

February 2024

MARSHALL MUSINGS



A good reminder

In January we attended the funeral of a long-term missionary. Ruth Weston served, with her husband, for 32 years in Japan with OMF. They arrived in 1985, so had already been there 15 years when we first arrived. Ruth and Gary have helped us in so many ways over the years. Our circles in Japan include very few Australians and even fewer Queenslanders, so it was always a joy to run into them at various missionary gatherings.

At Ruth's funeral we heard a tiny portion of the great impact this humble servant of God had on those around her. She was a quiet evangelist who did many one-on-one Bible studies with Japanese people over the years. We're praying for her husband of 42 years and especially for all those Japanese people she knew who haven't yet started following Jesus, or who have faltered in their faith.

We were also challenged by Gary during his eulogy. He said his wife would have not have been happy with the big focus on her at her funeral. Gary said she would have wanted us to focus instead on Christ. She simply served Christ. We pray that God would enable us to do the same. (Photo: at the reception after the funeral.)



Plans for 2024

Barring something unexpected, our plans for 2024 at this point are that we (David and Wendy) will return to Japan in early July. Our plans in Australia before that include a trip in March to NSW and ACT mainly to attend OMF's national conference and to visit a supporting church in Canberra. After that we plan to take two months of long service leave.

We have already visited most of our main supporting churches and many of our key supporters. Please contact us if you'd like to catch up.

Earthquake update

It has been a month since the 7.6-magnitude earthquake struck off the coast of Ishikawa prefecture Japan killing 238 people, largely destroying six cities and leaving thousands without homes in the middle of winter.

- Pray for the ongoing work of rescue workers as they provide for the needs of thousands in evacuations shelters.
- Pray for volunteers being mobilized to serve in this time of need.
- Pray for Noto Help as they coordinate Christian relief efforts in the area.
- Pray for OpSAFE trainings to be set up at Christian universities and with churches and missions in preparation for trauma work with children.

Why go with a mission organisation?

We've been greatly blessed by being members of OMF International. Here are a few reasons why:

- OMF has provided so much on-the-ground support in Japan and in Australia. They've helped us when we've had medical needs, provided fellowship vital to longevity, guided us in important decisions, provided professional development, admin support, and language training. They also sponsor our visas and have helped us find housing.
- The local knowledge and experience that they've got as an organisation helped us get to Japan and settle there in ministry.
- They've provided us with a means to get the money people have given towards our support in Japan, in a way that doesn't look like international money laundering.
- They've got a much wider platform in Australia than we have personally, enabling us to develop a wider prayer and financial support team that would otherwise be possible, but also to tell more people about the needs in Japan.
- They've supported us through challenges with our sons in recent years and given us much grace to do our best to support our kids, even when that meant taking time off.
- Possibly the most important thing to us is that being members of OMF means we feel part of a greater whole—a body that is working together to reach Japan for Christ. That sense of purpose, and of working together with others is very important to us.

Question
corner

Accommodation update

Jamie has found a house with a new friend, he's looking for a third housemate. Centrelink has notified him that they will begin providing financial assistance soon.

Doug is still looking for somewhere to move to, preferably before we go away in mid-March (see above). He would do best in a tidy place that doesn't require much socialising. He continues to look for work with support from a team from EmployABLE program (Autism Queensland) and feels like he's making progress there. He's yet to hear from Centrelink or NDIS.

David and Wendy Marshall

in Australia, living in Springfield Lakes
Phone: 0493 288 766 (Wendy)
0493 470 914 (David)

Wendy's blog:

www.mmuser.blogspot.com

Webpage: ido.com.au/marshalls.php

OMF Japan website: omf.org/japan

OMF Japan social media:

Facebook: facebook.com/OMFJapan/

Instagram: [omf_japan](https://www.instagram.com/omf_japan)

OMF Australia: www.omf.org/australia

Prayer points

- That our support would remain 100% throughout 2024.
- For strength, wisdom, and resilience.
- For Doug to find accommodation and a job before David and Wendy go away for several weeks from mid-March.
- For Jamie as he negotiates moving out of home, getting to know house mates, and starting uni. Pray for they will find a third person to share the house.
- That we would be free of anxiety for the future as we move through a lot of transition this year.
- That each of our boys will continue to mature and know God better. That they would each know God's will for their next steps.
- That in all we do, think, and say, we would glorify God.
- That God would guide us in what we say, and that he would work in the lives of those we speak to. We're especially keen to help people see that God uses all types of people to serve him on the mission field, including those who aren't church planters and evangelists.

Praise points

- That our financial support is good.
- For Jamie finding accommodation in a good location and for a good price, as well as a short-term job. That Jamie's meeting new people.
- For an interesting motorhome experience (it was really hot and really rainy during our short trip).
- That we're learning again how to have fun as a couple.



Coming up...

February

- 9 Speaking at Brisbane School of Theology (BST)
- 16 Jamie moving out
- 22 Mission Steps (OMF)
- 24 Heart for Asia (OMF)
- 25 JCF (Japanese Christian Fellowship)
- March 10 David preaching at our home church

On the home front

Thank you for praying during January. During January **David and Wendy** had meals or coffee with over a dozen individuals, couples, or families. Many of those were long-time friends or supporters, some were new friends or contacts. In addition to that, just in the last few days of the month we went to two birthday celebrations and a funeral. It's been a social month!

On the home front, we took ourselves on the road and borrowed Wendy's parents' motorhome for three nights and went on a little adventure around south-east Queensland. This was in preparation for taking it on a much longer journey from mid-March (see pg 1 for our plans.) We also went to the final Men's BBL game at the Gabba on the 10th and enjoyed many games on TV.

During January we've also been helping **Jamie and Doug** follow leads for accommodation options. See the update on page 1 and please keep praying!

We're compiling a list of needed furniture for **Jamie** and other household goods. Please contact us if you know of stuff that's available.

Jamie was grateful to pick up three weeks of gardening work at his old school, Westside Christian College.

David had been scheduled to preach in February, but ended up preaching on January 21 instead. It's been great to help out our home church in this way while they search for a new pastor. He's scheduled to preach again in March.

Doug and Jamie are both making good progress in learning to drive. We're hoping Doug will be able to sign up for his driving test in the coming month or so.

Thank you for praying; we're asking God to glorify his name as we continue to ask him for big things.

In Christ, David and Wendy



Photos clockwise from left: we met a friend from Japan OMF at Mt Coot-tha. Brisbane Heat cricket fans, Helen—just one of the friends we met in January, motorhome off the grid near Coominya.

