



The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shone.
Jesaja 9,2



Newsletter #10 +

祈tenzlers in 禱Japan

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.

Ein bisschen Japanisch



Because many everyday Christmas words are imported from the USA, they are usually written in katakana, the

writing system for foreign words:

サンタ (santa) Santa Claus
ツリー (tsurii) Christmas tree
プレゼント (puresento) present

As far as Christian words are concerned, however, the first missionaries apparently got ahead of the American influence and came up with Japanese equivalents:

待降節

taikōsetsu

means "advent" or literally "time of waiting for the descending".

御降誕

gokōtan

means "birth of Christ" or "nativity" or literally "descent and birth".



Dear family and friends,

21-12-2023

We wish you a blessed Advent season and a Merry Christmas! Now that winter has really arrived here with a thick layer of snow over Kitami and icy -20°C at night, we would like to give you a bit of a picture of what Christmas feels like in Japan.

But first, we will briefly update you on the latest happenings. Thank you for all your prayers for Café COEN. It closed in its current form on December 2nd. However, one of the regular customers has agreed to take it over and continue to run it in a similar way. What this means exactly has yet to be clarified, but in any case the Sunday services of the COEN Bible Community can continue to take place in the café rooms. Thank God!

God Builds His Church on Hokkaido

We are also full of gratitude for the week we were able to spend with Mr. and Mrs. Ka. As with our first meeting in the summer, we were able to spend a lot of time together studying the Bible and this time we also heard their stories of how they came to faith. We were also able to meet Mr. and Mrs. Ki. in Obihiro a second time and could answer their questions about the Bible. **Please pray that the joy and trust in God will continue to grow in both couples and that God will use them mightily in their respective places to spread His kingdom in Hokkaido.**

We had a very special experience just last week. On Monday, we began spending two hours a day for the two weeks before and two weeks after Christmas praying together for Kitami and Japan and proclaiming God's light and reign over this place. On the very second day, the doorbell rang unexpectedly and it was Mr. T., who had come to the church two or three times the year before and then disappeared again. We don't even know where he got our address from. He brought us souvenirs from a visit to Sapporo and only asked if we still knew who he was.

Two days later, we returned the favor with gingerbread and cookies at his home. Quite contrary to our expectations (and Japanese etiquette), he invited us in, served us coffee and we talked for two hours about his experiences with Christianity. This week we invited him in and had dinner together. He has a very difficult family background and longs for a God who loves him. **Please pray that he will experience God's love personally and get to know living spiritual fellowship among Christians.**



Together with H. we were crafting some Christmas window stars for first Advent.

A Date at Kentucky Fried Chicken – the Perfect Christmas?

But what about Christmas? A few Christmas traditions have become established in the Christian churches, such as lighting an Advent wreath, decorating the church and Christmas parties for children. In Kitami Megumi Church we will have a small concert and a big feast at Christmas, and a “candle service” in the evening. However, we have not yet seen things here like St. Nicholas Day, an Advent calendar or baking Christmas cookies.

Outside of Christian circles, American influences in particular have found their way into Japanese society. In Japan, people are very aware of the sequence of seasons and so anything that can fill the gaps between Japanese holidays and is particularly suitable for decorating stores and public places is welcome. The sequence is usually: New Year, Valentine's Day, Girls' Day (Hina Matsuri), Cherry Blossom, Mother's Day, Tanabata, Obon, Tsukimi, Halloween, 7-5-3 and Christmas.

As Christmas is a normal school and work day, people don't usually have family celebrations but go out with friends or have a date with their partner. They look at the elaborate Christmas illuminations in the parks, take a selfie in front of the huge Christmas tree in front of the train station, and stroll through the German-inspired Christmas market. Together they eat chicken drums from Kentucky Fried Chicken, a Japanese Christmas tradition that was established by an advertising campaign in the 1970s, followed by the obligatory Christmas cake, a small sponge cake with strawberries and lots of cream. Then presents are exchanged. No sign of the child in the manger.

What do we do during Christmas?

We are looking forward to having the opportunity to fellowship with our Japanese brothers and sisters over Christmas, be it at the various Christmas celebrations of the cell groups, at the Christmas service on the 24th or doing handicrafts together with nine-year-old H. on the first Advent. We will also have a big Christmas party on the 26th with our internationals and the Japanese students from the KGK group. **Please pray for all these events and for good conversations.**

At the beginning of January, we will participate in a workshop in Tokyo to prepare for our home assignment in 2025. **Please pray for the colleagues who will be conducting the workshop and that we can already think through everything now that will help us to ensure that our home assignment runs smoothly and is well coordinated.** Afterwards, we will have an OMF meeting at the international headquarters in Singapore. **Please pray that God will fill this trip with much spiritual fellowship and good impressions.**

Thank you very much for your interest, your prayerful intercession for us and your faithful financial support!

Julian & Karolina



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



Donation account: (OMF account with tax receipt)

Like all OMF missionaries we live on donations.

[Link to online donation](#)

Account holder: OMF International Deutschland e.V.

IBAN: DE76 5185 0079 0350 0051 61

BIC: HELADEF1FRI (Sparkasse Oberhessen)

Purpose: Unterhalt Tenzler, [donor's name], [address]

Upcoming events

24.12. Christmas Service

26.12. Christmas dinner with students

This is how you can support mission in Asia

- Order our prayer letter (write us an email).
- Become a prayer partner of us or support us practically: [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](#)

Pray for Japan

[Link](#)

Even though Christmas is often just about presents and food here in the West, too, most people still know that it has something to do with the birth of Jesus and perhaps go to a Christmas service. In Japan, there is no such cultural knowledge about Christian holidays and their meaning. Please pray for Japanese Christians that they will be able to share the wonderful truths behind the Christmas traditions with their friends and family at this time of year. Pray also that Japanese people will use this time to look for and learn about Jesus, and get to know him.

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



Our Telegram channel

[Julian & Karolina in Japan](#)

