

Duncan & Suzanne

Serving with Cadence International

Forbes

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WE STAY

In a transient and mobile military community, Cadence offers stability, strength, and consistency over the long haul to each installation we serve.

It's PCS (Permanent Change of Station) season here in Yokosuka. On average, military personnel move about every two to three years. The stress of moving so frequently has an impact on all.

In the last five months, we have already said farewell to 18 people. Summer 2024 here at Yokosuka Naval Base will be unusual as many experience a significant transition. The aircraft carrier U.S.S. Ronald Reagan is port shifting back to the USA. It is being replaced by the U.S.S. George Washington. We are anticipating a welcome of the sailors and families who are moving here to Japan with the carrier from Norfolk, VA.

Many from the Reagan will be grieving what has been home to them for many years, while the George Washington families will be acclimating to a foreign country, complete with different customs, culture, and language.

Life in the Navy is always uncertain. PCS, ship deployments, training, new jobs, new homes, new schools, new locations . . . all this leads to looking for something solid, something that doesn't change, something that stays consistent.



Staying is one of the primary goals of Cadence. The Lighthouse in Yokosuka is an example of this.

- Yokosuka Navy Yard was established in **1871** to serve the Japanese Navy. On **October 17, 1898**, Estella Finch established the “Japan Army and Navy Club” in Yokosuka completing the building on **September 23, 1899**.
- **April 12, 1953** – The Yokosuka Christian Servicemen’s Center, which occupied the original Japan Army and Navy Club building, was dedicated to the ministry of American servicemen and their families.
- **March 1, 1969** – The Board of Directors asked Overseas Christian Servicemen’s Centers (OCSC), now known as Cadence International, to supply leadership for the Center.
- A fire ravaged the building in **1990**, causing it to be a total loss. In **1992**, the land was sold, and construction began on a new building a short distance away.
- **June 11, 1994** – The new Yokosuka Christian Servicemen’s Center, now known as The Lighthouse, was dedicated to the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- **June 11, 2024** – We celebrate 30 years of ministry here at this “new” location, 55 years of Cadence ministry here in Japan, and 125 years of ministry to the military here in Yokosuka.

After 30 years of continuous ministry, and in honor of the 30th anniversary, we will be holding a fundraiser for replenishment of wear-and-tear items here at the Lighthouse. Stay tuned to our Epistle or our social media for links to find out how you can participate.

Duncan & Suzanne

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SMALL WINS AFTER SETTLING IN

- Making the Lighthouse our home
- Navigating local roads without using GPS
- Finding new favorite foods
- Receiving help from a local pastor’s wife to navigate the Japanese culture

PRAISE & PRAYER

- Praise God with us for a good, ongoing partnership with the chaplains.
- Praise God for those volunteering regularly—some teach, some bring dessert, and some invite others to be a part of the community.
- Pray for the many families that are moving this summer. Pray they would find community in their new location. Pray for opportunities where we can meet and welcome newcomers to the Yokosuka community.
- Pray for us as we begin the extension process on our residency visa here in Japan. We are looking to renew it for three to five years.

WILL'S HEART

I was raised in a Christian family and gave my life to God after a very vivid dream where I was presented with an image of what living without Him would be like. In high school, after a Christian worldview conference, I realized I did not understand who God was; I only understood God as a creator. I became an agnostic, searching through what I knew of religion and having philosophical meditations, wondering what was true. I prayed, "God, show me who you are". Several weeks later, I woke up, and God was once more three persons in one; it just made sense again.

After joining the Navy, I began experimenting with how much alcohol I could tolerate and virtually stopped believing in God. In order to keep up appearances and to tell my folks I was still attending services, I went to a spiritually dead church. I finally passed A school and went to my first ship, the U.S.S Ronald Reagan, in San Diego.

The U.S.S. Ronald Reagan switched home ports to Japan in 2015, and I stopped attending church. I had a lot of pain in my heart, and instead of giving it to God like He kept asking, I gave in to the numbing and temporary relief of alcohol.

God had asked me to surrender the pain to him, promising healing in His timing. But each night, I struggled between waiting and meditating on God, often without relief from the pain, or giving up on him and drowning my pain with alcohol.

My ship deployed, and I started going to the church on board, but only because alcohol was not an option with the Reagan deployed. My ship eventually returned to land, and once again, I wavered between alcohol and God. I realized alcohol was not strong enough and I needed a stronger drug. I started exploring the idea of love being my new drug. Thankfully, I was scared of women at the time, and getting close was terrifying. Thank God for the small things.

Later, God worked on my heart. I realized the love of another human being would not heal my brokenness; only the love of God can do that. I was struggling, low on strength and low on patience with God. God brought to mind some verses I had memorized as a child:

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, But those who wait on the Lord Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint. (Isaiah 40:28 –31)

With me not giving my heart to God, I failed to wait on him. I was weary of living in depression, but my impatience prevented him from healing my heart and mind from the pain.



On my second deployment, I surrendered to God. I realized he had helped me more than my path of self-destruction. I surrounded myself with the Christian community on my ship. I slowly surrendered to God and allowed him to use me to serve in and be served by the church on the Reagan.

When we returned, I continued in my commitment to wait on God to heal me. I devoted my life to the pursuit of holiness. I would tell others during this time when I shared my testimony that I found my stronger drug and his name is Jesus. Also, that doing Jesus would get you to the Most High. I was given a winged cross as a symbol of the covenant I made with God so long ago, representing freedom through Christ. I was faithfully coming to the Lighthouse and was being mentored by the house director Lou. I got rebaptized in April 2016.

Things were not always smooth after that. I still had to work through some childhood traumas and process how they impacted my view of myself. The ship's psychologist and chaplains were gifts God gave me during my initial healing time.

This second time stationed in Japan, I had been faithfully involved in The Lighthouse and was introduced to a great Celebrate Recovery program at the Chapel. This group strives to heal from hurts, habits, and hang-ups that have been picked up along the way.

I am currently studying courses to one day be ordained as a pastor and serve at Celebrate Recovery. I hope to be able to live out 2 Corinthians 1:3–7—comforting others with the comfort God has provided me on my journey.

Knowing that I have a community at The Lighthouse has made a huge difference when I am home from deployments. I have also been able to visit Cadence hospitality houses while visiting other areas around the world. The consistency in love and fellowship has been a lifeline, pointing me back to Christ.



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GIVE ONLINE



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