



March 1, 2010

News and Prayer

John and Tomoko Armagost



Magic and second graders

"Your face looks like you could do magic." I was at the Isogonooka Church in Yokohama, where I had been invited to preach. The pastor, Rev. Yamamoto, has been a friend for about 25 years. I decided to join the Sunday School before worship and was sitting across from some 2nd graders. My sermon was ready but suddenly I wasn't sure if I was prepared for the 2nd graders. I said, "Let's finish the lesson, and then we will see if my face is telling the truth."

Okay, I have no idea what my face was saying and I only know one magic trick, the disappearing coin trick. "Make my marble disappear!" A marble, close enough, they asked for the right trick. After one trick and a few games Sunday School came to a close. Next it was the easy part, preaching in Japanese.

What makes you sweat? What gets you excited? Maybe people do both to us. When the second graders walked in that morning, they were surprised to see me, a foreigner in their class. By the time they left, I felt like one of the gang, even getting some hugs, and questions about when I was coming back. One of the really wonderful parts of being a missionary, maybe I should say being human, is the wonderful people I meet everywhere I go.

For Christians life is not just a journey, but more of a pilgrimage. Seeking and finding the sacred and holy things of God as we travel this life. I find that often the sacred and holy are in the people I meet along the way. Whether they are second graders at Isogonooka Church, or 90 year old Mr. Suganuma who rides his bicycle every week to our Shalom Fellowship Bible study in Osaka, they bless my life.

John and Tomoko
Armagost

PRAYER POINTS

Pray with us for the people of Chili and for our IM missionaries working there.

Praise for the Isogonooka Church and the Sunday School.

Pray for us, our support and the directions the Lord is leading us in the future.

THANK YOU! You are the ones who sent us, and the reason we can be here.

We are not alone!

I was coming home from Nara. I had preached about Jesus healing the man at the pool of Bethesda. He told Jesus, "I have no one..." It is about a 75 minute train ride home. About half way through, we pulled into a station in Osaka. The train stopped, and people on the platform lined up to get on but the doors didn't open. Then came the announcement. Someone had stepped in front of a train. People on the platform went back and sat down. We waited almost an hour before the doors opened, people exited and enter and we resumed our journey.

I had a meeting that afternoon. I missed it. For a moment I thought of myself, stuck on a train. Then I realized someone had just died, someone with troubles. Would they have said to Jesus, "I have no one..."? I don't know.

That evening at the youth meeting, I saw one of the young people Tomoko had held tight a couple years ago as he was trying to commit suicide. She told him he was not alone, that he was loved by his family and by God. He is a faithful member today, but still growing.

We give thanks for the chance to share the Love of God and the presence of Jesus Christ here. We give thanks for your support, because we know we are not alone.

Grace and Peace,
John



Mr. Suganuma at Shalom Fellowship. The youth meet at our home.

www.internationalministries.org
www.armagostjapan.org