



December, 2011-January, 2012

THE JAPANESE LANTERN

Matsudo Church of Christ

Sponsoring Church:

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Photo Albums (Click on this link for photos for this issue)
[Japanese Lantern Photos](#)

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Worship and Study at Mito for New Years

It is customary for Christians in Japan to begin the New Year at the Mito Church of Christ where we gather to praise God and discuss a useful topic of interest for our spiritual growth. This year, Bro. Masa Nonogaki spoke about "Men and Women Created to be Like God." in relation to the Role of Women. In February and March, he will continue with "How Human Sin has affected the Man-Woman Relationship," and "The Trinity in Relation to the Man-Woman Relationship." It was all very uplifting and useful to us as we gathered

with Christians from Ibaraki, Tokyo, and Shizuoka.

From Matsudo church, the Kyle Story family went with us along with Bro. Komuro, who has recently started attending Matsudo church. We also enjoyed the fellowship going and returning.



Storys and Bro. Komuro at New Years Meeting

All would have been fine except for an accident that happened to us as we were about to leave Mito. Nothing quite like starting out the new year with a "fender-bender. A couple cars in



Awaiting Police due to "Fender Bender"

front of the car I was following paused briefly when the light turned green for a motor scooter turning left. I didn't notice in time and "tapped" the rear end of the car in front of me. Fortunately, there were no injuries and it did not appear to me to be more than a few scratches on the cars. But it turned out to be expensive for me and delayed us a while. I was very glad that my insurance covered it all and my 60% discount may go down to about 40% discount. The Lord was very kind to us once again.



Bro. Masa Nonogaki - featured speaker

Using Our Tools for New Years

I decided to use Publisher for making a 2002 Calendar, New Years cards for Japan, a Pictorial Church Directory, and a Meishi (Name card) for myself this year. We're very thankful to Paul & Stacey Herrington for providing the software for us, so besides our church bulletin and this newsletter, I thought it might be good to broaden its

use. Making most of these in both English and Japanese allowed me to get a feel for how to do it. It did take a lot of time, but now that a template has been made, it should be easier in the future.

Later on, I'm hoping to prepare tracts and other

materials to distribute for outreach in our neighborhood.

Another hobby of ours has been genealogy research on our family tree. "Ancestry.com" and "Find-a-Grave" are 2 sites we find useful for this hobby. This has led Debbie and me to find a lot of history we hope will be interesting to our family over the years.

Prayer Requests

- For continuing Eastern Japan earthquake relief efforts, care, and support
- For fund-raising efforts and mission preparations of the Taylor family
- Thanks to God as church members at Matsudo grow in faith.
- For Debbie to gain more strength after her cancer.
- For our new grandson, Corban and for his parents' wisdom to raise him
- For the Storys' future plans and getting a visa for Nahoko.



God Has Purpose for our Lives - Debbie's Article



Well, my long journey is over. My doctor says I'm in remission from my lymphoma! God has been merciful and has answered

your many prayers. I think God still has something for me to do on this earth.

Where do I begin...It all began during our furlough in 2010. I was having problems with pain in my abdomen and I thought it might be something I ate or cancer. When we got back to Japan in October, I continued to have pain off and on. Finally, in mid- January 2011, having pains again, we went to a doctor Steve goes to and he suggested I have some tests run at the hospital I usually go to for my diabetes check-ups.

Tests were scheduled...an endoscope was used to check out my stomach and they did a colonoscopy to check out my intestines. Not fun at all. In Japan they do not put one to sleep for these procedures. They deadened the throat with a solution but it was still Gag Gag. I have a very high gag reflex. Well, the results of those tests were good and I did not have stomach or intestinal cancer. February and March were spent having tests like a CT scan, blood and other specimens, MRI, etc. done to determine what the problem was and preliminary to the surgery.

