

# The Japanese Lantern

Matsudo Church of Christ

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## Sponsoring Church:

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**Photo Albums** (Click on this link for photos for this issue)

[Japanese Lantern Photos](#)

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## Preparations for Our 2010 Furlough

We are now back in Japan for our 2nd term of work in Matsudo. It has been quite a while since we reported to you about the Carrells missions in Japan, but most of the past several months have been our furlough trip.

Some seem to have the idea that when a missionary goes on a furlough, he's taking a "long vacation." Perhaps some have never experienced what is involved in a missionary's furlough trip. I hope our report will be both informative and give you a taste of our travel "adventures" in 10 states.

Besides the airline flight which included passing through security (with no problems), there

were prior preparations of confirming each church and individual along our route to schedule speaking times and places to stay. Many gifts were bought for friends in the U.S., packing for a 2 1/2 month trip took some careful choices, and planning for a vehicle, phone, and internet to use while there had to be planned. In Japan, Matsudo members agreed to cover our expenses, understanding that we would repay them on our return. They also took care of our car, motor scooter, and house security while we were gone. Then six preachers were contacted to speak each Sunday during our absence. We are so grateful to our home church (Matsudo) members helping us

in all these needs. On our departure day, Bro. Nakahara drove us to the hotel bus leaving for Narita. With travel plans, suitcases, and needed travel documents, we were finally set to go to the U.S.

An important part of our "gear" was a laptop computer which Bro. Joe Bickley of the Yokota congregation kindly fixed up and loaned to us for the trip. It was an indispensable tool which allowed us all along the way to keep in touch via e-mail, Facebook, and Skype communication. We are also very grateful to many in Japan who gave us freewill gifts to be used in our travels and for use in the U.S.

## Arrival and Visits in Indiana

Arriving in Indianapolis, Bro. Lynn Clapp met us at the airport and took us to our first U.S. meal - Arby's and Dairy Queen - quite a treat for us because these are not in Japan! We were driven to the home of Mark and Cindy Kady and ushered to the rooms which became our "headquarters" in

Kokomo, Indiana. Our first week was spent visiting and eating with several families in our sponsoring church. The Kadys initially allowed us to use a car for traveling because another car was being checked over for our use for the rest of our long trip. We visited Debbie's mother for a couple days,

then returned to look over a 1998 Cadillac which 2 members had purchased in the name of the church for our use. This allowed us to have a lower insurance rate than a rental car. So it was time to set out for our 2nd week of travels in Ohio.



## Click on These Links for Japan Homepages

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

## Ohio Travels - Columbus, Byesville, and Hamilton

On our trip to visit my uncle in **Columbus**, we had an initial “scare” with the engine overheating on the road. Nursing it along to a gas station, we were surprised that the radiator drank a whole gallon of coolant plus another gallon of water! With this temporary “fix” we continued on to Columbus, praying that God would help us not to have further car trouble and thanking Him for letting us get to my uncle’s home. After a great visit there and with no apparent further leakage, we traveled on to **Byesville**, Ohio to the Stop 9 Church of Christ.

Speaking to the senior citizens of the Golden 60’s was my first official report of the trip. It was well received by many who recounted their various connections with Japan too. The same report was later given to the Sunday evening church group at Byesville. The congregation seemed greatly encouraged about our Matsudo outreach and were also very generous to help us on our Stateside journey.



Our next stop was in **Hamilton**, Ohio where we stayed with our good friends, David and Peggy Stidham. They called together a group from their Middletown congregation to meet in their home. There in the living room on a big screen T.V. I showed them our presentation. Their church also contributed to our travels.

*On arriving there, they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles (Acts 14:27)*

## Tennessee Travels - Nashville and Memphis

Leaving Ohio, we headed to **Nashville**, to stay with my cousin, David Carrell. It was a great pleasure to visit with David and his wife, Marti, while we spent most of our time helping my Dad, Bill Carrell. One of our goals for this furlough was to spend some “family time” as well, so it was good to also see my Uncle Bob while In Nashville. My Aunt Juanita had passed away since our last furlough, so her absence was missed.

