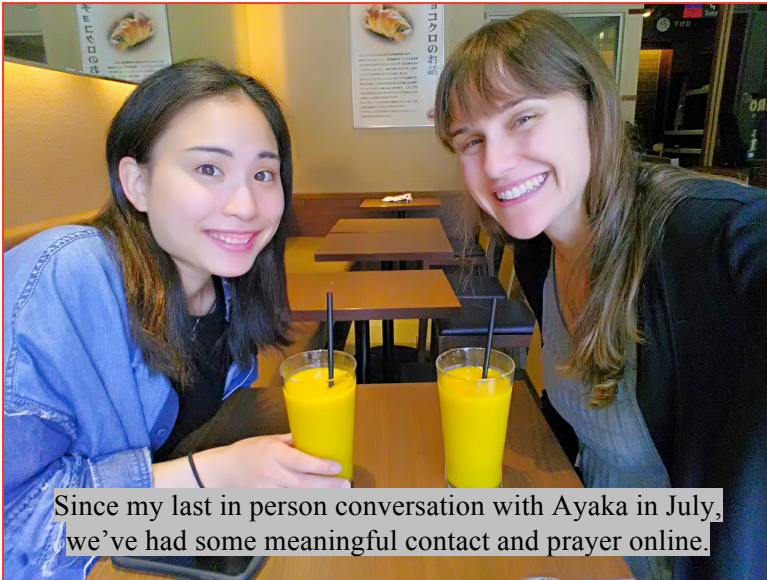


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Dear Friends,

Since coming back to the States for my first home assignment, I've enjoyed very much catching up with some of you in person. And I absolutely look forward to seeing many of you soon. It has also been so exciting to catch up with some of my friends in Japan, thanks to the internet.

Ayaka was the first student who reached out to me to see if we could talk (technology makes it so easy these days.) She melted my heart when she said that she had been reflecting on the times we used to do Bible study together and was feeling very grateful. Less than a week later we were talking, overcoming the 16 hour time difference.

While it made me so happy to hear her voice and listen to all that's going on in her life, it also made me sad not to be there for her in person. Like many Japanese people, Ayaka has found it particularly difficult to make connections at church. It seems that she has been feeling stuck since not going to church or spending much time reading the Bible over her summer break. She is hopeful about getting back into her Christian communities, but it's clearly a great challenge she has been facing.

Many of you prayed in the spring when I mentioned that Ayaka and I began doing Bible study since she had recently accepted Christ. Most of the girls I was meeting regularly last semester still have someone to meet with each week. However, Ayaka has been busy "job hunting" as they call it in Japan. She hasn't been available for regular fellowship, which I think makes the daunting task of preparing for her future even more lonely and stressful.

Please pray for Ayaka to have deepening relationships with Christians in Cru and at church. There aren't currently any full-time women on the team that I have been a part of in Tokyo, but that will change soon as women begin graduating from Japanese school. Several of her fellow students in Tokyo have also been an encouragement to Ayaka, but she doesn't know of any other committed believers on her campus. Please also continue to pray for guidance for her future. Depending on the Lord for direction is deepening her trust in Him.

As Ayaka and I were talking, I didn't feel quite like I had the "right words." It feels strange to have temporarily left my friends back in Japan, where the population is less than 1% Christian. I feel helpless. But it was incredible to sense a difference in Ayaka's tone after I prayed for her. She seemed so genuinely appreciative that I heard her struggles and lifted them up to God with her. I know she would love to have your prayers too!

In Christ,

Christina

Please join me in praying for~

- Ayaka, fairly new to faith in Christ, to continue in fellowship and understanding of God's love
- All my friends back in Japan to have spiritual protection and a deep sense God's presence and care