

Notes from Jim and Hydi

Mt. Akagi, Japan

December, 2014

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Dear Partners in Ministry,

If you follow us on Facebook or read our monthly prayer requests on our blog site you probably have some idea of all the changes we've experienced since our last newsletter in April. But if this is your only link to our ministries we apologize for the long blank. Since our last newsletter much has happened and we are eager to bring you up to date. We treasure your prayers, thoughts and gifts, and want to take a moment to let you know how God is answering your prayers and using your gifts.

A Move to the Mountains

Akagi Bible Camp

On June 16th we moved to Akagi Bible Camp in Gunma Prefecture. It is about 100km north of Tokyo and was first started by the Japan Covenant Church and missionaries from the U.S. in 1963. For most of the past fifty years no one has lived at the camp, and staffing has been done by volunteers from all over the denomination and a handful of local pastors, missionaries and lay people who have gone the extra mile. We would like to have full time staff living there but the camp can't really afford to pay much of a salary. So Hydi and I wondered if we might be able to step into that role for a season, and hopefully expand the ministries of the camp. July and August were very busy with eight different camps coming thru. The bulk of our work involved the kitchen and general facility maintenance. While we didn't do a lot of aggressive advertising for the fall, we had four groups in September, two in October and one in November. Things are quieter now but we may still get some users during the winter months. So far we have enjoyed the work at camp and absolutely love living in such a rural area surrounded by glorious nature!



Hiking in our back yard on Mt. Akagi

Ongoing Ministries

While our move to Mt. Akagi has brought about many changes, we are thankful

for the opportunity to continue many of our previous ministries. Jim is still teaching at the Covenant Seminary in Tokyo, which usually involves one overnight in Tokyo each week, between the months of April and September. Having a small part in raising up the next generation of church leaders is extremely rewarding and enjoyable.

Jim is also continuing to preach at various churches within the Covenant and beyond. Preaching God's word is something about which Jim is passionate so the continued opportunities to do so in a variety of churches is truly a blessing.

Hydi has become more involved in sports ministry with new and old Japanese friends. Since returning to Gunma she has played in many doubles tennis tournaments including qualifying to represent the prefecture in two regional tournaments and the national ladies team tournament. She has also taken advantage of opportunities to trail run and hike with small and large groups.



Hydi and her Gunma Teammates who went to the national tournament

Asian Covenant Ties

8th Asia Covenant Leaders' Consultation

In October Jim had the privilege of travelling to Taiwan with a delegation from the Japan Covenant Church. They spent four days meeting with fellow Covenant leaders from India, Thailand, Philippines, Laos and Taiwan. This gathering takes place every two to three years and is a great opportunity for establishing and strengthening international ties that lead to cooperative ministries thru out Asia.



Multi-cultural and multi-lingual worship

Christ is Born

Christmas Celebrations

December is always a joyous time of celebration as we pause to remember the gift that changed all of history. This year's celebrations started at the Covenant Seminary, where the students put together yet another zany and celebrative evening. Next was the Shibukawa Covenant Church children's Christmas event. This is a church made up almost exclusively of elderly folks and yet they are committed to reaching out to children in this way and we were happy to help out a bit. Then on the last Sunday before Christmas we joined the Iseaki Covenant Church for a time of celebration thru a shared meal and worship. Jim was honored to be the preacher and shared the challenge of being a part of God's incredible work of reconciliation, even if it is disruptive on a personal level.



Another Crazy Seminary Christmas Skit



Shibukawa Kids' Christmas



The Isesaki Church Family

Family Time

Our eldest son Miles is in Japan this year working, after graduating from college in May. Next fall he hopes to continue his studies in aquatic biology and fisheries at the graduate level and has yet to determine where that will be. We've enjoyed having him nearby and are especially enjoying spending the Christmas holidays with him. Our daughter Kendra just flew in from India where she completed a one semester study abroad program. She is on her way back to San Diego where she will continue her junior year studies at Point Loma Nazarene University so we are enjoying a couple of weeks together before her next term begins. Our youngest, Eli, is in the U.S. this Christmas. He is a college freshman in Orem, UT but returned to Colorado Springs for the holidays.

to be with relatives.



Eli was with us on Skype as we opened presents on Christmas morning.

Visiting the U.S.

Up Coming Home Assignment

We are planning to be in the U.S. for six months, from October 2015 to March 2016. We hope to visit as many of you as possible during this time and will soon be contacting our ministry partners to try and line up an itineration schedule. We look forward to seeing you again soon.

A Special Request

Christmas and the year end are a time when we reflect on all for which we are thankful. Your faithful prayers and generous gifts are a profound blessing for us, and a big part of what makes this ministry possible. We want to take this opportunity to request that you consider making an increase in your regular giving, or make a special one time gift toward our ministries as a way of helping us share the Good News. The Covenant has made it very easy to make [online gifts at this site](#).

Or you can send checks to the following;

ECC, Dept. of World Mission
8303 West Higgins Road
Chicago, Illinois 60631

Christ is alive and in our midst. That is why we celebrate Christmas and that is why we are here in Japan. Please pray that more and more people will encounter the living Christ as we seek to live out the good news where we have been planted.

Sincerely,

Jim and Hydi Peterson

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