

If this is Tuesday it must be Niigata!

Dear Friend,

Konnichiwa from Japan again! Glad to have a break to sit down and write to you. It has been really a busy season between the setups for Goal 2002 World Cup soccer outreaches coming this June and having 2 boys in basketball on different team schedules. Rochelle's calendar is quite active as well with English Bible studies and staff women meeting. In fact she is off this week to a Women's Conference for JEMA missionaries (Japan Evangelical Missionary Association, of which Japan CCC is also a member mission).

Our local Japanese church is now quite excited that one of our sending churches, Northwest Bible Church will be sending a short term mission team to be involved in the Goal 2002 outreach in our local area at the beginning of June. There should be over 20 single adults coming for that outreach to work with 3 local churches while they are here. Praise God! Glad to have Northwest involved together with us!

Working together with YWAM, the Southern Baptists, and various materials producing missions, we expect that hundreds of thousands of Japanese and world fans of soccer and even some of the players and coaches will be exposed to the gospel this June, and to that end we ask you whole hearted prayers and support!

We have divided up some of the responsibility of the 10 cities involved in the Japan side of the World Cup, and I have been visiting in Niigata, Sendai, Urawa(Saitama), and Yokohama, which are preparing to receive teams from Hong Kong (Niigata and Sendai), Singapore, the US and Taiwan. It gets very complicated! Some groups are sending specialized teams to play friendly soccer matches, host festivals, contact the athletes, work with kids and soccer clinics, along with the teams coming just to distribute material to the soccer fans! Language issues, who can translate? Who comes in where and when and who is picking them up? Wow. Pray for wisdom and grace to handle all the details! Pray for the support to come in for all those coming with the evangelism teams!

Pray in particular for the final design and production of materials. We are making thousands of tracts and CD's and audio tapes that will likely only be used during the 3 months around this June after which the interest drops off and we need to have them all "out the door!" Of course the issue is that the most number of people hear the gospel in a personally relevant way, not how many leftovers we have, but we need your prayers for the coordination and effective use and involvement of the Japanese churches and believers in the distribution and outreach efforts!

Take a look at what we are up to at www.goal2002.org on the web.

Please also lift up our family in health. It has been a trying winter and spring with a variety of viruses and allergies. We appreciate your care in prayer.

The amazing thing is that while many who read this letter are not all that interested in soccer, during the World Cup about 2/3 of the world will somehow be watching the games and following their teams

rather fanatically! So join us in praying that God would be honored through and around these games and that many would come to faith, both Japanese and foreigners. Pray for the safety of all involved, and protection from terror and hooliganism. Pray that Christian athletes would have a strong testimony through their words and actions at this games.

Thanks for lifting us up and enabling us to share in reaching the Japanese for Jesus using soccer! We appreciate you very much!

In His love,

Steve, Rochelle, Andy, Ben and Melissa