

PETERSON PERSONALS

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Goodbye Colorado, Hello Gunma

Modern air transport really is amazing. A recent visit to the Boeing factory in Everett, WA reinforced this fact for me. But then again, 14 hours in one of those birds with three little kids and 500 other people is quite an experience. Our parents' stories of two and three week cruises across the Pacific Ocean sound more appealing every time we travel. But this is the 90's, so like all modern folk we bought tickets for Northwest flight #19 and on March 30th we left Colorado Springs and flew to Tokyo by way of Minneapolis. (Hmm... not the most direct route) Our flight took us over Canada, Alaska, and Siberia. Clear skies and continuous daylight gave us an excellent view of the northern wilderness and an accompanying sense of deep gratitude for a call to Japan rather than Alaska or Russia.

Yoshioka; A happening place!

Our return to Gunma, and the town of Yoshioka couldn't have been more pleasant. A very comfortable and spacious house was awaiting us (and all of our boxes). Our first Sunday worship service at the new Yoshioka church was absolutely thrilling. In addition to the four core members we left behind last June, there are seven new people who attend regularly and two or three more who come occasionally. The building has also undergone a major transformation during our absence. Tim Johnson and several other volunteers put in an incredible amount of work and it really shows. We're still not done but it feels and looks great!

Our church isn't the only thing growing in Yoshioka. In fact the whole town is changing rapidly. A new bridge linking us to Maebashi, the biggest city in Gunma, will be completed by the end of this year. New houses are going up everywhere, and we even have our first shopping mall.

School Days

Miles is a first grader at the local Japanese elementary school. It's a whole new world for him, after spending six

months in a public school in Colorado Springs, but he is thoroughly enjoying himself and has had little trouble remembering his Japanese. Kendra has happily adjusted to Japanese kindergarten and her language is also coming along quite well. So far Miles and Kendra are still speaking to each other in English, but we will see how long that lasts... Eli is enjoying lots of parental attention with the older two in school. He seems to think he has more or less mastered the English language even though Hydi and I are the only ones who can decode what he says.

Please Pray

- **For the Yoshioka Church**

That God would continue to build us up and use us to spread the good news in the town of Yoshioka.

- **For a Clear Faith**

There are 3 or 4 people in our church who are in the process of finding their faith in Christ and discovering how to live it out. Pray for spiritual growth.

- **For Summer Camps**

Akagi Bible Camp, our Covenant camp facility, is only 45 minutes from Yoshioka so we will be involved in a variety of ways this summer. Pray for changed hearts, as many campers hear the Gospel in new and challenging ways. Pray also for those responsible for leading the camps.

- **For English Camp**

One of our camps is called English camp. It is geared towards people of all ages who are interested in speaking and studying English. We actually have a lot of fun in the process and the evening chapel times are in Japanese. Hydi and I are serving as directors this year so please pray for us as we scramble to get things organized.

Thanks

We thank God for the privilege of being back in Japan and we thank you for your prayers, thoughts, and gifts which make it all possible.

In Christ,

Jim, Hydi, Miles, Kendra, & Eli