

# Land of the Risen Son

イエス・キリストは日本を愛する

(Jesus loves Japan)



Seaside Chapel, decorated

*It's Christmas time again and in our imaginations Christmas trees and decorations are already up in your homes, houses are festooned with multicolored lights, and hopeful stores are pumping smells of turkey and stuffing into the corridors of busy shopping malls. It's a very different story here. In Japan, Christmas is a curiosity but many don't know of its origins and traditions.*

*This year has been one of unexpected twists and turns for us. We finished up the bulk of our partnership development by about mid-year, and had a chance for a vacation with my sister, Julia. In August, we were glad we'd had the rejuvenation of the time away as we plunged into packing for our big move to Japan. Since our arrival in September, the theme of our life has been "God's appointments".*

*While we were living at Seaside Chapel a young man, who we'll call "Alan", came to the church as we were about to leave for dinner. We didn't understand what he was saying but eventually were able to make use of pen, paper, and dictionaries to communicate. He said, "My life is tired. I need to talk with someone." Knowing that suicide is the number one killer of men in his age bracket, we were able to quickly connect him with the wife of the senior pastor. She later told us that he was a Christian, but had fallen away from following Jesus and was feeling increasingly isolated and lonely. She was able to pray with him, after which he felt "more hopeful about the future". He has continued to have meetings with her and the pastor. We couldn't help but marvel at the way that God had set up this "appointment".*

*In October I developed a blood clot. The suspicion is that it happened on the plane ride to Japan. I had a minor procedure to remove it, but recovery has been slow, with many ups and downs. It would appear that there is an issue with a damaged nerve, which typically takes awhile to heal. We know that God is using this time to refine us. It is not pleasant or easy, but we have a choice. We can look at the abundant promises that God makes to us with disillusion and bitterness, close our Bibles, and walk away. Or, we can choose to let them sink into our souls and nourish us. We have seen God already working to guide us, through our limitations, for the good of His kingdom; and we choose to trust in His wisdom, goodness, and love for us. This is not the easy path, but it is the best path. "We emerge from a season of profound disappointment, unnering chaos, or debilitating pain with a faith worth having. We discover that the place we most want to escape has produced the fertility that we most desperately crave." (Jeff Manion, "The Land Between")*

*Even through this period, we have a strong sense of God's timing. For instance, while Peter and I were in training to become ESL teachers, we were required to observe and teach in our supervisor's class. We had to postpone teaching because I was in a "down" period health-wise. When we were eventually able to attend again, there was a special moment. One of the men there (who we'll call Bob) was not a Christian but had been attending with "Bianca", his wife, who was a Christian. That day, Peter and he found out that they are the same age, and would have been in the same class in school. "We would have been friends," Bob said. To our knowledge he had never met someone of his age and sex who who is a Christian. In Japan, where these factors are very important in the social order, meeting Peter was significant. The next week following an ESL class led by our supervisor, he decided to become a Christian.*

*I have taken on a supporting role, for the time being, as I recover. This has provided some opportunities for me: to concentrate on language learning, which has already proved useful in my interactions with Japanese people; and to establish our ministry here on a firm foundation of prayer. How true the statement that we are never more active than when we are communicating with our Heavenly Father. We very aware of His patient care for us, and are so grateful that we can cling to His promise to be with us in all seasons of life.*

*In the meantime, Peter has joined several worship teams, has helped lead prayer meeting at our church, and is currently leading our first "Christmas English" class which is well-attended by eight people, two of whom aren't Christians. He has also been attending Uza Cafe, which is one of the two new churches in the initial stages of being planted. The Uzas, who are the leaders, have also volunteered to be our language helpers. We have been meeting regularly in our home to practice our Japanese pronunciation and vocabulary, and are really enjoying getting to know them.*

*We trust that you will all have a lovely Christmas, and that you will take time to enjoy life's little moments of peace and happiness.*

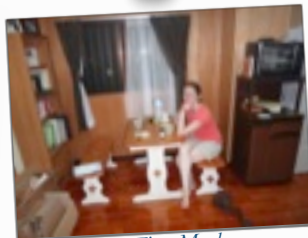


Cookies for Santa!

Val's Chocolate Chip Cookies... (See reverse for the recipe)



*Our Kitchen*



*Our First Meal*



*Our Car*



*Local restaurant & karaoke*

# Valerie's Chocolate Chip Cookies

*Makes 2 Dozen.*

*Preparation time: 10 minutes*

*Cooking time: 8-10 minutes*

## Ingredients

*1 cup + 2 tbsp flour*

*1/2 tsp baking soda*

*8 tbsp oil*

*1/2 cup sugar*

*1/2 cup packed light brown sugar*

*1 large egg*

*1/4 tsp salt*

*1 1/2 tsp vanilla*

*1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips*

## Directions

*1. Position rack in centre of oven. Preheat to 375F.*

*2. Whisk together flour and baking soda.*

*3. Mix oil, sugar and light brown sugar separately.*

*4. Add egg, salt and vanilla and beat until well-combined.*

*5. Stir flour mixture into butter mixture until smooth.*

*6. Add chocolate chips.*

*7. Bake 1 sheet at a time, for 8 - 10 minutes. Rotate cookie sheet halfway through baking for even browning.*

*Note: For richer cookies, substitute in whole wheat flour.*

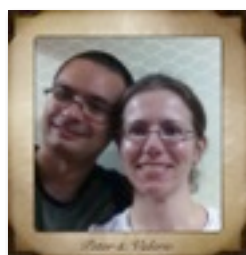


*Our Christmas Tree*

## Contact Information

### **Thank You**

*Thank you for your interest in our work. We plan to send out newsletters every two months. If at any point you decide that you don't want to receive them anymore, just email ([japan@peterandvalerie.com](mailto:japan@peterandvalerie.com)).*



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