

Hello and
I pray that God's blessings are being experienced by you each one
even today.

This has been a wonderful week for Colonel Wendy and for me.
We have begun a fairly regular schedule of zoom calls with some of
our team there in Tokyo
and over the past few weeks we have had the chance to meet
virtually with members of our team.
We have been so encouraged by your stories shared with us.
We have been learning about the history of the Greater Christian
Church and its influence on the people of Japan
and learning how The Salvation Army fit into that history both in
history and even unto today.

So many of you have inspired us with your support by joining on the
Women's Ministry zoom call earlier this week
or attending any of the Womens Rallies across the Territory.
We also shared in a call hosted by The Territorial Youth Secretary
Captains Asazawa with some of the youth across the territory!
As Colonel Wendy shared with you, our only disappointment is that
we haven't been able to meet you in person yet,
but that day is coming.
We have adopted a phrase which we have always believed –
In God's Perfect Time.

We believe that our appointment to serve in Japan is in God's plan
and must be in God's perfect timing as well.
God's timing is never wrong.
He is always perfectly on time
and we believe that our delay in actually being with you is a part of
His plan.

こんにちは お会いでき感謝します。
今日も神様の祝福の中におられることを祈っています。

今週は本当に良い時でした。
オンラインで定期的な打ち合わせを始めることができ、
同労者の何人かとお話しをし、証しを聞くことを通して、
大きな励ましをいただいています。
キリスト教会の歴史と日本に関することを学ぶ中で、
救世軍がどう導かれてきたかも教えられています

また2か所の女性部ラリーに参加できて、大勢の方とお会い
し
たくさん励ましをいただきました
またユースナイトで朝澤大尉や青年たちにも会えました

ウェンディ大佐も言ったように、直接会えないことだけが残
念ですが、
その日は必ず来ます
心に留めている言葉は
「神様の最善の時」です

日本への任命は神様のご計画なので、神様の時に実現するは
ずです。
ずれることはありません
いつもぴったりなのです
来日の遅れも、ご計画の一部だと信じます

We are indebted to Lt. Colonels Nishimura and many others of you for keeping us informed and helping us learn the Japan Territory. We continue to be excited to be with you physically and look forward to that day.

I mentioned in an earlier message that each year I try to learn something new about the Christmas Story and the Easter story and find myself intentionally studying the story weeks after we have celebrated the events.

The lead up to Christmas or Advent season allows me time to dig deeper into scripture in order to learn about one of the characters at the manger scene and try to understand Jesus' birth from their experience.

Ever since Easter I have been following the readings which allow me to remain in the story.

If you follow the Church Calendar at all you would know that this coming Sunday is Pentecost Sunday.

The passage of scripture traditionally read and preached around the story of Pentecost is PAUL'S account in Acts 2 - coming of the Holy Spirit.

What a fantastic scene in scripture!

Can you imagine the excitement of the moment when Jesus' Disciples, who probably all but forgot that Jesus had promised to send a comforter experienced the coming of the Holy Spirit in real time!

Even if they had forgotten . . . on that Day they were reminded again that God Keeps His promises!

Surely they thought the Holy Spirit would come at some point, but on that day Jesus once again kept His word!

西村大佐補や多くの方の助けで、日本の救世軍について学んでいます。
実際に会える日を心待ちにしています。

前にもお話ししましたが、毎年クリスマスやイースターのお祝いが終わった後も、そのことについて学びを深めるように心がけています。

クリスマスまでの時、イエス様の誕生に関わった人々について学ぶことで、彼らの経験から理解を深めることができます

イースターについても同じように思い巡らしていました。

教会歴ではペンテコステサンデーを迎えました。

この時よく読まれる聖書箇所は使徒言行録 2 章です。聖霊が降られた出来事です。

すばらしい光景です！

聖霊が来られるというイエス様の約束を、自分が本当に経験できるとは、弟子たちの感動はどれほどだったことでしょう

神様は必ず約束を守られる方だと、確信を新たにしたことでしょう

いつの日か…と思っていたことは、イエス様のお言葉通りに実現します。今もです。

We know that Jesus had promised to send the Holy Spirit when he was crucified and resurrected.

