

Land of the Risen Son

イエス・キリストは日本を愛する

(Jesus loves Japan)

Dear Friends and Family,

Our thoughts are turning once more to Christmas, and as the carols start to play, warm memories of you are never far from our minds and hearts.

This past year has been a swirl of activity for us: we engaged in our first furlough back in Canada after four years of having been away in Japan. It was wonderful to meet with many of you and catch up on what has been going on in your lives. We will be back to do so again in about two years' time.

On our return to Okinawa, we were greeted at the airport by 11 of our closest friends, whom we call our "Okinawan family". It's been really wonderful to connect with the people of the church and community again, and we've received several more hugs—a rarity in a culture that doesn't usually display physical affection.

The Kim family was fairly involved with our ministry before we left. Since they were originally from Korea, the Japanese language was sometimes difficult for them and they found English easier. Most of them weren't Christians, but they seemed hungry to learn about spiritual things and have a forum where they could ask questions and mull over important spiritual truths.

The children (Kelly and Kent) took violin lessons from Peter; their mother, Kristy, came out with the kids to English worship services; and everyone also had started coming to our cooking clubs by the time we left. Even while we were in Canada, Kristy would send us videos of the kids' violin performances, so that Peter could offer feedback on how they could improve.

When we first talked with them upon our return, we fully expected that they would be eager to start violin lessons again right away. However, the first question they asked was: "When are English worship services starting again?"

What an honour to be part of their spiritual journey!

We were also able to reconnect with our little cat, Blackie. Before we left Okinawa, she was very sick and we didn't think that she would still be around when we came back. However, a lady from our community (whom we'll call Wakana) told me before we left that she would look out for Blackie. When we returned, there was Blackie in her usual spot, waiting for us.

Wakana would later tell us that during the year we were gone, Blackie waited for us in that same spot every day. As we considered this beautiful story, we realized that it had great potential to impact the people in our community.

In Japan, there is a famous, true story that every school child learns—about a dog called Hachiko, who was adopted in puppyhood by a Japanese doctor. Every day, Hachiko would accompany the doctor to the train station on his way to work, and meet him again on his way home. Then the doctor died suddenly at work. Hachiko went to the train station as normal, but the doctor never came. Every day until his death 10 years later, Hachiko made the trip to the train station, waiting for his master to return. The Japanese love the story of Hachiko, and now there is a bronze statue of him at the train station.

At first, we couldn't help wondering if perhaps Blackie's faithful love would remind Japanese people about the story of Hachiko. Later, we noticed that our relationships with several people in the community had substantially increased in warmth since our return. We hope that one day we will be able to share with them about Jesus, who loves us so much more faithfully that even our little cat.

Well, we will sign off for now. We hope that you be able to take some time to sit down and relax in the gentle company of family and friends during this Christmas season.

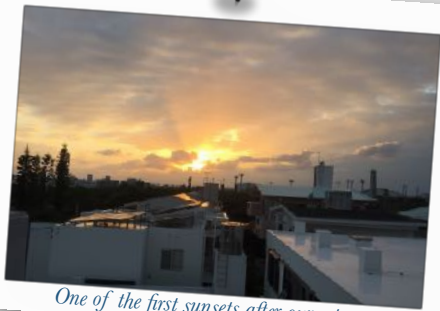
*In Christ,
Valerie & Peter Limmer*



Kelly, one of Peter's violin students.



Slow Cooker Cinnamon Pecans (See reverse for the recipe.)



One of the first sunsets after our return.



Preparing to play the Messiah at a local church.



Blackie, our little cat.



Our new car!



Greeted by our "Okinawan family" at the airport.

Slow Cooker Cinnamon Pecans

*I first made this recipe for our annual home Christmas outreach party two years ago.
It's fun and easy, and fills the house with a wonderful smell!*

Preparation time: 5 minutes

Cooking time: 3-4 hours

Yield: 3 cups

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg white
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 3 cups pecans
- 1/4 cup water

NOTE: To reduce cleanup further, line the slow cooker with tin foil before coating the inside with cooking spray.

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix sugars, cinnamon, and salt together in a large bowl.
2. In another bowl, whisk together the egg white and vanilla until frothy. Add the pecans and coat thoroughly. This will help the mixture stick to the pecans during the cooking process.
3. Prepare slow cooker by spraying it with cooking spray. Add the cinnamon mixture to the pecans and turn it to low. Stir until the nuts are coated well with the cinnamon sugar mixture.
4. Cook for about 3-4 hours, depending on the power of the slow cooker. Stir every 20 minutes. In the very last hour, add 1/4 cup water and stir well. This will ensure a crunchy coating and help the mixture to harden.
5. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and spread the pecans onto the sheet. The pecans should be pretty sticky so be sure to separate them before letting them cool.

Contact Information

Thank You

Thank you for your interest in our work. We send out newsletters every two months. If at any point you decide that you don't want to receive them anymore, just write or email us.



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