One of our goals while in Nashville was to check on the welfare



of my (Steve’s) Dad who is in assisted care living. While I stayed in Nashville to get started, Debbie took a short plane trip over the weekend to visit Marcia and Mark in Spokane, Washington.

We had been informed that “bedbugs” had been found in his apartment and that he was being moved to another apartment. But we were did not know we would be facing a massive ordeal with many things not ready when we arrived. Taking matters in hand, we contacted those responsible and asked for immediate improvement of all the care he should have been receiving. So we were able to reconnect his telephone and internet services, buy him a new T.V. and

chest of drawers, and move all things needed for his living to his new apartment. He was also sick, but after a visit to the V.A. hospital, he was able to recover during the week we were there. We went to church together and even got some old friends - the Gurganuses over for a visit. My cousin and uncle have also been a great help for Dad’s needs for which we are thankful.

Before leaving Tennessee, we spent a couple nights with my sister Joyce in **Memphis**. It was good to catch up on news from her world and to spend some time together.

## Arrival in Texas - Greenville, Clyde, and Abilene

Some unexpected surprises awaited us in Greenville, Texas, where we met some friends from our past - Wayne Childers and John and Beth Reese. It is very good to see how God has blessed their lives over nearly 30 years. The Mark Franklin family also go to Johnson St. Church of Christ and we stayed at their home while Mark set up a meeting for me to speak there. Although it was their first time to hear about Matsudo, they showed great interest and we received

some individual contributions to our Japan work. We stayed with Debbie’s sister, Teresa in Clyde. Her husband, Jimmy had passed away in August 2009, so it was quite different at her home too. It gave 4 sisters a chance to get together after many years, so Karen flew in from Denver and we all went to visit Deadra (4th sister) about an hour away.

While in Abilene, we visited Matt and Shi as well as many other friends we knew over

the years. It was good to meet Terry Savoie and his wife Faye who have been good friends to our children. We visited Bill and Miseon Whitley. We also met Joe and Ruth Betts, Daniel and Yuriko Garcia, and the Japanese group they work with in Abilene. We thank God for opening so many opportunities for us.



*Matt celebrated 27 yrs. with Shi’s planned party of friends. while we were there*

## New Supporting Congregations in Oklahoma

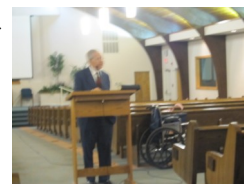
The Choctaw Church of Christ in Oklahoma city was a new supporter of our work in Japan, having been promoted by James and Sarah Kriwanek (Sarah is daughter of Paul and Janet Crouch). Unfortunately, Sarah got sick and was unable to keep us, however, James' parents, Stephen and Linda Kriwanek offered to keep us in their home. We were very surprised how much we shared in common, yet it was our first time to meet them. Preaching on Sunday at Choctaw, while showing my slides, we were thrilled at the warm reception and glad to make so many new friends. One of

the elders, Bro. Dayton Keesee, was a surprise because he had known my mother and father at Abilene Christian College in 1948 before they married! It is great to have this congregation as one of our new supporters.

In nearby Shawnee, I had opportunity to speak at the Newalla Church of Christ. Eleven of their members including Paul and Janet Crouch had come to visit Yokota and Matsudo in 2009. What a joy to see them again and report about our work in Japan. Several individuals from their church now support us.

While in Oklahoma, I began feeling pain

in my arm and back. I think our travels by car, sleeping on all kinds of beds, and so on was taking its toll. I had to visit a chiropractor while there and also a dentist for a tooth which broke at church. But we are so thankful to God for these new supporters and their commitment to our needs. Please pray for them and for us.



*Bro. Dayton Keesee teaches Bible at Choctaw Church of Christ*

## Visiting Relatives and Friends in Missouri

One of our former supporters had been the Red Bridge Church of Christ in Kansas City, Kansas. My Cousin Ben Church and his wife Liz live just across the border in Blue Springs, Missouri. We spent five days with them hoping to get another opportunity to tell some there about our new work in Matsudo. Two members of the mission committee met with us and I had a chance to tell them briefly about our work. Another exciting thing for us was to meet with an Asian Bible class which we had attended our last furlough. It has grown

and done well, now providing Bible lessons for Chinese, Taiwanese, Korean, and Japanese students in English. We pray that in the future, these opportunities may flourish for us and for the church there.



