

We met while the summer of 2004 while serving as summer staff at Camp Barakel, a Christian camp in northern Michigan. Joel thought he was saved but was actually still blind to his sin. The summer of 2005, Joel got saved and was called to be a missionary to Japan. As our friendship deepened, Misti made plans to be part of a summer program in Japan for college students through ABWE (Association of Baptist for World Evangelism). Joel decided to also be part of that program. We spent the summer of 2006 in Nagashima Japan; we learned about the severe spiritual need of the Japanese people. We served with ABWE missionaries around Kyushu (one of the 4 main islands of Japan), and learned about the ministries in each area.

During that summer, God broke Misti's heart for the Japanese. We started dating in August of that summer, our first date was in Izumi Japan. Joel stayed in Japan for one year, interning with multiple missionaries (part of various agencies) around Japan. Misti graduated from university & we got married in December 2008. Joel graduated from university the following spring. We were desiring to return to Japan after Joel graduated from university, but instead God led us to Bangkok Thailand where we taught at a Christian International School for one year. In 2010, He led us to Kumamoto Japan. Misti worked as an English teacher and Joel worked as a language consultant (teaching, interpreting, & translation). In addition, we were part of an ABWE church plant. During our last year in Japan, the missionaries leading the plant went on furlough, so Joel did the preaching.

God led us back to the USA in the spring of 2013. He took us to the metro Detroit area. Joel worked for a Japanese company. Misti worked at a Christian school for a few years and then for a jewelry designer. God used our home church, Union Lake Baptist, to disciple us well. We grew in our ability to exposit Scripture and greatly benefited through the training offered to us. We had multiple opportunities to lead and grow in our leadership abilities, as well as learn to be better followers. In our time at ULBC, God showed us more of what it means, both in joy and in sorrow, to lay down one's life for the sake of His church.

In 2018, veteran missionaries Bill & Becky Petite asked us to come fill in for them at their church plant, so they could go on home assignment. We served there short-term from July 2019 - August 2021. Our son, Kai, was born in Izumi in January 2020.

Shortly before leaving Japan to return to the US, God saw fit to bless us with another child. Our daughter, Fia, was born in March 2022.

We became appointed as long-term missionaries with ABWE in November of 2021 and are currently on deputation.