



## JEFF / MALIA / MASON / KAILI WALKER

Investing in Japanese believers to spread the good news of Jesus Christ to their own people

JAPAN | WORLDVENTURE

### About Us

Surrounded by college friends, we sat side by side, exhausted but excited. We were flying home to Seattle from Urbana 2006, a missions conference hosted by InterVarsity. Finally building up enough courage, Malia started, "I feel like God is calling me to missions, not to live missionally here in the States but to go somewhere foreign, somewhere overseas..." Jeff almost leaped out of his seat, "Me too! I feel like God is calling me to go too!!"

As excited as we were to start our journey into the mission field, God had other plans for us. We graduated from the University of Washington, Malia with her undergraduate and Jeff with his Doctor of Pharmacy, but God said, "Wait." We got married in Hawaii and moved to Arizona for Malia's physical therapy program and still God said, "Not yet."

While waiting, God helped us move toward letting go of our need for approval from others and reconciliation of broken relationships. He taught us patience, perseverance, flexibility, and trust in Him as parenting never went according to plan. He gave us a heart for leadership and community and taught us humility through hosting a discipleship group of young leaders.

After the birth of our daughter, Kaili, Malia went through a period of emotional difficulty. Late one night as everyone slept, God revealed that her struggles were related to her attempt to control Mason and Kaili's little lives. In submission, Malia released the children back to Him and God finally said, "It's time!" He called us first to full-time ministry then to Japan.

As Malia shared her experience with Jeff, he debated whether or not he needed to hear a call to Japan personally, or if God was using Malia to speak to him. We had never been to Japan at that time and while Malia's 5<sup>th</sup> generation Japanese American, she did not speak the language. A pastor and mentor at our home church, Lighthouse Christian Church in Bellevue, WA, recommended we take a Vision Trip to Japan. So we did in 2017. God opened our eyes and hearts to the people of Japan and oddly enough, we felt right at home. New doors opened and none were closed. Jeff was confident he had his personal call from God.

Shortly thereafter, we applied and were accepted as appointed missionaries to Japan with WorldVenture, the same organization our friends had gone with to Kenya. While the journey hasn't been easy, God continues to demonstrate His provision, grace and faithfulness as we follow Him where He leads. Some say we must be special if God would send us across the world, but in truth, we are not the special ones. God sees people He created, alone and hurting. He loves them so that He is sending us to share His love and blessings with them. He can use anyone, even people like us.



*"Look at the nations and watch – and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told."*  
**Habbakuk 1:5**



# Our Ministry

We believe that God is readying a great movement in Japan but that leadership for such an effort must come from within the next generation of Japanese believers, not foreigners like ourselves. Instead, God is calling us to seek out and invest in a few future leaders who will ultimately spread the good news of Jesus Christ in a uniquely Japanese way. Initially, we will learn language and culture and train with seasoned missionaries in a church-planting project in Kawasaki-ken, just south of Tokyo. We hope to disciple new believers, empower youth, shepherd families through life challenges, and train new leaders to do the same. We look forward to witnessing how God will use new leaders to strengthen the Japanese church, and the Japanese church to carry His truth and love to other cultures in that region.



Japan is often known for technology, manga, and good food but beneath the surface, many Japanese people suffer under intense cultural expectations and isolation. Self-sufficiency, honoring country and ancestors, and sacrificing for the good of the group are strong values in Shinto and Buddhism, the major religions of Japan. Personal shortcomings and unique ideals are regularly met with shame and bullying.

The Japanese people are one of the largest unreached people groups in the world with less than 0.5% of the 125 million identifying as Christ followers.



Japan has been called a "graveyard of missionaries" due to the difficulty missionaries have encountered in ministry. Unlike other Asian countries, Japan is politically open to all belief systems, but historically, the people themselves have been closed to the good news of Jesus. Shinto and Buddhist practices are deeply ingrained in Japanese family, culture and daily life. Accepting Jesus has been known to cause significant disruption of families and identity. Japan's strenuous relationship with the Catholic church in the 1600s and the Western world during the World Wars have also clouded Japanese perceptions of Christianity.



▶ **Please pray** for God's continued protection and guidance for our family. Pray for His provision through financial and prayer partners so that we may serve the Japanese well. Pray for Mason and Kaili and their adjustment to a new culture and language. Pray that the Holy Spirit will always work in us and through us.



▶ **Please pray** also for those in Japan. Pray for believers to find strength and courage to live daily for Christ. Pray that those who hear about Jesus may open their hearts and that those who haven't heard get the chance. Please pray today for God's Kingdom come and His will be done in Japan. Amen.

*"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him." Romans 15:13*



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