

A unique organisation

The Japan Evangelical Missionary Association (JEMA) is an interesting organisation. Established in 1952, it is a group of over 45 evangelical mission agencies (and independent missionaries). JEMA's mission statement is: "Networking and equipping to make Jesus known in Japan." The organisation has more than 1,200 individual members, which, estimates tell us, is over 50% of the Protestant missionary force in Japan.

JEMA doesn't have its own ministries to Japanese people, but rather aims to help missionaries and mission organisations to do the work God has called them to. The organisation provides prayer and personal retreats, missionary women's events, and highlights resources for caring for missionaries. It's a key group that helps missionaries network with others. JEMA also has strong ties with the Japanese church and seeks to work with them and encourage them wherever possible. We're not aware of any other country having a similar association.

The magazine Wendy works with is a key part of JEMA's work and goes out four times a year to all those 1,200 members (plus more). OMF, with around 140 members, is the largest mission within JEMA. Several other OMF missionaries also help JEMA in its goal of supporting missionaries from various backgrounds as they serve in Japan.



Exciting plans

Since 2010, Wendy's been dreaming of holding writing retreats. Writing is a lonely calling and even more so when you write in a language that isn't the dominant language of the country you're living in.

Over the last 15 years she's run six retreats, of various sizes in different places in Japan. The last one, in March 2020, was the largest and most exciting, but also very exhausting as she handled most of the logistics.

Since then various people who were at that 2020 retreat have been urging her to "do it again". But the pandemic, as well as challenges within our own family, then home assignment, have meant it

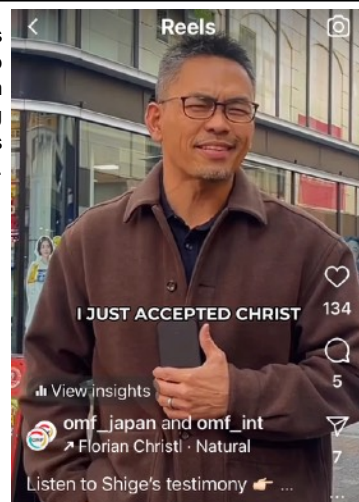
hasn't been possible. So, when we got back to Japan last year, she was keen to get going on planning another one. It's taken some time to get the right pieces into place, but we now have a small four-night writing retreat planned for May in northern Japan, with hopes of doing it again next year.

Her goals are:

1. To provide a space for people who write to get away and do that.
2. To energise writers by getting them together.
3. To offer her help with writing/editing, if people want it.

Please pray that this retreat in May will be an encouragement and help to all who come. Pray for her health and energy too!

Right: A Japanese friend of ours allowed Wendy's short term worker to record his testimony. He's a church planter in Tokyo. It's a very encouraging video: check it out on OMF Japan's Facebook or Instagram pages.



The end of the beginning

This year I am looking after five sheep as their shepherd. Yes, that's a metaphor. I am guiding five students in their last year of high school as they undertake an extensive research project into a global issue. Their main task is to propose a Christ-centred response to the suffering associated with this global issue. It's a big job for people this age. There is so much about the world that they have yet to learn; so much growing they yet need to do.

Every year at CAJ, our senior students manage to complete this big job. It's a struggle. It's frustration like they've never experienced before. It's also amazing to see what they do when encouraged and challenged.

In the practical part of their project, one of my students is proposing a curriculum change to a group of teachers. Another is making a board game to simulate life choices. A third is taking some students on field trip to a local recycling centre (with a teacher present of course). They are trying to be part of the solution, seeking ways they can move the world around them to a better place.

I like to think of them learning to be bringers of hope. They are about to complete high school. In many ways, the beginning stage of their lives is coming to an end, and their adult life is about to begin. Please pray that our Lord would use them all as they leave CAJ and branch out into the world.

**CAJ
corner**

David and Wendy Marshall
serving in Japan.

Email: themarshalls@omfmail.com

Address:

2-5-20-201 Shinkawacho, Higashi
Kurume, Tokyo, Japan, 203-0013.

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

- Please pray for two finance managers and a field medical advisor for OMF. For an Elementary School Principal, HR Manager, and Librarian for CAJ.
- For preparations for the writing retreat in May.
- For refreshment during our camping trip at the end of March.
- OMF Japan has our two-yearly field conference in June, pray for all the details that need to be organised.
- David and Wendy are planning work trips to Thailand and Singapore (June) and then on to holidays and working remotely in Australia (July). Pray for all that needs to be organised for that.
- Pray for Rachel, Serve Asia Worker, who returns to the Philippines this month: her visa wasn't extended.
- That Callum, Sophie, Doug, and Jamie will all continue to grow 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.

Praise points

- For plenty to put our hands to, that God has gifted us in ways that we are able to serve him here in Japan.
- 2025 is our 25th year of service with OMF, praise God. Give thanks for our support team (you) who help keep us going!
- Being able to join our church's mid-week prayer meeting.
- For an opportunity for Wendy to go to a women's retreat this month.

Family

Thank you for praying during February. We started it by spending three nights away with the high school wrestling team at their end-of-

season regional tournament on a US Army Base an hour from home. David was the driver and Wendy was the female chaperone. It was with great joy that we celebrated team victories in the two competitions (over the three days), as well as two gold and two silver individual medals.

David made it to his first OMF Kanto prayer meeting. He's usually working at CAJ on Mondays, but this time the once-a-month meeting was on a CAJ holiday.

We enjoyed a visit with two colleagues to the Edo Tokyo Outdoors Architectural Museum on another mid-week holiday (see photos below).

On two Saturdays we enjoyed meals with various people (together and separately). A fire on our train line meant Wendy couldn't return home via train from one of those Saturday gatherings, so David drove 50 minutes one way (13 km) to pick her up.

We've started attending the mid-week Zoom prayer meeting of our church and have enjoyed fellowshiping at a deeper level with those who attend.

Jamie moved earlier in the month and started 2nd year uni this week. He's deeply involved with ES and helping out at church and is still working on getting enough hours to take a driving test.

Callum and Sophie have been getting back into daily life, which seems to involve a lot of other people's weddings! Callum has also started helping out with the sound desk at their church.

Doug is feeling settled in his new place and occasionally says hello to a couple of local cats. He's been really enjoying reading a Japanese fantasy graphic novel series (in English).

In Christ, David and Wendy



Above: Working at the wrestling tournament in the first hour while everyone was warming up.



Left: Peter and Janet Dallman, the colleagues we went to the museum with; Bible and coffee in the sun—we've been enjoying the winter sun in our southerly-facing apartment.

Below: Scenes from the museum. A thatched farmhouse; plum blossom outside an architects house; and a traditional room in a former prime minister's house.

Coming up...

March

- 1 David teaching science to homeschoolers at CAJ (morning)
- 3 OMF Prayer and Praise meeting
- 11–14 Wendy at missionary women's retreat
- 12–14 David hosting a supporter from Qld
- 25–28 Camping trip during CAJ Spring break
- April 3 Wendy's birthday

