



Being His Hands

Volume 3 Issue 1

Quarterly Mission Work Report for Joel Osborne

March 2010

Opening My Hands Anew

I still remember the first time I saw someone lift their hands in prayer to God. With palms open raised toward heaven, it was a physical sign of the posture of their heart: a sign of submission to the Holy One, the Creator of the earth, who loves us and redeemed us at the cost of His Son's blood.



My desire, as I begin anew in Mito, is to have this posture: being fully released to God's will and placing my life and my ministry back into His masterful hands. There will be new challenges, both good and bad, but if we as the gathered people of God in Mito can have this attitude, I believe wholeheartedly that God will work both mightily and quietly in our midst to continue accomplishing His mission in this place.

In Sendai, I leave behind a host of memories, a sense of sadness and disappointment of dreams

yet unaccomplished, and a knowledge that God is not yet finished in what He wants to do there. If it is His will for me to return to that city someday, I will go. Even though I know it will be different, many relationships have grown that will continue beyond my changing work location. So I ask you to continue praying for those relationships, and more specifically for the faithful who continue to worship in Sendai, Morioka and Hachinohe.

Beginning something new brings a fresh sense of

excitement. As I write this report, I'm sitting in the chaos of a room yet unpacked. All of my feelings about the move are likewise yet to be unpacked. But there is a sense of anticipation that God is getting ready to refine us and plans to do something more.

Please bathe Mito church in prayer as it faces major transitions as well. May God bless us as we lift our hands and our lives to submit to Him and what He wants to accomplish in us and through us in the upcoming years.

Inside this issue:

- * Angkor of Faith 4
- * Prayer Requests
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Upcoming Dates

Apr 10 - wedding: Sugao Tadokoro & Chihiro Ikegami

Apr 16-17 - new AETs arrive in Mito

Apr 18 - annual meeting for Mito church and official commissioning as a missionary @ Mito Church

Apr 21 - Ibaraki Christian University chapel: Cambodia report

Apr 25 - farewell party for Hancock family; our welcome party

Apr 29 - annual nationwide church gathering: day of worship

May 1-5 - Golden Week & visitors galore!

May 9 - first sermon @ Mito Church

Angkor of Faith 4: Emerging Youth ~ A Bright Future

There is always so much to share that I don't know where to begin or what to leave out. The theme was "Friends 4ever" and I'm thankful for the friendships being formed that will, indeed, last forever. It is always amazing to watch as the Japanese groups (who have larger numbers of non-Christians generally) experience the depth and richness of Christian fellowship and watch as they transformed by God through the faith and warmth of young Christians from other Asian countries.

My mother, who served and participated in AOF for the first time, shared how exciting and refreshing it was for her to be in the midst of so many vibrant youth with a passion for God. She commented on what a bright future there is for the church. The number of youth who emerged as leaders significantly increased this year. This is important because it means we are accomplishing what we set out to do: grow and develop leadership among the youth and give them the tools to seek God's vision and have the faith to step out and do it in the church, in their cities, and in the world.



(Above) **Jia Ni** (l) and **Sara** (r) share their booklet with **Phy** (c) from Cambodia during a devotional time

Sara Mukaiyachi is one example of this. Sara has gone to every AOF and she also came with me to Cambodia in August last year. Sara studies nursing at Ibaraki Christian University and is from Hokkaido. She stepped up as a home group leader for Japan. She was

a 'big sister' (*literally, for her sister and first-timer, Mana*) for all of the other youth since all but one were new this year, helping them to know what to do and infusing faith into their service and fellowship. She did an excellent job! Another example is **Than Kumkiti**, from Chiang Mai, Thailand, who first came to AOF2. At the time, she was a non-Christian friend of one of the other campers. She has since given her life to Christ, and this year she worked with Robert to plan and lead the daily parties held at Traveller's Lodge.



(Above) **Than** (l) teaches the children how to sing "My God Is So Big" at the party

Another example of emerging leadership is the eight section leaders I chose for singing class. If there was a group that found a special place in my heart, it was this group! One of the greatest highlights of each day was gathering with them to process the class, discuss the spiritual meaning of the songs and giving them the time to share it with their peers in the next class, and to pray together. Each time we prayed and worshipped together, God dwelt richly amongst us.



Kevin Kon (*Bedok/Singapore*) and **Jacob Tan** (*Moulmein/Singapore*) were bass section leaders. Kevin is a stable, dependable leader who takes personal initiative. Jacob has an amazing bass voice, and a gentle, natural commanding presence. Our tenor section leaders were **Ryan Choy** (*Moulmein*) and **Mithiran Vikraman** (*Seremban/Malaysia*). Ryan is very gifted musically and I enjoyed watching this shy guy have a chance to lead his peers. Mit has a big heart, and enough enthusiasm to match it. He was very mindful of the others in his section.



(Above) On their way to the daily meeting for section leaders: (l to r) **Sheena**, **Ryan**, **Mit**, **Jacob** (behind) and **Kevin** (front)

(Below left) **Shermaine** teaches the children (Below right) **Haley** and **Grace** sing their part



Haley Edmiston (*Phayao/Thailand*) and **Shermaine Goh** (*Geylang/Singapore*) led the alto section, and **Grace Ong** (*Bedok*) and **Sheena Goh** (*Geylang*) were soprano section leaders. All of the girls, except Haley, were section leaders last year, and all four are gifted musically. The three returning leaders had experience from last year that helped a lot: they knew what we were doing and why we were doing it. Grace most notably matured and stepped up, both in singing class and in other areas of AOF4. The

(AOF4: Emerging Youth - A Bright Future cont.)

twins, Sheena and Shermaine, are always the bright sunshine of any group. Both of them have a heart for God and for people, and they are the quickest to express encouragement and thankfulness. Haley is part of the new mission team in Phayao, Thailand and she brought a spiritual depth to the group. I always appreciated her insights.

