



But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,
a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the
excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his
marvelous light.
1 Peter 2:9



Prayerzenzlers in Japan

Newsletter #19 十九

 Prayer Update

Dear friends and family,

02-05-2025

We are enjoying the German spring to the fullest. We have especially missed the variety of birdsong that can be heard in Germany, even in the city.

The three weeks we spent in Thailand at the end of March after leaving Japan did us a world of good. We stayed at an OMF guest house in southern Thailand, where mostly missionaries from the Thailand field go on vacation. So it was a great opportunity for us to get to know colleagues from a different cultural background. We even met a Japanese couple who work as missionaries in Thailand.



An OMF colleague takes us on a saleng, an adventurous and versatile vehicle typical of Thailand.

During our conversations, we noticed that Thailand and Japan have many cultural similarities. Both peoples have a strong shame-honor culture and it is important to save face. Both countries are monarchies in which the head of state is held in high esteem. Neither nation has ever been colonized, which they are very proud of. In both countries, Buddhism is a so-called high religion, i.e., it provides a religious and moral framework, has a clergy, and offers rituals for certain life events. In practice, however, people in both countries perceive the world as animistic and worship spirits, in Japan at Shinto shrines and in Thailand through spirit houses, which can be found on almost every property.


In Thailand, we managed to soak up lots of sun and wind down after all the stress of moving, not just

physically but also mentally, so that we can now focus fully on the next chapter of our lives in Germany. It may only last a year, but it will be a whole new challenge for us. Because we have changed, and Germany has changed too.

Unknown Homeland

It is not unusual for missionaries to experience a so-called "reverse culture shock" at the beginning of their stay in their home country because the environment that should be familiar is no longer familiar and, in some ways, has even become scary and frustrating. As far as we can tell after a month back in Germany, we were able to cushion this somewhat thanks to our time out in Thailand. However, the feeling of no longer really fitting in here is omnipresent, and many everyday things had to be consciously rediscovered after a long time. "How do you fill up the car again?", "Do I still know how to order at the cheese counter?", "What? Kitchen waste doesn't go in the regular trash, but aluminum foil goes in the plastic trash?", "Deposit on cans?", "Rotating cleaning duties for shared spaces?", "Where's the convenience store? I need coffee!" "And why does the hardware store already close at seven?"

Apart from that, we are doing very well. We have already spent a lot of quality time with family and friends, and God has blessed us with a rent-free apartment and now even a very comfortable car for a year.

 **Join us in thanking God for all His wonderful provision! Please pray that we and our loved ones will be able to cope with this new situation, which will probably never be the same again, and that we will base our identity and connectedness even more firmly on Christ.**

What does a missionary work on home assignment?

We have already made good use of the car. After a settling-in period of just under two weeks, we traveled to Mücke, to the German OMF headquarters, to reconnect with the German team and, together with our mission leadership, to recap the past term and consider how to move forward. We were very pleased with the warm welcome we received and were glad that we were able to encourage the team also spiritually with our report from Japan.

As mentioned in our last letter, we had a mobilization event on April 13 at the FeG Giessen Church. An OMF

colleague from Taiwan preached in two services and several home assignees, including us, also gave short testimonies about their missionary work. Between the services, OMF had set up several information tables. We were at the Japan table and had some good conversations, especially with students from the Giessen School of Theology (FTH) who were there for the evening service.



Japan table at FeG Giessen with Japan puzzle, wooden skill games called "kendama", and a chopstick challenge.

The next day, we were back in action, this time at the FTH, where their first vocation fair was taking place. Nearly 20 mission organizations and church associations presented themselves with a booth and a short presentation, with OMF being the last to go. Although this meant that only a few people stayed to listen to the presentation, it was still okay because the conversations at the booth drew three people who were specifically interested in missions in Japan, and we were able to talk with them for over an hour after the presentation.


A week later, we were in Gunzenhausen with another OMF missionary at the Eastern Conference, where we also had an OMF booth. Now we have a few weeks of rest to prepare materials for upcoming events and visit people in Bayreuth.


What's Next?

Our next assignment will be two mission reports during the two services (9 a.m. and 11 a.m.) at the Nikodemus Church in Bayreuth on May 11, where we will also have our Japan stand during the church coffee hour ([livestream](#)).

One week later, on Saturday, May 17, we will host a church evening at the Nikodemus Church, and on May 18, Julian will preach at our sending church, the Bibelgemeinde Bayreuth (10:30 a.m.), and we will share about our time in Japan ([livestream](#)).


On May 24, we will be in Hanau for a Day of Prayer organized by the Men's Prayer League (Männergebetsbund), and on May 25, Julian will preach at the Nidda Stadtmission Church, plus a report from Japan. After that, we will make a detour to Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania for just under two weeks, where we will visit several churches and friends.


 Please pray for all these events, that people will be encouraged by what God is doing worldwide and become enthusiastic about missions.

 Please also pray for all those we have already been able to talk to, especially the students from FTH, that they will trust completely in God's guidance.

Preparing new ventures in Japan

Our field leadership in Japan has now found a church with which we could work together during our next term. We will have a meeting with the pastor there at the beginning of June.

 Please pray for this conversation, that we may communicate well and that both sides understand clearly what God's will is.

 We would also like to draw your attention to our revamped [homepage](#). It now contains more information about us and Japan, loads of prayer resources, and an archive of prayer letters.

Thank you very much for all your prayers for us and the people of Japan, and for your faithful giving!

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