



July 2020

'The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever' Isaiah 40v8

Church building project

Thank you to everyone for all your faithful support for the church building project. **Praise God** that we now have enough money to pay for the renovations and to pay off a third of the loan which the church has taken out for the project. Much of the outside work of the church is done and the plaster-board is up on many of the inside walls. Some of the lights are in place and it's now much easier to imagine how we might use the church once it's finished.

Due to the Coronavirus, we haven't had any short-term teams come to help with the project and the start of the work was delayed. Therefore, the church opening has been moved back to the 13th of September. **Please pray** for energy and skill for Martin Ghent leading the project and the volunteers from Hanamaki who are helping. Of course, most church members are working full time so don't have much time to help with the work. **Please pray** that they will still feel well connected with the project.

New Building, New Opportunities

We are of course already thinking ahead about what we can do with our new church building. One Korean church member wants to teach a Korean class. Grace (14) wants to hold cooking and art classes with her friends. Children from our English Fun Club want to meet and play the Minecraft computer game together. Our neighbour, a disabled young man, wants to teach Mark about Pokemon. We are hoping that holding our main church cafe on a Saturday will enable us to hold many of these events and to share the gospel at the same time. **Please pray** for wisdom in how to use our new building from September. **Please pray** that people will come with open hearts, ready to hear about Jesus.

Coronavirus Situation

Our region, Iwate Ken, still has zero recorded cases. The number of cases in Tokyo has risen significantly in recent weeks but it is said that this is largely due to improved testing. **Please pray** for wisdom for the Japanese government in how to handle the crisis. **Please pray** for the number of new infections in Tokyo to go down and for members of the public to exercise appropriate restraint.

Flooding in Western Japan

(<https://thediplomat.com/2020/07/japan-hammered-by-record-breaking-torrential-rains-and-deadly-floods/>)

This rainy season has been a very wet one, including in Hanamaki. In western Japan this has led to over 290 serious mudslides leaving 3000 people in evacuation centres and 13 people missing. **Please pray** that the rain in these areas will reduce in intensity so that people can return to their homes. **Please pray** that people will think about eternity at difficult times like this.

Church Cafe

Thank you for praying for Mr S who had stopped coming to the cafe and had given up bible study. **Praise God** that he has recently returned and has restarted studying the bible. He's also taken a manga (Japanese cartoon) bible and is very keen to read it. **Please pray** that he will see the truth and believe in Jesus. Mr Whitestone also continues to come every week. **Please pray** that Mark will have a good opportunity to study John's gospel with him.

Saying Goodbye to the Laus

We will hold a leaving service for our colleagues the Laus on the 2nd of August. There may be a few non-Christian guests at this service so it's a particularly good opportunity to preach the gospel. **Please pray** for Mark as he preaches on the blessing in Numbers 6 – that it will be an encouraging message for the Laus with a good challenge for any guests. **We are very thankful** for the Laus and their ministry here in Hanamaki. **Please pray** for them as they move to Sendai and settle into a new life there.

Home Schooling

We are now a few months into full time home schooling and **we are thankful** that all three children are enjoying their courses. **Please pray** for good opportunities for them to meet friends and for patience for Sarah.

**The Gelsthorpes – working for OMF in a church plant in rural, northern Japan.
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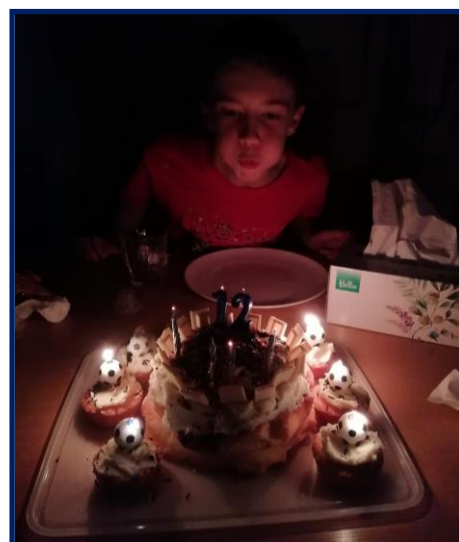
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Thank you so much for praying and please let us know how we can pray for you,

With love from
Mark, Sarah, Grace, Isaac and Caleb

Celebrating Birthdays!

