

# Mission and Art in Japan

使命 and 芸術 in 日本

Dear Friends,

June 2008

We're back in the States! We were greeted at Memphis International Airport on Friday night, June 6<sup>th</sup>, by many family and friends with "Welcome Back!" signs. I can't tell you how nice it is to understand the language and not feel so lost all the time. We're quickly getting readjusted to life in the States and are staying for the first couple of months in the Mission House at Second Presbyterian Church. We will let you know as soon as we have a more permanent address and phone numbers. Our year long Home Ministry Assignment in the States will be spent traveling to churches and spreading news of how God is working in Japan.

Our last few days in Japan were filled with goodbye parties (pictures below).



We gave one last concert the week before we left. The young girl in the picture below became a fan! Aidan celebrated his fifth birthday with all his friends at the park.



The Gospel Voices of Jackson came from Jackson, Mississippi, to spread the gospel in Japan through music and encourage the Japanese gospel choirs who sang with them in various concerts. God used the group in ways no one could foresee. Maegan, one of the only 2 sopranos in the group, spent the whole time in a Japanese hospital due to complications from sickle cell disease! From her hospital bed she sang of the gospel to patients and doctors, and one of the doctors even came to the concert pictured below to the right.



Below are photos from a trip to beautiful Kyoto.



Japanese people are great at hiding their 本音(honne) or real intent and

keeping up their 世間体(sekentei) or societal appearances

(literally "world body"). Constantly worrying about what others think, they are forced to hide weaknesses and family problems out of fear of judgment by neighbors, school teachers, and others. Japan is described as a duck pond where everything seems calm on the surface, but just under the water the ducks are furiously kicking their legs just to stay in place. The open and grace-filled community the church offered through Abi's Bible study was a breath of fresh air. (This kind of community is one of the most visible signs of God working in Japanese culture). One hurting lady from Aidan's kindergarten, Mrs. T, was visited by Jehovah's Witnesses and started adhering to the legalism of their many rules and duties. The ladies in Abi's Bible study told Mrs. T about the amazing community they are experiencing and invited her to come. Unfortunately, Mrs. T said she felt she really needed to stay committed to the Jehovah's Witnesses. "Can we please pray for her?" they asked Abi. Please do pray for Mrs. T and this group of ladies, who will continue studying the Bible together with two Japanese Christian ladies.

We are so thankful for your three years of prayer and monetary support. Please don't stop now! There are so many things to pray for and huge financial needs. The church planting movement in the heart of Tokyo where we are headed next needs your prayer and support. Please continue to pray for our family's adjustment to life in the States and that it will be a bonding experience for our family. Please pray that we will be able to raise the money we need to quickly get back to Japan. During our Home Ministry Assignment, we will continue as full-time employees of Mission to the World, dependent upon your support for our expenses. Thank you!



Aidan misses his good friend Ryuto

*In Him, Roger & Abi & Aidan & Eastin*