



November 2025

Dear Praying Friends,

It's hard to believe that Thanksgiving and Christmas is just around the corner! Summer lasted a loooong time here in Tokyo! We're just now starting to see the leaves change in our area, and the transition into gearing up for winter outreaches is in full swing. Our church family is super excited to share the good news of Jesus with everyone around us!

JOURNEY GROUPS

In this letter, I wanted to give you a glimpse into the life of our church family outside of the regular Sunday Services. What does it look like for us as a church in Tokyo to grow in our faith as followers of Jesus? For the past five years, our church has been doing something that has been deeply impactful in the spiritual growth of our believers. We call them **"Journey Groups"** where 5-10 people in each group gather together every few weeks. That's not unusual. But what I feel is unique is that **the members of each group synchronize their daily devotions together**. For example, one group is reading through the Bible in a three year plan, while another group is reading through Acts, and then reading the New Testament letters as they tie in to the events of Acts. (It helps them to understand Acts more deeply, and at the same time, understand the context of the letters more clearly).

Then, as they gather, the focus of the leader of each group isn't to teach. It's to stay quiet. 😊 Each member of the group gets to share how the Holy Spirit challenged them, convicted them, and encouraged them in their daily Bible reading. When questions come up, guided by the leader's direction, they work through the passage together. Over the years, this has significantly helped our believers grow in their faith. They have learned not just to listen to preaching, but to feed themselves and one another with God's Word. These groups talk about what they learn for hours at a time!

But there's another area that this helps us with that while it may not be unique to Japan, it's a key part of life as a follower of Jesus in Japan. Many of our believers were the first ones in their family to come to Christ. THEY have been the ones who shine the light of the Gospel in their homes, neighborhoods, schools and workplaces. By learning to first share God's word with other believers in the Journey Groups, the Holy Spirit has helped them to grow more and more **confident** and **capable** of sharing the good news of the Gospel to those around them!

We started our first two Journey Groups five years ago. I led a group of couples in their mid-50's, and Bethany led a group of ladies. Last year our Spanish speaking ladies started a Spanish Journey Group, and a few months ago we had our first young adult Journey Group! (See picture 👉) This idea has by no means been original with us, and we've tweaked things here and there to fit our needs, but they have been life-changing for our church family! By God's grace, He has been using these groups to bring more of the family and friends of our believers to come to know Jesus!



Please keep praying for us as we share Jesus with those around us! Pray that He will use our church family over the next two months, as they work to prepare for and to reach out to invite people to our Christmas events. Thanks for being faithful in praying for me, Bethany and Asher as we serve our Savior here!

Serving Him,
The Carters to Japan