

# Peterson Personals

## Notes from Tokyo

March, 2008

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### OUR PRAYERS ANSWERED!

We started working in Gunma way back in 1995, planning for the new church plant in Yoshioka. Weekly worship services began in Yoshioka in 1997. After ten years it seems that God has provided an answer to our prayers. Last fall we took a step of faith and Jim announced that he would step down as pastor, effective March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008. At first it was a bit of a shock to the small congregation, but as we focused our prayers on finding the next pastor, God began to open doors that we had never imagined. Now we are pleased to announce that as of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 (no; it's not a joke!!!) Mr. Michiharu Sezai will assume pastoral responsibilities at the Yoshioka Church. He is not finished with his studies at the Covenant Seminary so until he is certified and licensed his ministry will be supervised by Pastor Matsumoto, pastor of the nearby Maebashi Covenant Church. Mr. Sezai was a business man for many years before hearing the call to full time ministry. We pray that his past experiences and maturity will enable him to serve well at the Yoshioka church.



The kids' gospel choir at Christmas time.



Members of our congregation at Christmas.

## FAST PACED SCHOOL LIFE

This has been another active school year for Hydi at The Christian Academy in Japan. In addition to being head of the P.E. department, teaching P.E. and high school health, Hydi coached the high school tennis team (boys and girls) in the fall and was delighted to see her boys team bring home several trophies. They won the league and the final tournament. Just between us, I think she was especially tickled when our son Miles led the team with an undefeated record at First Singles!

Another highlight for Hydi was attending an international congress for physical educators, held on the northern island of Hokkaido in January. She was able to network with P.E. teachers from around the globe and meet face to face with leading researchers in her field.

Last summer Hydi got certified to teach Red Cross CPR/First Aid during our short stay in Colorado. CAJ has subsequently asked her to train most of their staff. Suddenly being in the position of teaching her co-workers and even the administrators has been quite a change from the ordinary!



Hydi's health class visited a convalescent home and did gardening with the residents.

### **ON THE UPSWING!**

The Covenant Seminary is growing at a steady rate amidst a general trend of declining numbers among Japanese seminaries. Currently the enrollment is just over 50 and we expect another batch of 10 or more to be accepted for the new school year. (It starts in April here in Japan.) Jim continues to teach homiletics (preaching) and a church history class that focuses on pietism and Covenant history. Later this month the school will graduate 8 students at the annual commencement ceremonies. We pray that they will all be blessed as they go out into the field of God's harvest!



Last year's Covenant Seminary graduates.

## FAMILY NEWS

- The big news is that we will be going to the U.S. this summer for a 1 year home assignment. It has been 10 years since we spent more than 3 months in the U.S. After thinking, discussing and praying over the matter we decided this was the right time for us to do an extended stay in the U.S. We will be living in Colorado Springs again with Hydi's parents where the kids will be attending local public schools. Hydi and I hope to visit as many of your churches as possible. Please let us know asap if there are particular times of the year that you would like us to reserve for a visit to your church!
- The kids continue to enjoy school at CAJ. Eli is in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade now, which means we no longer have any kids in elementary. He has worked hard to make the adjustments and meet the higher demands of middle school. He has also enjoyed the opportunities to participate in school sports teams. He played soccer in the fall, basketball in the winter, and now he is running track with his big brother!
- Kendra is in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and started off the year with quite a bang, running for and getting elected as V.P. of the student council. She also played volleyball in the fall and is playing basketball this spring. During the winter she decided to try out for the MS play instead of

being in sports. She got a big part in the play, which was an adaptation of The Emperor's New Clothes. (No, she wasn't the emperor!)

- Miles has been very active in sports all year. In the fall he led the boys varsity tennis team to a championship season. During the winter he played basketball, and despite being on crutches for 5 weeks after an early season ankle injury, by the end of the season he was back in action. The highlight was going to Seoul, Korea for the final tournament. He was thrilled to be selected to the all-tournament team. This spring he is in track and field.
- Hydi continues to be involved in tennis ministry back in Gunma and increasingly here in Tokyo. She regularly plays in tournaments and is able to meet many people on the courts.
- After six and a half years, Jim was finally relieved of duties as country coordinator of the Covenant Missionary Committee here in Japan. It was a blessing to be able to serve in that capacity but also a blessing to be relieved of it after such a long time.



In the Rockies, summer of '07	Miles' basketball action
	
Kendra's MS Drama	Eli about to score for the Knights!

## PRAYER REQUESTS

Please join us in prayer in the following ways:

- That the pastoral transition in Yoshioka would go smoothly
- That Hydi would receive the energy to keep up with a very heavy work load at CAJ
- That the Covenant Seminary would be blessed and protected as they train and send out Japanese church leaders
- That the kids would be able to finish this school year well, and make a smooth transition to life in the U.S. and big public schools next year
- That Hydi and I would continue to find time for each other amidst our busy schedules
- That preparations for and transition into our home assignment would go well

In Christ,

Jim, Hydi, Miles, Kendra and Eli Peterson