

# Grains from the Rice Bowl

## Praises

**I've been blessed with 3 months to focus on Japanese language study!** While this is definitely a life-long learning journey, it's been a real gift to have this time to focus on improving my skills.

**The Lord provided me with a bright, sunny apartment with a view!** I found a small apartment situated next to a bicycle path that goes directly to the university and to the cafe where I'll be working! The path is surrounded by trees, which means I have a view of trees and... mountains! I can't tell you how much this cheers my soul. Although I was unable to find a roommate, I do have a small guest room.

**University classes will meet at least 50% of the time in person!** For now my first 3 classes will be in person. After that the university will reassess the situation. This is a HUGE praise!!

**I've been able to catch up with old friends (like Mrs. H!) and meet new ones.** Thankful beyond words for the gift of community and friendship.

**Finished up a 9-week Bible study with local believers from all over Japan (thanks to zoom!).** Really special to hear insights from local brothers and sisters about the Bible and also how God is moving in their lives.

**Prayer is rising!** Thankful to God for my weekly prayer times for the city. Each week He shows me something specific to pray for and to proclaim in worship. I've also been really encouraged by using the prayer for Japan booklet and by different prayer initiatives which are in the pipeline here. I feel greatly convicted that I need to spend more time daily just sitting with Jesus. Not only for my own state of mind and emotional health but so that I can be useful to the Lord here!

verses. For example, I found myself sitting on Ephesians 1:3 for days! When do I really live as if this verse were true? If I truly am blessed with every

*"All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ."  
~Ephesians 1:3*

## Conversations with God

As I walked up the snow-clad mountain behind my friend I was wrapped up in the soft, white beauty around us. It was like being in Narnia and I felt the Lord's joy in the beauty of His winter creation. But then something jarred at the edges of my spirit... there was yet another small statue beside the path. All the way to the top there were statues at various points along the path, carefully swept clear of snow. Some wore red bibs, some had hats on, others were just the bare rock, but all bore testament to the faithful care of some local person. Finally, my friend and I reached the top and were rewarded by a stunning view of Sapporo. Sadly, we were also greeted by a stone monument to the god of the mountain. It seems local people are faithfully conversing with the spiritual realm when they hike in this beautiful place. Yet they mistake the creation for the Creator; they miss the best conversation of all, that of speaking with our Heavenly Father, because they are too busy speaking to rocks, trees, and statues. When will Jesus be honored in that place? When will people climb that mountain to proclaim His love and mercy over the millions living in the city below? Will you join me in praying that this day will come soon?



## Further up and Further in

As I continue reading the Bible s.l.o.w.l.y every morning, I've been blessed and challenged by different

## Prayer Requests

**For my new teaching job.** Pray that I can teach with excellence, generosity, and love. Pray that I can minister the love of Jesus to my students. It's been several years since I've taught in a university classroom so I'm a bit nervous! Please pray too for the Lord's guidance with how I can support and mentor KGK\* students.

**For the Holy Spirit to move with power in Sapporo, in Japan, and in the nations. That God will use us at Cafe COEN to be His love and His healing words to those who visit the cafe.** The cafe has been a safe place for many people to unburden their hearts, share a smile over delicious coffee, and learn about Jesus. I am excited to join this ministry.

**That my home will be a place of rest and refreshment for friends, students, guests and neighbors.** People are cautiously meeting together again in small groups, which means I can open my small home for tea and conversation. Please join with me in praying for my neighbors. I am praying to share deeply about Jesus with at least one person in my building. This person may or may not also be... **A person of peace.** I am also asking the Lord to lead me to one person in the neighborhood who is spiritually hungry and willing to see what the Bible says about God, and that this person will invite their friends and/or family to join in a Bible study.

**For various projects...** I have several projects I want to work on in the coming months: a prayer workshop, book club ideas, and getting further trained in trauma healing. The trauma healing program I did in the fall is now in Japanese! I really want to get involved in this life-giving ministry. Pray I can work diligently and for the Lord to open doors to use these various projects to help train disciples who make disciples.

**For believers to live lifestyles of prayer.** Pray that we all, foreign and local believers alike, would be faithful in praying for our communities. As we pray more, may we have the joy of being more and more conformed to the image of Jesus and of seeing many come into His kingdom.

\*KGK: Christian university students group in Japan

spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, if I truly am united with Christ, then surely I would have more hope for the future? Surely I would be more patient, have more self-control, speak and act with more wisdom... surely I would be a more fruitful and fruitful person? I've been challenged lately to proclaim the truths of Scripture over myself and my brothers and sisters- that we would know these truths deep in our bones; that we would fall deeper in love with the Lord who makes these truths true; and that we would yearn more to make Him known. This Easter season, as we celebrate the incredible gift of LIFE that our Lord has given us, through His incredible sacrifice, let us continue going further up and further in to His ways. As we become more and more like Him, may we have more power and love to share His goodness with those around us.

### Upcoming Dates

March 25: first meeting with interdenominational church retreat planning committee- every 5 years all churches in Hokkaido are invited to gather for a retreat and I've been blessed to join the planning committee as the OMF representative  
 March 26: end of my language refresher course  
 March 27: move into my new apartment  
 Good Friday: participating in communion service using tea ceremony, led by an OMF colleague  
 Easter Sunday: first Sunday worship with new COEN team  
 April 8: Spring semester starts at Hokusei University  
 April 9: my first day of classes at the university

Thank YOU, as always, for your faithful prayers, support, and friendship! I praise God for each one of you. May we all see the LIFE of Jesus breaking through in our own lives and in the lives of those we long to see join His family.

Christina



*Pictures from top: tea break overlooking Sapporo; monument to the mountain god; reunited with Mrs. H; never too old for fun with origami :-)*



To contact OMF, please email [info@omfmail.com](mailto:info@omfmail.com)  
 To contact me, please email [christina317@fastmail.us](mailto:christina317@fastmail.us)  
 To follow me on Instagram: [christinaw5207](https://www.instagram.com/christinaw5207)  
 Please check out more stories of what God is doing in Japan at: <https://omf.org/asia/japan/blog/>