

Land of the Risen Son

イエス・キリストは日本を愛する

(Jesus loves Japan)

Interesting Facts

Respect for the Aged Day...

The Japanese celebrate interesting national holidays. They have a children's day, a health and sports day, and even a greenery day! So why not a day for seniors?

The History

(right: Respect for the aged day, written in Japanese.)

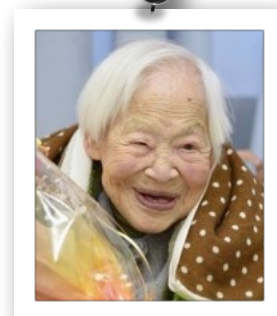
The holiday began in 1947 in Hyogo Prefecture. It became very popular, spread across the nation, and in 1966 was made into a national holiday. It takes place on the 3rd Monday of September each year.



Who are seniors?

(right: Misao Okawa is the oldest person in Japan at 116.)

In Japan, a senior citizen is anyone over the age of 65. However because of long life spans, in Okinawa the age is increased from 65 to 75. Every year our church gives small gifts to each person aged 75 and older.



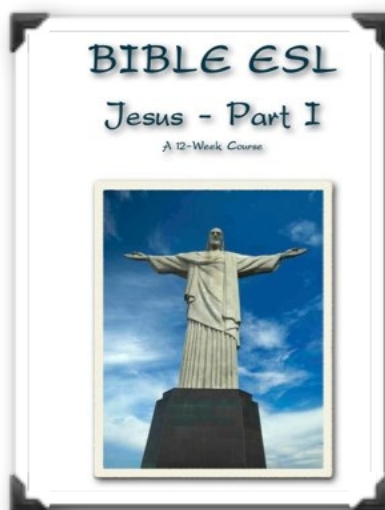
Update: A Singular Sojourn (Peter & Valerie Limmer)

Summer Work...

Children in Japan don't get a two-month summer vacation, as they do in North America. Instead, their summer break is only one month long. Even during that time they still have to complete several hours of homework each day. Given that so much is expected of them during their break, we decided to give all of our ESL students the month of August off from classes.

During that time, we turned our attentions to different enterprises: hospitality ministry, and creating brand-new ESL materials. Over the past year, we've found it very stressful to be writing ESL classes at the same time as teaching them. We thought that if we could write our classes beforehand, we would be able to have more time in our schedule for people, rather than having to close ourselves away to write for significant chunks of time.

When we started Bible ESL a year ago, several of our students had never before interacted with the Bible, and when we prayed about what to teach them, God told us to start with the Old Testament. So, up until now we've been teaching stories of how sin entered the world; Cain and Abel; Noah; Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; Joseph; and Moses.



The cover page for our latest Bible ESL class.

Our goal during August was to write a textbook that we could use over the next year, focusing on Jesus' teachings, miracles, life, death, and resurrection. I'm still awed to say that 264 pages of lessons later, we have been successful in our endeavour! We're very thankful to God for enabling us in this, and both we and our students are enjoying exploring these new stories together. In each class, I make props and we act out skits of the various Bible scenes. This helps the students to more accurately understand what's going on in the stories, and they come away with some great insights.

What Happens Next?

In a recent planning meeting with Higa sensei (the pastor of our church), we decided that it was time to bring up the issue of whether or not we will be coming back to serve in Okinawa for a second term. As the years have gone by, Peter and I have both experienced a growing desire to return and continue on in the work that God has set out before us. However, we didn't want to force ourselves on the Japanese church, and we didn't know if they wanted us back. We concluded that if they didn't want us to return, then we wouldn't take things into our own hands; we would simply resume living in Canada.

Over these years, we've seen that it often takes Okinawan people a long time (sometimes up to a year) to make important decisions. So we thought that with a year left in our term, now would be a good time to broach the subject, and the church could have lots of time to consider its decision.

In order to avoid applying undue pressure, we knew we would need to ask the question in a really round-about way, and try not to let on that we hoped to be invited back. At our meeting, we didn't even finish asking the question before Higa sensei enthusiastically replied, "Any time you want to come back, you

are more than welcome to return.”

Peter and I both thought, "He's answered far too quickly. He must be inviting us to visit, as tourists. Perhaps he's misunderstood the question.”

Just as we were about to clarify our query, Higa sensei went on, "Will you want to keep your apartment for when you come back to Okinawa?"

With that, we realized that there was no miscommunication whatsoever. We all laughed, and animatedly

started to talk about the logistics of home assignment in Canada, and returning to Okinawa. Since then, Higa sensei has excitedly been telling many people of our planned return. We are so blessed to be working with such a wonderful and loving church and pastor.

Our Friends' Wedding

Helen & Patrick, October 13, 2013



A beautiful collage of pictures since their relationship began.



A key component of Japanese wedding ceremonies: displaying their new rings to the onlookers.



The Bride and Groom with their families.



Foyer decorations.



The Bride and Groom, with us.



The pew decorations.

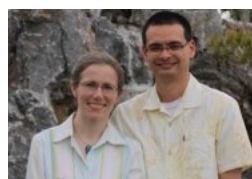
Helen and Patrick's wedding was originally scheduled for October 11th, but that weekend a typhoon was passing through, so their ceremony was postponed by a couple of days.

Contact Information

Thank You!

Thank you for your interest in our work. We send out newsletters every two months. If at any point you decide that you don't want to receive them anymore, just write or email us (japan@peterandvalerie.com).

Correspondence can be sent to:



Peter & Valerie Limmer
Sunnycourt 207, Apartment C-3
3-207 Nishizaki,
Itoman-shi, Okinawa, 901-0306
Japan
E-mail:
japan@peterandvalerie.com

GOM Main Offices

GOM Canada
PO Box 1210
St. Catharines, ON
L2R 7A7

GOM USA
P.O. Box 2010
Buffalo, NY
14231

