



Japan Journal | JULY 1, 2015

Updating You on Ryan & Jungshin's Ministry to Students in Kobe

Dear Friends,

Can you believe it's already July?! Here in Japan, the coolness of spring has turned into the stickiness of summer. Three months have gone by in an instant, and we're heading into the last few weeks of the semester. Let me try to catch you up on all that's been happening since we wrote you.

We started the school year in April, passing out fliers on campus, introducing our group and inviting freshman to our different activities. In all, we passed out around 2,000 fliers on 5 campuses. Most of our Christian students joined us, too, which was a big encouragement to us staff!

But freshman orientation was also challenging. We were kicked off of one new campus for being an unregistered, religious group. We were rained out at another campus. For that reason, perhaps, ministry seemed to start slower this year than usual. For instance, we only had four freshmen come to our big **Welcome Picnic** at the end of April. Slowly but surely, however, God has been working in the lives of Kobe students this semester.

One of those freshmen at the Welcome Picnic was a Christian. Since then, we have been able to guide her to a good church and begin meeting with her for discipleship. Another freshman is not a Christian yet, but he has been coming to our weekly worship and prayer meetings. He has also been actively inviting his non-Christian friends to our outreach events! Just last week he brought four new people to a party hosted by one of our short-term mission teams.

God has been leading us to older Christian students, as well. In May, we all gathered to share the gospel on one of our main campuses. During the outreach, we met a 3rd year Christian student. He has since gotten involved with the ministry, and through him, we have been meeting other Christians on his campus. There is also a 2nd year Christian student at another university that I have recently started



Passing out fliers with teammates and students at freshman orientation (April)



Jungshin and some of the girls she has mentored at our **Welcome Picnic** (4/25)



Sharing the gospel with students at our **Korean Open House** event (5/23)

meeting to train in evangelism. After a slow first month of the school year, it seems like we're finally beginning to pick up some momentum.

By far, one of the most encouraging stories this semester has been **Mariko**. She came to our Christmas Party last year and trusted Christ after her friend shared the gospel with her a few weeks later. For a couple months, she wasn't able to attend church. But starting this school year, she committed to attend church and our meetings every week, even though it meant totally rearranging her class and work schedule.

Mariko's faith has grown tremendously as a result. So when one of her church pastors asked her if she would like to be baptized last month, she said yes! (Most Japanese view baptism as the final act of their conversion; it is when they truly begin to identify themselves as Christians.) Seeing Mariko grow has been very encouraging at a time when it feels like we've been doing a lot of evangelism but haven't always seen a lot of fruit for it...at least, not yet!

Summer in Kobe is the season for short-term mission teams. We have 3 coming from LA, 2 from Korea, and 1 from Taiwan from **5/31-7/20**. And I'm in charge of most of them, which is why I haven't been able to write you sooner! Over the past month, many Japanese students have heard the gospel through these teams and their events. Many more will hear over the next few weeks. Please pray that God would open their hearts to respond in faith.

Lastly, on the home front, Baby Beneke and Jungshin are doing well! Mom is healthy and staying active, and baby gets bigger every week. We're looking forward to more time to rest and prepare for the delivery after this semester. But until then, there's still a lot of work to be done, so please remember us in your prayers!

As always, we are truly grateful for your partnership. Have a great month, and we'll try to write you again soon!

Yours in Christ,

Ryan & Jungshin



Mariko was baptized on June 21st!



Baby Beneke is now 27 weeks old! You can see the side of his/her nose and face in this 3-D ultrasound taken June 16th.

PRAISES & PRAYERS

- *Praise* God for new Christian students getting connected, Mariko's baptism, and 29 weeks of healthy pregnancy!
- *Pray* for Summer Mission Teams and events, especially **LA Night** (7/3) and **Taiwan Night** (7/17)
- *Pray* for us to always prioritize our relationship with God in busyness
- *Pray* for grace and perseverance to finish this semester's ministry well as we look ahead to parenthood

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