



September 2018

Dear Praying Friends,

As I see God's great plan unfold in my life, I'm continually reminded that I'm part of something bigger; much bigger than myself, my ministry, my church, or the area in which I'm serving my Savior. I'm part of God's plan to glorify Himself through the lives of everyone who is His child. This means that whatever He gives, and whatever He takes away is not only for my good, but also for His glory. I can rest in that. I can be confident in Him. What peace and joy that has given me over the past month!

THE LORD GIVETH

In our last letter I was able to share how **Ikuya Suzuki** came to trust Christ (If you happened to miss it, you can find it on our website, cartersjapan.org). Since his salvation, it's been so encouraging to see his steady growth as a child of God. A few weeks later we were having our Sunday lunch with the church family, and Ikuya and I were having a conversation about growing as a Christian. The subject of baptism came up, and I explained to Ikuya why we are baptized as followers of Jesus, and what the meaning of baptism is. I asked him if he was ready to be baptized, and he wholeheartedly affirmed his desire. So a few weeks later, it was my joy to baptize him in the Akigawa River, the river our church is named after! It's been so encouraging to see them continue to take steps in their growth as God's children. In the last several weeks, he and his wife Sachiyo have been learning what it means to be members of a church family, and have been growing there as well.



AND THE LORD TAKETH AWAY



Late Sunday night on August 27, I got a call from the wife of my dear friend and brother in Christ, **Yuzo Sakai**. She was calling to let me know that God had unexpectedly taken him home to Heaven the night before. This news sent a resounding shock, not only to our church family, but also throughout the Christian community in our area of Japan. Yuzo had made a far-reaching impact for Christ on such a wide scale here. He unashamedly spoke of Jesus' love to nearly everyone with whom he came in contact. While we are heartbroken to say goodbye for now, we rest in the sweet assurance that he is with our Savior. His wife smiled while telling us that she knew he was having a great time catching up with Noah and Abraham! Please pray for his dear wife and five children as they try to deal with this tremendous loss and adjust to their new normal.

BLESSED BE THE NAME OF THE LORD

In all of the joys and sorrows of life, in the peaks and the valleys, we know that our Shepherd guides us, cares for us, and walks with us. And for that, we are thankful. We are also thankful for this bond of brotherhood through which Christ sustains each of us, even across the spans of the oceans between us. While we do not know what the future holds, we know that our future is firmly held in the hands of the Sovereign King!

Serving Him,
The Carters to Japan