

# Profile in Mission

## MINISTRY

Youth ministry

## LOCATION

Yokohama, Japan

## PARTNER

United Church of Christ in Japan

### **What Need Is God Showing Us?**

Young people in Japan are struggling with depression in a high pressure society which is focused on material success. Those who cannot fit in or measure up are often severely teased. Many withdraw and become hopeless. It is said that such "at risk" youth may share their struggle only with those from outside. As an international family, we are well placed to help reach them with the gospel.

### **What Is God Telling Us to Do?**

The church in Japan is seeking support for youth outreach. They seek to establish care and peer groups that will help young people tell their stories and express their heartfelt concerns using their own terms and modes of communication.

### **How Are We Doing What God Is Asking?**

RCA missionaries Nathan and Nozomi Brownell will be working in cooperation with the church in Japan to renew youth ministry. They will be developing a relational youth ministry in Yokohama, Japan, through various mission schools. They will also practice a ministry of hospitality and develop a network to spread the vision for a revived national youth outreach in Japan. The vision includes involving high school and college age youth in ministry to younger children through multi-sensory presentations of the gospel such as Children and Worship.

### **Who Is Our Partner?**

The Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan, or United Church of Christ in Japan, is an alliance of Protestant churches that were united during World War II. The Kyodan is composed of approximately 1,700 churches. Though Christians make up less than one percent of Japan's population, they have a good reputation in education.

### **Up Close and Personal**

Nathan Brownell first felt a call to mission in Japan in sixth grade while reading a book about Hiroshima. He studied Japanese culture and society at a university in Tokyo as part of his coursework for a bachelor's degree in Religion and Christian Studies from Hope College. He went on to graduate from Western Theological Seminary (WTS) with a master of divinity degree. Nathan and Nozomi met in Japan and were married at WTS in 1996. Nathan went on to earn a master of arts degree from New Brunswick Theological Seminary and certificates in pastoral counseling at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center in New York City. Nozomi is a graduate of Ferris Women's University in Yokohama, where she received a bachelor's degree in English literature. She earned a master of religious education degree at WTS. Nathan has previously served as a short-term missionary in Japan; the Brownells also spent eight years working with the Japanese American Church in New York City, where Nathan was pastor and Nozomi served as director of church education. Nathan and Nozomi have three sons: Kenneth, Raymond, and Luke.



**THE BROWNELL FAMILY**

