

# The Japanese Lantern

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

NOVEMBER, 2009—  
JANUARY, 2010

## Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2010!

Dear Friends,

Debbie and I hope you all had a wonderful time with family and friends at Christmas and New Years time. So many of you responded to our needs with great generosity that was truly overwhelming. Thank you so much for your kindness and prayers in our behalf and for our relatives during their losses. We praise the Lord for His abundant blessings during an especially challenging time for us.

Stacey Herrington, new missionaries in Haruna, Japan. Debbie and I, as well as the Matsudo church received this gift of software which will now allow us to prepare reports, brochures, advertisements, and other materials much easier than before. Thank you Paul and Stacey!



**Gathering for the Yokota Church of Christ Dedication, November, 23, 2009**

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You will notice that our Japanese Lantern has a new look, thanks to new software which was given to us by Paul &



We pray that God will richly bless your life in this new year, that you will find many ways to serve Him and that the borders of His kingdom will be spread throughout the world.

### Click on Links Below for Homepages about Japan

- [Matsudo Church of Christ](#)
- [Carrell Family News](#)
- [Japanese Lantern \(past issues\)](#)
- [Japan School of Evangelism](#)
- [Ibaraki Area Churches](#)
- [Paul & Stacey Herrington](#)

## Homepages Built for Japanese Churches

In a day when the Internet is so prevalent and most people search websites on a wide variety of topics, it seemed appropriate to consider how to construct homepages for churches in Japan who may have neither knowledge or

time to build their own sites.

Out of 60 Churches of Christ in Japan 20 are in the Ibaraki area and only 5 of those had their own homepages. Having made a site for Matsudo and several for my family and relatives, I wanted

to use what I had learned for our neighbors to the north. So during Thanksgiving week and early December, I made a general homepage for Ibaraki churches sites for 3 churches in Ibaraki. I pray they can be used for God's glory!

**Photo Albums** (Click on these links for photos for this issue)

[Japanese Lantern Photos](#)

[Matsudo Church Photos](#)



## New Buildings Dedicated at Yokota and Ochanomizu

We were thrilled to participate in “history in the making” as God provided two new worship facilities for brothers and sisters during November!

The Yokota Church of Christ was begun initially by military families who had been stationed at the Yokota airbase and who built a building in 1958. The facility had grown very feeble after 50 years, so it is with great excitement and anticipation of God’s blessings that we look forward to seeing this new building put to good use in the future. While we waited for the construction to be completed, the church met for a time at a school owned by Yokota church member, Bro. Nakamura. It has been a long time in coming and it is wonderful when the goal of having a new facility for continued work for the Lord sees fruition. Thanks to the prayers and hard

work of a number of many dedicated Christians, funds for the building were raised and construction was completed during 2009. On November 23<sup>rd</sup> during the Annual Joint Worship service, we were thrilled to participate when 87 people came for the dedication of the Yokota building.

Less than a week later, on November

29<sup>th</sup>, the Ochanomizu Church of Christ was able to announce the end of what they called their “tabernacle” time when their new building could also have a special dedication service. About 200 people gathered to witness the event and participate in songs and prayer to God as they recounted how God brought about this new building in the middle of Tokyo which can now continue to be



**The New Yokota Church of Christ building 2009**

used as an outreach to many in central Tokyo. We hope you will enjoy the album of photos showing these two gatherings as we rejoice with these brethren in having

new facilities which can be used for God’s glory.



new facilities which can be used for God’s glory.

**Photos: (Above & left) Ochanomizu Building 200 seat auditorium & fellowship hall**

*“Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain.”  
(Psalms 127:1)*



## Christmas and New Years Time in Matsudo



**Members and friends at Matsudo Christmas potluck**

Thanks to all of you who kept Bro. Tamura in your prayers. It has been a joy to have him back for regular worship and Bible study each week. As I mentioned in our last report he can now lead the songs and function in the worship while seated. When he needs help either passing the Lord’s Supper or the contribution basket, I’m able to be his legs

during that short time.

During the month of December, I prepared lessons which looked at the birth of Jesus from 3 perspectives. On the 13<sup>th</sup>, from Matthew 1 and 2 we considered “The Royal Birth of Jesus,” since Christ’s royal ancestry and kingship are the main focus there. That afternoon, 3 of the Matsudo ladies prepared a special flannel

graph presentation and songs to try to accurately teach the children about Jesus’ birth. This was followed by a party to which some of the kids even invited their friends. Then on the 20<sup>th</sup>, “Jesus Birth means God Became Human” was the topic from John 1. It is always important for us not to forget Jesus was with the Father from the beginning, so

is God who became flesh when He was born. That afternoon we had a potluck meal with some traditional dishes of the season including turkey and dressing which Debbie



made and lots of cookies too. Although I had another lesson from Luke 2 prepared at our normal Bible study time which happened to be on Christmas Eve, all those who came wanted to discuss Romans 14 and our freedom in

Christ instead. Afterward, they came to our house for refreshments and fellowship.



