We taught them a song: *Makoto no Kami Sama tada hitori (There is only one true God)*. Within minutes they were heartily singing their first Christian hymn!

We then told them how to pray to the only true God -- not by clapping of the hands as in the temples, but with folded hands and closed eyes. After

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that we told them the story of David and Goliath. The story was a hit!

Some raced home to tell their parents about the young man with a slingshot who had killed a giant! The grownups wanted to know why they were left out of such fun! Some of the children reprimanded their parents for not giving thanks to God before eating a meal. The parents did not know how to pray, so the children did the praying. They saw to it that the grownups closed their eyes properly and folded their hands before they prayed to the living God. Soon the parents started attending Hideki's house gatherings!

On March 7, 1965, the Verweys had the privilege of going to the house with the cross on it, to conduct the inaugural service of the Horimizo Church!

Hideharu, Hideki's young son, was playing the piano. They had rented one for the occasion but he could only play with one finger. He was eager to use whatever talent he had for God!

Before becoming a Christian, he had been so shy that he did not even greet his neighbors. Since then God helped him to believe, ***"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"*** (Phil 4:13). Eventually Hideharu became an accomplished pianist!

At age 58, Hideki left his work at the bank in order to go to Bible College. Together with Kayoko, his 23 year old daughter, they attended Bible College. He studied for 3 years and Kayoko studied for 5 years. Later on she married a minister.

Many years later, the Lord encouraged us greatly when we were invited to speak to a group of Christian businessmen. One of those in attendance was Hideharu. He reminded us that his father had been saved in hospital some 32 years earlier, resulting in his children, grandchildren and many neighbors believing in Jesus!

"Only one small lamp reached into the darkness of the town of Horimizo," Hideharu said. "But the light of God shone through that lamp and it illuminated the lives of many!" At a recent family gathering, 23 of his family members were followers of Christ!

Quite recently, two ladies walked into our office, showering us with gifts. It was not so much the quality of their presents that surprised us, but the fact that they referred to themselves as our spiritual grandchildren! They belonged to the Nishiyama clan! We were amazed to see that the seeds the Lord had enabled us to sow in Hideki's heart so many years ago were still bearing fruit today!

It is a wonderful encouragement to us as we see the seeds of the Gospel multiplied in the lives of many around us over the years! How worthwhile it is to sow the precious seed when the opportunity presents itself!

"In the morning sow your seed, and in the evening do not withhold your hand; for you do not know which will prosper, either this or that, or whether both alike will be good" (Ecclesiastes 11:6). ❑

UPDATE - VERWEY FAMILY

The Verwey family

Neil and Peggy Verwey continue to be used by the Lord in various capacities. Neil (81) speaks at evangelistic meetings, visits various prisons and does a lot of writing. Peggy (87) recently wrote a book called, "The Lame Take the Prey." She is always handing out tracts and continues to be used by the Lord but has become quite frail.

David (46) and Sue (45) Verwey have taken over many of the administrative responsibilities from Neil and Peggy, and recently concluded a tour of meetings in the UK, where they participated in about 50 meetings and appointments over 60 days. They praise the Lord for God's blessing, protection and the interest the people showed in the work. Lord willing, they plan to take similar meetings in South Africa during April and May, 2009. Pray for wisdom and protection as they continue to head up the work. Please continue to pray for their three children:

Jesse Verwey (24) is in his third year with the US Army and is stationed in Oklahoma. He was trained for a year and is now repairing radar and missile systems. He seems to enjoy his work and may soon be transferred to Okinawa, Japan. Please pray for him as he strives to be a faithful witness.

Alex Verwey (22) finished his degree in International Business and was married to Eri (24), a wonderful Japanese Christian girl, on July 21, 2008. They currently live in the Los Angeles area, where he is working for a Japanese company, taking college courses and involved in ministry with a local Japanese church. Eri is also studying and involved in this ministry.

Chris Verwey (21) is in his second year with the US Army. On January 1, 2008, he was married to a lovely Christian girl from the USA, called Bonnie (19). They live in the Seattle area and continue to be faithful in their witness for the Lord. Bonnie is working to further her education.

Earlene McKean (66), Sue's mother, has been in and out of hospital due to various physical ailments. However, the Lord continues to use her in these circumstances and many have been touched by her faithful witness. Recently, things became quite serious when she had to have one of her legs amputated above the knee, due to infections caused by diabetes. This was quite a shock to her emotionally. However, she now seems to be doing better. Thank you for your continued prayers.