

# 2009 Mansell Musings

## Dates to be remembered:

- March/April reporting to our Minnesota churches
- Had a wonderful Mansell family get together for one week at Hilton Head, SC.
- Jason Kenneth joined the Appel family

## Individual Highlights:

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### 35<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary, March

"May the Lord bless your time with family in remembering our Dear Saviour's Birth. Thank you for being a part of our lives, as well." *Ken & Vicki*

## Sending Prayers of Blessing from our family to yours!

Every year seems to go by faster and faster although we don't think we got any busier...or did we? Or maybe it's because we seem to want to 'sit a bit' for a bit longer these days. We praise God that our health has been good although you will read about some surgeries that have taken place.

All around us schools have shut down for

### Christmas in Japan?

Do you wonder what Christmas is like in Japan? It is estimated that less than 1% of Japan's population is Christian. December 25th is not a Japanese national holiday. Unless it is on weekend, Japanese people work and go to school on the day. Christmas is mostly a commercial event in Japan. Many people do not know exactly what the origin of Christmas is. The big corporations do the main decorating. They light their buildings and the trees.

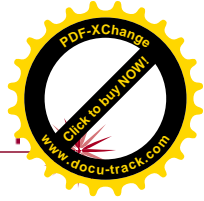
The Japanese have adopted many Western customs related to observing Christmas. Christmas trees are placed at home and Christmas parties are held around Christmas Day. Although they are different from Christmas parties, many bonenkai (year-end-parties) gatherings are held among co-workers and friends. The Japanese tend to find things of interest from abroad and transform them into something that is uniquely Japanese. It is a Japanese way

short periods because of influenza including the most recent strains but God has protected us and we haven't even had a cold! We continue in the work of God's calling here in Teshio and praise God each day for one more day to do so! We trust you are finding the same peace at the end of the day knowing you have done your best...that's all God asks...for our best and faithfulness.

to celebrate Christmas Eve by eating Christmas cakes. Christmas Eve has also become a night for couples to go out and spend a romantic time together at fancy restaurants or hotels. It is not easy to make reservations for such restaurants and hotels at the last minute on this day.

At home, popular Christmas dinner dishes change slightly year-by-year, but usually roast chicken or fried chicken and a Christmas cake are included. In fact, KFC restaurants around Japan get very busy on Christmas Eve. Instead of cooking a whole chicken, chicken thighs are used for cooking. Various pizzas have also become a popular food to eat on Christmas Eve. Most Japanese people buy Christmas cakes at stores. Different kinds of Christmas cakes are sold everywhere in Japan. Many homes do not have their own ovens or experience at making cakes so don't make their own. No cake mixes are available either. Needless to say we desire them to know the CHRIST of CHRISTmas.





# Newsworthy Mentions...

## Hospital Evangelism and Carpentry



A typical hospital room



Break time at the Minks



September Teshio Sunset

Vicki and Hamanasu Chorus  
30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Charity Concert

Besides our church services, Ken's regular school schedule and English classes in our home he has continued his Building Helps Ministry by going to Shibetsu (2 ½ hours away) to help fellow missionary Alan Minks in the remodeling of their 3 story building as a mission and home. They continue to see progress but sometimes it just does not happen as fast as one would like. The major interruptions to all of this began in July when he admitted that he had been experiencing quite heavy back pain for several weeks and not just on days that he did the carpentry work. He saw an orthopedic surgeon who discovered his pain wasn't from the damaged discs he knew he had but from kidney stones, large ones in both kidneys!! Then while figuring all that out, they also discovered gallstones. To make a long

story and two hospital stays and surgeries shorter, suffice it to say we hope he has stopped being a stone factory!! They removed two stones in one kidney that had caused blockage and thereby the pain; and left the one in the other kidney that really 'wasn't in an easily accessed position. After his body was allowed to heal, they chose to do the gallstone and gall bladder removal *before* the stones caused major problems. There were 17 large stones so we were thankful that they had not moved before they were removed! During Ken's two stays in the hospital he had extensive opportunities to hand out Bible verse cards to staff and patients alike as well as get to know his anesthesiologist and begin a Bible study with Dr. Nao Nishino!! We have kept up that contact and her heart is starting to open to the truth of the Gospel! She comes to a near by hospital once a month and we have continued study with her then. Lord willing, she will be able to stay overnight with us on Christmas Day before her shift.