By April 2011 Dr. Kashimura, an expert on lymphoma and leukemia, scheduled a week in the hospital for surgery to take a biopsy and determine the course of action. After the results came back we were told I had non-Hodgkin's disease! We were shocked and numbed at the news. But, I thought "we all have to die of something someday and as a Christian, it is like Paul said, staying on earth benefits others but to die is to be with the Lord." That thought helped me a lot. Marcia, our daughter who lives in Spokane, came to help just after I went home from the hospital.

Before the first chemo therapy sessions I had to have a Radium injection and CT scans. Finally, the big day arrives. I was to stay in the hospital one week while they gave me my first chemo session and observe how my body would react to the chemicals. The drugs are

introduced into the body intravenously so my arms and hands had to keep mostly immobile. The first day took about 6 hours and the next day was 4 hours. Thanks to our computer guru at Yokota Church of Christ, I had a laptop to use and watch DVDs since I could not do much while hooked up to the I.V. and I would not be bored.

Dr. Kashimura told me that a week or so after the first chemo session my hair would start to fall out and within a week it would all be gone. At that time my hair was long and I decided to get it cut short, which was a good idea because hair was falling out by the handful. I was coping with this by thinking of how to lose my hair without losing my sense of humor. A good friend of mine sent me a joke about a woman waking up every morning counting the loss of hairs and in the end she was thankful for no hair to have to fuss with. There are advantages: use less shampoo, not worry about "bad hair days", and I matched my hats, scarves, etc. with my outfits. Another thing that happened was my eyebrows, eyelashes, and nose hairs were gone, Oh My!

One image I had of people who go through chemo therapy was having nausea and vomiting. But, because of some medicine the doctor prescribed I only had slight nausea and a little queasiness after the first 2 months. Medications have improved so much in the last 10 years! God is good. Before I knew I had cancer last year, I had lost about 20 lbs, which I needed to lose anyway, and because I didn't feel like eating sometimes I have kept most of the weight off!

One side effect of the chemo therapy besides loss of hair and nausea is some nerve damage. My fingers and toes became numb. I experienced loss of strength in my fingers and feet. Walking became a little unsteady. I've had to learn to do many things differently or more slowly. As many of you know, I love to crochet and do cross stitching. I have had to adjust my way of doing these tasks. Also holding a wash cloth to do the dishes and even wash myself in the shower has been affected. But, I just fall back and punt and adjust how I do my tasks. Steve

says I'm "Cleans With a Fist" like the girl in the movie Dances With Wolves; she was named *Stands With A Fist*.

There were 3 things that I was cautioned about while under chemo therapy: catching chicken pox, fevers, and becoming constipated. I wore a mask when we went to crowded places, canceled all my children's English classes and drank tons of water. I had to measure my temperature 3 times a day and often after the 2 day chemo sessions I would have a slight fever. Because I am a diabetic, this also became a problem. I had to start taking insulin because the chemicals cause a person's blood sugar levels to rise. I told Steve I felt like a human pincushion because of being poked and prodded by needles.

From April through October, as I was going through these 8 chemo sessions (2 days/session), I had to make many adjustments. The simplest task would leave me exhausted. Steve would often have to help with cleaning and some cooking at times, especially a week or so after the treatment. I needed to rest often.

Now that I look back at all these experiences that God has helped me to overcome, I'm thankful for Steve, the brothers and sisters of the Church, and my family. I believe God arranged for just the right doctor at a hospital, only a 10 minute walk from our house. My cup runneth over. There Is Life After Cancer.



Debbie Carrell leaving for Ochanomizu English Bible Class



Christmas Time in Matsudo

In an attempt to reach out to children and to those in our neighborhood, we usually have several opportunities to tell about the



Neighborhood Children at Christmas Party (Doing Handwork)

birth of Jesus. Although we know he was likely not born on December 25th, since many are interested in finding out about Jesus from all they see and hear, we believe it to be a good opportunity to speak about his birth. Matthew, Luke, and John approach the birth of Jesus from different perspectives, so emphasizing both his humanity and divinity, we find many having a great deal of interest in learning more about our Savior and Lord.

