

April 17, 2007

Hi,

This is the first time we have sent out a four page informational letter. This format will NOT replace FrontPage and Flipside. Why four pages? We think God is doing some neat things and think that as supporters and friends to want know what is happening. If I am wrong, I apologize. To the 'dust box' these pages go.

In short

An opportunity for increased effectiveness in ministry:

- We want to increase the effectiveness of our ministry.
- We sense God leading us to start a ministry center.
- God has provided two couples, one we are hoping can come in June and one in September.
- We want you to know what is going on so that you can pray more specifically and if desired, contribute toward the need of the two couples and some startup costs.

An opportunity for increased short-term involvement:

The desire in churches to send short-term teams has been much greater than our ability to receive those teams. Our track record for receiving teams is NOT good. Hopefully this new direction will provide for effective ministry that we can team-up to participate in.

An opportunity to make it happen:

Our greatest need, now, is to get the new, one year couples over here. It is their responsibility to raise the necessary funds to meet their needs. As Team Leader I want to lend a hand and expand the base of opportunity for them.

Our desire is for a June and September arrival may be wishful thinking considering they were just approved. It is in God's hands. Feel free to contact them. Email address and phone numbers are included for both couples. Feel free to pray for them, encourage them... Whatever you do for them you do for us as well.

This communication is an opportunity for more information:

The 'four pager' is divided by category to allow you to go directly to the parts that interest you most and skip the rest. If you would like more detailed information, I hope to have some available on the web. But feel free to write or call for information as well. Thanks for taking the time to read this far.

Serving an Incredible God,

Mark Bowman
Sapporo Team Leader
ReachGlobal Japan

Sapporo Ministry Center

Project Love

A New Direction

Current Purpose & Process

Reproduce communities of Christians by loving, evangelizing, disciple-making and sending believers to do the same. We are doing this by connecting with individuals and small groups. Our plan of attack is gentle:

LOVE people with the love of Christ. Some become interested in the source of our love.

EVANGELIZE, that is, share the Good News of Christ. Some become interested in a relationship with Christ.

DISCIPLE those who become believers. Some become interested in sharing their faith.

SEND them out to reproduce communities of Christians by **L**oving, **E**vanglizing, **D**isciple-making and **S**ending believers to do the same.

We feel we are living out what Jesus taught his disciples on the Sermon on the Mount. “You are the light of the world.” Our desire is to be effective lights without burning out in the process. We feel that being **LEDs**, is the best way to do that.

Course Correction

Can we be more effective? I think so. We needed a larger base of people with whom we connect on a regular basis so that more can “catch” the love of Christ.

The Story

Could a **ministry center** increase our people base? The idea floated around for some time. We even pursued it a little. Spending more time, money and energy seemed too risky. Yet the idea kept coming back to whisper “what about me?”

In our staff time, as we prepared our ministry goals for 2007, the idea popped up again. At first, the best response we could muster was, “This is a pretty big idea. We need to pray about it for a week.” We prayed. God moved! One of Athlee’s students (not yet a believer) came to me after a Bible lesson on love and said she had a house she would like us to use. This was a very unusual gift, especially since she had no idea of our thoughts about a ministry center or a couple to work at the center.

God not only gave us peace, but a loving, practical “Hey, I am with you!” shove. Our goals for 2007 tell what we sensed God leading us to do. We would actively seek a married couple for the ministry center by June who would stay at least one year; spoke, or was willing to learn Japanese; connected well with young people; was consistent and would work well with a team.

However, the Japan field has an embarrassing recruitment record for anything longer than two weeks. The chances were NOT good. But, we decided to forge ahead and leave the rest to God.

When we arrived in the US, we talked to our son, Aaron, and his fiancé, Laura, about the opportunity. Several weeks of silence followed. We visited our second church on January 7th. Before the service I was talking to a lady in the back of the church about the opportunity. She pointed to a young couple practicing in the worship team and said, “that’s your couple.” We met with Justin & Rachel during the Sunday School hour. What an incredible fit. They were ready to go.

The next day, after returning from Kansas, Aaron came over and announced that Laura and he were sensing God’s leading to join us in Sapporo. WOW! TWO couples!?!? I remember exactly where I was with both of those announcements. Three months of confirmation, affirmation and paperwork have passed and BOTH COUPLES are officially accepted.

Project Love – A Ministry Center

Purpose

Develop relationships to model Christ's love, utilizing the fruits of the spirit and our gifts.

It is important that what we do lines up with our areas of gifting. I want our ministries to spiritually and emotionally energize, rather than wear us down. The Executive Director of the EFCA ReachGlobal said that 80% of missionaries’ time should be spent in their areas of gifting. We hope to apply that bit of wisdom, to allow people to see Christ’s love through the gifts He has given us.

Plan

We plan to rent a building to provide services for people. We want them to keep coming back. These services will likely include:

- **Coffee house** to create opportunities for non-Christians to develop relationships with Christians.
- **English classes**, weekly or more often – with Bible instruction.
- **English classes for moms & tots** to learn English, receive encouragement, connect with other moms & kids and Christians. Maybe even some English babysitting.
- **Other activities utilizing our gifts**, skills and interests such as nature, music & drama. These activities could happen both in and outside the walls of the ministry center.

