

Regular prayer update for Ian and Maki Smith,
Converge missionaries to Japan.

Prayer Works



The installation service was well attended

On September 14th I was formally installed as the pastor of Mihama Grace Christ Church. For longer than I have been alive, Mihama Grace had been without its own pastor. Planted by Converge's first missionary to Japan, Francis Sorley, it had been without a pastor since his retirement in the 1970's. A small group of believers stubbornly kept the doors of their church open for over forty years with the cooperation of pastors from as far as two hours away.

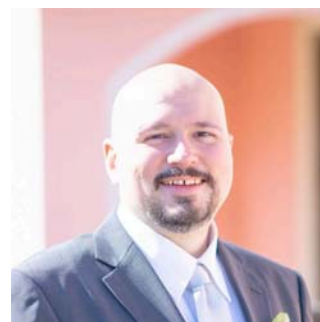
Thank you for your prayers for the installation service; it went off without a hitch, and was even reported on in the local newspaper. We're thankful that members of several area churches were able to attend. Please pray that in the future, we'd see our building filled with this many people gathered to worship Jesus on a regular basis.



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Intercession Points:

Thank you for your prayers for our ministry at Mihama Grace Christ Church!

The Lord provided more than what we asked for in order to buy a new van. Once we have the bandwidth to begin shopping for it, we'll let you know what we end up buying. Please pray that we would be able to find a reliable and suitable van.

Thank you for your prayers for our transition to Sunday mornings; we have had a few new people attend as a result of the move, including one couple that has been coming almost every week. Please continue to pray for the new prayer meeting, and that the Lord would bless the church as we seek his face. Please pray that I could faithfully and clearly teach God's Word.

Please pray for those individuals and families that we are reaching out to.



Article on the installation service

As the missionary pastor of Mihama Grace Christ Church, it is my hope and prayer that we can help the church become healthy enough to call and support a indigenous Japanese pastor in the future; however, with only a handful of members, barring a miracle, this is likely a long-term goal. Our hope is to see Mihama Grace become a launching pad for other evangelistic endeavors and church revitalization throughout the prefecture.



A newspaper article about my ministry at Mihama in a different newspaper

Currently there are only about 70 churches in Wakayama for a population of a million people. Most of those churches are small, only

Please pray that God would lead us to 'people of peace,' in Gobo and Mihama-cho, who will be receptive to the gospel.

Please pray for our outreach events in October, November, and December. Please pray that there would be a lot of youth interested in our American Thanksgiving outreach next month!

Emma is healthy and growing like crazy. We're so grateful for everyone who has been praying for her! She's adjusting to life back in Japan and really misses her grandparents, the dogs, and the back yard at our home in Olympia.

I've lost about 10kg (20lbs) since being back in Japan, and need to lose another 10kg. Please pray that I can have self-control when it comes to diet and exercise.

Please pray that we will be godly parents that can demonstrate the love of God in our marriage and in the way we raise Emma. Pray that God would be glorified in our home. Please pray for our marriage that it would be a testimony to God's love and grace.

Please continue to pray for a fresh move of the Spirit among the Japanese people--that despite the many obstacles to the Gospel, many would hear and respond and put their faith in Jesus.

Please pray for the Japanese people, most of whom have never had a chance to hear the Gospel. Pray that God

having 5 to 15 members, and many of the area pastors have exceeded retirement age. We are looking at a looming crisis in which the very small beachhead that the Gospel has among the people of Wakayama is increasingly shrinking. Please pray that God would send more missionaries and Japanese partners to work with us to help disciple and reach Wakayama for Jesus.

Even though I am serving as a pastor, I will not be taking a salary of any kind from the church and we still depend on the generous support of Christians from outside of Japan to do the ministry we do here. It isn't our desire to take any ongoing financial support from the church in Mihama, but instead, to help move it towards a place where it could call and support a Japanese pastor. In order to do this, we're going to be reinvesting church funds into updating the facility and eventually hopefully being able to provide a guest house for visiting missionaries and a parsonage for a Japanese partner.



Brian and Rachel Lusky came and blessed us with beautiful music



Special music lead by the Luskys

One of the church members has generously offered to let us use her

would send out more workers into the harvest field, and that God would raise up more laborers to serve among the Japanese.

Please pray for Converge Japan in 2025. We have a new Asia field director, new missionaries in the pipeline and many new opportunities in front of us. Please pray that God would continue to work through us in Wakayama and that we would be able to build a team there if it is His will.

Joyfield.org

[Time Capsule: Converge Japan in 1960](#)

"And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me."

-Isaiah 6:8

old house as a guest house for visiting teams and missionaries, which we have already started to prepare to be able to host people on a short and medium term basis. We have also begun to make some small changes around the church to make it comfortable for nursing mothers and families with small children. In the future we would like to purchase the vacant lot next door and expand the footprint of the church to include a classroom, office, and more parking.

