

June-July 2021

MARSHALL MUSINGS



Olympics?

Marty Woods, an Australian missionary Wendy knows, has moved around the world the last 20 years doing ministry with international sporting events. He's been in Japan for these last few years preparing for the Tokyo Olympics.

In Japan we're hearing about protests from people who don't want the Olympics to go on. We've also heard that despite what Japan wants, the IOC is insisting that the games are held. We're not sure what you're hearing, so we thought we'd share a little from those working in sports ministry here.

Marty sent Wendy an update this week that included this: "We are not those who shrink back, pressing on to make the most of the situation we are in. We are increasing our prayers." On the 3rd of June they held an online "50 days to go" prayer meeting in Japanese.

Marty's ministry includes training churches how to connect to their local communities using a format called "Festivals" where they run a local event for anyone to join in and use it to make connections. They are continuing to train and help run festivals in various places. They're seeing more Japanese people involved in the JiSP (Japan International Sports Partnership), a ministry that equips



Marty and Jenny Woods and Levi Booth.

and encourages Japanese churches in doing sports ministry.

Marty asks that people pray that he and his team will work closely with God. What does God want them to do with the Olympics? How can they make the most of the opportunity?

Marty himself has been asked to lead the Christian Chaplaincy program in the Olympic Village during the Olympics and Paralympics. The Olympic charter requires a multi-faith centre. They can't bring chaplains in from overseas, so much of their work will be online. They are currently organising talks and worship online in nine languages for athletes to access at any time.

One of our OMF colleagues, Levi Booth, is also working in sport ministry in Japan, with Sam, a short-termer. Could you pray for Marty, Levi, Sam, and others, as they negotiate this tricky time?

COVID-19 update

The state of emergency we've been under in Tokyo since April 25 has been extended until June 20.

On the 1st of June, the 7-day average of new cases in Japan was 3,320 (a month ago it was 5,031) Compared to:

- UK 3,304
- US 17,119
- India 164,291

Another big difference is the vaccination rate (at least one dose):

- Japan 8.21%
- UK 58.15%
- US 50.38%
- India 12.29%
- Australia 15.14%

New visas for missionaries are still not being processed and our Japanese church is still fully online.

We're thanking the Lord that CAJ has had very few hiccups during the year and remained in-person for the majority of students the majority of the year.

The finish line is in sight

This summer all our staff are especially looking forward to a break. It is understandable, considering the year we have been through. While we are grateful that school has been in-person the whole time, it has been with heightened awareness of masks, hand-washing, spacing students out, and maintaining outside ventilation despite the heat and cold. This higher level of alertness is draining.

Though many events have been cancelled, including the more fun activities that go into a school year, a highlight was being able to stage a mini-Olympics event for the high schoolers at the end of May. Students competed in sports, video games, cooking, art, music, trivia, and escape rooms. It was hectic but memorable for all.

The building (pictured right) is set to be handed over on June 17 after final inspections. Although not all the furniture we have ordered has arrived yet, we look forward to being able to get some parts of the building ready for the next school year. Construction on the new soccer field will begin next week, hopefully being completed in September.

We have three new teachers joining CAJ next year. One is already living here, and two will come from the US. One has a visa already, and we are expecting the other to have hers soon. Please pray for them as they transition into CAJ life.

Please also pray for a successful head of school search over the next year. Finding someone with the skills and temperament will be a challenge in these times.

CAJ
corner



CAJ's new building is nearly complete.

