


## Dear Friends,

Gobusata itashimashita! (a Japanese apology for being out of touch a long time) Sorry for our long lapse since our last *Moshi Moshi*. We have managed to almost keep up with our intended monthly writing of our *Osaka Direct* email update, so those on that mailing list would be fairly current, but the rest of you may be wondering what happened to us. We are doing fine, still working here in Osaka to share the gospel with all, especially those at the fringes of Japanese society. The Lord has been giving us many opportunities for ministry, and for this we are very thankful – praise Jesus! We trust that He is also watching over you and leading you in all of His ways.

It should be no big surprise to hear that a lot has happened since our last letter. Dan is still interim pastor of Osaka International Church, and at the same time he, Karen, and our new partner Aukje continue establishing Grapevine Cell Church, currently with six meetings per week. Plus, we hosted 38 short-term workers in 2003! We are also partnering with Aaron DeLeon to help him establish a Calvary Chapel here in Osaka, and we have a variety of other activities. We'll cover what we can in four pages, but more can be found on our web site, where we have all issues of *Osaka Direct*, other ministry info, and even a PDF file of this letter (the photos are color and you can zoom in to see them better). Also, just tell us if you'd like to receive *Osaka Direct* by email.

The OIC ministry has been both a great blessing and a real stretch. Since international church ministry had not been part of our plan, God had to work on Dan to open his heart to this, but Dan felt the Lord saying, "these are your brothers and sisters, get over there and help them." This fall Dan realized that the Lord did not say that this was temporary, and that God wanted him to be willing to serve long-term if called – by this summer the church will call Dan or someone else. But whether interim or not, it is a huge challenge to pastor a church of 100+ people from a dozen different countries, and Dan has been particularly challenged by the demands of multi-cultural counseling. But along the way we have realized that OIC is not necessarily a distraction from the church plant since OIC may become a major ministry partner for GCC. God has even used an African proverb to speak to Dan about the need to partner with others: "If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together."

Your prayers for all of these ministries are greatly needed and appreciated. We hope that you will enjoy this edition of *Moshi Moshi*, and we pray that the Lord would be with you and bless you wonderfully today and every day.

*In Jesus' love,* 

## The DVD Project is Rolling

The following pages feature Dan prominently, but Karen has been just as busy. Besides her traditional role using music, she is now deep into video ministry. She has made DVDs of all OIC messages since January 2003, a DVD-based training series for short-termers coming to Japan, and several concerts



and seminars, a wedding, and various other things. The snapshot on the left shows only part of her creations to date. There are a couple short pieces compressed and available on our web site, but if you would like a real copy of one of her DVDs, let her know. Please pray that we find gifted Japanese Bible teachers who would like to teach on camera - that's a key part of our vision for the DVD resource library.



*Our kitchen studio: Karen by the sink, Dan's notebook computer hangs on her tripod as a "poor man's teleprompter".*

*Dan at the table with a bookcase and curtains behind him, with his mouse (to scroll the computer display) taped to a chair below view, the mic on a box, and desk lamps clamped to doors and the microwave. But it looks good on video!*



## Please Pray for our Weekly Events

**Sunday:** 10:15 OIC main service, 2:00 Aaron leads the Calvary Chapel Osaka meeting starting April 4th in the GCC Abeno Room, 6:00 GCC prayer meeting at Sekime Chapel

**Monday:** 10:00 GCC "Bible Time" at the Abeno Room, 7:00 Japanese Alpha class at GCC Sekime Chapel

**Tuesday:** Day off! (in theory 😊)

**Wednesday:** Dan counseling at OIC

**Thursday:** 7:00 GCC cell worship at Sekime Chapel

**Friday:** 6:30 Japanese Alpha at GCC Abeno Room

**Saturday:** 10:00 GCC cell worship at Sekime Chapel, 4:00 English Alpha at OIC, 6:30 bilingual worship at OIC



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*Changed zipcode and new toll-free number!*





# Grapevine Cell Church News

## A Place to Call Home... and Another!

As a cell church, we want to have meetings in various places around Osaka, and that is becoming a reality. Our first priority was a facility that would serve as the church office as well as a meeting area for cells, and preferably would also have the basic necessities (especially a shower) to allow short-term workers to stay there. Next we wanted a simple room for cell meetings in a different part of central Osaka. In the last year God has provided both!

We signed the lease on "Sekime Chapel" last March – a first-floor office space in which a previous tenant had installed a tatami room and shower/bath. It is next to a subway station entrance and about a 4 minute walk from a station on a different train line – a major commuter artery into Osaka. Both stations have Sekime in their name. We dedicated the facility (and the church as a whole) on May 11th, and have been having two worship services and a prayer meeting since then.

