

STAFF UPDATE - SACRIFICIAL SERVICE

We praise the Lord for the difference that workers of Japan Mission (JM) are able to make in the lives of many. We have been blessed with a team who are well-qualified and dedicated to the Lord. These things, combined with faithful prayers, continue to help us impact lives for the Gospel.

Many of the workers of JM serve the Lord sacrificially while experiencing various personal struggles. Some have family members in home countries that are aged and whose health is failing. Others have close friends and family who are ill and suffering from cancer. Some have had family members pass away while serving the Lord in Japan.

Sunette Hugo joined JM as an office worker and English Evangelism teacher from South Africa in Feb. 2007 and has spent years faithfully sowing the seed. Her family recently experienced a sad and tragic situation.

In July 2014, Sunette's grandson, Daniel, was rushed to the hospital due to a near-drowning incident. The doctors were able to revive him, but he suffered from a lack of oxygen to the brain. The doctors say that it is unlikely that he will regain his speech or mobility.

Sunette was able to return to SA during August 2014 to see Daniel and console her family. It was heartrending for her as she spent hours caring for her once energetic two-year-old grandson who was suddenly bed-ridden and only slightly responsive.

Sunette returned to Japan with a heavy heart on Sept 11 to continue her ministry with JM. This has been a very difficult year for the Hugo family. **Pray** that the Lord's healing hand would be upon Daniel. **Pray** that the Lord would continue to give the doctors and rehabilitation team wisdom. **Pray** also that the Lord would continue to comfort, guide and bless Sunette and her family.

We greatly value your continued prayers for the team of workers of JM -- many of whom live very far from loved ones and serve the Lord sacrificially. ***Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him*** (James 1:12, NIV).

We are keenly aware that your prayers play a vital role in helping us make strides for His Kingdom. **Pray** for the continued health, protection and spiritual growth of the workers of JM.



Nov / Dec 2014

SERVING THE WEAVER

Susanna Antoinette Hugo (Sunette) was born in Pretoria, South Africa to parents who were dedicated Christians. Her father was an elder of the church. "Every evening my father or mother would read to me from a big, beautiful children's Bible," she recently shared. "I vividly remember the impressive illustrations of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, Miriam next to the Nile river with baby Moses in a woven basket and Jesus on the cross with His crown of thorns."



Sunette Hugo

Sunette attended Sunday School, and at age 17 she confessed her sins and professed Christ as Savior. However, as she started to attend university to study Occupational Therapy and Drama, she began to drift away from her faith. She did not attend church as regularly as before. She did not consult God in prayer regarding important decisions, such as a career or the husband she ought to marry.

Her husband was a church-goer, but did not have a personal relationship with the Lord. He was kind and they hardly ever had an argument. He was intelligent and had a great sense of humor. He was responsible and worked hard as an attorney, but he was an alcoholic.

"It was only my prayers that kept us together and me sane," said Sunette. "I prayed for him for more than 20 years. At times I was very unhappy and depressed because I was so worried about his health and our future.

"After being married for 5 years, I finally started to lay my burdens before the Lord. I asked Him to comfort, guide and support me. I did this because I was no longer able to carry this burden on my own.

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“The Lord showed me that I had made a grave mistake by not seeking His guidance before we were married – ‘Father God, is this the man You have chosen for me? Is this the man You want me to marry?’ I repented of my sin of depending solely on my own judgment.

“I often cried, prayed and found solace in my deepening relationship with the Lord through Bible study. I also listening to the messages of theology students – whom I helped train to deliver effective sermons at the University of Pretoria.”

By God’s grace and the work of the Holy Spirit, Sunette’s husband accepted Jesus Christ as Savior a few years before he passed away. He was born again and became a devoted elder of the church.

Her husband struggled with his health and passed away of a heart attack on Jan. 2, 2002. “He gave me a good life, as we had two sons who are now married,” Sunette recently reflected. “Today I am the proud grandma of a granddaughter and a grandson!”

After her husband died, Sunette was in need of work to support herself. It was just at that time that her cousin decided to go to Japan to teach English. The Holy Spirit guided Sunette to make contact with the same English school and take the big step of joining her cousin to teach English in Fukui Prefecture in Sept. 2002.

“At first, I found it difficult to communicate,” she reflected. “I could not read the labels when

shopping. Buying a bus or train ticket was a challenge. Visiting the doctor, dentist or hairdresser required lots of gestures. During the winter, the snowfall was often so heavy that I had to dig my car out of the snow to start my day -- but the Lord was good and helped me each step of the way.”

After three years of teaching, the Lord guided Sunette to teach at a Christian English school that was run by a minister in Tottori Prefecture where she was able to talk to people more freely about the Lord. She was also able to attend meetings at an English Fellowship and serve as a volunteer on an outreach with Operation Mobilization to the Philippines where they ministered to 200 underprivileged children and taught them Christian songs.

After two years, the Lord did something miraculous to put Sunette in contact with Japan Mission (JM). The minister she was working with travelled quite far to consult with Neil and David about how he could reach people more effectively through his English teaching ministry. He was an old friend who had been familiar with the work of JM for many years.

Neil and David then communicated their own need to find someone who could help them with the Afrikaans correspondence. “Sunette may be the person you are looking for!” the minister replied.

At age 65, after working with that minister for two years, the Lord miraculously led Sunette in 2007 to

work with JM in the Osaka area as a missionary. She now helps with the Afrikaans correspondence and teaches English at churches where many students are introduced to the Gospel.

Upon reflection, Sunette stands amazed at the tapestry of God’s plan. She is convinced that God has been faithfully weaving her story for many years, and it is clear that He has been at the center of each new opportunity.

She has since helped with many student outreach events, teaching Sunday school and evangelizing the elderly at old age homes.

“I know that God has brought me to Japan, and now to the JM to be

a humble instrument in His service to spread the Good News,” Sunette recently shared.

“The Lord had said to Abram, **Leave your country, your relatives and your father’s home and go to the land I am going to show you** (Genesis 12:1). God used this passage to speak to me as I came to Japan in 2002, and it has been an exciting adventure ever since!

“I don’t know what the next step in my life will be, but I know the One who weaves my story. I am fully assured that He knows what He is doing and I am here to serve Him.

Many have been part of my story and I thank you for your faithful prayers over the years.” □

Prayer Requests

1. Christmas is a special time of year when Japanese people are interested in Christianity. JM workers become very busy, participating in evangelistic meetings, concerts and parties. Our teachers will be involved in over 100 meetings in various churches to reach those in local communities who desire to learn more about the meaning of Christmas. **Pray** that many will be reached through these outreach opportunities.
2. Japan Mission recently held a two-day camp in the countryside for English students. Many heard the Gospel as friendships were cultivated. **Pray** that they would respond to the seeds that were sown in their hearts.
3. David and Sue Verwey will be visiting South Africa to visit JM contacts and churches from January to March 2015. **Pray** for protection and that the Lord would give them the ability to communicate the vision of the work effectively.

SPECIAL THANKS

We thank each person who faithfully prayed and supported the work of Japan Mission during 2014. You have played an important role in helping us further the Lord’s work. We praise the Lord for the many changed lives, the leading of the Holy Spirit, and His faithful protection and provision.