

OUTREACH TO THE ELDERLY

The headquarters of Japan Mission is located within walking distance of four retirement homes. We have had regular opportunities to reach out to the elderly and sow the Seed.

On *Respect for the Aged Day*, we make a point of visiting the retirement homes to take them flowers and share God's love. Recently, we were able to encourage an elderly lady who said that she had given up on life because her family does not visit her anymore.

Offering hope to the elderly has been a wonderful way to sow the Seed. On July 13, David Verwey was asked to speak to a group of 60 elderly friends of a good Christian friend, Shinji. He turned 80-years-old and was recently diagnosed with late-stage brain cancer.

His friends, who were mostly non-Christians, were invited to gather at what Shinji referred to as his *Farewell Party*. There, he gave David the opportunity to share about the hope we Christians have for the future. It was a marvelous opportunity to speak of the hope we have in things to come, as we are taken up to be with Jesus!

David and Sue have been friends with Shinji and his family for many decades. He valued the teachings of Christianity, but was not always serious about his faith. After he learned that he had cancer, he asked David to pray with him regularly. His experience with cancer caused him to do some serious soul-searching and caused him to openly declare his faith to his non-Christian friends.

Pray for Shinji and his family as he faces a battle with brain cancer. It was so wonderful to hear him say, "No matter what happens, I am not worried. I have peace in my heart because I know that Jesus is with me."



David & Sue Verwey with Shinji and his wife



JAPAN MISSION

CALLED TO SERVE

July / August 2025

A SERVANT'S HEART

Nathan Johnson was born in November 1987 in Minnesota, USA. To everyone's surprise, he arrived as a twin. The unexpected arrival of a second baby brought both joy and added challenges to this young family.



Nathan Johnson

"As a minister's child, I grew up with the church at the center of my life." Nathan shared. "From an early age, I learned about the teachings of Jesus and developed a strong foundation in the Bible. However, my knowledge was intellectual and I did not have a personal relationship with the Lord.

"As a 14-year-old, an event drastically shaped my view of the world. On the morning of September 11, 2001, my teacher turned on the radio. The classroom quickly fell silent as the announcer described a tragic scene unfolding in New York City. Buildings were collapsing and massive clouds of dust and smoke were pouring through the streets, as airplanes collided into buildings.

"I was overcome with emotions of confusion, heartbreak and a growing sense that *something must be done*. It was a day that left a lasting impression upon me.

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“When I was 18-years-old, I felt a strong desire to enlist in the US Military, so I walked into a recruiting office. This is how I came to join the US Military in July of 2006. God did not specifically lead me to join the military, but I felt that it was the right and honorable thing to do.

“I was raised in a God-fearing home where respect for one another was a core value. These values were quickly challenged in the US Military, where I found myself surrounded by young men from every corner of the country — many of whom did not automatically give or expect respect.

“While in the US Military, I deployed three times overseas and witnessed things that left deep scars on my soul. It wasn’t until after I finished my military service in 2010 that I fully realized what a toll it had taken on my life.

“The doctors diagnosed me with severe PTSD and the next eight years were extremely difficult. My relationships were strained and my spiritual life suffered greatly.

“In 2012, a turning point came when a doctor challenged me with a simple but profound observation: ***Maybe you push people away because your childhood shaped your view of***

the world. And when that view collided with reality, you felt betrayed.

“These words struck a chord. God used the words of this doctor to start a long process of soul-searching that would lead to a healed heart.

“I knew that I needed to change, but I did not know how. I kept attending church regularly, but even my relationships with people in the church felt distant and strained.

“Then one Sunday, the minister preached on the life of David. I felt an instant connection as I could relate to his struggles. David was a warrior. David was flawed. Like me, David carried guilt, trauma and even betrayal. Yet David had one thing I lacked at that time — a deep and sincere relationship with God.

“This realization opened a new door in my heart — a door back towards healing, towards faith and towards a loving God who had never stopped pursuing me.

“David always let God into his heart. Throughout the book of Psalms, David poured out his heart — his pain, his joy, his fears and hopes — all before God.

“As I read those words, I realized something important:

It wasn’t enough to know about God. I needed to have a sincere and living personal relationship with God himself.

“At age 27, I finally came to the realization that I could not succeed in life by just relying on my own strength and trying hard to be a good person. I cried out to God to forgive me for selfishly following my own path in life.

“I then started to pray to God and read the Bible in earnest and my faith started to grow.

“I turned to music as I picked up the bass guitar. I joined the church worship team and found true joy and fulfillment in serving the Lord. My heart was slowly being healed as I sang praises to His name.

“My connection with God grew stronger and my relationships with people around me improved. I started to realize the depth of God’s love for me.

“I was inspired by the example of Jesus. I knew that I needed to become a person who takes up

his cross and lays down his life.

Through this journey, I came to learn one simple truth: ***It’s all about relationships.***

“The Bible verse I now pattern my life after is:

Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends (John 15:13).

“The world may say that power comes from strength, money and respect — but I know that true strength comes from God’s love and a servant’s heart.

“My prayer remains simple: ***God’s will be done. I will serve that will.***

“This is now what I strive to do at Japan Mission. Whether teaching English, meeting with local pastors, encouraging believers, or simply being present in daily life — my mission is to love others as Christ loves. To be the hands and feet of Jesus. To reflect the hope that once pulled me out of darkness, which can help others find the light.” □

MINISTRY OF NATHAN JOHNSON

Nathan Johnson joined Japan Mission from the USA in March 2025. He has since been serving as an English Evangelism teacher. Each week he visits a number of churches to partner with them to evangelize their communities.

Nathan has had the opportunity to befriend and teach English to many unsaved students. **Pray** that God would protect Nathan and give him wisdom. **Pray** that he would be effective in reaching out to many with the Gospel.