The final lesson of 2009 and the first lesson of 2010 was from 1 Peter 4 and 2 Peter 1, to help focus our minds on doing God's will and becoming Christians who produce fruit for the Lord effectively. Please pray that all these lessons have planted good seed in the hearts of

both our members and friends so we can dedicate ourselves more to His service in this New Year.



**Sis. Kojima wearing a kimono of the season**



## An Adventure in Faith

Waiting to see how God's plan will unfold is one of the ways God teaches us patience and perseverance. It is important to keep on target, remembering to accomplish our goals even when we don't know where our support will come from as we wait for God's supply.

December was especially exciting since we anticipated our support and work situation to drastically change and were not sure what to do. We were totally overwhelmed by the contribution from our sponsoring church which will now allow us to continue working in Matsudo though this next

year! Praise the Lord! A number of Japanese brethren have also contributed to our needs with monetary gifts which have helped so much during these times. Thanks to all of you who prayed for us, considered our needs and helped us with your contributions. God bless you.

*"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."*

*(John 1:14)*

## Family and Other News and Notes

Visitors in December: It was



**Mark & Linda Franklin visit us in Matsudo**

wonderful to have Mark & Linda Franklin from Greenville, TX visit Matsudo on 12/20. Mark spent about 12 years in Japan and can both speak and read Japanese. His wife understands and speaks Japanese too. They joined us for worship and the afternoon potluck. They are considering options for serving the Lord in Japan.

We also had Ron & Cindy Hobelman, parents of Debi Hobelman, doing missions in Sendai. They were in school with me at Harding about 37 years ago. What a joy it was to renew our friendship.



**Ron & Cindy Hobelman from Kansas**

Battling a Cold and Hay fever: Thanks to Sis. Kojima, one of our Matsudo members, I was introduced to a local doctor



## Shining the Light of the Gospel in Japan

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.” (Psalms 119:105)

### MATSUDO CHURCH OF CHRIST

Minami Hanashima 3-48-5  
Matsudo, Japan 271-0065

Homepage: <http://sites.google.com/site/matsudococ/>

Phone: 047-362-8858

Fax: 047-368-7822

Email: [matsudochurch@gmail.com](mailto:matsudochurch@gmail.com)

### Prayer Requests

- For the health of Bro. and Sis. Tamura
- For the spiritual growth of each member at Matsudo church
- For the Lord's wisdom and guidance as we plan for 2010.
- That those thinking about becoming Christians this year will have courage to obey the gospel of Christ.
- For more men for Matsudo church.

### Contact Information

**Steve & Debbie Carrell**

**Dai 2 Marukame Haitsu 201**

**Minami Hanashima 3-44-6**

**Matsudo, Japan 271-0065**

**Home phone: 047-368-7822**

**(Japan country code 81)**

**Steve's e-mail:**

**[fujikid76@yahoo.com](mailto:fujikid76@yahoo.com)**

**Debbie's e-mail:**

**[crossstitcher24@yahoo.com](mailto:crossstitcher24@yahoo.com)**

## Highlights from 2009



**Matsudo LST 2009 with Rebecca & Elizabeth in June**



**Summer Retreat in Ibaraki - August**



**Paul & Stacey Herrington arrive as missionaries to Haruna in September**



**New Church Buildings for Yokota and Ochanomizu brethren in November**

## Our Children Coming to Japan

who has provided medicine for a lingering cold and cough I have had throughout November and December. Since I use my voice so much for singing, preaching, and teaching, this has been a challenge, but the Lord has sustained my voice and the medicine helps.

Marcia's Paintings and Trip: Marcia prepared some illustrations for the Japanese Fukuinshi (Gospel) magazine, which should be used sometime in 2010. She is also planning a trip to Japan next March.

Matt & Shi in LST for Matsudo: We were also thrilled to learn that Matt and Shi were asked to be an LST team to come in the summer of



**Photo taken in 2006 after Matt & Shi's Wedding. These are the three who will be coming to Japan, Lord willing in 2010**

2010 to Matsudo. Their training should begin in January. Please pray for them and Matsudo church.

May God richly bless you all with His love and grace in 2010.

In His love and service,  
Steve & Debbie Carrell