

Edition 68 - April 2014

From the Editor

We host over 100 short-term volunteers each year, who come by themselves or on teams for a few days up to two years. Their aim? To experience and contribute to mission life in Japan. Our hope? That they will continue to pray for Japan, and that God may call some of them back here! Nick from Canada came for three months in 2011, and then in 2013, returned! This month he compares his two experiences.

Henrietta Cozens

News and Prayer Points

Thank God for helping the Crowhurst family resettle and find work and schools in Manchester, UK. Julie has just started an office temping job while Martin volunteers at a missional homeless night shelter. After two decades of service here in Japan, we pray God would guide them every step of the way.

Thank God for helping Ishiyama church see their prayers answered. Despite Mrs Nishide's family choosing a Buddhist funeral for her mother this week, her husband joined in the church's prayer time and the family received comfort and love.

Please pray for the preparation for our field conference, May 4-8. We will discuss a five year plan and new leaders as well as worship God.

Please pray for the grace and power of the gospel to be preached and received in hearts this Easter, in church services and picnics under the cherry blossoms across the land!



Nick (red shirt above) in Izumi Christian House (Yamashina, Kyoto) where he has helped both as a short term and long term missions worker

Short and long term mission compared

During my time here as a short term (April to July 2011), I was tracting, teaching English classes, assisting with church events, visiting universities, and interacting with young adults. I was attached to Izumi Christian House but visited too the Hikone church one day a week. Though I had been considering long term service, my short term experience seemed to confirm my feelings that God wanted me here and the devil did not.

As a short term, I felt that my job was simple: just do my best to help with whatever I was asked to do. Since coming back for long term, I am focusing on language study, which can be a great tool to make subsequent years more effective. But as it doesn't *feel* like ministry, it feels more difficult to find my place.

There are a lot of other differences between the short term and long term experiences, starting with the mindset. As a short term, I knew I

was only going to be here for a certain time, so I would jump on every opportunity that came up. However, once I came here for the long term, this sense of urgency quickly faded. I no longer had the time or energy to run off on every adventure. Although it is useful to learn when to enjoy and when to refrain, if not careful, one can let this lack of urgency creep into other parts of life, leading to loss of focus.

Another difference between short and long term is the effects of loneliness. As a short term, there were nearly always people around and things to do. However now I am often delving into study materials on my own. It can be really tough too when close international friends return back to their home countries.

I would like to add that, despite any and all difficulties at first, there is no greater joy or peace that I have experienced than being where God wants me to be. **Nick Mason**