

# Our First Months in **Japan.**

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It's been five months since we landed in Japan, and sometimes we still can't believe that we're here. We cannot thank you enough for your prayers, encouragement and financial gifts through which you have partnered with us to help bring new believers to Christ and establish churches in areas with little to no Christian witness. Things have barely begun, and yet already we are anticipating all that God will do here in Japan.

We're pretty much settled in. Thanks to your support we've been able to move into a small but comfortable apartment, purchase a reliable vehicle, enroll in language school and make four trips down to the coastal area to aide in ministering to Tsunami survivors.

We're serving at Morioka Bible Baptist Church during our first term, and being a part of the body there had been a tremendous blessing. We've made many friends and are seeing God open up many doors for ministry both now and in the years to come.

## Needs all around us

This past summer we were able to visit the coastal towns of Ofunato, Kamaishi, Otsuchi and Yamada, all of which are still reeling from the effects of the Tsunami 2 years ago. These four towns have a combined population of over 100,000 people, yet there is only one evangelical church, which has only two members. The only other Christians that we heard about in these towns were missionaries and Japanese ministers and volunteers.

We've visited Ofunato on a number of occasions to encourage the small church there, and help with a monthly children's outreach. In Kamaishi and Otsuchi, we've visited a number of different temporary housing parks to help meet the ongoing needs of Tsunami survivors.

Transitions are happening all around. People are slowly being moved from temporary housing to permanent housing, foreign missions are turning over



We took a step of faith coming to this area, knowing that we would have to rely on God to help us develop partnerships with believers here and see what opportunities He would provide through them, and already we are amazed to see how things are starting to materialize. There are needs all around us, and so many places where missionaries are needed. As always we look forward with great excitement to what God has in store for us next, even as we praise Him now for all that He has accomplished so far.



ministries to Japanese leaders, and short-term workers are beginning to head home while long-term workers, like us, come to carry on the work they began.



## Language School

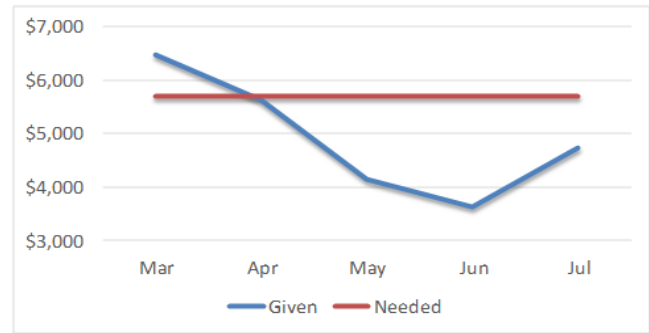
During our first two years in Japan, our primary ministry focus is for me to learn Japanese. The importance of this phase of ministry has become even more clear since we moved here. Lord willing I will eventually be able to preach, teach, and share the gospel in Japanese.

Thankfully God has been providing abundantly for this need, and I can't imagine having a more ideal setting for learning Japanese than living in Morioka and attending Morioka Japanese Language School. My two teachers are amazingly patient and helpful, while at the same time always pushing me to grow in my Japanese abilities. As both are Christians, they've even begun helping me with understanding biblical and theological words in Japanese, and working scripture reading and translation into my curriculum.

So far I've been able to pass the N5 Japanese Proficiency Test, the first of five progressively more difficult tests. At this point I'm able to carry on basic conversations, ask questions and understand answers. Things like sermons are still difficult for me to follow, though I can usually pick up the general theme. During our first term here, I am hoping to be able to pass the N2 test, for which I would have to demonstrate "The ability to understand Japanese used in everyday situations, and in a variety of circumstances to a certain degree." I'll also be entering a speech contest in October to get some practice in public speaking in Japanese.

While at times my limited Japanese ability is incredibly frustrating, each day I feel like I am coming a little closer to understanding the people and things happening all around me, looking forward to the day when I will be able to speak about Christ in an understandable way to those around me.

## Support Update



We are serving among one of the largest, most unreached people groups in the world, but are currently in need of additional monthly financial supporters in order to remain here in Japan long-term. Will you prayerfully consider joining us in this enormous task?



## Morioka Bible Baptist Church

We are so grateful that God led us to Morioka Bible Baptist Church (MBBC). The entire church has been incredibly welcoming, while Pastor Kondo and his family have been a constant source of encouragement. As I struggle to learn the language it often feels as though they are ministering far more to us than we are to them.

Tomo attends a bi-weekly women's Bible Study, and is in the rotation to play piano during the worship service. I attend Wednesday night prayer meetings, and get a good dose of Japanese practice in the process.

Through the connections we've made at MBBC we've been able to meet many of the missionaries and pastors who are serving throughout Iwate, and even had opportunities to participate in various ministry activities, through which God has begun to open doors for future ministry.



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A higher purpose.*

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