



www.geloveninjapan.nl

newsletter  
De Boo family  
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Geert and Eline de Boo are send as church planters to Japan with OMF International (former China Inland Mission) in partnership with the Reformed Mission League in the Netherlands. Currently they are in language school learning Japanese.

www.geloveninjapan.nl is the name of all activities to support the ministry of Geert and Eline in Japan; 'geloveninjapan' is Dutch for 'faith in Japan'.

## Tokyo, Japan Fall 2005

Dear friends,  
It is a beautiful Sunday afternoon in Tokyo. Even though the rainy season has not ended yet the skies are clear blue. We just attended the worship service in the small tatami room of little 'Budonoki' (=vine) church. With 40 people in a room the size of a small living room, there is not much space for growth; reason to consider starting a second worship service to accommodate new people. This little church, right in the center of Tokyo, will be our home base for the new assignment that we will start from January. After our visit to this vibrant church in the middle of the buzzing city, we look for a quiet place in the gardens of the imperial palace. Thom and Berend are excited about the 'castle' and as a family we imagine what life is like behind the imperial walls.

### a god speaks

On August 15, 1945 a Japanese God spoke and everybody could hear it. The whole world was listening. For the first time in history emperor Hirohito directly spoke to his people and the Japanese hardly dared to breathe. Not only did the emperor's capitulation mean the end of World War II, but his words also made an abrupt end at the myth that the emperor was of divine descent. The Japanese nation was in shock. The emperor, his myth and the dream of world dominance appeared to be a disillusion. Citizens were disoriented and a new direction needed to be found. This happened exactly 60 years ago and Japan has changed radically since.

### empty

The people, with whom we carefully discussed Japan's aggressive history, confirmed the lack of meaning in life during and after the war. Stories of pain, suffering, loss, starvation and ultimate disappointment came up. In Japan propaganda and indoctrination was applied, too. Also in this

country the people were not spared from their leaders' hunger to gain more power. And, it has to be admitted, many Japanese readily made sacrifices for their god. And then the dream appears to be a disillusion. What is more, everything they sacrificed for appears to be based upon a lie. What do you do in that case? Some Japanese changed their course 180 degrees and decided to go to church. That was a remarkable move because Christianity was the religion of the former enemy. But this apparent revival of the church didn't last for long; the churches got empty again all too soon. One thing certainly became painfully clear: the war left many Japanese completely disillusioned. 'Empty', is what one of the persons I talked to named the feeling. And that emptiness is still there for 99.5% of the population.

### fun

After the war Japan changed dramatically. A new constitution was accepted in which peace was one of the most important values. Democratic principles started being used. The Japanese economy became the strongest in the world and who doesn't remember the time that many products had written 'made in Japan' on them? In spite of the recession in the nineties Japan is still a very prosperous nation and there is still a sense of pride about her economical achievements. But the material prosperity did not bring much satisfaction. This is, after all, the country of gadgets: all kind of high tech stuff to make life more 'fun'. But fun hardly ever lasts. In this full country where almost everybody has everything a feeling of emptiness rules. People still try to fill this hole with religion. Buddhism, Shinto, and many, many cults flourish. And this while the only Living God is speaking to them. 60 years ago almost all of Japan listened when their god spoke, now only few people are listening to the real God of the Bible. What seems to be the problem? Doesn't it sound 'funny' enough?

### heavenly marketing

These people are some of the friends we had to say goodbye to recently. We thank God for their friendship and His work in their lives. We thank you for your prayers for these people and for us in the past term. We'll continue to pray for these people that one day they confess Jesus to be their Lord and Savior and share the God News with other friends.

Satoko

Isomura

Kiyoko

Hidemitsu

Yumiko

Sora

Junichi

Yu

Yona

Junko





### outreach

Eline teaches a cooking class for women in the neighborhood and Geert preaches in a Japanese church.

