

Clark Family Ministry Update

February 20, 2004

Dear Friends,

It has been quite a while since our last letter, and so many good things have been going on! I am excited to catch you up on what God has been doing. First off, today is Josh's one year old birthday!

One really great thing we are praising God for is Andy getting baptized! Yes, on the Sunday before Christmas Andy was baptized in our local Japanese church, after a few weeks of preparation classes with the pastor. His commitment includes joining our church as a member, so some of the class included that content. We were very proud of our son as he stood before the congregation and shared his testimony, how he has seen the Lord at work in his life, seen God's protection and recognized God's forgiveness. We are so thankful.



All of this happened during the really, really busy season - did you think I would say during our Christmas outreaches? No, I mean basketball season! Besides everything else we were going to basketball games double duty - both Andy in varsity and Ben in JV teams. With Andy in 11th and Ben in 9th grade, we are going to enjoy this experience again next year (some Saturdays we sat through 4 games in a row!). I (Steve) am really loving it - it is so fun to watch, see the guys improve, see their confidence grow, etc. The Junior Varsity just completed their tournament, and won it all! Their record in season wasn't that great, but at the tournament they won all three games, including a final comeback from 8 points down to



win it in the last minute! Cool! The Varsity team is now in South Korea for the Far East Basketball Tournament, which pulls together the regional leagues of international and US military schools each year.

Well, okay, family interests aside, we were quite busy during the Christmas season with the Peace of Christmas outreaches. This combined effort saw over 100 short-term workers from various countries come to distribute the special Christmas CD. There were also teams of





artists and musicians from New York, London and Tokyo, especially Makoto Fujimura, a Japanese painting artist who leads the International Arts Movement. Makoto's work was exhibited under the theme Christmas in Peace - Still Point at Tokyo's Takashimaya Department Store. Several artists donated Christmas music for the CD, and there was video of Makoto sharing his testimony, and the whole Jesus video (compressed).

In all, over 193,000 copies of the CD were distributed, mostly in the downtown Tokyo area. Praise the Lord for all the lives touched through everyone's work! Our family also got involved in this distribution, joining those with elf hats and Santa suits.

We found it to be one of the easiest distributions ever, as Japanese are so interested in Christmas! Many people took the CD, and then turned around and asked for one for their friend. In several places where they were distributing the CDs, and songs playing through the loudspeakers of stores where they were distributing. While the focus was on getting as many CDs out as possible, there were also opportunities where



the easiest distributions interested in Christmas! and then turned around friend. In several places distributing the CDs, and songs playing through the where they were focus was on getting as there were also people used the cover of

the CD, which included a Christmas version 4 Spiritual Laws presentation to share the gospel personally. I heard of one person who used the cover at a church to share the gospel and the person received Christ. I am sure there must be many others. The CDs were also used as attractive advertising, including for one YWAM gospel outreach in Ikebukuro that drew many people; they reported 30 saved!

In addition to the CD we had a linked website that highlighted Christmas events in the Tokyo region, both ours and those that people sent in through the website. Over 9100 unique visitors came to the site, looked over our events, and several hundreds viewed the evangelistic material there. About 30 people were interested in some way for follow up, which is being pursued between us and the partners involved in the project. You can still see all but the events data at the site, www.peaceofchristmas.net. I have included a copy of the CD with this newsletter so you can enjoy it; you will be able to view or hear the contents, with some in English and some Japanese. We still have a small supply if you would like more for your Japanese friends.

The artists had a very interesting impact. Their purpose was to impact the culture out in the marketplace, rather than directly as with our distribution. One event was a charity exhibition at the Sato Art Museum. This was an unprecedented event! Many Japanese artists were invited and 150 chose to participate. Normally in an exhibit the paintings are on sale or on auction, with profits going to the artist. In this case, the theme given was Christmas in Peace, and the art was all donated for charity (UNESCO), something that had never been done in Japan! In fact the museum had to go to the Cultural Affairs

ministry and find out if it was legal/permissible (at first the ministry didn't know because it hadn't been done before, then they came back with simple guidelines and approval). During one of the Christmas concerts connected with the project Makoto actually painted a new painting live in 10 minutes while 3 songs were going on and this was shown by video projected behind the musicians. This painting was also added at the last minute to the Sato museum display. Mako lives in the shadow of ground zero in New York City, and there was an interesting shadow image that developed in his painting resembling the twin towers.

Makoto always had CDs and copies of his testimony available at the museum showings, as well as other Christian artists in their team from New York and London were talking with artists and guests at the exhibits, building relationships and sharing their testimonies. One follow up result is that our staff, Keiko Okano, who is working with artists and entertainers in Tokyo has begun a small group of these interested people contacted.

January saw a lot of catch-up work and planning meetings for the new year; we are evaluating what and how to do things this coming Christmas. Now in February I have already made a trip to Thailand for a week of Financial Management Advanced course with CCC, improving what I am doing in taking care of the finances of this growing team in Japan. Praise God with us as 7 new trainees were accepted for staff in January! Meanwhile many short-termers are coming still, so our CCC staff in Japan is up over 110 now, with about 60 kids above that. This is lots of people to care for! Pray with us for adequate personnel assigned to serve this growing team as it impacts Japan for Jesus!!!



Thank you so much for your prayers, and making it possible for us to serve the Lord in Japan.

Blessings,

Steve and Rochelle, Andy, Ben, Melissa and Josh