

ADAIR UPDATE



Winter at a nearby park

PRAY FOR MY PRAYER

A confession and a request regarding one of my biggest struggles in Japan

The meeting is coming to an end and I (Robert) am starting to get a sick feeling in my stomach. Staff at our partner church have been discussing the book of Acts and how our understanding of this book impacts our ministry. I have understood most of the Japanese and have been able to share my own thoughts fairly well. Now it's time to close the meeting, and I really don't want to be asked to pray.

Praying in Japanese is a huge struggle for me. It started out from the reality that I didn't speak Japanese so people around me expected me to pray in English. Then as my language ability progressed in other areas, I continued to pray in English. Over time a large gap developed between my capacity for normal conversation and my ability to communicate in prayer.

Now I am in the funny position where I dread being called upon to pray in a public situation. When I sit in a prayer meeting or Bible

study, I avoid eye contact and am relieved when someone else is called upon to pray. I have stagnated because of my pride and desire not to look bad in front of other people.

I have shared this struggle with a few of my Japanese friends. I am now working hard to pray when I have the opportunity while studying more sample prayers in my free time. I have the goal to take the opportunity to pray publicly at least twice a week.

I want to be able to pray for my friends freely in their heart language. I want to be able to pray when asked in public situations. I want to be able to verbally communicate with God in the language of the country we live. Please join us in praying that I would have the courage to pray in Japanese as I improve the language element. Also please pray that I would be able to focus on prayer and not performing for people. Thanks for your encouragement; I am excited to grow in this area.



What does our small group's name "Roba no kai" mean?

- A) Sushi
- B) Bible Study
- C) Sunday Night
- D) Donkey Meeting

12 MONTHS IN JAPAN

Thankful for the last year and anticipating the one to come

Wow! I (Roberta) can hardly believe we've been in Japan a whole year. As I skimmed my journal from the last year, I couldn't help but notice two things: 1) Living in Japan feels a lot easier a year in and 2) God has been faithful to and present with us this year. Thanks for journeying with us during this season of highs and lows associated with adjusting to living in a different culture as a couple.

A look back

For me (Roberta), this last year was full and good. It included lots of time studying Japanese, getting to know people at our partner church, getting settled (where to shop, how to pay bills, etc.), hosting people from our mission and church, and participating in various activities at church. I've also enjoyed meeting weekly for Bible study with my friend, "K," and getting to know the mothers of Robert's English students.

Robert...has had a busy year. In addition to helping me (listening to culture and language frustrations, translating occasionally, etc.), he has helped and encouraged our partner pastor during a busy season. He spent several months assisting in organizing and caring for various volunteer teams with the relief arm of our church (Hope Miyagi). With that, he also helped with events at temporary housing facilities, park cleanups, oyster farmers trying to relaunch their businesses, distributing supplies, and other responsibilities.

Almost every Tuesday afternoon, Robert teaches English to kids between 4 and 10 years old. He teaches in a school that was inundated by the tsunami but our church helped clean up post-disaster. Through these relationships, kids are learning English and beginning to come to some fun events at church. Their parents are getting connected with people in our church community, too. Three or four moms recently starting meeting weekly for Bible study. I (Roberta) hang out with some of the moms at least once a month, and I'm excited for what God is doing in these ladies' - and their whole families' - lives.

A look forward

In addition to continuing work with the mother church and helping with young adult, kids, relief, and English ministries (oh! and of course language study), the conversation of church planting has come up yet again. We have been through the cycle of "Yes! Let's go!" "No, this isn't a good time." "Yes! This is a great community for a church!" "No, we are stretched too thin..." 3 or 4 times. Even though we have understood the reasoning for the changes, it's felt like an emotional roller coaster. Yet, once again, it's looking plausible that we will be involved in a church plant in a community where one does not currently exist.



One of Robert's Classes

The area we are considering is about half way between where we currently live and downtown Sendai. It is a very new community that basically grew up around a train station in the last several years and is made up primarily of young families. We are hopeful that the newness of the community means that people are more open to relationship and exploring new ideas.

Please pray for our ministry partners: for wisdom in how to proceed, in planning, in timing, in resourcing, and in caring for multiple house churches.

Please pray for us: that our language and culture skills will grow and that we will gain experience and confidence needed for the work (and privilege!) of being light in an unchurched community. Pray also that we will be willing to move there or stay in our home as God leads.

We are so grateful for your partnership, prayers, and encouragement,

-R&R

Partner

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Specific Prayer Points

- That we would grow in our love for Jesus and people daily.
- That both of us would grow in our ability to pray in Japanese.
- That we would be able to foster an environment of discipleship and evangelism at Roba no kai.
- That God would lead us as we consider planting in the area of Shinden-Higashi.
- That our friend K would be baptized soon.

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D) Robert's nickname here is Roba-chan. It's a play on his name that also sounds like the Japanese word for donkey. Thus our small group is both "Robert's meeting" and "Donkey meeting."