



You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. .
2 Timothy 2:1-2



祈enzler Japan Newsletter #5五

Julian und Karolina want to reach students and staff at Japan's universities with God's good news of love and forgiveness, and disciple and accompany them in following Jesus.

A little bit of Japanese



Summer is in Japan the time of street festivals which in Japanese are called

祭り

matsuri

An obligatory part of these festivals are the many colorful stalls selling various delicacies. Examples are:

Yakitori grilled chicken

Takoyaki octopus balls

Taiyaki Tai fish made from dough with sweet bean filling

Kakigoori shaved ice with syrup.



Dear family and friends,

14-07-2023

From July, the summer has cranked up properly with temperatures over 30°C and 60-70% humidity. So slowly we long for the winter again. But for now it's time to unpack the grill.



With two elderly care trainees from Indonesia eating ramen after a blessed service and Julian's sermon in Abashiri on first warm summer day.

As we wrote to you in our last letter, we were invited to the barbecue party of the neighborhood association. We realized once again that fellowship goes through the stomach. We were able to talk a bit about faith, but quickly realized where the problem is. In the eyes of many Japanese, Christianity is just another religious system with hierarchy, obligations, meeting houses and a spiritual elite.

When you look at it that way, there is little visible difference from Shintoism or Buddhism as practiced in Japan. Combined with traumatic experiences with "Christian schools" where the nuns measured skirt and pony length with a ruler, one need not be surprised that the response to an invitation is often, "Thank you, but I am (already) a Buddhist." Which then doesn't mean that people think that Buddha's path to enlightenment was better than the way of Jesus, but rather something like "Thank you, but I already have my system and enough commitments with it." So it looks like, the first thing we first have to do is to explain to our neighbors what true following Jesus is and clean up their image of God and understanding what faith really is.

More and More Trust in Church

As far as our congregation is concerned, we are very happy about all the opportunities through sermons, private conversations and Bible studies to feel where people's shoe pinches or where they are still stuck in the old way of thinking, and to point them to the clear truths of the Bible. We notice how our explanations are received with open hearts, and more and more church members come out of the woodwork and ask us for advice.

After a sermon about God's selfless sacrificial love, Mrs. Y. asked how she could become like that herself. Karolina explained to her that it starts with learning to accept and receive this love from God first. She then said, "Hai, ganbarimasu!" which means, "Okay, I'll do my best!", and is a very common everyday

expression in Japan. Mrs. H., who was sitting next to her and has already understood more of God's character, immediately said, "Wait, that's not how it works! Being loved is not an effort".

She told us after lunch that she was thinking the other day that it is no wonder that so many Japanese Christians have difficulty evangelizing or inviting their friends to church when they themselves are only afraid of God and think of Him as a slave driver.

This condition is also shown by the incident that Mrs. S. told us. She said that her baptized friend, after marrying a non-believing man, no longer wanted to know anything about God. In a conversation, she told Mrs. S. that she thought it was totally unfair that God would just throw people into hell like that. Mrs. S. then told her exactly what we had explained to her earlier about the passage in Matthew 25 where Jesus as King judges the nations. It says that he separates them like a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And how does a shepherd do that? He calls them. And Jesus says, my sheep hear my voice. The goats, on the other hand, pay no attention to God's call, as it is written in Isaiah 66:4. "Oh," the friend commented, "then I must have always misunderstood." Isn't that glorious? Mrs. S. is truly a disciple as one would wish: Listen, test, tell others!

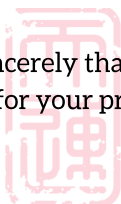
Praise and Prayer Points

We are very thankful to God for the past field conference and the many opportunities to talk with OMF colleagues that we have only seen online or years ago for the last time. Thank you for your prayers! The transportation, which Julian was responsible for, went completely smoothly! The following week off for spiritual retreat was absolutely necessary.

Right now we are working towards our church summer festival on July 29. In Japanese it is called "Megumi-Matsuri", meaning "Blessing Festival". There are many activities planned, such as games, bazaar, snacks, and an exhibition on the 6 nations represented in our church. Please pray for many visitors from the neighborhood and that they will get the right impression of Jesus' church.

Also, please continue to pray for our financial provision. As for January through June, 52% of our support is covered by donations, which means the rest is replenished from other OMF funds at the moment. For comparison, in 2022 January through December we were at 62%. We do not want to be a burden to our mission community. So please pray that our giving will increase soon.

We sincerely thank all of you who support us financially! And thank you very much for your prayers and support in every way!



Julian & Karolina

Upcoming events

- 29.07. Church summer festival
- 14.08.-16.08. KGK summer camp
- 30.09. Outreach concert at church

This is how you can support mission in Asia


- Order our prayer letter (write us an email).
- Become a prayer partner: [Link](#)
- Become part of an OMF team of volunteers close to you: [Link](#)
- Do a short term mission trip with OMF Serve Asia: [Link](#)
- Or does God call you to Asia as a long-term missionary? [Link](#)
- Invite OMF to your church.

Pray for Japan [Link](#)

Mrs. H.'s husband keeps saying he can't believe in God, even though he has been reading the Bible for over 25 years. Last week we prayed very intensively for him. Mrs. H. now told us that he suddenly started to talk to her about his childhood traumas, which he has never done in 35 years of marriage, and that he only can see his own father in God, whom he cannot forgive. Please pray for him and the many broken father-child relationships in Japan, which are a great obstacle for the trust in God.

Please check out our Telegram channel for photos, videos and stories. (No Telegram account needed)

 **Our Telegram channel**
[Julian & Karolina in Japan](#)

 **Address Germany**
Julian & Karolina Tenzler
Bodenseering 15
95445 Bayreuth

 **Address Japan**
Julian & Karolina Tenzler
Shunkouchou 3-10-10
Shunkou Royal Heights 101,
Kitami
090-0801 Japan

 **Our email address**
info@prayforjapan.net

 **Our Homepage**
www.prayforjapan.net

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