

Week of Prayer

— DAY 6 —



Carlton and Cornelia Walker

“It’s going to be one amazing journey.”

Carlton Walker’s words to his wife more than 40 years ago ring true today. “It has been.”

When Cornelia Walker was in elementary school, her Girl’s Auxiliary group gave an assignment to pick a country and draw its flag and then learn about it.

Cornelia wasn’t a great artist, but there was one flag she thought she could manage. Japan’s flag was just a red circle on a white background. So, she picked it for her project.

At the time, she never imagined she’d pour over 40 years of her life into loving and serving the people she first learned about for that project.

After she met and married her husband, Carlton, they both felt God’s call to serve overseas. They learned there was a need for new missionaries in Japan, as many of the IMB workers who moved there after World War II were retiring.

“I think we both looked at each other and said ‘What about us? We can go,’” Cornelia said.

Will you stop and thank God for the Walkers’ obedience to serve overseas and their steadfast presence for four decades? Ask God to send more workers to the fields of Japan.

The seeds of that initial willingness to serve have blossomed into decades of fruitful ministry. In a country that is known to be resistant to the gospel and discouraging for many missionaries, Carlton and Cornelia have persevered faithfully.

They arrived in Japan on a spring evening in 1982 at the peak of cherry blossom season. As they turned into their neighborhood after a long drive from the airport, the street was carpeted in beautiful blossoms, and a crowd of other missionaries had gathered to welcome them.

After they completed language study in Tokyo, they moved to Hokkaido, Japan’s northernmost province. Over two decades, they saw Japanese people come to faith in Christ, planted a new church, and trained young pastors who went on to serve faithfully in churches all over Japan.

Ask God for more Japanese churches to have a strong desire to spread the gospel.

After 21 years in Hokkaido, the Walkers moved to Tokyo. A few years ago, their story in Japan came full circle when they were asked to move back to Hokkaido to mentor a new team of missionaries.

“I am so excited that God has opened doors for new young families and singles to come into the country at a time when it’s so needed,” Cornelia said.

Just as when they first arrived more than 40 years ago, they are confident God is still at work in Japan.

“We have a tendency to look at those who have served for a while, and we focus on their faithfulness,” Carlton said. “But my goodness, the bigger story is God’s faithfulness. He’s the one that gets the praise, the honor, and the glory.”

Give God the praise, honor, and glory for His work among the nations. Ask God what further step you should take to join His work.