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The 18.26 Network

A New Wave of Missions
Turning Your Vocation into Missions
Spring 2020

Ministry of missionaries Carl & Becky Chaplin and Jud & Jan Lamos

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Hello ,

We hope you enjoy the latest newsletter of **the 18.26 Network - Vocational Missions**. Thank you for your interest and prayers for those who serve by having a secular job and partnering with a missionary team and the national church. Please send us an email if you have questions or suggestions.

In Christ,

Carl, Debbi, Jan and Jud

Personal meetings at a Distance

We meet people face to face which for us usually means seeing them on Zoom, the video conferencing program. This picture is small, but this is a Zoom call with 10 people (3 on one computer) in Nigeria and various US towns.

Even during these times people are contacting us about what it would mean for them to be a vocational missionary. If you or your church wants to know more, please contact us.



*The prayer of a righteous man
is powerful and effective.*

We are saddened for two of our members, **Adele A and Kim Dent, whose mothers died recently**. Both mothers died from illnesses. *Please pray* with us for Adele and Kim and their families during this time of grieving especially with the visitation limitations because of the coronavirus.

Also, ***please pray*** for Kim who is visiting Nigeria, the country where she plans to work as a vocational missionary. However, because of the coronavirus she is **unable to fly out and is waiting for the next available space on a flight**.

We have a prayer team that monthly receives prayer requests. If you **want to be on our prayer team**, please email Jan Lamos at jan@1826network.com.

How can we pray for you? We would gladly pray for you and praise God with you. Feel free to submit a prayer request or praise report by sending an email to jan@1826network.com.



Andrew (Andy) Duncan is our featured member this month. He's married to Chie and has two children.

Andy joined the 18.26 Network after he was working and serving in Japan because he wanted to be part of our vocational missions endeavor.

1. Tell us a little bit about your journey that led you to minister vocationally in Japan.

From my time as an undergrad I had a desire to serve as a pastor somewhere not in the US. I had no specific country in mind but during college I met my soon-to-be wife who is a Japanese national. That, of course, helped guide my thinking toward living and working in her home country. The needs are great in Japan and laborers are few. Perfect, I thought. Let's move to Japan. No problem! But, initially my wife was not thrilled with this idea. She enjoyed life in America and knew some of the difficulties that pastors face in Japan, particularly financial difficulties. Japanese pastors often are paid below poverty level, many around 12-1500 dollars per month or less. Thankfully, I needed to go to seminary which took 4 years so that gave us ample time to talk, think and pray.

During 4 years of seminary I was able to visit Japan and see what pastoral work would look like, first hand. I learned that the church in Japan is tiny. Most congregations are small, usually 20 or so. Not surprisingly, church budgets are tight. Because of this, many Japanese pastors are bivocational and have been so for years. Learning about the state of the church in Japan and through talking to many pastors on the ground produced in me/us a desire to follow the sacrifice of the Japanese brothers. Their service is costing them something. They preach and work a 9 to 5 job. If they can do it, why can't I? Easier said than done, but that's the bliss of ignorance.

Japan is easier than many countries for immigrants to find gainful employment. So, through careful planning, flexibility and providence my family was able to set up the systems necessary for vocational ministry. So far, we've been able to keep the necessary plates spinning. Because of this I've been able to serve the church in pastoral ministry and pay rent at the same time. Win-win! High fives all around.

Over my 10 years here I've had the opportunity to serve with various churches. Three years ago, I was able to plant a small bilingual church on the north end of central Tokyo. I currently serve as pastor while working as a freshman English teacher at 2 local Japanese universities.

2 . Who are some of the people you are developing relationships with in your new location?

I've been in Japan for 10 years. As I write that, I must say that I'm shocked I have not been deported yet. My Japanese hosts are forgiving to a fault. Having been here so long, it's hard to highlight particular people. Because of work, pastoral duties and an active family I'm involved with many folks throughout my week.

I've developed deep friendships with many in the expat community. The expat community is not large or diverse by American standards but it is robust. Lots of people coming in and lots of people going out. One thing that pulls foreigners together in Japan is that all foreigners are put in the same foreigner box. So, whether you are Chinese, American or French you are made an honorary member of the same foreigner club. Weird at first but makes for strong relationships with other folks you'd normally not be grouped with.

As for locals, I've been privileged to be included in many relationships with Japanese families. Having 2 children in local schools allows for my family to be involved with a wide swath of people living in my neighborhood.

The MTW community in Japan has also been a great source of friendship and encouragement. In particular 2 couples, one older and one younger, have become like family.

3. What has been your most rewarding experience since moving to Japan?

As you might expect from reading a little of my bio, the experience of church planting and the relationships in that church have been by far the most profound and meaningful. It is, by far, the most taxing and rewarding thing I've been involved with since setting up my new home and new life here. The church is multinational which makes things very interesting (yeah...we will go with that word). Each one of the people and families in the church has a special and unmovable place in my mind and heart.

By the Numbers

Rejoice with us over those who have decided to serve Christ globally as they work. **32 people** have applied to be vocational missionaries with the 18.26 Network, **10 people** are working and serving in a country of their choice and they are in **7 countries** around the world, **11 people** are looking for a job and place to serve in a global city, and **60 people** are interested in being vocational missionaries but haven't applied yet.

But as you know **numbers don't tell the real story**. Just like Andy, our featured vocational missionary, the people working and serving in a country and those desiring to go have great stories of God's blessings and faithfulness to them.

Why Some Are Eager to Donate

We are very thankful and appreciative of the churches and individuals that give to the 18.26 Network operational fund. The money given goes to support, counsel, and care for our members, people looking to go, and people exploring being a vocational missionary. It is not used for salaries or buildings. Please consider donating to the 18.26 Network's ministry of sending people as vocational missionaries.

**DONATE
NOW**

Most of our members don't raise support because they have a job in their host country. However, four members need support to live and work in a country because their salary does not suffice. You can learn about or give to [Anna](#), [Andrew](#), [Lance](#) or [Tim and Emily](#) by clicking on their name.



The 18.26 Network
A New Wave of
Missions

Serving people who work, live and minister as vocational missionaries **Our Team: Debbi Beers, Carl Chaplin, Jud and Jan Lamos**

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