

AIDAIR UPDATE



Merry
Christmas
and a Happy
New Year

CHALLENGED BY OUR PARTNERS

Some of what we learned on our last trip to PA

When we talk about partnership, we're not just talking about the recent "strategic partnership" between Asian Access and SIM...or just about people committing to give to and pray for our ministry. We're also talking about how we learn from and are challenged by the unique people around us.

As we were talking about some of our recent interactions with people on a several week trip to PA, we were:

- Challenged by friends who are involved in a new church plant in Philly
- Encouraged by several people committed to praying for and reaching out to international students at PSU
- Inspired by the consistency and vision of the leadership of a campus fellowship that is committed to empowering young leaders and teaching them to "be the church"

- Excited about people who are involved in a house church
- Stimulated by people committed to discovering how their faith relates to their intellect
- Moved by people who are loving their aging parents well
- Excited to see people who previously supported us because they liked us transition to supporting us because they believe in what we're doing
- Amazed by friends who are prayerfully considering inviting an aging (and unrelated) man to live with them (taking Matt. 25:35 literally in a beautiful kind of way).

Thanks for opening your lives to us, for teaching us, and for being stellar examples of loving Jesus and loving others well. We look forward to continuing to learn from you.

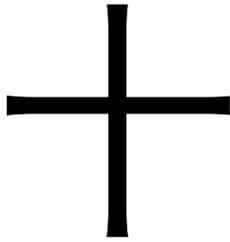


Quiz

What is this a picture of?

- A) Traditional musical instrument
- B) Ceremonial purification basin
- C) Children's game
- D) Cooking facility

KANJI LESSON



Cross (Jūjika)

The three characters written above form the Japanese word for cross. Individually the three characters mean (from top to bottom) ten, character or letter, and to frame or mount. When combined they mean something like the “thing built in the shape of the number 10.” That said, when people read it all they see is the word cross.

More on the partnership

Last month we gave you a lot of information about our exciting new partnership with SIM. After talking with a few of you, we have a better idea of some of the questions you may be asking.

What does SIM stand for?

SIM started in 1893 as Sudan Interior Mission. Since then, SIM has grown into an international missions agency with over 1600 missionaries. So, like IBM, SIM is an acronym without a meaning. SIM has come to be defined by our purpose, which is “...to glorify God by planting, strengthening, and partnering with churches around the world as we: evangelize the unreached, minister to human need, disciple believers into churches, equip churches to fulfill Christ’s commission.”

How do I transfer my giving to SIM?

The great news is that we already have accounts with both organizations so wherever your gift is going it is being redirected to the correct place. If you are a new supporter, we ask that you direct your gifts to SIM. If you have been giving through A2, we ask that you continue doing that for now. A2 and SIM are

working on determining what the easiest way is to transfer partners between organizations.

Once these details have been finalized, we will send out a communication specific to this process. We appreciate your patience and ask you to please not hesitate to contact us directly with any questions you may have.

Why SIM?

Over 3 years ago, A2 began the process of looking for a partner organization to enable us to more effectively equip Japanese churches to see their communities transformed by the gospel and to better steward resources. This process involved getting to know many wonderful organizations. SIM’s commitment to working with the national church, track record of partnership with other organizations, capacity to handle our stateside operations, and similar mission DNA all helped lead to the partnership. The two of us are happy to be both SIM and A2.

Keep the questions coming

Thank you for all of your great questions and keep them coming! Our colleagues in Japan and their ministry partners will benefit greatly from all of us learning how to navigate this process together.



From Clogg
Family Croquet
2011

WHERE ARE WE GOING???



On the road

We moved out of our house in West Chicago, IL on December 20th and headed to Texas. We will be focused on raising support and making other preparations full-time until we leave for Japan...hopefully in early 2012.



Are we there yet?

“When are you leaving for Japan?” This is probably the most frequent question we receive, and it has a somewhat complicated answer. We usually respond with “hopefully soon!” but a more honest answer is that we will be cleared to go as soon as we have 100% of our support pledged, receive our placement from A2, and obtain our visa from the Japanese government.

“100% support pledged.” That is what we need before we can buy our tickets. This means that we are living in a tension between real excitement about how God is providing through individuals and churches as well as real apprehension about the amount that still has not been committed. (We are between half and 2/3 of the way there.)

Japan - here we come!

