

Dear Mom + Margaret,        1/7/'69

Happy New Year! It seems strange to write 1969 but the years do roll by don't they? New Years is the big Holiday of the year here in Japan. Everyone lays off work from 1-10 days. They prepare lots of food ahead of time so they don't have to do much cooking. They all rest, feast, drink and visit neighbors, friends and relatives. They dress in their finest kimonos etc + visit the many shrines and temples to seek their gods favor for the coming year. The Christians have special services on New Year's Eve + on New Years [sic] morning.

We had a nice quiet Christmas. We had a 13 lb turkey with all of the trimmings. It was a gift from a couple in Tokyo who work with the Air-Force [sic]. He is a Civilian Engineer + has been in Japan 22 yrs. They are Free Methodists + always are so good to the missionaries.

Thank you so much for the nice gifts. They were all so useful + fit just right. The sleeves of Jake's shirts were a little long but Carol shortened them for him. Thanks for the checks, too. Jake just had a new over-coat made and I plan to get one too (as my coat

is 10 yrs. old) so we will probably apply our money on that. John will probably use his to apply on payments for his motor-cycle. The girls want to get some clothes + Mark seems to

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find lots of use for money there at the school.

It was good to have them all home for 2 weeks. We didn't go anywhere special as the highways + resorts are so crowded. One day we all went bowling. It was the first time for me! On New Year's day [sic] we all went hiking in the near-by mts. We have had a beautiful fall + early winter.

We are holding regular Sunday services in our new building in Katsuta. We had 20 for the Christmas Eve services (Devotions + Social-hour.) but usually only 6-10 for regular services. We are praying for an increase in the months ahead. Love,

Florence + All