For the children, the ladies prepared a presentation and party to follow. On Christmas Eve, Bro. Kyle Story spoke on the gifts we give back to God as the Magi showed their adoration of King Jesus. I translated from English to Japanese. I



Kyle Story Preaches at Matsudo

spoke one week about the faithful parents of Jesus and another week about the visit of the wise men to see Jesus. We also enjoyed some good meals and fellowship as well.

Classes in Matsudo and Yokota

As Debbie has felt better, her desire to teach children Bible has also returned as well. She decided to teach a weekly class at Matsudo instead of just once a month. Also at Yokota, she is resuming teaching the children there as well. This time, she is emphasizing the Life of Christ in the New Testament, rather than the Old Testament studies she had taught before. The kids both congregations seem very happy to have Debbie back again as their teacher. At Matsudo, we are also very thankful that Nahoko Story has joined as a teacher for the children as well.

I'm now teaching about Leadership from

the book of Nehemiah for the Yokota adults and my Saturday class at Matsudo has been in the Prison Epistles of Paul - so far Colossians, Philemon, and now Philippians.

Debbie's printer gave out and her old monitor needed to be upgraded, so we were able to find cheap replacements at a nearby computer store. She's thrilled now to be able to scan material for Sunday school classes. Both Debbie and I are learning more about using our scanners for organizing our office materials as well, adding more pictures we can share with others.



Scanning Photos to share with friends

Bro. Takashi Iwasaki Passes Away Suddenly

We were saddened when Bro. Takashi Iwasaki, preacher for the Tsuchiura Church of Christ in Ibaraki had a heart attack and died on January 27th at the age of 79. He had been active in teaching at JSE (Japan School of Evangelism), was a prolific reader, and had a great deal of knowledge of both Japanese history and the Bible. He was very dedicated to sharing the gospel with people and often welcomed people warmly, discussing both

Scriptures and general information on a wide variety of topics. He was a very good scholar. He will be greatly missed by many in the brotherhood.

The funeral was held on February 1st. Near his home. Besides the eulogy for Bro. Iwasaki, several sang from the chorus group of which he was a member and a number of hymns to bid him farewell were very spontaneous. We pray for the comfort of his family and friends.



Bro. Takashi Iwasaki



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)

Highlights - December, 2011 and January, 2012 (see more in the **Photo Album**)

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Matt, Shi, and Corban Carrell



Visiting Sis. Nakama at the Hospital



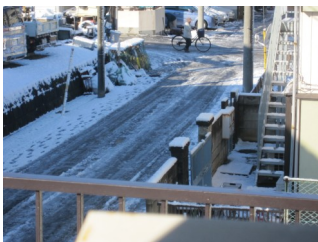
Bro. Gamou Leading Morning Worship at Matsudo Church



Debbie Begins Mark Study with Children in the New Year

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](#)
- [Les & Sara Taylor](#)



Winter at our home in Matsudo

Other News and Notes

Sis. Nakama's Colonoscopy: Normally the picture of good health, one week Sis. Nakama complained of some nausea and went to the hospital for a checkup. They said she needed a colonoscopy to check if she had cancer. In answer to our prayers, we were thrilled that she came through it all with a "clean slate" - no cancer or further problems.

Searching for Apartments:: Our landlady, Mrs. Nakajima has been very cooperative in searching out possible apartments for the Taylors. We saw a couple. We're praying that one of them may be available when the Taylors come and that they can raise all the funds they will need. They have about 20% of their goal so far.

Steve's Dad and sister on Skype: After returning to Japan to help Dad, I'm happy to report that I can now regularly communicate with Dad on Skype. I also helped my sister Joyce get a computer and get

set up with Skype as well. We also keep in touch with our children through these useful tools as well.

Mark Dukes Safe Return: Thank you for your prayers for our son-in-law, Mark, who returned safely from the Middle East.

Thank you all for your prayers for our family and for the generous financial support so many of you gave to us throughout 2011. Debbie seems to be doing well in her recovery and my Dad is getting into a new routine as his new place of residence in Nashville. May God bless and keep you all in His care.

In His service,
Steve & Debbie Carrell