Of course, when you communicate, presentation is very important. Also when you present the Gospel. But we are missionaries and not employees of the department for heavenly marketing. After sharing our story, His Story, in Japan enthusiastically for over two years now, we learned a lot about the best 'strategy'. We haven't discovered the ultimate formula for successful evangelism in Japan just yet, if it exists at all, but one thing has become clear. The by nature closed Japanese only open their hearts if you sincerely show interest in their lives and if you open up your own. Before we left for Japan we asked an American colleague who worked as a missionary in Japan for over 30 years how to handle this huge task of evangelism in Japan. "Just love the Japanese", was his answer. Back then, it sounded too simple, but we have learnt how true his words were. The first hurdle in building relationships with Japanese friends has been overcome: learning the language. Somebody entrusted me recently: "I am so glad you speak Japanese, I can really talk to you. Usually, when I meet a foreigner, I think they are interesting, but if they do not speak my language they will always stay guests and will never become my friends." We graduated at the Japanese Language Center in the beginning of October and have a strong base in the Japanese language to work from.

### outreach

But how do we put our love for the Japanese into practice? Our outreach is a search for points of contact with the people around us. An example is the 'family appreciation week' that we organized in the OMF office next door. The building is modern and obviously Western style. The people in our neighborhood seemed to be very curious about it and the two of us got permission from our directors to invite them for an 'open house'. We offered a different activity every day to connect with the desire for 'fun' or entertainment of the people. We decorated cakes, taught cooking classes and English classes for kids, there were songs and games for mothers and children and a late night barbecue for the busy fathers. All week long we had a full house every day and again and again the question why we offered the neighborhood these activities free of charge was asked. This was a wonderful opportunity to share about God's grace, which we can receive for free through

faith in Jesus Christ. We told about our Lord and Savior and handed out many tracts and Bibles. The response was very positive. For example, Yumiko, a young mother of two daughters (1 and 3 years), came back every single day to hear more. The next Sunday we took her to church and she is now doing Bible study with a colleague. Chiyu (5 years) came faithfully with his father and at the end of the week he promoted taking a free Bible to other moms. Our neighbor Keiko was longing for a second baby for quite a while. I knew of her desire and when she told me that week that she finally got pregnant, she was very surprised to hear my response that God had heard our prayers. We gave her a children's' Bible to study with her precious children.

### He does not let go

Many of the new contacts we have made we cannot actively follow up ourselves. In October we moved from Sapporo to Japan's capital Tokyo. It broke our hearts to leave so many dear friends behind, but we know that our God does not let go when He began a good work. He calls our family to the millions of the biggest city in the world (30.000.000 people!). From January we will start a brand new initiative working with young urban professionals in the heart of the city. Makino sensei, a former OMF missionary presently pastoring the Vine church downtown, will work with us as a mentor. A new phase in our life will start with full time ministry in a new environment. In our family many things will change, too: Thom will move on to Christian Academy Japan, an American mission school, Berend starts Japanese kindergarten, and God has entrusted us new life! We are expecting our third child at the beginning of May. God also does not let go the work He started in us. We experience His presence, providence and guidance in our lives in these hectic times. We would love to share about that when we meet you soon. We will come 'home' to the United States in January, we hope to arrive in Grand Rapids, MI on the 18th. We'll have ten days to catch up with all of you, our dear friends. We cannot wait to see you! Please, do get in touch with us to set up a get-together so we won't miss you. Until that time we'll be in the Netherlands to meet our families and friends there. See you soon!

In our Lord Jesus Christ,  
Geert, Eline, Thom and Berend de Boo

### SEE YOU SOON!

We have been looking forward to this moment for 2 and a half years now: our homecoming in Grand Rapids!

Wednesday January 18, 2006 at 2.00 pm we'll arrive in Chicago and will come your way as quickly as possible!

Of course, we would love to meet you and hear the stories about what happened to you these past two years. Our hope for the ten days we will be able to spend in West-Michigan is catching up with as many friends as possible.

If you want to make sure we can get together some time between January 18 and 28<sup>th</sup>, please, get in touch with us via e-mail at [deboo@omf.net](mailto:deboo@omf.net). We would love to hear from you, and of course, to see you soon!

Love, Geert, Eline  
Thom and Berend (looking forward to building a snowman with you!)

### news from the home side team

Thank you all who support the De Boo's ministry by prayers and donations, helping them to reach the Japanese with the Gospel.

If you want to offer your financial support, you can send a cheque (mentioning: **support Geert and Eline de Boo**) to:  
**OMF International,**  
**10 West Dry Creek Circle,**  
**Littleton, CO 80120-4413.**  
For planned giving and automatic banking plans you can call OMF International at 1-800-993-2751.

### home side team of the De Boo family

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### internet

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