

東京駅  
TOKYO STATION

de Boo family  
church planting Tokyo

# BiJ newsletter

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We would like to keep you informed about our church planting ministry in Japan. Please help us to keep our mailing list up to date and let us know when you move or would like to receive this newsletter on a different mail address: deboo@believinginjapan.com

**“Mommy, daddy, I am getting a little tired of having no place of our own,” Berend sighed a couple of weeks ago. He verbalized what our whole family was feeling. Six months have past since we packed up and stored our furniture in a warehouse. Those past months have been very special. The theme was ‘meeting people’ and that is what we love best. As a missionary on the field you meet many people every day, you tell them about the Bible or you cooperate with local Christians. That time spent is very intense and precious; but how refreshing it is after two years of hard work to recharge by spending time with your own family, friends and church. We feel privileged to share about the meetings at home in the Netherlands and at home in the States in this newsletter.**

**February >** While Thom and Berend are saying their goodbyes, Julie plays in a cardboard box jungle. But within an hour nothing but a couple of empty rooms are left of her play zone. Without our own stuff this little wooden house doesn't feel like home anymore. Angered that the small truck that drives away takes all our stuff, our little girl also goes outside. We follow her and say good bye to our neighbors. We give every one a small package with an evangelistic book and cookies. After two years of greeting them, talking and sharing with them, praying and cooking for them, we release them in God's hands. Two days later we do the same thing in the Vine church. During a farewell party with our friends there we look back to two special fruitful years in which God made this congregation grow. The young people in the overly crowded church hall are living witnesses of that grace!

The melancholic feeling of having to let go is soon pushed away by the reunion of our loved ones in the Netherlands. Two days after our return the boys start at a Dutch Christian elementary school and that immediately makes our daily life structured.

**March >** We don't have to keep our Japanese experience to ourselves and we think it is a privilege to do many presentations. Every day we travel from north to south or from west to east in our little country. We testify of the Spirit that moves us to bring the Word in Tokyo and we are moved by the deep involvement in our mission by so many people. There appears to be a big interest and we are very happy to learn that our

newsletters, prayer letters and weblog are being read faithfully. The video that Geert made about our life and ministry in Japan literally completes the picture that we try to sketch with our stories. We settle into our home church in Leiden quickly, even though there seem to be many unfamiliar faces. That is a good sign and it motivates us to get to know these people. At the end of our presentation in our church we call upon them (a little forward, but very effective...) to invite us over to their home for a cup of tea. Many people give a very positive response and we enjoy many mornings during which we are not the ones sharing about our experiences, but listening to the stories of new friends! During small groups and the year church camp out we find time to deepen relationships. We try to serve the church by cooperating during the worship services and through teaching catechism classes and the Alpha course. The most special worship service we celebrate is the one on Easter morning. That day Julie is baptized and we praise God's name for his faithfulness. Knowing that through His covenantal grace you can find refuge in His arms, that is really home. Realizing that, all of a sudden it doesn't really matter anymore whether you stay in a traditional little Japanese wooden house, a flat in a suburb of Leiden or with an open suitcase at a guestroom in somebody's home.

**April >** Normal life determines our daily schedule. Besides going to school, serving in the church and renewing of friendships there is our family. We thoroughly enjoy the Dutch custom of celebrating one another's birthday. This is not part of Japanese culture and they are really missing out on that one. A party that draws the attention to a certain individual is unwanted in a group oriented culture as Japan. But to us it seems that they miss out on so many opportunities to celebrate each other's existence. Our fathers have their birthday this month and how lovely it is to be able to celebrate that special day with them. We are also coming 'home' at our Dutch mission, the GZB (Reformed Mission League of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands). Our relationship with them intensifies and it is proposed that they will send us out again for a new term. This time they will no longer send us out in a partnership with OMF International. We enter into a new contract in which the GZB will directly cooperate with the new church that we will be planting in Tokyo. We also felt very much supported by our mission, but them entering into



Geert and Eline de Boo are sent by the GZB (Reformed Mission League of the Protestant Church in The Netherlands) to Japan. They work as church planters in Central Tokyo.

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a partnership with a local Japanese church shows how committed they are to church planting in Japan. The professional and pastoral support of GZB is very important to us, the fact remains that our ministry in Japan is impossible without your (financial) support. We thank you for your faithfulness till now and hope from our hearts that we you will continue your support. Please, look elsewhere on this newsletter if you want to know how to contribute to our ministry in Tokyo.