We confess that we sometimes feel pretty anxious. Pray that we will be diligent in the areas that we can control and that we will trust God fully in the areas that we cannot. Also pray that we would be able to consistently and joyfully share what God is doing in Japan. Finally we ask that you pray that God would bring many people to himself and expand his kingdom in Japan. We believe God has called us, has consistently provided for us in the past, and will continue to meet our needs and guide us in the future.

Finally, knowing that your finances are between you and God, we ask you to prayerfully consider partnering with us financially if you are not already doing so. We thank all of you for your prayers and encouragement for both us and for our ministry in Japan.

STEPS TO DEPARTURE	SUPPORT	PLACEMENT	VISA	GOODBYE
Here is a quick overview of what needs to happen between now and our departure to Japan. We look forward to when we are able to communicate a firm departure date and destination!	100% We need pledges for 100% of our monthly need to depart. We are getting close to 60%!	What Church A2 leadership is working to determine our placement by mid-January. We can't wait to find out.	Religious Work We are in the application process for visas. The process is usually 1 to 2 months.	Departure Once these three requirements have been satisfied, we will be free to fly.

MY OWN CALLING TO JAPAN

A Tale of Three Marches

This is an attempt to communicate something that I (Roberta) think God is doing in my heart toward Japan.

March 2010: Surrender

In March 2010, I believe that God walked me through a season of surrender. I won't take the time or space here to write all of the "how's," but it seemed pretty clear that he was asking me to actively lay down my identity, dreams, and desires with my previous missions agency and country where I had been working.

All that to say, it seemed that Robert and I would be going to Japan. I kind of accepted this with resignation. I would give myself occasional pep talks ("God is good. He knows what he's doing. People in Japan need Jesus, too. Be obedient."). Yet I confess that I viewed going to Japan more as a punishment or, at the very least, as an assignment. I felt like a servant doing what my Master told me to, which isn't a terrible thing, I just didn't have the best attitude.

March 2011: Invitation

After a week in southern Japan, Robert and I went to A2's yearly conference an hour north of Tokyo. This is where we were when we experienced the 9.0 earthquake on March 11th. I remember the several minutes of shaking, standing outside waiting for the gas in the buildings to be checked, the first images on the news of the tsunami, waking up to aftershocks, and seeing stoic, hyper-controlled Japanese people so overwhelmed that their legs gave out. I also remember someone reading Psalm 46,

which is when I sensed God changing my heart toward Japan.

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the seas, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. God was with us.

Somehow I had lost sight of the fact that God was there. Despite the destruction around me, despite not really previously wanting to move to Japan, despite my lame attitude, He was there. Fear was not necessary - not regarding disasters; not regarding my future.

The psalmist later describes "the holy place" where God dwells, which I understand to now refer to the Church. *God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at the break of day.* Although the church represents less than 1% of the population, the Holy Spirit is in her and will help her. Mary Jo Wilson, the VP of A2 in Japan, said, "The church in Japan is small; the love of God is great."

Then I heard this: **Come and see** *what the LORD has done...* "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." This was the clincher for me. Rather than being commanded to "GO! LABOR!" as God's servant, he was inviting me



From our
March 2011
Trip

to "come and see" as his ambassador, his bride, his friend. He was inviting me to be a part of exalting him (honoring him, making him known). While I know I am also God's servant and he has the complete right and authority to command me to do whatever he wants, I am grateful that I am also his. Period.

The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. This verse is repeated twice (v. 7 and 11). As I sensed God extending an invitation to me, I loved the repetition that He is and will continue to be with us.

March 2012: Expectation

We don't know what this year holds. We're expectant, we're excited, and we're in need of our hearts to be continually softened and broken...not just for Japan but for us, too! We encourage you to have a look at Psalm 46 as a possible guide for praying for us and for Japan. Ultimately, we ask that God be made known in Japan, in our lives, and in yours, too!

Prayer Requests

Please join us in prayer for our lives and future ministry. Above all we ask you to pray that we would daily grow in our relationships with Christ and with each other. Also pray that our lives would be oriented in a way that facilitates good preparation for our future in Japan.

Specific Prayer Points

- Pre-field Preparation
- Relational dynamics associated with us not having a home.
- A2 leadership in meetings regarding our future placement
- Last of all, we ask that you pray that God would prompt people to partner financially with us at a level that they can joyfully give and that meets our remaining need.

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