



SEPTEMBER 2017

God is Drawing People to Himself

Over the past six months we've seen an unprecedented number of people from outside the church coming to various outreaches. Through your prayers and partnership God is beginning to lead people to Himself. I want to share two really encouraging stories with you.

"I want to be a Christian"

This past Summer with the help of two interns from the US our church hosted a Summer English program, and gave English lessons to people in the community, using a curriculum based on the JESUS Film. After the seven week program ended one of the ladies who had attended started to show up at other Church events. She came to English Cafe, and then to our Fall Food Festival, where she was invited to come and attend Sunday service as well. None of us really expected her to come, as it's pretty unusual for non-believers to attend a Christian worship service, but we were really excited that she did!

Our pastor was surprised as well, and at first feared that his planned sermon from the book of Genesis about the covenant of circumcision wouldn't really connect with her, and he thought about changing it. But as he explained about the difficult things that God

sometimes expects of us, like commanding Abraham to circumcise all the males in his household, he mentioned that Christians too are given difficult commands, and quoted Jesus words in Matthew 5:44

But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

He explained that only Christ can enable us to love in such a powerful way. The next day after our pastor received a call from the lady. She said she never heard of such kind of love, and that she wanted to be able to love her enemies enough to pray for God to bless them. She then said, "I want to become a Christian!" That very week she began studying the Bible with our Pastor to learn what it means to be a Christian as she considers giving her life to God.

Our neighbors getting more connected with Church

We've also been really encouraged to see God working in the lives of our neighbors as well. They have become wonderful friends who have been very loving and welcoming to our family and especially our kids who go to play at their house often. Over the past year they've been coming more and more to different church events. And have expressed much interest in the teachings of Christianity. I've been able to give them a copy of the JESUS Film, which they watched as a family, and

they have come to English Cafe on numerous occasions.

They also came to the Fall Festival last month, and were invited to join a Korean class that a missionary at our church is teaching. The mother, who has a great interest in other cultures decided to join and attended the first class this week and plans to continue coming to the church each week over the next ten weeks. We are so glad to see that relationship continue even as we will be moving away in a few weeks, and look forward to keeping in touch with them.

It's been so encouraging to see God working in so many ways. It's an exciting time at our church, and in some ways we wish we didn't have to go. But seeing the Church develop a vision to expand this outreach into other cities through Church planting is incredibly exciting as well, and we are filled with joy and praise to God for the work He is doing.



FLYING HOME NOV. 15

Things continue to progress smoothly as we prepare to return to the US for about 8 months. We'll start packing up our home next week, and have one final interview for Tomo's visa on Oct. 23.

ATTENDING CPI

One benefit to being delayed in our return is that we're able to attend the Japan Church Planting Institute Conference the October. We're praying to learn a lot as we prepare to start church planting in Miyako next year!

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