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It was much more relaxing riding bicycles near the beach than it is on the streets of Japan.

Dear Friends,

An advantage of living in Southern California is my Japanese friends love the idea of coming to visit! So far this year, I've seen two dear friends for the first time on this side of the Pacific.

First, Natsuki, who I met her very first day of college at Rikkyo University came to bring in the new year. She loved getting to see how Americans celebrate New Year's and getting some time outdoors. Our first main outing on New Year's Day was riding the San Luis Rey river trail down to the beach.

I loved catching up with Natsuki right where we left off in August. It was exciting to hear in person how she has been growing in her faith this

past semester. While she still struggles at times with how Christians stand out so strongly from the norm in Japanese culture, she is clearly desiring to know Christ more and help others learn about him. Natsuki has been meeting regularly for discipleship with Mayu, who has just recently been accepted as staff with Cru in Japan. Mayu has also been supporting Natsuki as she helps a freshman from her university learn more about Christianity. Natsuki was nervous but eager to start mentoring Mako when I last saw her in August, so I was thrilled to hear about that becoming a reality.

Second, I got to see my friend Mio and her mom in Long Beach. She is my friend that spent the last 10 years hospitalized due to a nerve disorder and failed surgery. After being released in September, she was able to come to California to reapply to Cal State Long Beach. It was like a dream come true to see her here and gather together with her former homestay families. They prayed for her all along and are also thrilled about her miraculous recovery.

I'm amazed at how much foreign students just love getting to spend time with an American family. Natsuki mentioned that a highlight of her time here was meeting my family. And clearly Mio treasures her relationships with her host families. Please pray with me for Mio and more students like her to know Christ and return to Japan as a light for Christ.

In Christ,

Christina



Mio was able to return to California after 10 years in the hospital!

Please join me in praying for~

- Natsuki as she has returned to Japan desiring to be a witness to her friends and family
- Mio as she has once again reunited with her Christian homestay family to put her trust in Christ
- Mayu as she prepares to graduate and begin preparation for joining staff with Cru in Japan