

July 2014

# AID AIR UPDATE



Summer interns from Wheaton College

## TEAMS AND MORE TEAMS

### Several groups came to assist in ministry in Tohoku (northern Japan)

What were we thinking...less than a month after our son was born, we agreed to host teams continuously for 7 weeks. Short-term teams are a complicated subject. There is no doubt that God uses them in the spiritual growth of the participants. There is some discussion, though, on how beneficial they are for the local ministries they rely on in the field. We are happy to say that all three teams helped us deepen relationships with Japanese people and provided unique opportunities to share the gospel.

On June 19th, three interns arrived to serve for seven weeks from Wheaton College. They were followed by Rolling Hills Covenant Church who sent a team of 8 young adults at the end of June. Finally, Crossway Community Church sent a team for the 4th consecutive summer to serve with Shiogama Bible Baptist Church (our partner church) and A2.

Here is a little of what we were able to accomplish through the short-term teams who served this summer in Tagajo. Hundreds of

children participated in English events and activities organized by the teams. Several families came to our home for the first time. A large amount of tsunami debris was removed from a beach in a rural fishing village. Our Japanese partners and church members were encouraged through their relationships with these young people. Residents of temporary housing facilities enjoyed international events, hula performances, and violin concerts. Many new relationships with people in the community were formed, and existing relationships were deepened.

Tears, laughter, and a broken fan were some of the highlights from a going away party when the Wheaton team left a few days ago. Roberta and I went into the summer worried about the stress of hosting these teams but miss them now that they are gone. Please pray that along with our Japanese partners we would be able to deepen the relationships these teams helped us start and that we would see fruit in the form of new followers of Jesus in the near future.



### Judy in Japan

We loved having Roberta's mom, Judy, stay with us for 6 weeks. It was helpful having her here for pre-baby anticipation and post-delivery encouragement. In addition to sharing a testimony at church and interacting well with our friends, we enjoyed having her around and showing her glimpses of "our" Japan!

# BELONG, BEHAVE, BELIEVE

## En route with friends in their journey of knowing Christ

At our most recent A2 meeting, some of us shared insights we have learned that shape our lives and ministries. One that I shared that I think about at least weekly was a concept I (Roberta) learned while living in Kosovo. It describes various ways that people encounter Christ: the 3 Bs of Believe, Belong, and Behave.

All 3 are important in being a follower of Christ - believing rightly about Him, belonging to a Christ-centered community, and behaving more and more like Him. That said, many of us come to Christ in different orders of these Bs depending on our personality, generation, culture, etc. In Japan, it seems like a common faith journey takes the order of belong-behave-believe with people occasionally saying, "Now that I'm a Christian, tell me what I believe."

### Belong

At robanokai, our young adult small group, we have several friends who do not yet identify as Christians but who are becoming more committed to the group. They come regularly ("belonging"), and we hope to be a place where they can continue to explore faith. One friend recently identified herself as a half-Christian. This term would've made me uncomfortable a few years ago, yet I'm now encouraged that she's verbalizing what seems to be her journey toward knowing Christ. Another friend has had many conversations with people in the group but doesn't yet identify as a follower of Christ.

Other friends, too, have gotten more and more comfortable with the church community. They are beginning to feel less like *okyakusan* (guests) and more like *kazoku* (family). Please pray for these friends to transition to being fully

adopted sons and daughters by putting their faith in Christ.

### Behave

Whether praying at the end of an adult English class, reading the Bible after lunch, or serving in temporary housing, we know several people whose behavior is similar to that of Christians.

A lady connected with our English ministry has gotten involved with the relief and volunteer branch of our church (Hope Miyagi, which was started after 3.11.2011). She, as well as 2 older gents, helps out regularly with events in temporary housing - acting as the hands and feet of Jesus. Although not a Christian, she tells others about the ministry and the church as "we" and not "them." Once, despite having a schedule conflict and being unable to stay herself, she dropped a friend of hers off at a Sunday service.

Please pray that this lady and others like her will continue to want to serve their community and act like Christ. Please pray that she will soon grow in her understanding and love for the Groom (Christ) and the Bride (the church).

### Believe

My friend K has been on a journey of believing in Christ for several years. She identifies herself as a Christian and seems to have a genuine commitment to Christ. She even wants to tell others about Him...yet is not yet connected in a consistent way to a Christ-



Two months and counting

centered community. As faith in a vacuum isn't what we believe God has called us to, please join us in praying that she and others like her would grow in the other Bs.

### Be-cause God is able

I fundamentally believe that God can and does use all kinds of people to accomplish his will and expand His kingdom - even those who are still really early in their journey of knowing Him. If God waited until we were fully sanctified (or fully fluent or fully selfless...) before using us, we would be in big trouble. Yet in His grace and power, He is able!

All of this sounds pretty triumphant and hopeful, but I confess to being a bit weary. Will we see fruit (this term, this area, ever)? Will our friends fully surrender to Christ, allow His Spirit to change their hearts and actions, and embrace His church? Prayers for refreshment and restored faith are appreciated - as well as for our friends. We are grateful for your prayers and partnership.

- R&R

### Partner

To partner financially:

[www.sim.org/giveusa](http://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

- Refreshment
- Growing in our roles as Mom and Dad
- Japanese language acquisition
- Wisdom in how to manage our time and care for people entrusted to us
- Robert's role of encouraging young pastors and leaders
- Roberta discerning what to focus on and what to let go of for this season
- Good followup with people from various events held this summer

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