For the past two months I have been preaching through the book of Galatians, and we are nearing the half way mark. Please pray that God would continue to bless the preaching of His Word, and that it would strengthen the faith of the church members. We're thankful that a few new people have settled into a rhythm of church attendance including U-san and her daughters and H-san and her husband A-san. Some friends from Shirahama, Mao & Shunpei-san (and their daughters) have committed to coming to worship with us at least once a month; and Mao-san will be blessing us with special music.



Maki teaching Sunday School

Maki and Yuki-san have been doing a great job with the children's ministry, and there are children and teenagers attending almost every week. Please pray for U-san's daughters; as well as H-san's baby and Emma that God would bless them with faith in Jesus. We have a special children's outreach event coming up this coming Sunday where we will be decorating pumpkins and eating okonomiyaki (Japanese savory pizza) together. Please pray that that event would be well attended. U-san's daughters and Mao & Shunpei's daughters are planning on being there; and at least one other family has committed to coming.

We have continued to open our home to share Christ's love with those around us. Recently we had a couple of friends visit from Hiroshima.

Shou (a young Japanese pastor) and his wife Kana came to stay with us for a few days, and Hiroshi and Yukiko came to join us for a day of fellowship. In a couple of weeks we're having K-san, a firefighter from Shirahama and his family over for BBQ, the last time we met I had the opportunity to share a very in-depth Gospel presentation with him. Please pray that God would continue to work in his heart and draw him to faith in Jesus Christ. We're also hoping to develop a closer relationship with our neighbors; please pray that God would open doors for us to share his love with those in our neighborhood.



Fellowship with Pastor Shou and Kana

In addition to preaching, discipleship, and evangelism, I have also been working on a few different side-projects, including an having an article published in Japan Harvest, a magazine for missionaries here in Japan. Please pray that I would continue to use the gifts that God has given me to be a blessing to the church, not just here in Wakayama, but throughout Japan. We're still hopeful that in the future we can develop a training center here in Wakayama; next month I have been invited to come and share about my experiences as a missionary in Japan with some new missionaries at a missionary training school in Nara.

We're still working on finding a new van, and would appreciate your prayers for finding the right one. This past couple months has been a whirlwind with preaching in Japanese every week (sometimes at more than one church), and I just haven't had the bandwidth to invest much time in searching for one. One of our fellow missionaries, Jeff Chapman is going to be shaking the trees for us a bit, please pray that we would get a good deal. Thank you to everyone that so generously gave towards our new van!



The article in Japan Harvest

At the beginning of November I am going to be headed up to Shizuoka for the Japanese Baptist Church Association Annual Meeting; this will be my first time attending not just as a missionary, but as a Rengo pastor. Please pray that I would be able to encourage some of the other pastors there. We're also planning on having a American Thanksgiving themed outreach event geared towards youth at the end of November. I'll probably be baking a turkey and smoking some bacon.

We started a bi-weekly prayer meeting for the members of Mihama Grace, and it has been a huge blessing. Last week Linda and Doug Grimms from the Rural Japan Church Planting Network prayer team were able to attend. Please pray that God would continue to deepen our prayer lives and help us to pray more boldly for how God might work among us. We're also praying that God would lead us to people of peace in Mihama that will help us to connect more deeply with the community.



Fellowship meal after church

In Japan, December tends to be one of the busiest times of the year for the church; as many Japanese churches have their best attended outreach events near Christmas. We haven't begun planning anything for Christmas yet, but we would appreciate your prayers.

I was pretty shaken up by the assassination/martyrdom of Charlie Kirk; there were a couple of weeks there were I was a bit prickly as a result. Pray that I would hold the tension between boldly declaring the truth and loving my neighbors well.

We continue to post weekly on our private prayer group on Facebook if you would like more frequent updates and prayer requests. Thank you for your prayers!

Maki and I have a private prayer group on Facebook where we post updates and prayer requests multiple times a month. If you would like more frequent updates, please consider joining our private prayer group. Please reach out to me if you haven't already received an invitation.

Current Support Level: 107% (Committed) / 102% (Performing(annual))

I sincerely appreciate those who read these updates in their entirety (and pray over them)! I am especially grateful for those that have sacrificially given towards this ministry among the Japanese. If you feel lead to make a financial commitment towards reaching the Japanese with the Gospel, [you can find out more about how to support my work in Japan here](#). All gifts are tax-deductible.

Ian Smith,
Missionary, Converge



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Thank you for your partnership in the work of the Gospel!

You are receiving this e-mail because you are a prayer-partner, friend or acquaintance of Ian Smith, Converge Worldwide Missionary to Japan.

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