



January 2017

Dear Praying Friends,

A missionary's heart is always in more than one place. When you are on the field, while your heart is fully with the people that you serve and minister to, there is always a sense of longing for your family and friends you've left in America. And when you're back in America blissfully enjoying the time with your dear loved ones you've missed while on the field, you sense a different longing. It's an intense longing for the family of brothers and sisters into whom you have poured your heart. Both families are loved dearly. Both families are longed for deeply. Oh, for the day when both families will be together in the presence of our Father!

A FAMILY REUNION IN THE U.S.

Furlough in the States was a much needed time for us. It was a time to recover from several intensely busy years of serving in Japan, as well as a time to reconnect with our loved ones and spend cherished time with them. Because we were able to stay longer than usual, we were able to see some family that we haven't seen in close to 15 years, and some younger family members for the first time! This was also a time to reconnect with churches who have been faithfully praying and supporting us through the years. While we are never able to see all of our supporting churches in one furlough, it was so encouraging to see those that we were able to see. I am also very thankful for several new churches that chose to partner with us in reaching the Japanese. While we were in the States, our home church family was such an incredible blessing to us in how they loved and encouraged us. It was also so helpful for me personally to spend time with my pastors, gleaning as much knowledge and wisdom from them as I could so that I could better serve my brothers and sisters in Japan.

A FAMILY REUNION IN JAPAN

On January 11, we said our goodbyes to our family. This time the pain of leaving was much deeper for us than it usually is as we were leaving our oldest son Tyler behind for college. God was (and continues to be) so gracious to us in giving us the strength to leave family again. As our flight neared Tokyo, the overwhelming sorrow of leaving was being overtaken by the overwhelming desire to see our family in Japan: my mom and dad, and our brothers and sisters at Akigawa Baptist Church. Our first Sunday back was, again, a blissful family reunion. While the intense busyness has already begun, it has been so good to see the spiritual growth of our brothers and sisters in our absence. God is so good! There have already been several blessings in just the two weeks that we've been back that I will be sharing in our next letter.

SOME THINGS TO PRAY FOR

There are several health issues for which we would greatly appreciate your prayers.

Asher's asthma While in the States, our youngest son Asher had a severe asthma attack. He received excellent medical care in the States, and we are hoping to find a good doctor here in Japan who can continue to give him the treatment he needs.

Bethany's carpal tunnel After arriving in Japan, it was determined that Bethany's carpal tunnel was severe enough to require surgery. She had surgery on January 25. Please pray for a speedy recovery.

Thanks so much for each of you who've been praying for and supporting us! I so deeply wish that I could have gone to each of you to thank you personally for how much you mean to us. One day...

Serving Him,
The Carters to Japan