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Dear friends and partners in mission,

Greetings during this “most wonderful time of the year”! How delightful it is, in spite of difficulties we may be facing, to celebrate once more the coming of the Son of God into our humanity as the Savior of the world! He is no longer the baby in the manger of Bethlehem, but the one to whom “all authority in heaven and earth” has been given, the one who has opened the way to be reconciled with our Creator and who saves all who put their faith in him! He commissions us to “go and make disciples!”



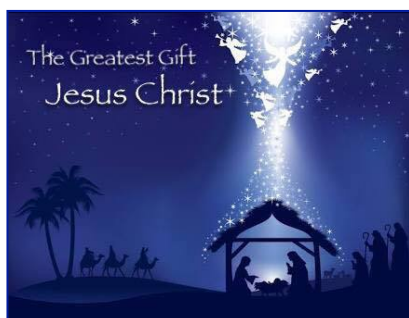
What has the year 2017 been like? Thanks to you who have prayed, we achieved our main goal to lead the Hikarigaoka Christ Church into organization as an independent congregation. We ministered each week in a couple of key congregations among which we rotate, and saw them add new vitality (and also new members). We transitioned to a new structure that will enable us to develop new strategies to reach Japan.



Family wise, we added two grandbabies, both girls, born to Ben (Maya is on the right) and Jonathan (Isabelle on the left), joining the 3 boys (Elijah, Gus and Des) and bringing the total to 5 little ones. Each one is a precious gift and we are very thankful. It's certainly not hard to count our blessings! We hope that is true for you as well!

We hope in the new year to continue to work to increase the evangelistic zeal and ability of a number of congregations and to help them to develop richer and more attractive worship. We want to encourage a couple of key groups to move forward in plans to start daughter churches. We plan to travel to Kenya in early April to lead a retreat among missionaries there (Going to Africa has been Ruth's dream)!

We thank you again for continually standing with us as partners in this work. As the Lord allows, we expect to carry on as your representatives to bring the Good News to many more. Thanks so much for your support! God bless you all at Christmas and always!



In his love,

Larry & Ruth Spalink

Merry Christmas