



Arigato gozaimasu (thank you) from Tokyo!

I can't believe it. After months of waiting and preparing to be back in Japan, I'm here. I'm in Japan! **Thank you.** Thank you so much – I really wouldn't be here without you. Sometimes when I'm in line at the grocery store or am waiting to get on the train, I just have to smile and thank God for you and for His graciousness in allowing me to come back to the people I fell in love with last summer.

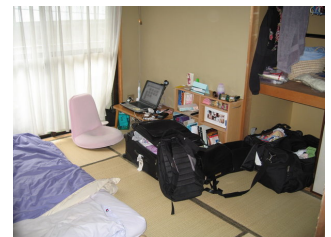
Saying good-bye to friends and family at home is always the hardest part. So many of you make me feel so special and loved, it's hard to leave that behind. I know I'll be missing you at different times of the year, but now that I'm in Tokyo, I'm again reminded of *why* God's called me here. I'm reminded that His plan to bring others into a relationship with Himself is much bigger than me and my desires to be comfortable with family and friends . . . and it's exciting to be a part of that plan with you!



So what have I been doing?

I've only been here for two weeks, but already I've learned more about *living* in Japan than in my whole summer last year. Last year, while I was on Summer Project in Tokyo, our time was almost purely about ministering to the Japanese university students. We didn't have time to settle in or learn how to really live long term in Tokyo.

This year, our team of nine arrived a couple of weeks before the Japanese universities resumed from their short summer break. Our first week was spent moving in, getting our alien registration cards, buying furniture and appliances needed to live in our apartments, figuring out how to throw away trash (it's quite a process!) and figuring out how to shop at the grocery store and cook without ovens. The transition was relatively smooth despite not being able to read or speak Japanese, cockroaches, mold, a complaint from our landlord and some heavy lifting. The JCCC staff was incredible and we wouldn't have settled in so quickly if it wasn't for their help!



From left to right:

1) luggage for the year; 2) moving furniture; 3) Kazuko (JCCC staff member) guarding the furniture outside our apartment; 4) my new room!

After the initial craziness of moving in, we kicked off our official schedule with a day of much needed solitude with the Lord. Each of us came off of a whirlwind summer of support raising, packing and saying good-byes so we all needed to just sit at Jesus' feet to connect with Him. Obviously, daily connecting with Jesus is essential, but sometimes we need to pursue an extended time alone with Him, which is something that I've been convicted about in college.



Sharing a meal together at the guys' apartment

This past week (our second week in Tokyo) we've had foundational staff meetings and men/women's heart-to-heart times, prayer walked at Waseda, took a vision trip to the top of a government building in Tokyo, observed college students for an hour at a popular hang out place at Kabukicho, went to a send off party for a JCCC staff member Yukie who's going to Turkey for a year, had language interviews to determine our placement in language classes and followed up via e-mail with some students from the summer projects. Last week, Joe and I also met up with Yoshitaka, the national campus director, to discuss our STINT team's role. We discussed branching off to other campuses besides Waseda in the near future, which was exciting for all of us. We're dreaming big and trust God's going to show up in huge ways this year!

Please pray for . . .

- continued wisdom and discernment for Joe and me as we lead our team
- the heartaches on our team that come from being away from home, family, friends or significant others and adjusting to a new culture
- discernment in finding the right church to go to
- the Japanese people we come in contact with who need to hear about Jesus
- Yukie, the JCCC staff member who just left for Turkey for her own STINT year
- the students (Bun, Kota and Sachi) who have recently received Christ over the summer – pray that they would become strong *disciples* not just "converts" and that our team would follow up well with them



Yukie's in Turkey now!

Thank you again for everything! Please e-mail me if you have prayer requests too. Soo Jin (we're roommates) and I pray every night for one of you. It helps to know what to pray for!

"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy . . ."
Philippians 1:6

With much love,
Jessica



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