

Christmas Greetings 2002 from the Clarks

Steve and Rochelle Clark, 5-30-5 Higashi Fujisawa, Iruma-shi 358-0012 JAPAN

Email us at stcinjapan@aol.com or rochellejp@aol.com



Christmas is a time for giving thanks for all the love of God our Savior! It is a wonderful celebration of love, because God loved us so much that He gave His only Son! We also think of love at this time and of giving from our hearts. James wrote, "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows." (James 1:17) When we see love in every gift, when we realize the goodness of the giver, we are set free from petty striving for our own gain, and can begin to give as He does: freely, lovingly, graciously. In fact the more we see that we have been given, the more we have to give ourselves.

We are so very grateful for you, friend, as part of our support team. You all have been friends and family to us, some of you for many years! You have given of your time in prayer, your sustenance in generous giving, along with love and kindness and thoughtfulness through all manner of communications! God bless you!

Many of you know that Christmas is widely celebrated in Japan, and these days more people in our neighborhood seem to be decorating up their homes with Christmas lights (which is not a very typical Japanese thing to do in this reserved and private country!). Can you guess why? More of them have experienced Christmas as a season of giving, a positive hopeful holiday, unlike any of the other holidays celebrated in Japan. Its cheerfulness and bright decorations lift spirits. Most of them do not seem to understand that its purpose is to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. (Note that "kurisumasu" (Christmas) and "kirisuto" (Christ) are not quite the same in Japanese as they are in English, so you can forgive them for missing the connection).



It is such a privilege for us to be here and to be part of a great effort of many believers to share the love of God at Christmas and all through the year! Your prayers and gifts have helped make it possible! Please pray with us that many Japanese will open their hearts to Jesus this Christmas. Pray for that great spiritual openness that we long for among these people. How we want for them to know the Savior who made this gift giving meaningful by giving His own Son for us!



This year many will see and think of Jesus through seeing the Jesus film in a theater or receiving a video gift while visiting a church for a candle service or while listening to carolers. Students on college campuses will hear the good news while at a CCC sponsored Christmas party. Others will hear the gospel at a Christmas concert, spoken by a singer or a pastor. We will be involved directly or indirectly with all of these, because of you!

I (Steve) was touched by a comment from a man who had received a Jesus audio cassette with a church tract this year. He wrote that he was at first just going to throw the cassette away, but then he thought it would be a waste not to at least listen to a little of it. He began listening to it in his car

while going to and from work. He thought, "This is so amazing, and I have never heard these things before!" We are glad to be part of a movement of people helping more and more Japanese to hear of Jesus!

As we look ahead to this coming year, we realize we will need your help this Christmas to prepare for some of our financial needs. Of course, the most significant change for us is the addition of our new baby, due in February! Other significant needs that we are asking the Lord to meet are the following: 1. Replacing our old 1989 van with a newer used model. 2. Funding our increased medical insurance costs. 3. Providing the funds for our air tickets home for a summer visit to see our families and ministry team partners-- you!

We ask you to pray and seek the Lord for how He made lead you in regard to these needs. We really do appreciate the great help we receive through Christmas giving, and we could really use your special gift to help us continue making Christ known among the Japanese. Thanks for your prayers and consideration of this request.



We pray for you and are delighted to share in prayer as you send us prayer needs in letters or email. If you want to be part of our immediate prayer needs email list, just send us an email and we will include you too! Our email addresses are listed at the top of this letter. Thanks!

HAVE A BLESSED HOLIDAY SEASON THANKING THE LORD FOR HIS MANY GIFTS!

With love in Jesus,

Steve and Rochelle,

Andy, Ben and Melissa