

あけましておめでとうございます！ Happy New Year !

Dear brothers and sisters,

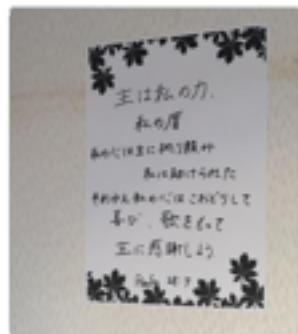
Happy New Year! I've been praying for this new year and asking God to help me rejoice in Him always. I've also been praying for you, that you would have a year filled with joy!

Lillian



- ◆ Our meal times at Osaka University are always very international. There are 5 countries represented here by these students and staff. Can you guess where everyone is from?

- ◆ Sweet students taped our weekly memory verse on the wall and took a picture just to show me!



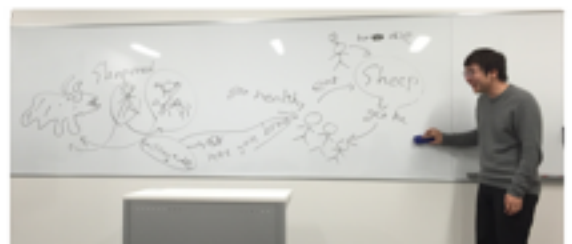
- ◆ Here we are, sharing in small groups during our student fellowship meeting.



- ◆ One of the students invited me to attend a free culinary class. We are growing together in our domestic skills!



- ◆ This is a Christmas celebration meal at Ritsumeikan University. Our humorous students especially bought a bottle of grape juice that looks like wine (pictured above). Our English Bible studies are always very interesting. Professors and students have animated discussions complete with diagrams. (pictured below) Can you guess what we are talking about?



- ◆ Kana is always very thoughtful. She especially gave me this Christmas themed strawberry cake at our Bible study right before Christmas. (Japanese people have a tradition of eating strawberry cake during Christmas!)

Thanksgiving:

1. Even though it was a busy December, thank you for making time to pray for me. We hosted multiple student parties at our apartment for a total of about 30 students who came over, 2 of whom decided to believe in Jesus! These parties were a chance for us to challenge our Christian students to practice sharing the gospel. I was very encouraged by the many good responses from our non-Christian students.
2. I started a Bible study at Rithmeikan University in November. During the Christmas season we had a meal together and it was the first time that I invited the students to pray with me, and they responded quite well.



- ◆ During one of the parties we hosted at home, we made dumplings together. Everyone wrapped the dumplings, ate them and shared about Jesus with gusto!

- ◆ Mei is a student at a hair and beauty school and she braided all of our hair. You never know what will happen when a group of women hang out!



- ◆ Here's a photo after one of our big Christmas parties.



- ◆ We invited a number of overseas Chinese students to our home for a year end meal.

3. In December, I was invited to an event at a Christian physical and mental health organization. I taught these Japanese people how to make Taiwanese food, and in the process I was able to share my faith with the patients there as well as the government official who hosted the event. The Christian worker at the health organization told me that this was the first time in many years of working there that he was able to see someone testify freely at a public event and he was quite excited. I felt thankful that I was able to share the gospel while teaching culinary art. It was great to meet lots of different kinds of Japanese people there who came from different life stages and had different needs.
4. My Japanese teacher, Chiaki, recently introduced a mother to the Lord. Last year, my teacher's son was bullied and she chose to forgive and not pursue further punishment for his attackers. One of the mothers of the bullies was very touched by her forgiveness and started studying the Bible with my teacher. Recently, she decided to follow Jesus and has been going to church regularly. I've been so thankful to be able to pray regularly with my teacher and see God answer our prayers!

◆ Our Osaka University gospel choir was invited to perform at a small event. Even though we are not professional singers, everyone gave it their all. Please pray that Koutaro (the guy on the right) and Ayaka (the girl next to him) would know Jesus soon.

◆ Seiko, (rightmost) a graduate from a university in Tokyo, brought a younger Christian friend, whom she's mentoring, to visit me in Osaka. We used to spend a lot of time mentoring her and now that I see that she is caring for someone else, I was filled with joy.



Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all men.

The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

(Philippians 4:4~7)

Prayer requests:

1. Please pray for the hearts of the Japanese people, that God would continue to change them and enable them to open up to His good news. Please also pray for Japanese Christians to continue to prioritize meeting together and persevere in their faith. May they not be influenced by the values of the people around them so that they are tempted to leave their faith.
2. Please pray for me, I would like to continue to grow in my relationship with God and experience His love every day during this new year. May His joy fill me as I serve Him and may I truly experience what it means to have the joy of the Lord be my strength (this has been my hope for a long time). Please also pray for my health, that I would be able to rest in the midst of much activity. Please pray that I would understand the truth even more, and not just know it but have the truth change me so that the fragrance of Christ would flow naturally from my heart.
3. Please pray for my family. Please pray that my family members who know Jesus already would continue in their faith and rely on the Lord for strength, and pray for those who don't know Him yet to know the only true God soon. Please especially pray for their physical and financial needs- may they experience God's healing and His provision so that they don't need to worry every day._

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2. Continue to [pray](#) for Lillian.

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