## Vicki's Venue

Vicki holds the fort, makes it a haven for 'after' hours and is still involved in three different groups in town: chorus, taishogoto instrument, and pottery. She manages to still provide good home cooked meals, home made breads and goodies, is the 'secretary' for mailings of letters and reports and has a 'Dorcus' ministry of sewing for the other missionary families as needed. Vicki has been a member of the city women's chorus since we moved to Teshio. As of last year, she was asked to be the president after several years of being vice-president. With the agreement that the president would still be vice-

president, she said okay. They have a good relationship so it has continued to work out well. Their big event this year was a charity concert for their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. They asked a group to provide music from each school and a couple different guests as well as their own presentations. As a thank you to each participant and aid, they gave each a small bag of cookies that Vicki made. She baked around 500 cookies for that and then made more to give out to English students and other contacts along with invitations to our Christmas program. In all she made around 700 cookies! She is quite thankful for her American made oven range.



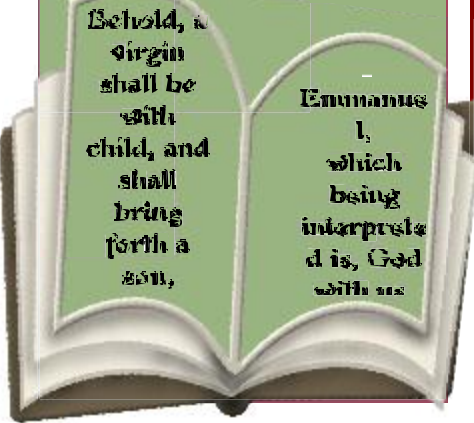


# Children's Chatter

Part 1 of 3  
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*Richard, Angela, Abigail (almost 6), Emma (2 1/2), & Makayla (1)* still live in Gastonia, but maybe not for much longer. They are actively pursuing God's will in seeking another church to minister in as a pastor. They are praying that shortly after the first of the year the Lord would open the door wide and lead them on. Angela has joined the teaching ranks, a job she enjoys immensely, by teaching K5 to Abigail. Abby is an eager learner and we had the joy of hearing she accepted Christ as her Savior in late November! Emma is a wonderful sweet 'pill' and is always exploring. Makayla gets all around in trying to keep up with her older sister and we probably won't recognize her when we see her next year, Lord willing.

*Michael and Stacy* are still in Tucson, AZ. The economy has played havoc on their jobs and other various challenges face them that we continually commit to the Lord. They are both well and we praise God for that. Stacy tries to help them keep their heads up by doing two part time jobs. Michael is trying to get a self-run business off the ground.

*Joshua and Alicia* are in their second year outside of Atlanta, GA. "We are so blessed to be serving the Lord in Loganville, GA. Josh has been very busy this past year serving as assistant pastor which also entails the responsibility of teens and children's ministries. Alicia has had her hands full as a busy mother or three. She has even ventured out into the world of homeschooling this year. *Jacob (4 1/2)* is now a preschooler, loves learning to read, and is quickly becoming a big help around the house. *Alyssia (2 1/2)* is all girl and tries to help mommy around the house but somehow always ends up getting into some kind of mischief. *Jason (6 mo.)* is our sweet baby who the Lord blessed us with this past May. He is a very content and happy baby who's favorite past time is watching his older siblings.



Local Fall School Festival



On our family vacation together in April



Appels 12/09



Vicki's part of pottery club display

