

At Student Impact's summer camp...we had a blast!

In Ishinomaki w/ Suzukis

In Sendai with Kanos

Love in Action in Kesennuma

## STORIES

*Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the LORD tell their story—Psalm 107:1-3*

Each of us has a story to tell. A story of life. A story of loss. A story of love. If you're a believer in Jesus, you have a story of how He pursued you and how you responded. And how He's working in your life today. That's the best story and should often be told.

The triple-disaster gave everyone living in Japan on March 11th a new story to tell and though the stories are far from over, I want to tell some. Since Japan's college students have August off for their summer holiday, immediately following our 3-day student summer camp, our Student Impact staff resumed sending Love in Action teams to Kesennuma and Higashi-Matsushima, Sendai. I went on Love in Action team #11 to Higashi-Matsushima, and since the Kesennuma team was full, I also went to Ishinomaki with Be One Tohoku Aid, another solid Christian organization. There are so many Christian organizations and churches working in the Tohoku region it can be a little confusing, but it's been wonderful to see how we're all connected somehow.

In the Tohoku region, I worked alongside house owners clearing yards from debris and weeds, shoveling mud from under houses, scraping dirt and smoothing down wood beams, cleaning usable items, etc. and at the same time heard many of their stories that I'm going to share with you now. **Stories of grief.** One woman (Suzuki-san, pictured above) I worked for for three days lost her daughter before the tsunami in an accident and then lost her other daughter and sister in the tsunami. Another woman I worked with (Hayakawa-san -pictured on next page) was working at her job

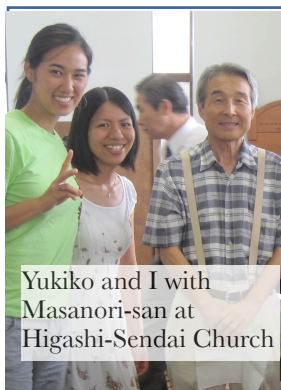


A= Tokyo: where I live. Summer camp was a in Tokyo's mountains in Okutama.

B= Sendai: JCCC's Love In Action teams sent to Higashi-Matsushima to work with Higashi-Sendai Church. In April we were going to Wakabayashi-ku (see back photo!) working with Sendai Bible Church. I went to both places in Sendai.

C= Ishinomaki: I went here through BeOne Tohoku Aid

D = Kesennuma - JCCC has a base here and sent two Japanese LIA teams this past month. My close friend/former STINT teammate, Kel also led "Japan:Rebuild's" team from America here for 2 weeks



Yukiko and I with Masanori-san at Higashi-Sendai Church



Hemni-san, his wife Reiko-san, Hayakawa-san and our team



I took this picture at the Chibas' house **BEFORE** (4/11/11) when our LIA team went to Wakabayashi, Sendai



Fumi took this picture of Chiba-san's house **NOW** (8/22/11)

at a nursing home when the tsunami came. Sixty-two of sixty-five of the elderly in her building were washed away. **Stories of survival.** Seventy or eighty-something-year-old Hemni-san (also pictured above) had no warning that a tsunami was coming until water started pouring into his house. He had no second floor so he thought for sure he would die as the water rose and he had no way out of his house. Just as the water was reaching the ceiling, it began to subside, allowing him to live. **Stories of heroism.** The Kanos (pictured on first page) also had no idea the tsunami was coming until a man on his bike rode by yelling for everyone to go towards the nearby school. The Kanos made it to the school and Mr. Kano helped eight people get up to the second floor before the tsunami came. But he couldn't help everyone. Once the tsunami came everyone left on the first floor had drowned. Still, he was able to save eight

lives. **Stories of hope.** Seventy-something-year-old Aoki-san couldn't shake the guilt that engulfed him for not being able to save his apartment-mates. He could still hear their screams as he searched for a way to save them but found none. A week later, Aoki-san met BeOne missionaries cleaning up his neighborhood. Even though he wasn't a believer in Jesus, soon after meeting the missionaries Jesus appeared to him in a dream and told him he was proud of Aoki-san. Jesus also told Aoki-san to talk to the missionaries that he had just met. And they would tell him what to do next...(pray that Aoki-san receives Jesus because even though I met him at church I'm not sure he's made a commitment to follow Jesus.) **Stories in progress.** Every day after volunteering, our LIA team would go to the sentou (bath house) to wash. The owner, Masanori-san, took an interest in our team because we were so

international and Christian. I asked him if he was a Christian. Hesitating, he said he was thinking about it. That was the start of a great friendship. He had so many questions and had been trying to read the Bible on his own. He was eager to learn and we were eager to teach. On our one free day, he came to church with us and took us around town. I just received an e-mail from him yesterday and he's planning on seeing the next team we're sending up next week.

We each are a part of the story God's writing. I'm praying for each of my dear new friends their stories will one day include how they met Jesus. I'm praying you also know Jesus and can share Him with others too! I also thank God that He's put you in my life to be a part of my story...Without your prayers and support, I really wouldn't be here. Thank you! Until next time!!

**Prayer Requests**

It's so easy to lose focus on Christ and get caught up in all the physical relief work that needs to be done in Japan. Relief work is tangible and it feels

good because we can see so much progress so quickly. College ministry in Tokyo is not as tangible and slower, but just as important. Please pray that I would remember my identity is not

in what I do, but in Who I know. Please pray for the salvation of those I mentioned above and also college students - Mai, Erina, Misaki and Kaori. Thank you!