

CLARK FAMILY UPDATE JAN 2009

**Touching the World
By Sending Workers
Into God's Harvest**

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Happy New Year 2009!

Hi dear friends and family! Thank you for sending us your special Christmas letter or email to catch us up on your family and highlights from 2008. We love hearing from you!

We would like to wish you a Happy New Year 2009! We pray the Lord blesses you to see Him, the source of all you are and need, at work in every part of your life. How greatly we need Him for this life He has given us!

2008 was still a year of transition for our family. In the first half of the year we were participating in the Lake Hart STINT, a program designed to help staff who may be led to work at the Headquarters of CCC as they re-adjust to living in the US. This was really helpful as we learned from CCC leaders about the different parts of the ministry (CCC is so big now. It's just incredible to see what God has done!). As you may remember, during the Stint year we lived in an apartment complex with all the other participants which was a fantastic blessing and gave us a community to belong to. But then we had to move, so in June we moved into a rental house nearby, so we could be in the same school district for Melissa's high school. We are still waiting to see if housing prices will drop any lower and we hope this will be our year to buy a house (first time!).

Andrew, our oldest son is 21 now and still studying Physics in Southern California, though as of April he transferred to California State Polytechnic University. He is sharing an apartment with some high school buddies from Japan. Andy and these buddies have been involved in the Japanese Fellowship, an outreach to Japanese students at the nearby Citrus Community College. Citrus holds many English studies programs for Japanese and other international students. The Japanese fellowship Christians reach out to build friendships and share their faith in Jesus with the Japanese students who come to their dinner meetings. They also encourage the students to visit a Japanese church nearby. Students get to hear the gospel and some are led to faith and baptism through the Japanese church connection. We are thankful that God has provided a niche for Andy to enjoy his Japanese and American cultural background! Andy is considering a leadership position in this ministry for this year.

We had a great time seeing Andy when we were in California this past summer and when he came to Florida for the Christmas break. It is fun to watch Andy and Josh together. Josh really loves his big brother! We pray for Andy that the Lord would use his witness to touch Japanese, and for success in his physics studies.

Ben, our second son (19), has been attending Valencia Community College as a freshman. He is interested in studying athletic training. He is still working at Panera Bread nearby. In August Ben passed his driving test and he now can commute to work and school independently!. Ben and Melissa have both been involved with MK2MK, which is a ministry of CCC aimed at the children of missionaries. They both went on a summer project to Mexico City for 5 weeks.

They learned a lot, and got to share the Gospel and serve the people there in many ways.

Ben's highlight for the year was his trip to Japan over Christmas break! He stayed with his friend's family, visited his favorite restaurants and public bath house, saw many classmates, and got to play basketball twice as a member of the alumni team competing against this year's varsity squad. Ben was very happy that the alumni won both times!!

Ben has stayed involved with MK2MK during the fall helping with the weekly program and encouraging the middle school and high school MK guys. Although he is doing well, we are praying that he will make some new friends here and have a chance to be a part of a Christian fellowship with other college students..

Melissa went through another transition at mid year since her best friend during the Stint year, Cori, moved to Little Rock, AR. She and Cori both went on the mission trip to Mexico, so that was special. A highlight for Melissa was the visit of two of her friends from Japan during June!

Now she is in her sophomore year at Timber Creek High School. She loves singing in the choir, and this year Steve also joined her choir (parents allowed!) to sing at Epcot's Candlelight Processional on two evenings in December. It is a beautiful and amazingly Christ-honoring pageant .

Melissa just passed the test to get her first driving permit, so we are excited to start practicing with her. This is really different since the boys didn't start driving until after graduating from high school! We are praying for Melissa to build close friendships, grow in her faith, and let her light shine for Jesus.

Josh has been such a joy - we just love having a 5 year old. Although he has forgotten all but a few Japanese words, he still loves Japanese food! He was so excited when Ben brought back lots of Japanese treats in his suitcase. Josh is learning lots of words and loves to read. He still plays the Japanese Nintendo game we have.

Josh is making lots of new friends in Kindergarten. Next door is another 5 year old boy in his class, Jacob, and the two of them take turns after school playing at each other's homes. Josh has started playing basketball with the YMCA.

In December we invited the kids from Josh's class to a birthday party for Jesus. We were shocked to see that there was no mention at all of Christmas in the kindergarten's celebration of the season. We were happy that 10 boys came and heard the real meaning of Christmas! We are trusting the Lord to give us more opportunities to share the love of Jesus with their families.

MINISTRY GIVING UPDATE

We are so grateful for the generous and sacrificial gifts of so many over December! Because of those gifts we are going to go ahead and get braces for Ben's teeth which will prepare the way for his jaw surgery. Thank you so much!

Steve will continue to work part time while he keeps on searching for the partners we need to serve full time with CCC. Please continue to pray for us.

Thanks so much for your prayers and love for our family as we follow God's call to help build spiritual movements everywhere!

With love and thanks,

*Steve, Rochelle, Andy, Ben,
Melissa and Josh*