We also know that Jesus didn't actually share when this would happen.

I can only imagine how impatient those disciples had been during that time between the ascension and the day of Pentecost.

But God acts in Perfect Time!

But today I want us to think about it in a bit of a different way.

The Scripture for today is from Romans 8, verses 22 – 27

22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

23 Not only so, but we ourselves who have the first fruits of the Spirit groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

24 For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has?

25 But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

26 In the same way the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

27 And He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to God's will.

イエス様は前から、聖霊が送られると約束されました。

しかし、いつのことかは言いませんでした。

イエス様が昇天された後、弟子たちはどれほど気がかりだったことでしょう。

しかし神様は最善の時に働かれます

今日は少し違う視点で、別の聖書箇所から見てみましょう

聖書はローマの信徒への手紙 8 章 22-27 節です

22 被造物がすべて今日まで、共にうめき、共に産みの苦しみを味わっていることを、わたしたちは知っています。

23 被造物だけでなく、“霊”の初穂をいただいているわたしたちも、神の子とされること、つまり、体の贖われることを、心の中でうめきながら待ち望んでいます。

24 わたしたちは、このような希望によって救われているのです。見えるものに対する希望は希望ではありません。現に見ているものをだれがなお望むでしょうか。

25 わたしたちは、目に見えないものを望んでいるなら、忍耐して待ち望むのです。

26 同様に、“霊”も弱いわたしたちを助けてくださいます。わたしたちはどう祈るべきかを知りませんが、“霊”自らが、言葉に表せないうめきをもって執り成してくださるからです。

27 人の心を見抜く方は、“霊”の思いが何であるかを知っておられます。“霊”は、神の御心に従って、聖なる者たちのために執り成してくださるからです。

The key verse for our purpose today is the short verse

25 But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

Wendy and I know what we want, and we have prayed for it.
We want to pack our suitcases and move to be close to you, each one of you.

We are excited to have the entire Japanese experience of living in community, worshipping with you, enjoying real Japanese food, visiting you in your Corps and around your community.

But instead, we are living out of suitcases and meeting many of you through a screen.

For now I suppose the zoom calls will have to be good enough.

But do you know what?

We thank God for the technology of today.

When my parents first set off for Japan they were on a ship for 3 weeks just to get to Japan.

They had only limited opportunity to visit with their family back home and none of them could have even imagined such a thing as a computer, the internet or zoom calls.

We are grateful that God has called us at a time when the communication is so clear between us even as we are waiting for our visas.

God is so good!

But wait, the scripture says that I am to wait patiently?

Patience doesn't seem to be one of my strengths or spiritual gifts.

When I long for something, I want it now.

I think we need to be very careful not to become as the world in our expectation of things to happen when we want them to happen.

今日特に注目したいのは 25 節

「わたしたちは、目に見えないものを望んでいるなら、忍耐して待ち望むのです。」

ウェンディと私は求めていることを祈っています。
荷造りして、みなさんのところに行きたいのです

日本での生活を始めて、共に礼拝し、和食を味わい、みなさんの小隊やコミュニティに行きたいのです。

しかし実際はスーツケース暮らしで、スクリーン越しにしかみなさんと会えません
それで十分としなければいけませんね。

でも思うのです

技術に感謝しなければと。

私の両親が初めて日本に遣わされた時、船で 3 週間かかりました。

アメリカの家族を訪問する機会はわずかで、インターネットでの会話ができるようになるとは想像もできなかったでしょう。

こうして入国を待つ間も、コミュニケーションを取ることができる時代であることを神様に感謝しています。

(日本語が入るので字幕なし)

聖書には忍耐しなさいとあります

私の得意分野ではありません

すぐ答えが欲しいのです

こういう期待について、この世に倣わないよう、気をつける必要があります。

To place a phone call or text and in a very short time, whatever we ordered: from amazon or from a restaurant or from the grocery store . . . just magically shows up at our house.

We have come to expect immediate gratification.

Sometimes God wants us to wait – for in the waiting we learn more and more about our reliance on GOD.

! Corinthians 13 is commonly known as the love chapter and it defines for us how important loving one another is to our witness and to God.

But toward the end of that passage a question is asked.

“ But these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

You see, Faith is our relationship with the past.

