



# RCA Missionary Update

## from the Brownells

Young people in Japan are struggling with spiritual emptiness in spite of their material abundance. Many withdraw and become hopeless, engage in crime, or commit suicide, and the church in Japan is having trouble reaching the next generation. Nathan and Nozomi Brownell will be working in cooperation with the church in Japan to renew youth ministry. They will focus on developing a relational youth ministry through schools in the Yokohama area, and they will practice a ministry of hospitality and develop a network to spread the vision for a revived youth outreach across Japan. Nathan and Nozomi have three sons: Kenneth, Raymond, and Luke.

### Japan facts:

- Population: 127,333,000
- Size: 377,835 square miles (slightly smaller than California)
- Major religions: 84 percent Shinto and Buddhist, 16 percent other (0.7 percent Christian)



### MINISTRY

Youth Ministry

### LOCATION

Yokohama, Japan

### PARTNER

Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan (United Church of Christ in Japan)

### CONTACT

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Dear Friends,

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We are happy to be able to write to you with good news. Through God's miraculous provision, we are now in Japan!

We thank God for the opportunity to share our vision for youth mission. In answer to your prayers, God opened the door for us and in March we received a confirmation of our call to serve in Yokohama. Nathan was called to fill a teaching position at Ferris Jr. & Sr. High School, which was founded by RCA missionaries 137 years ago. Ferris is the oldest girl's school in all Japan. Fortunately, this school sincerely endeavors to share the faith with the next generation. With the additional support from the school, the RCA mission board directed us to "Go!"

Here are two important photos, which represent both the history and the future of the mission in Japan. The first photo is of a group



2007 Ferris Girls Junior High School students visiting the grave of Ms. Jennie M. Kuyper in Japan.



The final resting place of Ms. Jennie M. Kuyper, RCA missionary to Japan died Sept. 1, 1923 in the Kanto Earthquake. In the foreground is the final resting place of Rev. Theodore Ernest Flaherty, an RCA missionary who went to glory from here in 1982.

of students from the mission school visiting the grave of Ms. Jennie Mary Kuyper an RCA missionary. Ms. Kuyper died on Sept 1, 1923 in the massive Kanto earthquake. She was pinned in one of the collapsed school buildings. Other teachers and staff tried to rescue her but were unable to reach her before the fires came. Her last words were, "Go. It is God's will." From her supreme sacrifice the school received its motto, "For others," which is drawn from Philippians 2:4. The fact that the school still escorts every incoming class to this site says something profound. There is yet much hope for the future of the mission here.

We would like to thank each one individually and will try to write in the coming months. In this letter we would like to express our gratitude for the support we received in memory of Rev. Del Vander Haar. We were blessed to have met Mrs.

Trudy Vander Haar while we were in Holland, Michigan. Trudy noted that in many ways our ministries connect. The Vander Haars served eight years coordinating youth ministry, then coordinating family life ministries, and later raising support for missions. The Vander Haars also served as missionaries in Japan from 1989-1992. We want to honor the testimony of the Vander Haars through this mission—to God be the Glory.



Trudy Vander Haar with Nozomi

#### **Our ministries:**

Nathan is teaching at the mission school. He is glad to find that many of the teachers are sharing their Christian testimonies at chapel time each day. Not so many students call themselves Christians but Nathan finds this to be a great opportunity to share his faith and values through teaching English conversation and presentation classes.

One of our main tasks is seeking the approval of the area pastors and churches for the youth mission called "Greenhouse." If this can be attained, then the youth mission will have a much greater possibility of success.

At this stage Nozomi's first ministry priority is helping our family adjust. She is also ministering to many through hospitality. Now she is able to focus on helping establish the Children & Worship program here in Japan. We are grateful to the C&W staff who equipped her as a trainer for the Children & Worship program. We believe that C&W could be a major help to the youth here.

#### **Where we are:**

We are blessed to live in a beautiful new mission apartment complex located on a hill at Yamate. We live in one of the three units in the building. This is an excellent location close to the mission school. It is near both the historical districts of Yokohama and also the modern future Port City, "Minato Mirai 21." We were pleasantly surprised to find so much greenery in this part of metropolitan Yokohama. Ken and Ray are overjoyed to find a lot of trees to climb. There is a quiet park in front of the mission house where kids love to play. The only challenge of this location is the hills. For grocery shopping and to ride the trains, we go down the hill but we have to come back up to hill on the way back. It is hard work for Nozomi to run errands and go shopping with Luke even with the stroller. Ken and Ray are attending Japanese public school. Luke is also well and very active.



The Brownells

Please keep us and the Greenhouse youth mission in your prayers.

Sincerely,

*Nathan & Nozomi Brownell*

Rev. Nathan Brownell M.Div. M.A.T.S.  
Mrs. Nozomi Brownell M.R.E.  
With sons Ken, Ray and Luke