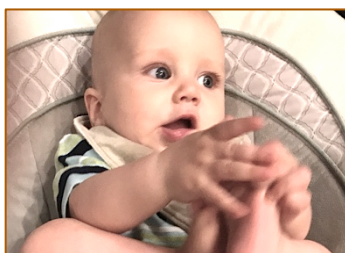


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September 14, 2021

PCR Tests (with the emphasis on the plural!)

We had an amazing summer, working remotely while traveling. We made up for not seeing some of our family for more than 18 months! Some of you know apps like Strava that track bike rides or walking trips? Well, I think Strava would have had trouble keeping up with us! After our pre-departure test, we went from Tokyo to Grand Rapids via Chicago, to Chicago (Jonathan and family), to Saylorsburg (Mom) and Albrightsville (Ben and family were vacationing) in NE Pennsylvania, to Grand Rapids, to College Station, Texas via Houston (Daniel and family), to Grand Rapids, to Chicago again, to Grand Rapids, then back to Tokyo via Dallas. Jolena is in Grand Rapids. So we saw Mom and all 4 kids and all 7 grandchildren. It was fairly easy to work remotely, doing mission financial and ministry reports, preparing messages, doing some writing (and editing), getting ready for a big lecture which happened on August 15 (end of the Pacific War Day), and we were able to grab a few days of vacation in between, especially to play with the little ones, who are still small enough to enjoy hanging out with us, assembling Legos, splashing in the pools, learning how to play Mario Kart



with the help of the 8-year-old's instructions! But the traveling was exhausting too. 8 PCR tests later & after 14 days of quarantine at home, we've jumped back in. I did develop an alter-ego this summer. I am now to be known as "Oscar the octopus." I eat lobsters and clams. "Are YOU a lobster?" I ask, and the response: squeals of delight! What fun we had!

WE ARE COPING WITH COVID (How about you?)

Tokyo is under a declaration of a state of emergency as I write, after a 4th wave of new infections, especially by the Delta variant and now the Mu mutation, both of which seem to be more troubling than the original. The last time we celebrated communion was during Lent in 2020. We really miss singing and mingling freely with our church families. We try to stay connected as much as we can with Internet applications like Zoom and Facebook, also using these and YouTube to live-stream our worship services, distributing video and printed sermons, meeting in cyberspace for prayer, and of course the low-tech phone calls! In spite of COVID and maybe because of it, new folks are still coming to church, and God is gathering his harvest!

NEW REALITIES OR SAME OLD?

This is not our preferred way to operate, but we have to admit that the times have stretched us to find new ways to do ministry & to preach the message of God's salvation and love displayed by Jesus to give us forgiveness and life. There is no "normal" to go back to any more, as we have changed along with the medical situation. But that's okay. Family groups are sharing more intimate worship times. More people even in remote places and in areas hostile to Jesus are hearing the Gospel! It's not possible to deny the true fragility of life and our need for the Lord's help. The resurgence of the Taliban, the devastation from hurricanes, political instability as we wait for a new prime minister to be elected, surging fraud and cyber-crime, remembering 9/11, wars and rumors of wars...but the end is not yet, says Jesus. It is time to remain faithful to him and to our calling to be salt and light! "The one who stands firm to the end will be saved." (Mark 13:13). So that is our goal, and it is our peace. God is our mighty fortress, our rock. "The Gospel must first be preached to all nations." The same old Gospel in ever-changing contexts, right? Jesus is still and forever will be the way, the truth, and the life.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRAYERS AND GIFTS

- We ended fiscal 2020-2021, very unexpectedly surpassing our fund-raising goal! Those of you who gave, thanks so much! There have been many monthly and several special gifts to start off this new year too. We are truly encouraged by your partnership with us for this cause! Wow!
- My special presentation on August 15 went really well. I had pre-recorded it here in my study, and then we played it back during our live-stream Zoom session, with more than 100 in attendance. I was given the topic, "Twenty years after the terrorist attacks of 9-11: how has society, church and mission work changed?" I ended my talk with an appeal to retool for mission, especially in this world of refugee communities, for "diaspora outreach," as we call it. There are 3 million foreign nationals living in Japan at the present time, many with special needs and hungry for peace in heart and life. So we really need to keep this on the front burner, even as we continue to reach out to the 99% of Japanese who don't know Jesus!
- Thank you for continuing to pray for protection and for our good health. We can't do this work without you!

Your missionaries in Japan,
Larry and Ruth Spalink

please check out page 2 for more
prayer requests and information!



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<<https://www.resonateglobalmission.org/support/our-missionaries/larry-and-ruth-spalink>>



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THE PHOTOS ON PAGE ONE

I couldn't resist introducing a few of the grandchildren, as you no doubt realized! These are pictures of the three youngest ones. Clockwise from the top are Abraham Thys Spalink (Abe) who lives in Chicago, Francesca Paeonia Spalink (Frankie) who lives in Bryan, Texas, and Maya Mariel Spalink (Maya, holding my effigy of Oscar the octopus!) of New York City. There is a Japanese word for doing this (subjecting you to our grandparental pride): *oyabaka*. It means "parental foolishness!"

RECRUITMENT UPDATE

I have asked you to pray that we at Resonate might be able to recruit and deploy a new missionary here in Japan, hopefully the first member of a new, younger team. For several years we have searched, had a few bites, but no new candidate to tell you about yet. I am excited to report that we are in conversation with someone at present. There is no commitment yet, but we've talked a lot, and I believe these folks would be a great addition to our team for the future of the very much needed mission work here! My goal is to maintain at least 3 missionaries in Japan for the foreseeable future, waiting on God's timing for a spiritual breakthrough, exploring new training and capacity-building ministries, spearheading some "diaspora" outreach among the growing number of non-Japanese now making their home here, and so forth. There are just a lot of possibilities and such great need! So please keep this need before the "Lord of harvest!"

WHAT IS GOING ON THIS FALL?

I anticipate a little lighter speaking schedule this fall, though that is still a major focus of my work. I will spend some time to train one of my colleagues in the business and financial management of our Japanese religious corporation. It is not good that I am the only one with a handle on these matters! Our first "session" will be on September 22.

A COUPLE MORE OF OUR PRAYER REQUESTS

-- You've heard us mention this many times, but one of our deepest and most important needs is for the work of the Spirit to break down the numerous barriers that keep people from really hearing and responding to the good news of new life in Jesus! Ask God to do this!

-- Compounding stress leads to mental (as well as physical) fatigue and lowers resistance to emotional and physical sickness. Many of us are familiar with this personally. At times we see family members struggling. Church members (and leaders) do too! Ask the Lord for grace to reach out for help before hopelessness sets in, and for grace to reach out to those around us when we think we notice warning signs! Pray that our churches will be able to offer hope and be havens of rest for the weary multitudes around us!

-- Thank God for the amazing technology that is available to us to help us maintain and expand ministry! Ask him for courage and creativity to take advantage of these wonderful tools! Pray for more people with the skill set to help us with this, especially young people!



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I want to support the Spalinks' ministry with Resonate Global Mission in Japan (fund code 802133)

Here is my gift of \$_____ or call 877-272-6205 (USA) or 800-730-3490 (Canada)

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Please make checks payable to Resonate Global Mission and include the above # (802133) on the memo line. You can also give on line using the URL to the left. Thank you for your financial support! Please note that prayer support is also very important, and giving prayer support only is also very welcome and appreciated!