David and Wendy Marshall

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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

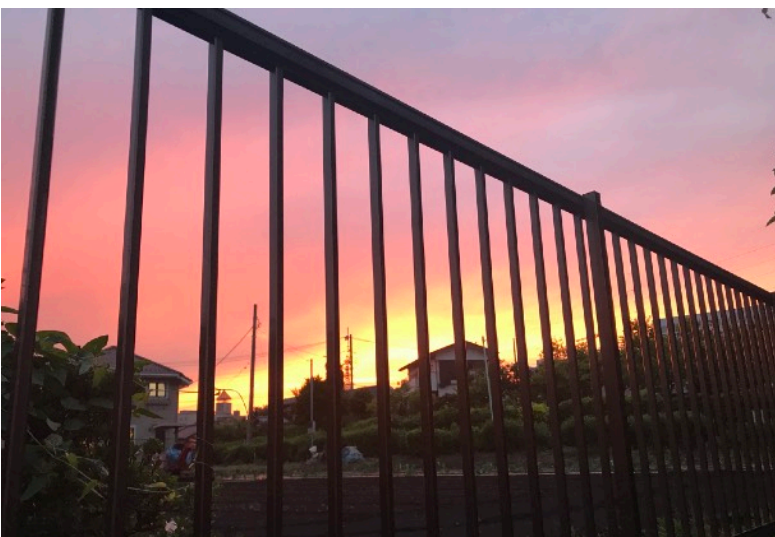
PLEASE SUPPORT US IN PRAYER

Prayer points

- Continue to pray that God would provide us with all we need.
- For rest during our holidays in July.
- Doug has officially graduated. But he's had a rough year, struggling with anxiety and other mental health issues, and he is yet to finish one large project. CAJ has graciously allowed him to continue to work on that without a deadline. Pray for us as we try to assist. Pray too that God would guide him for the future—for now he will remain in Japan with us.
- For Callum who's heading into second semester in his fourth year at uni. He's also had a rough year and needs God's guidance for the future. Pray UQ will be in-person this coming semester. Pray he and his friend will find a place to rent.
- For Jamie, that he will have a restful summer before the start of Gr 11. His best friend will be in the US for the next year.
- Cancellations have been a theme over the last 16 months, pray we'll be able to keep our eyes on Jesus amidst the ongoing disappointments.
- For wisdom for the sport ministries in Japan, and those that hoped to use the Olympics to connect with their communities.
- Wendy's been struggling with headaches.

Praise points

- That CAJ has been able to be in-person for most students most of the school year.
- Our support remains at a high level.
- For regular time to talk with Callum.
- It looks like David and Wendy can get COVID-19 vaccines in July.
- For daily strength and wisdom from God.



On the home front

Thank you for your prayers in May. We're very close to school finishing for the year and our annual break in the mountains is only weeks away. We're longing for the break.

Doug graduates this week from CAJ, but still has work to complete (see prayer points). Unfortunately many of the usual end-of-high-school celebration events were cancelled or radically changed.

Doug and **Jamie's** athletics season was also cut short by the state of emergency.

Jamie has a number of things planned during June with his close friends, especially with his best mate Joel who is going to the US for the next 12 months with his family for their home assignment. He had been hired to work as a maintenance person during a summer camp in June, but that also was cancelled.

Wendy was looking forward to the online uni conversation club, but that was cancelled too, for lack of interest. Not directly due to COVID, but outreach ministry online is harder than doing things in-person.

We were able to call **Callum** on his birthday, as well as send him a big care package. He's hoping to move out of his current homestay (where he's been for 3 ½ years) into a place with a friend. The national wrestling championship was hard (in terms of stamina), and he didn't do as well as he'd hoped, though he made it to the semifinal.

David and **Wendy** have enjoyed playing board games with our guys during our weekly calls with Callum. We'd like to go camping this summer, but can't currently book campsites due to Tokyo's state of emergency. We wait in hope that this will change.

*In Christ,
David and Wendy*

Photos on this page:

Left—glimpse of a sunset on a walk.
Right (from top)—one of our smaller local streets, Wendy dressed for riding to get groceries, a local path David and Wendy regularly walk.



Coming up...

June

4 High school graduation

7 Kanto OMF Prayer and Praise morning (online)

8 Last day of school for all other CAJ students

15-16 David small skin cancer surgery, o-night stay

14 June - 2 July Summer school (David teaches two weeks, Jamie attends one week.)

July 3-17 Family holidays at usual OMF cabin.

August 24 School starts again for students