**May >** We love every aspect of our job, but sometimes special opportunities come up. In that respect doing two radio-interviews on the Dutch national radio and later the making of a documentary about our calling in a professional film studio in Grand Rapids were very neat experiences. Redeemer Presbyterian Church invited us to New York. Together with their church planting institute we hope to start a new church planting movement in central Tokyo. In order to do so, it is important to get to know the 'DNA' of the Redeemer church planting movement as it is progressing in all megacities in the world. We stayed on Manhattan for two weeks, the fast beating heart of New York city. We worshiped in services lead by Dr. Tim Keller and talked to many people on his staff. We also visited four brand-new churches that we just planted and learned so much from the experiences that our colleague church planters shared. With our heads spinning with all these new impressions and information, we traveled on to Grand Rapids, Michigan. Two wonderful weeks of deputation followed, while spending time with our friends of Riverside CRC and other churches. It was just another home coming and the two years of separation did not seem to have harmed our relationships. We are so thankful for your faithful commitment to our ministry and to us as a family. The same was true when we arrived at our American Alma Mater Kuyper College. It was a joy to share about our mission to Japan and about how the College had played an important role in preparing us for that challenging calling. Also the openness of the staff of Kuyper College to learn and constantly adjust to the needs of the students who want to obey to a higher calling impressed us.

**June >** From our airplane seat we entered directly into the church pew. Sunday morning we landed at Amsterdam Schiphol Airport and after having a bite of Dutch bread and cheese, went straight to our home church to be commissioned again and say goodbye. As we had done in the States, we once more cried tears of thankfulness when we looked around in the church. The presence and words of so many old acquaintances and new friends were so encouraging. Saying goodbye to the grandpas and grandmas was not easy either. More tears, another deep sigh and back into another airplane. We were exhausted but very satisfied by this home assignment, there is excitement in the air about what is awaiting us in the next term. This time we are not flying West to go home, but to the Far East. The truth was, we had no clue which house we would be able to call home in Japan. For the time being we settled into a guest home and went out apartment hunting. The plan is to go and live in central Tokyo, just like

our new colleague, the pastor of the new church plant Reverend Fukuda. In order to reach our target group, we need to live amongst them. Living at the same place will make it possible to share our lives and understand theirs. This is a huge challenge and it means pioneering, but we just know that trying to reach them from the outside would be less effective. But from the initial moment we try to enter into this unreached group's world, there are counter forces. We are being refused as renters because of our Christian faith and jobs as missionaries connected to a Japanese church. It only took a couple of turn downs to understand that it was not a matter of choosing a place to live, but to accept whatever was available. We were refused again and disillusioned we leave, as planned, for Sapporo in the North of Japan.

**July >** We take an intensive refresher course Japanese to get our language to where in should be in order to work amongst the highly educated young professionals in central Tokyo. It is wonderful to come home (yes, again, we have many homes around the world – they have in common that our brothers and sisters in Christ are waiting for us) in our first church in Sapporo. This blooming church prays weekly for our ministry and many people have a real heart for what God is doing in Tokyo. Most of them have friends or a relatives working there and they pray for their salvation. Immediately we get a role and teach English, share at the child raising small group and



*ds. Makoto Fukuda en zijn vrouw Michiru, beide begin veertig, staan samen met hun vier tienerkinderen in de startblokken voor een geweldige nieuwe uitdaging: de start van de nieuwe kerkplant in september. Als predikant in de Presbyteriaanse Kerk in Japan zal hij leiding geven aan ons team van jonge kerkplanters.*



*Tokio – Net als in andere Aziatische megasteden wordt het stadsbeeld in het hart van Tokio bepaald door de torenhoge woongebouwen die recent uit de grond zijn gestampt. Hier krijgen we te midden van onze doelgroep, jonge professionals die in grote getale dicht bij werk en voorzieningen willen wonen, een nieuw thuis.*

kids' club. Geert preaches about Jeremiah 29, how the Gospel changes the city. We try to disciple our friends who came to Faith while we lived in Sapporo three years ago. We enjoy the language study, but the insecurity about a place to live in Tokyo causes stress. From a distance we try again and get rejected once more. Trying to hang in there we send out more applications. Living out of our suitcase for six months seems to be the limit to what our family can take and how big is the relieve when, just before our return to Tokyo, we receive a phone call. A real estate company is willing to accept us and has an apartment on the 51st floor in one of the residential towers next to central Tokyo available. Grateful we take this offer, even though the very thought of living that high makes us shiver. But it seems to fit into God's higher plan... >> continues in right hand column

**August >** First we move and then there will be the kick off of our new project: the establish a movement of a (series of) new church(es) in central Tokyo. This city is the fast beating heart of Japan where business and politics thrive. From here news, trends and culture find their way into the rest of Japan and Asia. If the Gospel can impact and change the city and her inhabitants, there is hope. Together with the Japanese pastor Fukuda and his wife and four children we want to be used to bring this great message to a city that doesn't seem to know God. In building this new community, we will have to start from scratch. But we are not on our own. Besides the fact that we can trust in the experience of Rev. Fukuda, we gathered with a group of Christians with the same vision over the last two years. And there is the support of Redeemer Presbyterian Church from New York. Above all we know God is calling, equipping and carrying us!

United in Christ,

Geert & Eline de Boo  
Thom, Berend, Julie

We value your ongoing support towards our ministry in Japan. You can send your donations to:

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Please write "Geert & Eline de Boo, Japan" on the memo line. Your donations are tax-deductable.

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