



The Harringtons

Chris and Leanne

Mark (7), Lillia (6), Claire (4), and Graham (9 months)

in **Tagajo, Japan**

with **SEND, International**
sent by **Parkside Church**

Merry Christmas!

Dear friends and family,

Our hearts are full this Christmas with thankfulness to God. It's a joy to look back on this year and reminisce about God's faithfulness. Early in the year we had our fourth child, Graham. His birth brought the unexpected blessing of needy-ness. We watched in awe as God met need after need by our new community. It deepened our relationships with our unbelieving friends and our church family.

Over the summer we were surprised that four families from our core group of friends came to our church's English VBS. Those same families and an additional two families joined us for our church's Thanksgiving outreach and Christmas outreach! For many of these dear people, this was their first time hearing about the God who made them and loves them. We continue to pray for God to open their hearts to His good news and give them faith to trust in Him. There are many shrines and physical idols around us. There is even a small idol at the end of our street. While we wash the dishes we see children, mothers, and grandfathers walk to this idol to ring the bell and pray. This summer our family visited a famous nearby town filled with many of these gods. We could feel the spiritual heaviness as we walked, but 3-year-old Claire broke the heaviness by erupting in song. She sang, "Jesus is ALIVE.... and He loves me!" at the top of her lungs as she skipped through the idols. I can't help but think of that song when I watch people come to pray at the idol at the end of our street. Isn't it amazing that our God is alive AND He loves us?!

We thank God that our kids are doing well. In March Mark will enter 3rd grade and Lillia 1st grade in Japanese school. Claire will enter her first year of kindergarten. They have come a

long way in their Japanese ability! When we first arrived I remember coaching the kids, "Watch everything the other students are doing to help you figure out what to do." We sang Joshua 1:9 many mornings on the way to school. (Have I not commanded you be strong and courageous? Do not be terrified, do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.) Praise God...school is no longer terrifying, but a joy! (Well...most days—they are normal kids.)

In April, Chris will complete his two-year goal for language study. He will take an oral test in March to determine if he is ready to begin full-time ministry. We're encouraged by how far we have come in our language ability since we arrived here. (We didn't even know the alphabet!!) However, we also realize this will be a life-long endeavor.

Thank you for your love, encouragement, and many prayers this year!

Merry Christmas!

Love (much),

The Harringtons



Left: Our dear neighbors, the Onos. Right: The "Cherry Ladies:" an English class Leanne has been teaching while another missionary is in America.



Left: This summer's English VBS

Right: Mark's friend reading about the Gospel