On the other side of central Osaka, we have had a growing relationship with a teacher and several students at Osaka Christian College (most of the students not yet believers), and when we decided to start an Alpha Course for some interested students, God closed the doors on all attempts to rent a room by the hour, but opened a door in December to rent our second full-time facility – a 10 minute walk from the college, right at a subway station and a 10 minute walk from the biggest JR (Japan Rail) station in Osaka! "Abeno Room" is a simple second-floor 150 ft<sup>2</sup> room, but it's right on a

main drag with a covered sidewalk, and being above a bar and sharing the floor with a karaoke pub means that we can sing praises as loud as we want! We furnished it livingroom-style, with two sofas, coffee tables, and a TV for viewing teaching videos. See more photos of both places on our web site.



Dan hanging our new sign at the Abeno Room

## SEKIME CHAPEL: BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER PREP



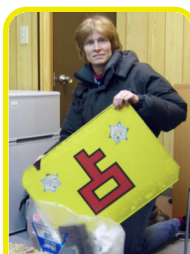
The large room of Sekime Chapel when we rented it - dirty and empty, but with wonderful potential



Karen builds furniture while a plumber installs a faucet and sink



Fellowship after the dedication service. Pastor Nagashima came from Hiroshima to give the message!



Taking ground from the enemy: the former tenant at Abeno Room was a fortune teller; Karen happily throws away their sign!



Several new guests came to see the Covenant Players drama outreach team at Sekime Chapel in February, hearing the Gospel both in the skits and in conversations over coffee after the show

## A New Partner!

Praise the Lord for Aukje vandenBerg, a MUP missionary who moved from the Tokyo area to Osaka last August to work with us on the cell church outreach. She is a tremendous blessing and gifted asset to our church-planting team.



## Cell Starters

A primary tool we are using to start new cells is the Alpha Course, a video-based introduction to Christianity started in **Alpha** England but now used around the world in a wide spectrum of churches. We are currently running Alpha at both Abeno (above) and Sekime (below), and plan to start two more soon. Please pray that they would result in new believers and strengthened Christians, as well as perhaps new cells and leaders for future Alpha courses!



## Financial Support

The GCC church plant and special outreaches rely on your financial partnership. Your support is appreciated. Support may be mailed to MUP, or you can also give online at <http://www.mup.org/OnlineGivingMain.htm>



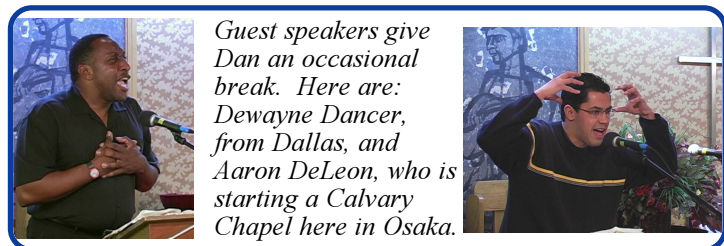


Recent photo taken when OIC founding pastor Jack Marshall and his wife Keiko (standing) came back for a visit. As you can see, the sanctuary we rent in the Osaka Christian Center is quite full, but a new Christian Center building is under construction next door (artist's conception to the right), and when it opens in June we will enjoy a 350 seat sanctuary.



## Saturday Night Live! at OIC

Noticing the full sanctuary, Dan decided that OIC should add a second service. He imagined a second service on Sunday morning with the same message, but he made the "mistake" of asking the church what they wanted. Their response doubled Dan's workload: "If we have a second service, we want it on Saturday night, and with a different, more basic message, and with Dan doing it all bilingually." Have you ever tried to give a speech switching back and forth between two languages? It twists your brain into a pretzel! But it is also a blessing and is allowing for some innovation. We're using a multimedia approach – an LCD video projector showing bilingual Powerpoint slides of photos, songs, and Scripture, plus DVD movies to bring the teaching to life. First, Dan taught through Luke using the *Jesus* film in Japanese with English subtitles, now he is doing a similar thing with the epic *Jesus of Nazareth*, in English with Japanese subtitles. Karen leads the worship and we all have fun!



Guest speakers give Dan an occasional break. Here are: Dewayne Dancer, from Dallas, and Aaron DeLeon, who is starting a Calvary Chapel here in Osaka.



## Missionary Quotable Quotes

• "My only joys therefore are that when God has given me a work to do, I have not refused it." – C.T. Studd •

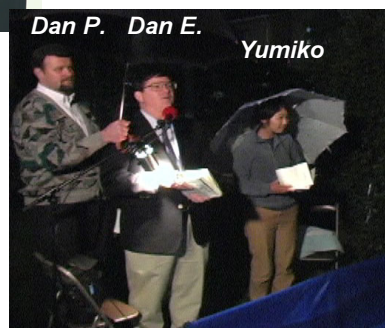
## Frequent Firsts

In Hiroshima we worked with Pastor Nagashima, so although we did a lot of evangelism, he handled ceremonies and other pastoral duties. But now Dan has all pastoral responsibilities at OIC, and in this role, since last July he has had several "firsts": a wedding, two baptisms, and two funerals.



Soichi and Masayo had their wedding at a commercial wedding chapel, but they asked Dan to do the ceremony (above). They also asked Karen to video the reception (which was another first: Karen doing wedding videography!).