Hope is our relationship with the future.

But Love is our relationship with Jesus TODAY

and when we focus on loving Him, ~~our faith and hope both rest in Him.~~

But our love is something which comes from our daily relationship with Him.

The only way we can live our lives completely for Jesus is to focus on His love He has for us.

The best way to do that is to read and study His word and have Faith in Him and Hope for a day when we can be with Him – when our adoption as children of God is complete when we are in His presence.

If we can trust Him with the past and the future . . . we begin to see things like timing through his perspective and we can then rest in His timing and not ours.

今、電話やメール一本で、すぐにアマゾンやレストランから注文したものが届きます。

瞬時の満足を期待するのです

神様は時々わたしたちに待つことを教えます。神様だけに頼ることを学ぶためです。

愛の章と言われる 1 コリント 13 章は、お互いに愛し合うことの大切さについて書かれていますが、

最後の方にこうあります。

「それゆえ、信仰と、希望と、愛、この三つは、いつまでも残る。その中で最も大いなるものは、愛である

信仰は過去との関係性です。

希望は未来との関係性です。

愛はイエス様との関係が今日どうであるか

イエス様の愛を知る時、その愛で人を愛することができます

それはイエス様との日々の関わりから生まれます。

イエス様と生きるには、自分に対するイエス様の愛を知ることです。

そのために聖書の言葉を学びましょう。そして神の子どもとされる約束が完全に成就する日が来るという信仰と希望を養いましょう。

過去と未来を神様に信頼できるなら、時機ということも神様のタイミングに任せることができます。

I don't know what part of your spiritual life seems to be a continual struggle for you . . .

~~but here is what I do know. If we continue to study His word and pray for God to help us to more naturally~~ see things as HE sees them . . . we are more able to trust Him with all things.

While serving in one appointment we had a young adult in our corps who loved being with us.

She became almost like a part of our family, but she wasn't living a Christian life at that point.

In one conversation Wendy and I encouraged her to let God lead in one area of her life just to see what happened.

She did and God blessed her for giving that back to Him.

As we farewelled from that appointment Wendy told our friend that whenever she was ready to fully commit to Jesus, Wendy would be honored to help her with that when she was ready.

Thirteen years later, she called and said to Wendy, I am ready to make this decision,

and Wendy was honored to lead her to a relationship with Christ.

Did we want her to accept Jesus on that first day we discussed it, of course . . .

but we had to leave it in God's hands and we held on firmly to the relationship with our friend.

What are you struggling with in regards to following the Timing of God.

Just as Jesus promised to the disciples that He would go away, but He would send one who comforts – the Holy spirit - for His disciples. His promises are true everyday and His timeline is within His perfect will.

今のみなさんの葛藤はどういうものでしょうか

神様はすべてを治めておられます。どうか神様の目線で見ること、神様に信頼することができますように

ある小隊で、私たちと家族のように一緒にいた青年がいました。

けれども彼女はキリスト者としての生活はしていませんでした。

ある時、人生のある部分を神様にゆだねてみたらと勧めました。

そのようにした彼女を神様は祝福されました

転任の時がきて、ウエンディは彼女に、イエス様を信じる決断をする時には助けになればと嬉しいと話しました。

13年後、彼女から、その決断をしたいと電話がありました。

そしてイエス様とつながることができたのです。

出会ってすぐにイエス様を信じてくれたなと思います。

しかしわたしたちは関わりを保ちつつ、神様の時にゆだねることが必要でした。

神様の時について思い悩むことがあるのでしょうか。

イエス様が慰め主である聖霊を送ってくださると弟子たちに約束されたように、

イエス様の約束は今日も真実で、その時は御心に適っていません。

And . . . it is only through Him that we can await His timeline ... with patience.

I pray this is one way you experience His presence in your life today and every day.

May God be so close to you just now that He will calm you and lead you in His way today.

忍耐を持って待つのは神様の助けなしにはできません。

どうかこの経験を通して、神様の臨在を知ることができますように。

どうか神様がそば近くあって平安を与え、神様の道に導いてくださいますように。

皆さんのことを日々お祈りしています

神様の祝福をお祈りします
お会いするのを楽しみにしています