

# PETERSON PERSONALS

Notes from Japan

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## Winter Chill, Warm Home

Our fall has been very full. Between teaching and coaching, Hydi's schedule at the Christian Academy (CAJ) has kept her at full speed with very few breaks. Jim teaches at the Covenant Seminary two days a week and serves on 3 denominational committees as well. The kids have had to work hard to make the adjustment to English language schooling. Add tennis lessons and basketball practice into the mix and it makes for a busy week. On weekends we go to Gunma, usually as a family and spend Saturday night sleeping on the floor at church after the gospel choir finishes practicing. Sunday worship is always a highlight of the week!

We mentioned our new home in the last letter. It is a 10 minute walk from CAJ which is great for Hydi and the kids. It is a large, American style house and we were particularly excited about the central heating, which is quite unusual in Japan. Imagine our dismay when we discovered that the first floor heating system was broken. We just had to bundle up until it finally got fixed on December 13<sup>th</sup>. Now we are enjoying our warm home more than ever!

## Christmas Celebrations

Once again we look forward to lots of activity around the church at this time of year. We will be holding our annual children's Christmas event on December 23<sup>rd</sup>. Then on the 26<sup>th</sup> we will have our Christmas worship followed by a potluck meal. Special musical guests will include the bell choir and a vocal group called Trinity. (See the World Mission insert in the upcoming Covenant Companion for more info)

Speaking of music, we have a number of events happening already and are looking forward to more. On December 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> our bell choir, gospel choir and children's choir performed at Christmas celebrations at two local nursing homes. On December 23<sup>rd</sup> all of our musical groups will perform at the annual Gunma Prefectural Christmas celebration. Then on Christmas day we will perform at a German Theme Park in Gunma called Kronenberg. Following a couple of mid-day performances, the highlight will be a fireworks bonanza synchronized to the music of our top flight vocal group, Trinity. The fireworks with music are an annual event but this is the first time to use live music. The event regularly draws a few thousand spectators!

We will finish the year with a bang on December 31<sup>st</sup> with the annual New Years Countdown Gospel Event. Once again the prefectural government has asked us to be the organizers. It will be held on the top floor of the prefectural capital building (32<sup>nd</sup> Fl.) from early in the evening until well past the magic hour. We will feature all of our musical groups, numerous other amateur

gospel performers, and a professional group from Tokyo. We are continually amazed that God makes this event possible. We are given complete freedom in content and message and the prefecture gives us several thousand dollars to help with the costs! Once again we will welcome in the New Year with shouts of "Hallelujah!" from the top of the highest building in Gunma.

## Helping the Hurting

On October 23<sup>rd</sup> the Chuetsu region of Niigata Prefecture was hit by a series of very strong earthquakes. Gunma is right next to Niigata and we received a pretty good jolt as well. You've probably seen and heard about the damage and tragic loss of life already. We have a Covenant church in Nagaoka City, not far from the epicenter and they sustained significant damage to their building. Fortunately no one connected with the church was injured. Jim was able to make it into Nagaoka the following day to check in on them. Over the next few weeks we were able to organize three more trips into the region to help out as volunteers. Activities included preparing and serving hot meals to people displaced from their homes, and performing live music for people living in evacuation facilities. It was a blessing to see God touch those in need through our meager efforts.

## Address Changes

Once again, just in case you missed it last time, our email address and web site address have all changed. Please make a note of these changes.

- Email address: [jimkpeterson@yahoo.co.jp](mailto:jimkpeterson@yahoo.co.jp)
- Web site URL: <http://www.geocities.jp/jimkpeterson/>

## Family Matters

Jim was able to visit his parents in October. It was painful to see the rapid progression of his father's Alzheimer's and the toll it is taking on the family. But it was a very timely and meaningful visit as well.

## Prayer Requests

- Please pray for Hydi as she teaches and coaches
- Please pray for the yearend events in Yoshioka
- Please pray for Jim as he teaches and pastors
- Please pray for our kids as they adjust to school in English at CAJ

## With Thanks!

It has been another fantastic year! We are deeply grateful to each and every one of you who have supported us through your faithful prayers and gifts.

In Christ,  
Jim, Hydi, Miles, Kendra & Eli