

Wendy Eros, June 2023

THE JAPANADIAN



"Be merciful to me, Lord, for I am in distress; my eyes grow weak with sorrow, my soul and body with grief." Psalms 31:9

June has been a month of deep sadness as I lost my best friend, my mentor, my confidant, Ruth Leppy. Ruth passed away suddenly on June 11th, 2023. Although I do rejoice that she's with Jesus, it's such a



huge loss for me personally and I am still having difficulty coping some days. Please pray for me, as well as her family, as we mourn her loss. This letter is dedicated to Ruth. She always had a smile and amazing laugh that could turn any



frown into a smile. Whenever I brought students to Canada, Ruth and Dave always opened their home for a meal or snack and lots of laughter. I

was able to watch her memorial via a link sent to me by Vicki Leppy (thank you again Vicki!) Marie



Kennedy spoke so well on 'our' behalf of some memories we shared together. One memory I wanted to share was how Ruth would always be open for an adventure...even if it meant hopping in my car and driving with me for 3 ½ hours one way to Hedley to buy the best beef jerky at Doug's Homestead (they relocated to Kaledon now). She was the champion for my ministry and helped me with so many things over the last 13 years, especially proofing my monthly newsletters. So, if you happen to find any mistakes it's because my proof-reader is dancing with Jesus.

But June was also filled with much laughter and good times with students and former students. One of the fun things we have done in some classes is to go to karaoke for English class. Students are allowed to sing only English songs and they sing really well. Sometimes I think it would be great to 'sing' our lessons in class because their pronunciation is so good when they sing 😊



I went on a one-day bus trip with my friend, Seigetsu to a beautiful hydrangea park near Nishio City (where I study advanced gospel choir once a month). While I was walking down the hill back to the bus, I stopped to buy something from a lady selling handmade carry bags in her front yard. As I was looking at them, Seigetsu called out to me and a lady standing nearby said she knew a lady from Canada named Wendy. When I turned around I saw Mariko Isobe

(pictured with me on the left). She is a former Toyota student and was visiting the garden along with her husband. We chatted for a bit and made plans to get together after summer. I love how God puts people into our lives and they suddenly appear out of the blue to brighten your day!



For Father's Day classes, the children completed a certificate to give their dads. Pictured at left is one of the classes from Komaki with their 'awards' for their dads. This class is special because the two girls are sisters (Honomi and Ayuka) and their father picks them up every Tuesday. I prepared two different certificates for them so their dad would have a double treat. As well, on June 18th there was a baptism at Toyota Church. The oldest daughter of Mark Kane (the former teacher) made the decision to follow Jesus with all her heart and was baptized by Fujino

sensei. He is the pastor of Komaki Hope Chapel and knows Noelle very well. It was a beautiful afternoon and I was so happy to connect with Toyota church members, as well as some from Wago Church where Mark still teaches. Please pray for Mark and his family as they prepare to return to the US after serving 9 years in Japan. Pray for safety in their travels and that they will be able to settle well in their home back in Michigan. Praise the Lord for their faithful ministry here in Japan!



Then on Monday, March 19th I drove to Hikone Castle to meet up with our other team members here in Japan. Hikone is one of the twelve remaining original castles in Japan. The steps inside are so steep I could only manage to go up one level. But getting together with Doris, Cory and Masami (and their foster son Kaoru) was such a blessing after losing Ruth the previous week. It was so nice to get hugs!! Please pray for Joshua Giesbrecht as he will be moving to Winnipeg this summer to attend university starting in September. Pray for safety for his travels and peace for his family.

One of my favourite things to do on my days off is to meet up with former students. I managed to do that several times this past month, starting with seeing Seigetsu, who used to attend Komaki Hope Chapel classes, then having lunch with Yumiko and Shiho (right photo) who were in Toyota and ending with visiting some of my dear friends, Nako & Kunio Andoh, who I met back in 2006 when I first started teaching in Fujigaoka (left bottom photo). Kunio is now



93 and Nako is 89. Kunio was a university professor and loves to write. He has written several 'personal' books about proverbs and is now working on his autobiography (book number 3). In one of his books, he wrote 4 pages about his time at Fujiogaka with me. I haven't been able to translate the pages yet, but I was very humbled to know he enjoyed learning English and studying with me. Please pray for his health as he is not in good condition.

When I returned to Japan one year ago (yes, it's already been over a year!), one of my hopes was to start a home church. Although that hasn't happened, God opened up another opportunity for me to reach out to students and it is through our monthly movie times. The movies have had an impact on those attending and it's really wonderful to see how attentive the students are as they watch God work in other people's lives. This month we watched "Facing the Giants". Please pray for next month as I'm planning to show "Left Behind".



Along with movie nights, I have also started teaching English to some choir members in Nagoya and Okazaki after my gospel choir practices. I am already teaching choir members the songs we sing in English in all 4 groups so adding the English classes is new. They have advertised it on the OneVoice Gospel website, which is pretty cool 😊 The classes have been going very well and there are 3 classes (50 minutes each) with up to 6 per class and the sessions run for 6 weeks. Please pray for these students because none of them are Christians, yet they love singing songs to the Lord. Pray their hearts will be open to hearing the gospel.





This week I've been having Canada Day classes and the students have enjoyed learning more about Canada, as well as eating maple cookies and some homemade moose & maple leaf shaped cookies (right). I also served raspberry Jello topped with whip cream (representing the red and white of both the Canadian and Japanese flags)...after all I am "Japanadian"...lol. Some of the



adults (pictured above) put on Canada 'tattoos' which was great fun. I hope they were able to wash them off Tuesday night 😊 All the kids made totem poles (using toilet paper rolls) and for one class at Fujigaoka we tried making a 'human' totem pole (pictured at right). I pray you all have a very Happy Canada Day and are able to join in some festivities or watch a parade in your city/town.



Just a note to let you know this is my last newsletter until September as I'll take the summer 'off' from writing. But I will send an email to let you know when my 3rd grandbaby arrives. Courtney was due on the 24th and if she hasn't had him/her by Saturday she will be induced. Please pray for a healthy baby and safe delivery.

Prayer requests:

- Please pray for the movie afternoon Sunday, July 2nd at Komaki Hope Chapel. One former student is coming and she will bring 2 friends. Pray for these ladies, along with the others who attend.
- Pray for the upcoming birth of my 3rd grandchild. Pray Courtney will be okay during delivery and that the baby will be healthy. We are waiting excitedly to find out if it's a boy or another girl 😊
- Pray for my continued good health during the hot, humid summer. Pray, too, for peace in my heart and mind, especially after Ruth's sudden passing.

Praise items:

- Praise the Lord for new students attending class and movie times. There are 2 new students starting in July, so please pray that they will enjoy meeting the wonderful people who come to the classes.
- Praise for great Canada Day celebration classes this week and also at choir practices. It's so fun to share Canada's birthday with the students and choir members.
- Praise for the new English classes at choir. Pray that the same students will come to the next sessions in September after the summer break during August.

Please note that is my last newsletter until September as I'm taking the summer 'off' from writing. There isn't much happening in the classes during July and there are no classes during August because of the Obon holiday and the children are out of school. Many families take a vacation so pray for them to have safety in their journeys and to return to class in September. But I will send an email to you to let you know when the baby comes! And I would love to hear from you so please feel free to write anytime. I will always respond, even via 'snail mail' 😊

Praying you all have a very wonderful, healthy and safe summer!

Blessings and love,

Wendy 😊