

December 2017

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Notes From Jim & Hydi

December 2017, Mt. Akagi, Gunma, Japan

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Dear Partners in Ministry

Autumn has come and gone and now we are already in the second week of Advent. This is a quiet time of the year for some of our work, and for that we are thankful as we have our hands full with other things which we will talk about below. We want to keep you informed as we deeply appreciate your ongoing prayers and thoughts.

Camping Season Winds Down

We hosted two groups in October and then had our last group in the first week of November. What a great season it has been; lots of camps, numerous campers and many enriching experiences for them. Given that Akagi Bible Camp is located at an altitude of 1,350 meters (4,400 ft.), our current plumbing

system requires that we drain the pipes and shut things down in the two main buildings by about mid or late November. We dream about someday being able to use the entire facility all year long, but for the time being, the house we live in is the only one that is functional year-round. Fortunately it is rather large so we are able to host smaller groups (up to about ten people) at our place during the winter. At the end of October we were thrilled to have a couple of visitors from the U.S. Tim Johnson is a former missionary to Japan who was deeply involved in the ministries of Akagi Bible Camp in the past, and is responsible for leading most of the renovations that have taken place so far. Tim brought a friend, Dave Nesburg, who is the executive director at Portage Lake Bible Camp in Michigan. It was exciting to have a fellow "camping guy" visit our place. Akagi Bible Camp is much, much smaller than Portage Lake so it was inspiring as well. We are looking forward to forging a closer connection between our camps in the future.

The big news at Akagi Bible Camp this fall was that our kitchen chief, Yumiko Seino, gave birth to her fifth child in mid-September. His name is Hotaru and he joins one sister and three brothers. Yumiko and her husband Shimon make up the other half of our core camp staff and we absolutely love working with them.



One of our last groups of the season, in October.





Yumiko back in the kitchen with her new baby who was less than a month old at the time. (Just for the record, we told her to just kick back and take it easy but she just couldn't stand to watch us bumbling around in the kitchen without her!)

Sports Ministries

November brought the opportunity to play in two major ladies doubles tournaments representing Gunma prefecture. The first was the National Ladies Doubles Tournament. Even though Team Gunma ended up losing in the first round to Kyoto prefecture it was a joy for Hydi to be playing at the national tournament again. After the team loss, Hydi's partner had to go back home to care for her school aged children but some of the other team members wanted to stay another day and watch the remaining teams as well as play friendly matches with other pairs who had lost the first day. As Hydi was one of the drivers they were grateful that she was willing to stay and they had a great time playing doubles with other pairs from all over Japan. The following week Hydi took another road trip with 11 ladies from Gunma. This time it was to represent the prefecture at the eight-prefecture senior tournament. Hydi was paired up with yet another partner to play in the 50+ age division. There were also pairs in the 55+, 60+, 65+, and 70+ so it was fun to cheer on teammates as well as perform a dance together at the evening party. New friendships were formed and existing ones were strengthened with these over night trips and team events.





Hydi and the Gunma Prefecture team at the National Ladies Tournament



Hydi and the Gunma Prefecture seniors team at the eight-prefecture tournament

The winter season also provides Hydi with the opportunity to officiate basketball games in the Tokyo area for the many international schools. She loves the chance to develop relationships with other officials, coaches, and players. Please pray with us that Hydi will be the fragrance of Christ in each of these settings and that her frequent travels between Gunma and Tokyo will be blessed with safety.





Basketball refs taking selfies in the office during half-time...

Asia Covenant Consultation

During the first week of November the Japan Covenant hosted a gathering of Covenant-connected groups from all over Asia. We welcomed sisters and brothers in Christ from India, Nepal, The Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand and China. There were also several U.S. visitors from the ECC including President Gary Walter and Executive Minister of Serve Globally, Al Tizon. It was a fantastic celebration and from our perspective here in Japan, it was a time when a new generation of young leaders really came to the forefront. They planned the entire event and it gives us great reason for hope here in the Nihon Seikei Kirisuto Kyodan (Japan Covenant).



Japan youth leading the worship sessions



Worshippers from eight countries finding a common language in song



The whole group





Visitors from the U.S. with our missionary staff

Family News

We have two items of family news this time around.

First, our eldest son Miles and his wife Miho are expecting a baby in May. The notion of being "grandparents" still seems very distant to us, but nevertheless we are thrilled and excited. Please keep Miho, Miles and the baby in your prayers!





Miles and Miho

Secondly, we ask for your prayers as Hydi and her sisters try to figure out what's best for their aging father, Siegfried. Since his wife Edith passed away just over a year ago he has found the adjustment very difficult and is in need of help. Hydi will be travelling to Colorado later this month to spend time with him, and possibly even bring him back home to Japan for a while to live with us.

We are half way thru Advent and Christmas is just around the corner. We hope and pray that this season will encourage you and provide many opportunities to recall, celebrate, proclaim and live out the Good News of Jesus Christ. Thank you for your prayers, gifts and thoughts! May the joy of Christmas be yours.

In Christ,

Jim and Hydi Peterson



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