

Dear Friend,

Greetings from sweltering hot Tokyo! Our weather recently has been so hot that we have either hidden in the air conditioned room or gone to the city pool with the kids. But the people living to the north of us have had so much rain that a river dike broke causing 20,000 people to flee to city shelters and schools because of the flooding! We hope you are enjoying your summer and the weather where you are!

We want to update you on our family this month. We were very excited that Andy got to go on a mission trip with his High School group, called Hi-b.a, which is short for High School Born Againers. Each year this group does outreaches with Japanese high school kids. We missed Andy a lot during the 2 and 1/2 weeks he was away in June. Here is what he wrote about it.

"I had a really great time during the Gospel Team mission trip. I was able to make some new friends and see God work in people's lives. A normal day went something like this. I woke up about 5:30 every morning, and got in the car to go to the area where that night's rally was to be held. There we would pass out tracts and invitations to the rally to Japanese high school students on their way to school. Then around 9, our team met back at the place we were staying... we practiced singing or performing our skit to get ready for the rally. The rallies started around 4:30 or 5, and after the rally, we would drive back home, get dinner on the way, and then fall asleep around 12:00 or so. It was a pretty exhausting schedule. During the rallies, Gospel Team members led singing and also performed a skit... one Gospel Team member and one Japanese Hi-b.a regular member shared their testimonies of how they came to believe in Jesus. I had the privilege of sharing my testimony.

"During the first week, I was in the Osaka area where we had four rallies plus a larger final rally. At the regular rallies, we had anywhere from 2 to 15 high school students attend, with 0-8 being new people who had never been to a Hi-b.a event before. Also, during that week, one person made a commitment to Christ, and about 10 others said they were interested in learning more. The other team in Osaka had the privilege of seeing two people believe in Jesus. We came back to the Tokyo area for the second week, where we had to get used to a significant increase in the number of high schoolers who came. We had at least 15 high schoolers each time, and at some we had as many as 25 people. What was incredible was the fact that God was drawing at least two people into his family per night!! That was a great blessing to be able to see God work his power that way."

Rochelle and I thank each of you who helped support Andy through your prayers and/or finances during his mission trip!

Summer makes way for special opportunities. Ben attended a basketball program and Melissa a volleyball program held at school for 3 hours /day for a week. Then Melissa went to Joy Bible Camp in the mountains near Tokyo and both boys went to Hi-b.a camp near the ocean. The kids enjoyed these special events very much, and now we are looking forward to a week vacation at Lake Nojiri in August as a family. We imagine that you are enjoying good times with your family, friends, and church groups too this summer.

Meanwhile Rochelle and I keep working away. Rochelle recently had an opportunity to be the speaker for a group of moms meeting at a nearby church who are studying parenting. She was sharing about the importance of building a good husband and wife relationship as a key part of good parenting, and this was well received. Our own local church is hosting a speaker from Focus on the Family Japan this weekend talking about parenting and getting kids through the teen years. Parenting and marriage are such important topics for Japan because of the breakdown in these social institutions here (just as in the US). Greater isolation in relationships means young parents need additional outside help to figure out the parenting thing!

As always our cute little boy Joshua brings delight to all those he is around. He is growing so big so quickly, reminding us a lot of Andy at that age. He is very active and interested in all kinds of machines, cars, planes, vacuum cleaners, etc. He also loves playing in the pool. We are enjoying him soooo much!

Please pray that the Lord would continue to build us up and use us as His servants and children here in Japan! We so appreciate your partnering with us to help the Japanese hear about Jesus!

In Jesus love,

Steve, Rochelle, Andy, Ben, Melissa and Joshua