

# Peterson Personals

August, 2006

## Summer is Over

What a great summer it has been. Highlights included end of the school year in early June, on campus sports camps for all 3 kids, Bible camp in the mountains for Eli, arrival of Grandma and Grandpa from the U.S., an unforgettable family trip to Thailand, Miles' trip to California for basketball camp, English camp at Akagi Bible Camp, tennis tournaments for the whole family, family time at Lake Nojiri, and lots more. But as great as all of that was, even more exciting things have been happening at church in Yoshioka.



## Healing and signs of growth

In our last letter we shared some of the pain that has been experienced at the Yoshioka church during the last year. Numbers are still small and can vary greatly from week to week, but we are really encouraged by several developments.

Mrs. Matsuoka has been attending our church off and on for the past several years. Since the beginning of the year we have seen quite a bit of her and she has also brought her college age son and husband several times. Her husband is facing difficulties at work and this has prompted him to take a deeper look at his heart. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of July he expressed a confession of faith and his desire to seek baptism! One month later Mr. Fukuda began worshipping with us. He used to sing in the gospel choir that met at our church and has been seeking the Lord ever since. He has also expressed a confession of faith and desire to be baptized! We are hoping that both men could be baptized at Christmas and plan to begin preparation classes this fall.

During the spring we once again hosted the children's gospel choir. About 25 kids and several moms practiced weekly for a large event at the end of July. The director also teaches piano and voice lessons for about 20 individuals during the week. The kids' English classes also continue to grow, with almost 20 kids attending weekly.

While our family was in Thailand for a couple of weeks we had guest preachers and two of our core members led worship for the first time. Sometimes those moments when we are stretched are the most rewarding. While they had both been hesitant going into it, they both seemed to have been blessed by the experience.

Please pray that those newly seeking the Lord would experience spiritual growth, and that joyful praise would ring forth from our small congregation.

### A Tropical Adventure

On June 25<sup>th</sup> our family traveled to Thailand with our ECC coworkers for the first ever Asia Covenant Missionary Retreat in Hua Hin. It was the first time we had traveled as a family to a foreign country, other than our travels between our two home countries, Japan and U.S.



At the retreat we joined over 70 missionaries for a time of fellowship, learning, and worship. The theme was cross cultural communication and we found the program stimulating and inspiring. After the retreat ended on July 30<sup>th</sup> our family headed further south, eventually landing on the small island of Koh Tao. It was truly an adventure for all of us. We traveled by 3<sup>rd</sup> class train and an all night ferry to get there. Once on the island we rented a small bungalow on a beach for the next 5 nights and enjoyed swimming, snorkeling, fishing, hiking and exploring the small island on rented scooters.

### Miles' Basketball Adventure

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of July we put Miles on a plane all by himself, bound for California. Once there he was met and cared for by Jim's sister and family and Hydi's sister and family. From July 30<sup>th</sup> to August 4<sup>th</sup> he attended a Northwest Basketball Camp at Hope International University. It was quite an experience to face up to talented players his age and older in the U.S. and the high level of play and coaching but he found it extremely motivating. In the end, and much to his surprise, he was selected to play on the 9 man all-star team that faced the coaches on the final night of play. And at the closing awards ceremony he was even more surprised to receive the MVP award for the entire camp. He felt it was a time of unprecedented personal growth as a player

and as a person! Okay... sorry! I know we are sounding like proud parents. Please humor us.

### Akagi Bible Camp

The Japan Covenant has a camping facility on Mt. Akagi in Gunma and this year we were involved in two camping events there. July 27<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> was our annual English Camp and this year Hydi and Jim were the directors. It was a small group of campers



but a very rich time nevertheless. Since many people take English lessons at various Covenant churches, we use this camp as an opportunity to continue with the theme of English for those who want to learn more, but also to really present the Good News to them in a much more straightforward way than they would ever get in a regular English class.

Our denomination wide family camp, a.k.a. Covenant Refreshing Camp or CRC was held on August 14<sup>th</sup> thru 16<sup>th</sup>. This year the Northern District of the Japan Covenant was in charge of planning and directing the camp so Jim had a bit more responsibility than usual. We had more participants than we've seen in several years and the program was great! The special speaker dealt with the difficult but essential topic of the church and mental health issues. We also had a fabulous evening concert and came away feeling very blessed and refreshed.

### Back down to earth

Even as we write this Hydi has gone back to work at CAJ, and the kids will go back in a few more days. Jim's teaching schedule will start up again in October at the Covenant Seminary, but before that he will be making another quick trip to Thailand for a gathering of the International Federation of Free Evangelical Churches. Please remember the following matters in your prayers:

- The Yoshioka Church and those who are newly seeking Christ
- Hydi's work at CAJ, teaching Phys. Ed., health and coaching
- Jim's teaching at the Covenant Seminary

- Our kids as they return to school after a long summer vacation

Your faithful prayers and generous support are a constant source of encouragement and a blessing to us. We count it a privilege to be a part of your team.

In Christ,

Jim, Hydi, Miles, Kendra and Eli Peterson