The portable baptismal we bought for the cell church is coming in handy for OIC also. It got its first use in December when Osaka Christian College student Yumiko was baptized in the yard of teacher Dan Parry during a thunderstorm (she wasn't the only one to get wet!), and many of her non-Christian classmates attended. It was a team effort: Dan E. led the ceremony and gave the message, and Dan P. did the baptizing.



Then in January we had another baptism, of Kiyoshi at OIC, and this time Dan got his turn to do the "dunking" also. Praise God for these steps of faith of our sister and brother!



Funerals aren't the most fun events, but they are great evangelism opportunities, because unlike at weddings, people are really listening, thinking about life and death. Many Japanese say after attending their first Christian funeral that it was amazingly uplifting and full of hope, unlike the gloomy Buddhist rites. Dan was called upon to do this twice in the last year – both times those attending were primarily non-believers who had never seen a Christian funeral. The second time he was also invited to say a few words before and after the cremation (cremation is standard practice in Japan), so it was also the first time for both of us to see the customs surrounding cremation in Japan. In this photo Dan is reading Scripture after the bones have been gathered. All five of the people on the right are non-believers.







**Rachel Starr**

A college student from Minnesota, she was with us for 10 weeks, so she not only did her own ministry of friendship evangelism and music, but she guided and helped the teams that came after her, and distributed a lot of literature about their upcoming events.

## Short-Term Teams Multiply Ministry



**Father's House Team**

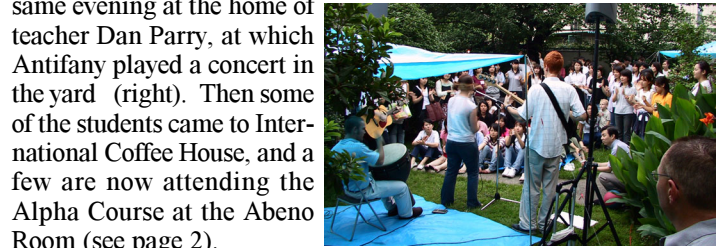
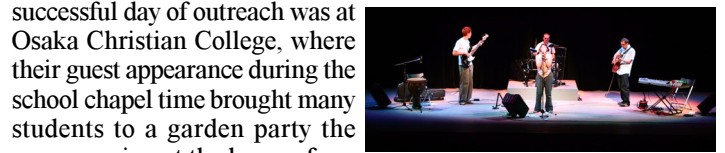
Seven people from Father's House church in Tulsa were here from mid-June to mid-July, and included an accomplished band called Antifany who gathered quite a following. While Antifany played on the street, the rest of the team passed out thousands of flyers about their concert and other summer events, and 1000 CDs customized for this outreach with original songs and lead singer Amy's

comments with Japanese interpretation (above photos). They also performed in a concert hall and twice at OIC, but perhaps the most



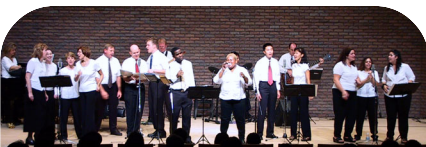
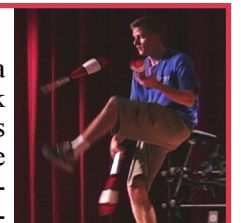
**International Coffee Time**

All summer we opened Sekime Chapel for three hours every Wednesday night, and many first-time contacts came to mingle with the whichever short-termers were in town - playing games, eating munchies, sharing music, and getting to know Christians and the church. The above photos show an Uno game and some one-on-one ministry (left), and a group playing the Ungame (right).



## The Outsiders

Troy and Rachel Cooper (who brought a team of high-schoolers in 2000) came back with a team of 22 (well, one was Rachel's newborn baby, whose main duty was to be cute!). They brought prepared gospel presentations through music, juggling, drama, illusion, and more. They were on the streets (Tim's juggling drew crowds), in a concert hall, at OIC, at a homeless outreach (left), and at our International Coffee Time. Like Antifany, they also brought copies of a CD to give away with our brochures about the cell church and future events.



*The MTJ (Mission to Japan) Gospel Choir came to Osaka in May, and we rented a concert hall for them and advertised. After the concert they made some new friends!*



In July/August we hosted four young people from an English teaching ministry called OSM. Kim and Haruyo (front) taught at Sekime, and Deborah and Kim (back right) at another church.

See more on our web site!



In the fall we had two more singles: Kurt Yanagimachi (Japanese on the outside, all California on the inside!), here seen putting literature in mailboxes (left); and Ken Woodfin (right), who helped us with early Christmas outreach and is now back in Japan for three months working with another MUP missionary.



In late August, Dewayne Dancer, a radio personality from Dallas, came for his second visit to us, and Amie Cuhaciyan, a youth from Seattle, happened to come at the same time, and they made a great team. Here they are resting before distributing this cartful of Digest Bibles in a Buraku area not far from the cell church.

## A Final Word from the Word

*"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."* — Acts 1:8 (NIV)