

September 2021

# MARSHALL MUSINGS



## CAJ praying parents

CAJ parents have a significant prayer ministry at the school. This includes monthly prayer meetings for each year level (K-12) and a weekly prayer meeting for the whole school community.

Since Callum started at CAJ in 2008, Wendy has joined many parent prayer meetings. It is a quiet behind-the-scenes ministry run by the PTA that has been a privilege to be a part of.

On the first day of school this year the PTA held a prayer walk: they walked around the boundary of the school, stopping at various points to pray. At present parents aren't allowed on campus so all the regular prayer meetings are held on Zoom. Four mums joined in the prayer walk (pictured above). It's the first time Wendy has prayed in person with people from school since March last year. It was a true joy.

Praying with parents from many nationalities, languages, and denominational backgrounds is a challenge at times, but it's a taste of heaven.



## Mobilisation and social media

It's four years since Wendy went to Manilla to attend an OMF social media workshop. Since then she has learned many things as she's worked with a team to produce social media content with the goal of mobilising people to be more involved in mission.

In August, OMF held a short social media training time online, which was attended by OMF missionaries from around the world. It was an encouragement to be interviewed about OMF Japan's Facebook page and then, during the training time, portions of that interview were featured as a case study.

## COVID-19 update

We continue in a state of emergency here. It is not a strict lockdown, but we are strongly encouraged to stay home. Japan is relying on the strategy of immunisation to flatten the current surge of new infections. They are currently giving over one million injections a day and aiming for "full" vaccination of the country by the end of November. Thankfully, because about 50% of the population are fully vaccinated, the death rate is relatively low. However the medical system is still being pushed to capacity.

On 1st September the 7-day average of new cases was 20,347. This is a significant increase in the last month, but the graph has taken a downturn in the last few days.

New visas are still not being processed. There are a number of long-term missionaries who have joined the field, but aren't in the country yet.

CAJ started their school year in-person, but with few extra curricular activities happening.

## Faithful caretakers

"Faithful caretakers" is one of CAJ's student objectives: the five traits we want all the students who graduate to have. The others are responsible learners, discerning thinkers, productive collaborators, and effective communicators. These are no doubt what many schools desire for their students, but this is the way CAJ chooses to say them.

Faithful caretakers is the one we mention first, because the others flow from this one. We seek to capture the idea of being faithful in our relationship with God, with others, with the world around us, and taking good care of all that we have been given in the way of talents, opportunities, communities and responsibilities. It is a grand vision, and one that we believe is worth striving for. It is also something that my fellow staff members strive to model in all we do.

With the opening of our new building and field, we are nearing the completion of four years of planning and many meetings discussing scintillating details. As a member of the building committee, I know that we have struggled with what it means to be faithful caretakers. How do we use limited resources well? How do we spend money wisely, prioritise what is needed, and leave what is unnecessary? And how do we make sure that we are building community as well as infrastructure?

We are unable to have a grand opening ceremony due to the pandemic, but we are trying to find a way to show our gratitude to our Father in heaven for all he has given, and also find some ways for our wider community to come and see what the



**Above:** David checking out a textbook to a student on the first day of school.

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**OMF Japan social media:**  
**Facebook:** [facebook.com/OMFJapan/](https://facebook.com/OMFJapan/)  
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## PLEASE SUPPORT US IN PRAYER

### Prayer points

- Continue to pray that God would provide us with all we need to continue to work in Japan.
- That the COVID-19 situation in Japan would rapidly improve as the immunisation rate increases.
- For patience as we wait to see what unfolds in the coming months.
- That Jamie will find a good balance in his daily life this school year.
- That Doug will be able to do the GED soon.
- That Callum will make good progress in his studies and personal growth.
- That through the efforts of Wendy and her social media team, God would raise up more workers for Japan, and more people to support them.
- For God's provision of a new head of school for CAJ from the middle of 2022.
- For wisdom for CAJ leaders and staff to be faithful caretakers.

### Praise points

- All four of us are fully vaccinated now.
- God gave us strength to make it through some tough days in August.
- That CAJ has started another school year, and is in-person.
- Being able to get away for another camping trip.
- For CAJ's prayer ministry.
- That CAJ's new artificial turf field is now complete.
- For our birthday and anniversary celebrations this month.



#### Photos on this page:

Top—camping next to a stream, Wendy with one of our camping friends (Renee, on the left) and a mutual friend who we ran into while camping, Jamie's first week of yr 11. Left—a family video call photo.

## On the home front

Thank you for your prayers during August. It's always a challenging month because the heat and humidity push us to our limits. Our house isn't well insulated and we don't have air conditioning in our bedrooms. Three of us slept in the lounge/dining rooms for several nights.

Thankfully the intense summer days seem to be behind us as we start September. Usually we'd be anticipating cross country season, with many early Saturday starts, however that season of our lives also seems to have ended (Jamie isn't joining the team, and spectators aren't allowed anyway again this year).

**David, Wendy, and Jamie** enjoyed a camping trip with friends at the start of August. Our campsite was right next to a shallow stream and we spent a lot of time in the water keeping cool. Unfortunately we had to return home a day earlier than planned due to a typhoon that was approaching the area, however we were able to come up with a Plan B and enjoyed a BBQ and movie night at our friends' house, and Jamie's friends stayed the night at our house. We also realised that, as of July, we've been camping for 10 years in Japan, in that time we've set up a campsite around 40 times!

**Jamie** started grade 11 in August. It's been many years since we just had one child at school, so that also is an adjustment for David and Wendy. His sporting involvement this year will probably centre around building strength and fitness in the school gym. Two of his close friends are in the US for home assignment this semester; he's hoping one will return early in 2022. He did a significant cull of things in his bedroom (many things from when we had younger children) and inspired **Wendy** to cull and tidy her craft corner.

**Douglas** found the heat almost unbearable at times and suffered a significant loss of sleep over several weeks. We hope to soon have more news about the series of exams (GED) he's planning to take to get his American high school diploma.

**We are all** now fully vaccinated for COVID-19 and are very thankful for that.

We continue to call **Callum** once a week and often enjoy online boardgames at that time. He continues to study maths (majoring in statistics) at UQ.

**David and Wendy** enjoyed watching the Olympics and Paralympics in August. We were thankful many sports were broadcast online in Japan with English commentary and we often played the "Guess the commentator's accent" game. David's got a significant birthday coming up this month, but we don't have any big plans, due to the pandemic. [Wendy writes: if you'd like to send a card, our postal address is on page one of this newsletter.]

Thank you for your prayers, they sustain us in ways we'll never know this side of heaven.

*In Christ, David and Wendy*



## Coming up...

September

14–15 OMF Japan field conference (online)

18 Doug's birthday

20 No school for students

20 Our 24th wedding anniversary

21, 23 Annual Planning meeting for *Japan Harvest* magazine chaired by Wendy (online)

28 David's 50th birthday