

May 5, 2011

# Jessica Joy's JAPAN JOURNAL



*Uplifted and encouraged  
by your prayers and  
support...thank you!*

Japan  
Campus Crusade  
for Christ "Love in  
Action": Team 3

(Plus Mr. Yokoyama in blue  
and Mrs. Yokoyama in  
yellow.)



## BACK TO (A NEW) REALITY

**Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Romans 12:12**

Though much of the world news media hype regarding Japan has died down, the reality of lost lives, lost livelihoods and high stress levels have remained as the government, relief organizations and Christian churches and organizations grapple with how to most quickly and efficiently pick up the pieces. For me personally, up until last week, my life came to an abrupt stop on March 11th and everything was focused on the disaster area- whether from Tokyo working at CRASH (Christian Relief Support Hope) or actually in Sendai with Japan Campus Crusade for Christ's third "Love in Action" team. Even major universities like Waseda delayed the start of their school year by a month causing a delay in campus ministry. My life is beginning to "unfreeze" and now I'm beginning to get back to doing things that have been put off for the past almost-two-months - like household work, celebrating missed

birthdays, replying to e-mails, Japanese lessons, more follow-up Bible studies with new Christian students, ICUHS...this newsletter. I had wanted to update you as soon as I came back from Sendai, but I still didn't have the capacity to write. Please forgive me for the delay, as I really believe you've been a part of this and have wanted help you feel like you're a part of everything here.

### Love in Action: Team 3 experience

By the grace of God and through generous gifts to my family and me, my dad was able to fly out from CA to spend time with me and go to Sendai with our Love in Action team. Japan Campus Crusade for Christ has sent out 5 weekly teams to the Tohoku region to work alongside churches/church members to help them with whatever they need help with. My team - made up of 3 of our college students, JCCC staff and my dad - was sent to



### Wakbaya-ku, Sendai

Debris from the tsunami...everywhere. It's hard to imagine the scope of the disaster as this wasn't even one of the harder hit areas, though it was certainly hit hard. In this area 2-300 people died.

Wakabaya-ku, Sendai - just one of the many places affected by the earthquake and tsunami.

We worked alongside Kyoko Yokoyama, a member of Sendai Baptist Bible Church and her husband, Kozo Yokoyama. Mrs. Yokoyama is a professional guitarist and guitar teacher. She came to Christ just 11 years ago when one of her students brought her to church. Mr. Yokoyama is not yet a believer but he showed us incredible hospitality and friendship. We believe he's really close to following Jesus himself as Mrs. Yokoyama's been faithfully praying for husband.

Though most houses in the Yokoyamas' neighborhood were still standing, they were not inhabitable as the tsunami brought mounds of mud, fish, debris and of course salt-water through every crack and crevice. Volunteers had not yet gone to the area as it was still considered a high-risk area, so word quickly spread that the "Christians are coming! To help!" Even though volunteers hadn't been to the neighborhood yet, I couldn't believe how hard each person had worked to clean their houses out by themselves. By the time we got there on April 11th, much of the mud and debris had been cleared. But of course there was still a lot of cleaning, tearing out and rebuilding to do.

Of course we wanted to physically/practically help, but we also wanted to provide emotional/soul care if desired. We were blessed to work *with* the families and in that way developed strong relationships. I got closest to the Matsudas - a mom and her 9 year-old-daughter, Niko-chan. When we first arrived, Niko-chan seemed unusually quiet and nervous to be around strangers without her mom. We found out later that Niko's whole family barely escaped the tsunami (they saw the tsunami, got

in their car and made it out despite the traffic jam) but her cat is presumably dead as well as some neighbors. As the girls from our team (Fumi, Manae and I) worked on cleaning Niko-chan's house, Niko began to warm up to us. Fumi had brought some art supplies and games so during our break we drew pictures together and Niko was able to relax and even smiled and laughed. Her mom said all of Niko's toys had been washed away and because she couldn't meet up with her friends and her school had been cancelled she was really bored so she was grateful we took time to play with her. After Fumi and I heard that we spent most of the afternoon playing with Niko. The next day Fumi gave Niko the *Manga Messiah*, the story of Jesus taken directly from the gospels in manga (anime) form and Niko loved it. She read almost the whole book while we helped her mom clean.

At the end of the week, we had a "farewell" lunch at the Yokoyamas' house and the 5 families that we had helped came. We wanted to show love and bless the families, but really we were blessed and felt so loved by the neighborhood. (Even neighbors we didn't get to help personally showed us their appreciation by giving us food or drinks or just coming by to say thank you throughout the week). It was very difficult to leave, but I have to keep reminding myself that even though I don't understand God all the time, He's trustworthy, loving, good and in control. He loves my new friends even more than me.

## Tokyo Life

Another part of the reason why it was difficult to leave Sendai was because life in Tokyo hadn't been easy either. In a physical/comfort sense, it's much easier. But mentally and organizationally, Tokyo life had been more stressful. In Sendai at least we knew what



needed to be done and we could just do it. In Tokyo, there continued to be so much to think about and work through. I've loved the community at CRASH and working there, but stress levels were extremely high as we dealt with many unanswerable questions and people. Thankfully, a new database, the set-up of physical bases in the Tohoku region and more full-time volunteers made my job easier. But then the Japan Campus Crusade for Christ and CRASH partnership got confusing. Mainly because communication within Japan Campus Crusade for Christ was confusing. All organizations are on good terms, communication's just been difficult. Please continue to pray for unity though as WITHIN organizations, JCCC included, there's been some divisions and conflicts following the earthquake. We know that we're in an unseen battle and disunity is one of the Enemy's attacks, so please do pray for the body of Christ here in Japan to remain united and reminded that we're on the same team. Thank you!!

## CAMPUS MINISTRY PRAYER POINTS

1) **Unity.** Especially within JCCC right now. With heightened levels of stress and miscommunication it's easy for Satan to get a foothold. Pray for humble hearts, wisdom and especially for our leaders.

2) **New believers/follow-up.** Right now I'm going through one-on-one follow-up with Ayu and Mifue - all in Japanese! It's a learning experience for all involved. Please also pray for other new believers Shoko and Rina.

3) **ICUHS ministry** - the school year just started, but we've had two "Let's Talk"s already with 14 students at the first one and 15 students at the second. 4 went

on relief trips with us for Golden Week (this week). I can't wait to hear about their experience when they get back!



Mifue, Rina and me