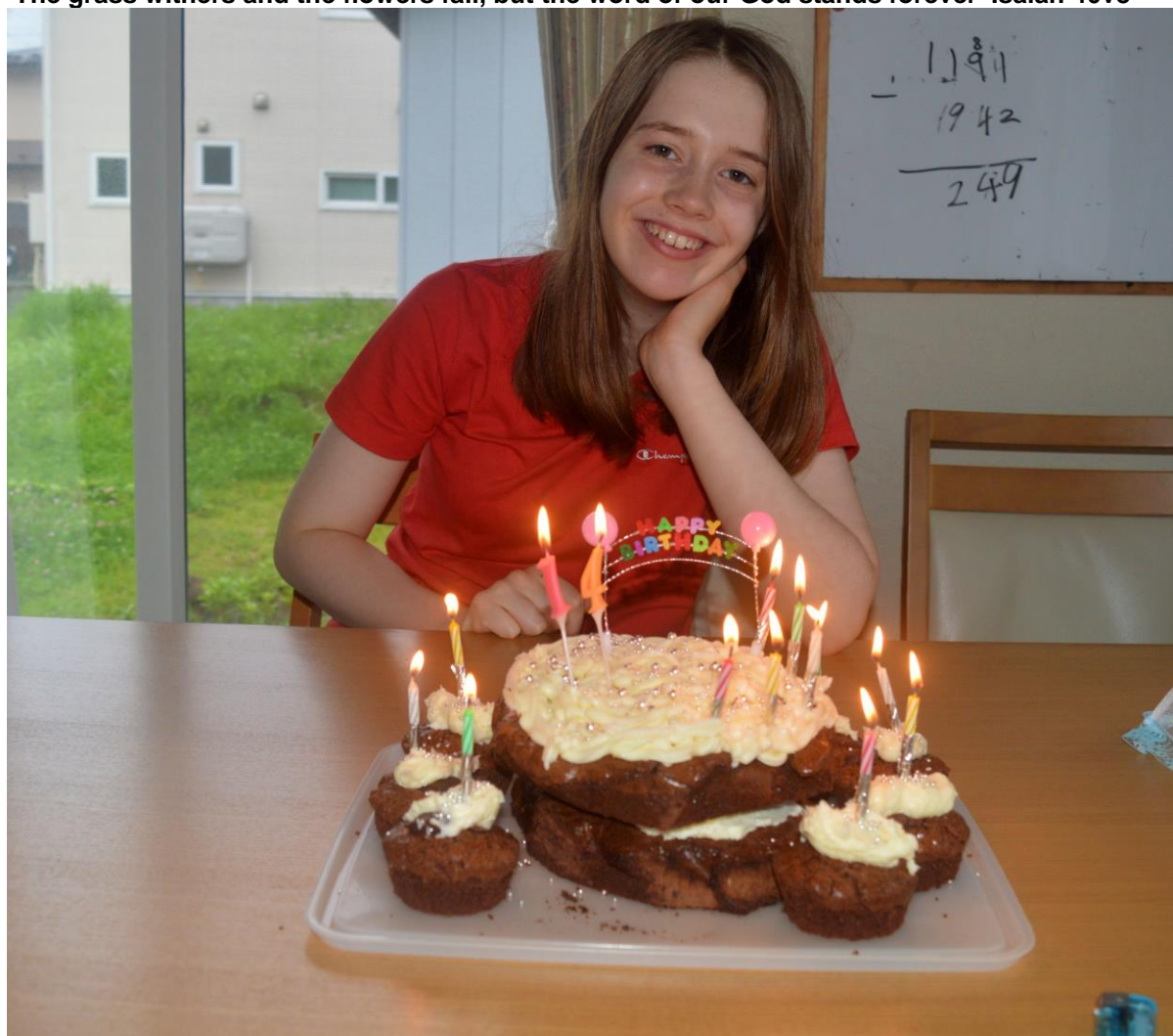


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