Reproducing Communities of Christians is the desired outcome as we (Christians) reach out in love to friends, family, neighbors & coworkers. The ministry center will not be a church. It will be a tool of the church, a lighthouse, (using LEDs) to point the way to the true Light, Christ.

We don’t have a **name** for the center yet, but are working with Japanese friends for a fitting name.

Short-term opportunities

Justin and Rachel have agreed to coordinate short-term workers for the center as well. This will increase the opportunity for teams to come to pray and connect with people, serving them in love.

Future

What happens after the first year? Both English students and college students we know have shown interest in working at the center. We plan to work with these volunteers the first year, building a future community of Christian workers. We may also need to replace at least one of the two couples.

Who has God raised up for the task?

The couples have been described as “amazing,” “the cream of the crop”! They fit the need perfectly.

Justin & Rachel Talley

Justin

Comments: High moral character & values, gentle spirit, sure faith, influences others, musical talents, spirit of love and mercy, loves to love people, experienced the joy of sharing Christ...

Ministry: Youth, worship, music, Bible studies...

Education: International Alert Academy – Ministry, Biblical Counseling. Search and rescue diving trainer with multiple deployments for search and rescue.

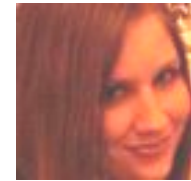


Rachel

Comments: Woman of integrity, bubbly and joyful spirit, develops relationships with unbelievers, loves the Lord, cares for people, kind, teachable, gentle yet strong, disciplined....

Ministry: Praise team, Bible studies, missions trips, mentoring other girls...

Education: Teen Mania Ministries “Honor Academy” (Bible), Acquire the Fire - drama ministry & outreach.



Laura & Aaron Bowman

Laura

Comments: Self-less, flexible, respectful, loyal, caring, talented, personable, excellent team building skills, great at cross-cultural relationships, integrity, deep prayer, cheerful optimism...

Ministry: Laura grew up as an MK in Indonesia, participated in missions trips and is constantly reaching out to others.

Education: North Central College – Bible, English as a second language



Aaron

Comments: Warm and friendly, trustworthy, strong character and very mature, has a servant’s heart, a pleasure to work with. Shows love, concern, encouragement, shares Jesus...

Ministry: Bible studies, music (violin). One year short-term in Iraq, loving people. MK from Japan, so the language will not be a barrier.

Education: Northwestern College (Bible, Science), University of MN – Natural Science

Both couples are highly recommended by their churches and others who have had significant roles in their lives. Both couples have a clear desire to let Christ’s love flow through them to others. They are pretty incredible.

More information

You may find more information at www.efcmj.org/bowman/

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Email: [thebowmans\(at\)gmail\(dot\)com](mailto:thebowmans(at)gmail(dot)com) (replace
'(at)' with '@' and '(dot)' with '.')

How can you help?

If you are interested in involvement, this page is for you. This information is not intended to stir obligation, rather to provide information and an invitation. Please join in helping us only if it gives you joy to do so. One of the most frequently asked questions, when we were on Home Assignment, was, “How can we help?” The answers are now clearer to us: 1. You can pray. 2. You can give. 3. You can come.

Rent & Down Payment – God has already provided

We hope that, by the end of the year, income from the various services will pay for rent and other ongoing costs of operation. Until they do, we have funds from contributions and ongoing income from current ministries to pay the down payment (five or six months rent), plus more than one year of rent. Anticipated monthly expenses: \$1500 -\$1700 for rent and utilities.

Renovation Costs – God will provide

We don’t yet have a specific building in mind, but we will likely need to remodel the building a bit to make it better fit our needs. We hope for help from donors. A project fund is available (see below). We also hope to use short-term teams to keep costs down.

Workers (Justin & Rachel and Aaron & Laura) Living Costs – God will provide

We are hoping that the two couples will be able to raise the full amount of support they need (approximately \$30,000/yr. or \$2500/mo. per couple). Both couples are being sent directly by their sending churches (not through EFCA ReachGlobal) to ReachGlobal Japan’s Sapporo Team.

<p>To contribute to Justin and Rachel, please write your check(s) to “Evangelical Free Church” with a note “SPF–Japan.” (Special Project Fund - Japan)</p> <p>Please send Attn: Financial Secretary - to: Winfield Evangelical Free Church 3725 E. 9th Ave. Winfield, KS 67156</p>	<p>To contribute to Aaron & Laura, please write your check(s) to “North Central District” with a note “Antioch Fellowships/Bowman Japan Ministry”.</p> <p>Please sent to: EFCA North Central District 711-10th Avenue South Minneapolis, MN 55415-1710</p>
<p>Church Phone: 620-221-2722 (main office) A tax deductible statement is issued <u>upon request</u>.</p>	<p>District Office Phone: 612-338-1716 A tax deductible receipt is issued with each gift.</p>

To contribute to Sapporo Ministry Center, please write your check(s) to “EFCA” with a note “Sapporo Ministry Center – Japan/Bowman”.

The check(s) should be mailed to:
EFCA ReachGlobal
901 E. 78th St.
Minneapolis, MN 55420-1300

Phone: 952-854-1300
A tax deductible receipt will be issued with each contribution.