



July 1, 2009

# News and Prayer

John and Tomoko Armagost



## The Olive Club

Every Wednesday afternoon Tomoko and I go to Sone Baptist Church. First we spend some time at the church's pre-school, playing and singing in simple English. After that we stay for an after school program called "Olive Club", which we help lead.

Pastor Watanabe works hard to connect the children and families who come to the pre-school with the wider church family. However, as is often the case, graduation from the pre-school and kindergarten seems to also be a graduation from the church. Her desire was to find a way to keep a connection with the children, to remind them that even though they are not part of the pre-school, the church can still be a part of their lives. How to do that was the question.

It just happens that the elementary schools in the Sone area of Osaka have a policy of no after school programs or activities on Wednesday. This is rather unusually in modern Japan where schools seem to work hard to keep children busy 6 or 7 days a week. Anyway, this provides a great window of opportunity for the Sone Church to have an after school program. Pastor Watanabe passed out flyers around the neighborhood, and especially invited children who had just graduated from the pre-school in March. Tomoko and I plan lots of games, and a Bible story, and a little singing, before we end with some snacks.

To be honest, it has been a little slow in building energy. At first it was mostly 1st graders, children who had a connection through the pre-school. Over the months however, the numbers have been growing, especially with a group of 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade girls. We overheard one girl say to her friend on the way out the door one day, "This is best! Are you coming next week?"

One faithful person is Sai-chan, a 4th grader who has not missed a Wednesday since we began. She is also faithful in attendance at Sunday School each week, though she is the only 4<sup>th</sup> grader. Last Sunday the Sone Church invited Tomoko to come to bring a special message for the worship service. Special invitations were sent out, and the word was spread. When Tomoko arrived Sai-chan was there with an excited greeting. It seems that some of the new friends from the "Olive Club" had come for the first time. Sai-chan wasn't the only 4<sup>th</sup> grader for once.

The Sone Church will have an overnight "camp" at the church next month, and the Olive Club children are invited. Join us in praying that connections and faith in the Lord will grow.

John and Tomoko  
Armagost

## PRAYER POINTS

Pray for Rev.  
Watanabe of Sone  
Baptist Church and  
the children of Olive  
Club.

Pray for the Kudo  
family and their  
ministry with  
immigrants from  
Brazil.

Pray for all those  
who are hurt by this  
world wide  
recession.

Thank you for  
always praying for  
us.

## Answer to Prayer!

We wrote a couple months ago about the Kudo family who are missionaries from Brazil. They have started a church for immigrants who have come from Brazil. They are here with the support of their church in Brazil. However, Humberto lost his job at Toyota last winter because of the recession. They had told us they might be forced to return to Brazil.

Recently I was talking with them and Humberto said, "John, I have good news. Josie got a job at a factory making light bulbs." Tomoko and I were excited to hear this news. Then Humberto said, "John, I have more good news. The factory owner asked me if I had a job, and I told him no I have not been able to find a job yet. The owner said, well, that's not good. You better come here and work until you get a job."

We rejoice with them, and give thanks for answered prayer. They still face many challenges, but they feel the Lord is providing the means for them to continue this important ministry.

Humberto and Josie came to an area pastors' meeting with us couple weeks ago, and we were able to introduce them to some of the Japanese pastors we work with. It was a great time of fellowship, though Humberto and Josie still just learning the Japanese language.

Finally, we want you to know that many people have responded to our need for support, and we give thanks to each of you for your prayers and your gifts. The Lord blesses us through you.

Thank you,  
John



Olive Club at Sone Baptist Church in Osaka, Japan.

[www.internationalministies.org](http://www.internationalministies.org)  
[www.armagostjapan.org](http://www.armagostjapan.org)