*Asian Bible Class at Red Bridge*

It was also great to spend some time with Ben and Liz, catching up on our family news. While there we got to visit my

Uncle Reu (my Mom's youngest brother) and his wife, Alice Jean. It saddened us to learn after our return to Japan that she had passed away, but we are grateful for the time we got to visit with them.

Leaving the Kansas City area, we stopped one night to visit briefly with Mark and Lisa Light in St. Louis. We had known them about 10 years before when they and their family were at the Yokota Church of Christ in Japan. The next morning we drove back to Kokomo to rest up a little before our final long trip to Michigan.

## Final Travel Adventures in Michigan and Indiana

It was a four hour drive each way to Muskegon, Michigan to visit a church which was supporting us, but we had never met them. Bro. Don Walt, who had known us in Japan many years ago in the military, was able to persuade the congregation to step out in faith to support us. He personally put us up in a very nice hotel and made the appointment for me to teach a Bible class and preach the last Sunday of October. It was a very cold morning, but the congregation warmly welcomed us, and one elderly brother got up afterward and told the con-

gregation that they were glad they had decided to support us after meeting us in person. Many of the members became our Facebook friends too and we hope to keep in touch during our next term.

Heading back to Kokomo, we visited more members, saw dentist, doctor, and eye care specialists, as well as weighed all suitcases as we packed them for our return. I gave a final message to a Bible class Sunday morning, then besides a couple more visits we thought we were done with adventures. On Sunday night returning home

from Bible class, out of a dark thicket, a deer bolted straight toward our car, dented the hood a bit and cracked a side light, but kept running after sliding across the hood! We had not hit anything all across 10 states but hit a deer at the very end! Amazing!

On our trip to Indianapolis, Lynn Clapp took us on a final visit to my Uncle Jim Carrell's home. Bro. Mark Kady also rented us a room near the airport so we could rest before travel. Thanks to all of you for kindnesses, prayers, and support!





**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)

**Snapshots During Our Furlough  
(see more in the Photo Album)**

**Matsudo Church of Christ**

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**Pecan Festival in Clyde, Texas**



**Barbecuing in Abilene, Texas**



**Taking a long walk in Missouri**



**Pausing for a Rest Stop in Michigan**

**Prayer Requests**

- Thanks to God for safety in our Furlough travels
- Thanks to God for some funds for Japan Missions He allowed us to raise
- For spiritual growth and maturity of Matsudo church members
- For effective follow up of the LST readers and their families.
- For more spiritual leadership and insight for our Matsudo members

**Family and Other News**

Sad News: After our return from furlough we received word that my Aunt Alice Jean Church (my mother's brother's wife) passed away after a long illness. We were thankful we got to visit briefly in the States. Please remember the Churches in prayer.

Gohdoh Reihai: On November 23rd, 8 members from Matsudo church attended the annual Joint Worship meeting at the Ochanomizu Church of Christ. Bro. Nao Fukushima was featured speaker on "The Greatness of the Christian Life"

Recovering from Travels: Debbie and I are not as young and "spry" as we used to be. The traveling and sleeping in unfamiliar beds caused me some back pains, requiring a chiropractor. We're both trying to take it easy and rest up from our nearly 4000 mile trip. Thank you all for your prayers.

Our Thanks: To all those who fed us, kept us in your homes, gave us monetary gifts, and helped us in countless ways during our furlough, thank you all so much! We thank God that He has blessed us with friends like you. We hope to keep in touch with all of you from time to time during our next term in Japan.

Facebook and Skype Contacts: We are happy that many of you keep up with us more often through Facebook and Skype. Please contact us if you'd like to become a Facebook or Skype friend.

As we approach the end of 2010, we are thankful to have many of our ties renewed, and look forward to sharing God's message with many in Japan throughout this year and into 2011.

In His love and service,  
Steve & Debbie Carrell