

ADAIR UPDATE



Celebrating Joseph's 2nd birthday

MESSY RELATIONSHIPS

The cheerier and drearier with some of our friends

Sometimes we feel overwhelmed by the lack of change and growth in some of our friends. While we do occasionally see glimmers of hope, we also sometimes feel discouraged and impatient. Will this person ever change? How are we to interact with this frustrating, disappointing, and/or disturbing behavior?

One artsy friend has consistently been coming to our small group for over 3 years. Although he doesn't yet identify as a believer, he is faithful, learning, and we hope in the process of turning to Christ. We are so glad he's still coming, yet he sometimes seems so far from becoming a brother.

Another friend and I (Roberta) have met regularly for nearly 4 years. We have read through Mark together, done other Bible studies, and she identifies as a Christian. Yet she is not interested in being a part of the local church (which we obviously think is an important part of being followers of Christ).

A vibrant, fun lady from the beach and I used to meet regularly to read from *Manga Messiah* (a comic book-style Bible). Her prayers at the end were so honest ("Jesus, you're nice.") At one time she agreed with a statement of faith in Christ, yet lately she hasn't been available to meet. Her family is strongly influenced by Buddhism and Jehovah's Witnesses.

We have another friend who has come to our small group for several years and have walked with him through the results of some bad decisions. He was recently offended by something at church, cut off relationships, and concluded we just spent time with him because it's our job. Although we know this is not true, it is quite hurtful.

It's easy to talk about how faithfulness is more important than fruit and how we need to ultimately trust God, but it is hard to do in actual relationships. Thank you for your prayers and encouragement as we try to share the love of Christ in the midst of messy relationships.



Fun with Family

It's been great having family visit lately. Over the last 3 months, we have had Roberta's mother, sister, and Robert's parents visit. We have enjoyed introducing them to baby Benjamin and seeing them get reacquainted with Joseph.

PREPARING FOR OUR NEXT TERM

Big P, little p, what begins with P?

We were having dinner with an Asian Access colleague the other day, and he asked what we need going forward. I blurted out, “A place to live, partners for the church plant, and a ministry plan.” I wasn’t trying for alliteration, but in thinking about this update I have since added two more p-words that are on our minds a lot: preparing and packing.

Partners

The church with whom we have been partnering for 4 years has been burdened for the neighboring city of Shiogama for 30 to 40 years. In fact, our senior pastor was involved in church planting there for three years before he was asked to pastor an established church. Although he didn’t see any fruit, he and others have continued to pray faithfully for decades for a church to be planted in this area.

The mother church (around 80 people, which is large for Japan) is committed to partnering with our work in Shiogama. They will continue to pray regularly. We are also hoping that some people will commit to partnering in various projects as we move and find ways to get connected with people there. The church has church plants in 3 other locations (ranging from around 5 to 30 people - all meeting in homes).

We are especially eager for on-site partners in ministry. We are praying for people to relocate to the area and do life and ministry together. Additionally, we are praying that God will call people to himself who are already rooted in the community to be a committed to the plant.

Place

Our hope is to be able to move our belongings to our next home before the end of this term so that we can start our next term already present in the community. The fiscal and school year start in April, which is when we come back. We prefer not to start our next term house hunting but instead to begin the process of getting to know our neighbors and community.

For around a year, Robert has been looking at real estate websites often, and we have people connected to the area looking for us. Yet it doesn’t look like there are many housing options. It’s hard to know if we should commit to what is available or keep searching.

Please pray that God shows us his provision for the next term. Pray for my attitude in particular as I’ve gotten quite attached to our current home and location. And pray that whether we start gatherings in our home or elsewhere, God will provide us a place to meet and worship in community.

A Plan

Although we have some ideas about what flavor of church plant we’d like to be a part of, we don’t yet have concrete plans. I occasionally feel overwhelmed by the need: 60,000 people with maybe a few dozen believers (which is well below 1%).



Benji's first camping trip

We haven’t made decisions about a plan, but we know two things: 1) we want to spend a lot of time learning about and from the people of this city and 2) we want our lives (as individuals, as a family, and as a community of believers) to be about loving God, loving one another, and loving the lost.

Packing and preparation

We have a lot of sorting and cleaning ahead of us in order to move out of this home (even if we don’t know where we are moving to yet). We also have a lot of preparation to do for our home assignment. Our rough schedule is PA in the fall, TX in the winter, then back to Japan in the spring (with shorter trips to the midwest and west coast). We hope to write more concretely in our next newsletter about our home assignment plans.

As always, thanks so much for your partnership. We look forward to reconnecting with you later this year. Fondly,

- R, R, J, & B

Partner

To partner financially:

www.sim.org/giveusa then click

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Or by mail: SIM USA

P.O. Box 7900

Charlotte, NC 28241-7900

Memo: R&R Adair Support #038207

Specific Prayer Points

- Messy relationships
- Partners, place, plan, packing, and preparation
- The final meeting of the Marriage Course
- Robert’s preparation for a conference in Indonesia and another volunteer trip to Nepal (both in August)
- Various friends to hear and respond to the Gospel

Contact Info

Robert radair@asianaccess.org
Roberta roberta@asianaccess.org

Address: Robert & Roberta Adair
985-0835
Miyagi-ken, Tagajo-shi
Geba 1-11-18, Japan

Web: www.adairupdate.com