The last, and perhaps most amazing example of growing leadership is among the Cambodian children. The “intentionality” and perseverance of returning several times a year to build on the relationships with the children is so rewarding as I see them step up in organizing themselves to help translate, to go to the schools and help with the various learning stations, and to hear more of their dreams and goals. Each time, they let me see a little more into their ‘world’ with jokes, stories, sharing fears or struggles, and beaming with joy when we can celebrate with them in

their accomplishments. **Smey** comes from a family of nine children. She and her younger brother are both studying English. Smey is maturing into a nice, young lady and would make a great teacher.



(Above) **Smey (l), Neat (c), Chhai (r)**

Neat lives with an older relative since her parents and both sets of grandparents are no longer living. Once the little girl with a winning smile who just hung around with us, she has emerged to help organize other children to lead activities and to help translate.

There are so many other youth, and children, with great stories or examples to share. There are stories of ongoing transformation in lives of youth like

Saki Sakakieda and **Kazuki Machida** (Japan), new youth who show great potential like **Ben Lim** (Malaysia), **Aaron Wong** (Singapore), and **Mark Metilla** (Philippines). Stories of hope in Cambodia can be seen in kids like **Chhai, Dieng, Vai** and **Ngem**.



(Above) **Vai (l), Dieng (c), Ngem (r)**

I don't know long AOF will continue, but I do know that God has worked powerfully in the lives of the youth. Let's give God the glory and continue to pray for them. My hope is serve faithfully through working with others to mentor and encourage them, and seek your prayers in that work.

(Right) **Paul and Chu**



(Below) **Raksmei** helped us a lot!

(Below Left) **Mark** shares a Bible story with his buddy, **Pon**; (Middle Center) **Kazuki** and **Keito** spend time with their buddies; (Middle Right) **Ben** makes a new friend, also named **Ben**; (Bottom Left) My international group skit - I promise it wasn't my idea to play the role of God... (Bottom Center) **Aaron** leads the kids in a song at school; (Bottom Right) **Saki** brings joy to the kids with her balloon animals and flowers.





PRAYER REQUESTS

“One generation will commend your works to another; they will tell of your mighty acts.”

~ Psalm 145:4

*(Left) The third day of our parties for the children at AOF4 in Siem Reap, Cambodia. We made and ate lunch, saw the Tonle Sap floating village, sang songs, played games, taught English vocabulary, washed hair with lice removal medicine, told Bible stories and did skits about them. I want to express gratitude to **Dave Hogan** and **Robert Reagan** for taking so many wonderful pictures for everyone to share.*

1) **Eiko Yamazaki** - a member of Mito church has inoperable stage 4 lung cancer. Initially seeming hopeless, we keep hope as she enters the hospital for 10 days and begins her fight against the cancer. Her non-Christian husband is now coming to worship with her, and they have begun praying every day together. Her faith and her attitude can be summed up in what she said yesterday: “I feel as if God gave me this cancer to produce within me the kind of character and faith He wants me to have. I will not give up hope on what God can do. Let’s keep praying!” Indeed, let’s keep praying!

2) **New Ministry** - please continue to remember me daily as I learn where I

fit in this new church and ministry and as I answer God’s call in a new place. Pray that relationships will begin to solidify, and that I may be a blessing. Join me in giving thanks to God for the ways the people in Mito have already been a blessing to Sasha, Gaku and myself.

3) **Debi & Judith** - please pray for both of them as they prepare for a new ministry focus, teaching at CAJ (Christian Academy in Japan) in the Tokyo area. The school provides a Christian education in English both to missionary families and to Japanese Christian/non-Christian families. Pray for Debi as she spends April with in the US, and then 3 months in an internship in Chiang Mai before taking

her teaching post. Pray for Judith, as she closes her ministry with Taga church and Ibaraki Christian in July and moves to Tokyo.

4) **Tsuneki Family** - I am so thankful for God’s blessing in gaining some new co-workers. Atsushi and Mari Tsuneki are a warm couple with a definite passion for God. They are raising four children (Yuu, Takuma, Kazuma and Yutaka) who are really delightful to be with. Ask the Lord to bring strength and blessing to Atsushi in his ministry. Pray for Mari as she begins a new job teaching English at a local junior high school. Pray for each of their children by name, asking God to root their faith and draw them close to Him as they grow.

A Month With Mom

One the big highlights of this quarter was having my mother spend the month of March with me. We went to Southeast Asia (her first time) where she got a chance to meet many of my friends and see where I spent almost 8 months in Singapore. She also got to serve in Cambodia at AOF4, and that gave her a better glimpse into the co-operative ministry being done there. Finally, she was a big help in packing and cleaning our house in Sendai, and getting to see my new home and new coworkers (the Tsunekis) in Mito. The best part was having time to talk and enjoy each other. I’m so proud of

(Left) Mom with her buddy, Aot

(Below) Mom gets to know Ken Sinclair and Paul Tan



my mom for being so adventurous and courageous, and I’m thankful for her faithfulness and commitment to God. Thank you, Mom, for being with me!

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Being His Hands is a quarterly summary of my mission work in Asia. I publish a prayer request list twice a quarter entitled *Into His Hands*. Thank you for your partnership in this work through prayer and financial support.

For responses to this report, or to request addition of your address to the report group list, please email: joelosborne4@yahoo.com