



January 2023

Dear Praying Friends,

Over the last several months, our families (the Carter family, as well as our church family here in Japan), have experienced several significant “new starts”. As we thank God for His grace to give us these new beginnings, we also continue to trust Him to help us and guide us in them, so that His goodness and faithfulness is on full display as He walks with us!

A (RE)START OF COMMUNITY OUTREACHES

Since Covid started, our church family has had to focus our outreaches primarily on personal interactions with family and friends while we waited for the social fear of Covid to gradually subside. Throughout this time, God has continued to help us make new connections; to share with new people the good news of the Gospel. And while that continues, we’ve also been excited to begin to expand once again into reaching more of our community through different events to reach out to even more people.

This Christmas, we had **two major Christmas events**, one specifically for children, and one geared toward families. In each event, we were so thankful to see many first-time guests, as well as those who had come to previous events before Covid. Over the two Christmas events, we saw over 40 visitors attend (not including our church family) and hear the story of the Gospel through the birth of Jesus. We have several more events scheduled over the next few months as we get back into the full swing of this vital aspect of our outreach here in Tokyo. We’re really praying that the Holy Spirit will use this to continue to draw them to a saving knowledge of Jesus. Will you pray with us to that end? That God will, even now, open the eyes of their understanding so that they, too, can see the hope that comes from faith in Jesus?

A NEW START FOR ONE IN OUR FAMILY

On a personal note, we had the special joy of seeing **our son Tyler married to his new bride, Morgan**. The wedding took place at our home church in Louisville, and we were so thankful that God worked it out for us to be with them on this special day. For missionaries, it is deeply encouraging to have a church family who loves and cares for your children as they return to the States to begin their lives away from us. Their desire to walk alongside our kids, to speak into their lives, and to invest in their spiritual growth gives us the assurance to confidently focus on our ministry here in Japan knowing that they have the care they need. For those of you who do take the time to invest in the children of your missionaries, THANK YOU!! Your investment is vital and deeply appreciated!

A POTENTIAL NEW START FOR A MUCH-NEEDED MINISTRY

Currently the average age of pastors in Japan is 65 years old. We need pastors! One of our dreams in ministering in Japan is, while we care for the church family God has entrusted us with, and as we reach those in our area here in Tokyo, that God would also use us to minister specifically to pastors and churches throughout Japan. It seems that God is beginning to open doors and bring people into our ministry in a very real way to enable us to effectively do just that. We are in the VERY early stages of potentially **beginning a ministry to train and equip young pastors**, not only in Japan, but also in East Asia as they begin the task of shepherding the churches God has called them to. This is a monumental task and it will require much discernment, planning, and prayer. So over these next several months, would you pray with us, specifically for wisdom and discernment that, if this is what God wants us to do, He would give us the wisdom we need to add this new ministry while caring for those He called us to? We sure do appreciate you. We’re so thankful for how you take time to pray for us, for sacrificing to financially care for us as we serve God here. Your part of this ministry is crucial. And by God’s grace, the fruit of your part of this ministry will continue to abound!

Serving Him,
The Carters to Japan