

**May 2025**

**"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."**

**Mark 1v15**

### **Prayer in the church**

We struggle to encourage church members to come to our weekly Fellowship Meetings and monthly Prayer Meetings. **Praise God** that, with the short term workers also attending, we had a lively prayer meeting this week with prayers in German, English and Japanese. **Please pray** for more church members to be excited about meeting together outside of Sunday and about prayer.

### **Short Term Workers**

**Praise God** for our three short term workers from Germany (Rebecca, Karl Heinz and Birgit). Rebecca is in her 20s and Karl Heinz and Birgit are an older couple with some experience of mission in Japan. **Praise God** that they are getting to know church members and people in the community. **Please pray** that many people will hear the gospel through the evangelistic cooking and craft events they are running at the church each week. **Please pray** that each of them will grow in their faith and will continue to contribute good, creative ideas to the ministry here. They are delivering lots of flyers into people's doors. **Please pray** for a good response.

### **Children's Party**

**Praise God** that we could hold a children's party for about 15 local children in mid-May (many of them came from the local children's home). Our church member, Erika, shared the Easter story in pictures (a popular Japanese method of story telling called Kami-shibai). **Praise God** for a really fun time and for the good relationship we have with the children's home. **Please pray** that the children and teachers who came will think more about the gospel.

### **Annual General Meeting**

This Sunday (May the 25th), we will hold our Annual General Meeting looking back on the past year of life in the church. **Please pray** for encouragement and thankful hearts for all of us as we remember God's faithfulness. **Please pray** that God will continue to grow his church in faithfulness and that we will soon be able to hand over the church to Japanese leadership.

### **Home Assignment Planning**

Planning continues for our Home Assignment in April 2026. In particular, we are working with the church eldership to hand over responsibility for leadership to them for a year at least at that point. **Please pray** for fruitful and efficient meetings to discuss this hand over and for good ideas about how the church can run in this period.

### **Teen Events**

Teenagers in Japan are typically very busy because of school club activities so it can be very hard to reach them with the gospel. **Praise God** that we have been able to share the gospel with lots of teenagers in Hanamaki through church teen events. Recently, attendance has been low and we often find that new people come through personal connections with people already connected. **Please pray** for the teen ministry team to meet new teens and to effectively encourage them to attend. **Please pray** for wisdom in how to advertise and for what events would be popular.

### **Study for Grace, Isaac and Caleb**

**Praise God** that Grace has enjoyed her first year of university in Southampton. **Please pray** for good results in her exams and assignments and a safe journey back to Japan at the beginning of June. Isaac now has just three Physics exams left in his A-Levels. **Please pray** for motivation and clear memory for him. We are very **thankful** for an opportunity for Isaac to go to the Philippines for an Internship in August. Please pray for the practicalities, safety and a good time observing the work. Caleb has begun his IGCSEs. **Please pray** for a good time at Japanese school for him (half day only) and for effective English-language study at home.

Thank you so much again for praying for us.

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

**The Gelsthorpes – working for OMF leading a church plant in rural, northern Japan.**  
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Tokyo for Exams



Cooking Class with Rebecca



Water Colouring Painting with Birgit

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