

Bencke Family News

Greetings, and thank you for your interest in Global Mission! We are privileged to serve in Kumamoto, Japan, where we have been since March 2006, Kumamoto is a city of 700,000 located about 1000 km southwest of Tokyo.

As of April 2007, we have begun another school year, with the beginning of each school year, our responsibilities change and shift as we are requested to serve and teach in a variety of capacities.

Our daughter, Emilie, attends the Lutheran kindergarten on our campus. Her Japanese has exploded since arriving in Japan. She is quick to smile, make friends, and eager to please. Needless to say, because of her head of golden hair, she inadvertently receives a great deal of (sometimes unwanted) attention. Most of the time, she enjoys the extra attention, but as you can imagine, as a five-year-old, sometimes she doesn't quite know how to handle the flood of comments that come her way.

Patrick teaches English at Kyushu Lutheran College. He has a full load of courses and also serves on several committees, including the chapel committee, where he finds many opportunities to engage in ministerial activities. For example, once a month or so, he volunteers to lead the daily chapel service. At these times, in addition to providing a meditation on the gospel, he will also introduce some new music.

Jackie teaches at the college part time. Her involvement includes teaching the chapel choir, teaching organ lessons, and classes such as music English, and Christianity and music. When she is not teaching at the college, she is home schooling Emilie in reading and writing (in English).

Both Patrick and Jackie assist with music ministry at the English service in downtown Kumamoto. The Kumamoto Lutheran Church is one of the only English services offered in this city, so the membership is diverse. We have many members who are students at Kumamoto University, as well as many folks who are teaching with the JET (Japan English Teaching) program. There is also a core group of Japanese members who come to the service to be ministered to and to learn English. Attendees come from a wide range of countries, including Zimbabwe, Uganda, Canada, Australia, Indonesia, Congo, Tanzania, United States, and France.

If you would like to be included on our mailing list, we will provide you with a periodic (usually once a month) update of our activities, and will tell the more personal stories of our work here. We try to send a picture or two with each newsletter to help readers better understand the culture in which we work. If this sound like something that is of interest to you, please contact Jackie at

jackie@bencke.com and indicate that you would like to receive the monthly newsletter.

We thank you always for your support-whether it is through your prayers, your financial support or by sharing the message of what we and /or other missionaries do once we leave the creature comforts of the Untied States behind.

Jackie and Patrick