

July 2015

ADAIR UPDATE



A street-view in Nepal 2.5 months after the earthquake

FROM JAPAN TO... NEPAL?

Helping facilitate partnership between Japanese and Nepalese Christians

The first weekend in July I (Robert) was in Kathmandu, Nepal for a 4 day exploratory trip. I had a great and challenging time meeting with various groups about the potential of sending Japanese Christians to help.

Right after the disaster in Nepal (4.25.2015), Roberta and I wondered if there was anything we could do. We had a few ideas, and at one point I offhandedly said, "Why don't we look into sending a team from Japan?" To my surprise, Roberta was intrigued by the idea so we moved forward.

Although Asian Access started in Japan, it has been working with pastors in Nepal for over 12 years. Through these preexisting relationships I was able to join an A2 colleague and go to better understand the specific needs in Nepal. The work will be quite different than what we have experienced in Japan. For instance, Nepal does not have the industrial resources of Japan, and therefore there are not trucks, backhoes, and other heavy equipment readily available to

clear away the rubble. Also due to the rugged nature of the area, there are not enough places to place the debris. Furthermore, there are complications related to understanding and working with government disaster policy.

Toward the end of September, I will be leading a team of up to 8 people to serve in and around Kathmandu (Nepal's capital). Potential projects include helping to repair schools, clean up debris, and rebuild homes in rural regions. Although we are unsure of many details at this time, we are excited to be partnering with Nepalese Christians in an attempt to love and help people impacted by this disaster.

Our hope is that through these teams the people of Nepal will be blessed, our Nepalese partners will be encouraged, the Japanese Christians who go will grow, and God may even call some of them to Nepal long-term. Please pray for us as we learn what it means to serve and work alongside the people of Nepal with our Japanese brothers and sisters.



U-40 (under 40) retreat

Towards the end of June I (Robert) participated in an Asian Access retreat for young leaders. We had a great time at a mountain camp enjoying the outdoors, encouraging one another, and learning how to better minister in our specific contexts. Pray for these young leaders who serve throughout northern Japan.



NPO HIGH FIVE

Volunteering at Nonoshima

Every Wednesday morning at 8:45am, we pick up the Wheaton summer interns at church, grab lunch at the grocery store, and meet our volunteer friends by the dock. We then ride a boat about 30 minutes to an island that was inundated by the tsunami. What was once famous for flowers including lavender and an edible yellow flower (pictured top left) was deeply impacted and still has a long way to go after the 3.11 disaster.

doing manual labor together. For me, the boat rides to and from the island as well as working with a screw gun, a rake, and dirt is great for my soul. I look forward to Wednesdays - I feel full ("God's pleasure") when I work with my hands.

Relationships

My friend (pictured with me in the middle) started this NPO to care for the island. Soon after the disaster, many volunteer groups came yet now, 4 years later, volunteers have mostly dwindled. We work with my friend, her father, and a few family friends. It's a small group, but getting to know these people is fun (the papa is an avid mountain climber, and we've shared stories and gotten pointers for future adventures).

Another highlight is that two friends have joined us who are not yet believers. As we work together doing something that the community sees as valuable and restorative, we pray for salty conversations and for God's love to be made known to them.

I hope that our presence is somehow an encouragement to the island and to those actively trying to restore it. I don't know how it works, but I want to trust the mystery that 4 to 6 people who carry Christ's Spirit coming consistently is somehow significant. As we often write, we long for God's Kingdom to come and his will to be done on these islands and in Shiogama as it is in heaven. "The Lord is King! Let the earth rejoice! Let the farthest islands be glad" (Psalm 97:1).

Thank you for your partnership and prayers.
- R&R (and J)



Beauty

As we get off the boat and walk to our worksite, we always comment on the beauty of our surroundings. It really is so, so beautiful! Coming alongside the perceived needs of the community in this case means helping to restore the flower fields. As we work cutting grass, pulling weeds, burning grass, and helping to build a small deck and tables, we see the contrast between what it used to be, what it is now, and what it might eventually become.

Even though we often go home feeling like our contribution is very small, we hope that the re-cultivation of the land will someday contribute to the economic well-being of the island through local tourism. We trust that God cares about both the beauty and economics of this island.

Working with our hands

I (Roberta) have always enjoyed working outside and being able to see the results of my work - something measurable ("measurability" is challenging as a new mom and being in ministry). Also, the pressure of communicating in another language is much lighter when we are



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Specific Prayer Points

- Wisdom in seeing how the church of Japan can actively reach out to and love their Asian neighbors in Nepal
- 1:1 and small group discipleship relationships (we recently changed our young adult small group to Sat.)
- Relationships and God's leading in Shiogama
- Language!
- Good visit to Kyushu (Robert's previous placement) in August.

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