

Dear Family and Friends,

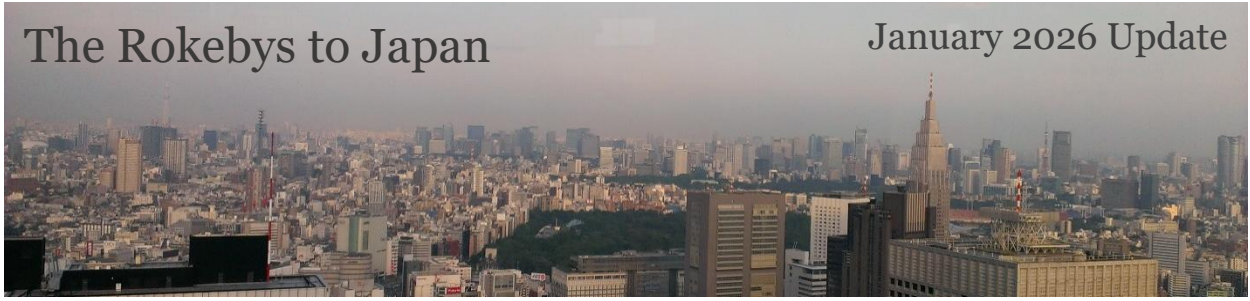
We pray that this letter finds you well despite the recent frigid temperatures. Earlier this week, Andrew was practicing his Japanese with one of our neighbours while putting out the recycling. Our neighbour wanted to know how Canadians deal with the extreme cold and chuckled a bit when Andrew explained that we stay inside. To be honest, the way Japanese houses are built and heated, we more often feel chilly here.

One of the challenges of proclaiming the Gospel in Japan is the difficulty of building relationships. Many people we have met describe themselves as shy, and a conversation with a non-native speaker can be an uncomfortable situation. Social etiquette in Japan dictates that one should not cause others discomfort. In our experience, a few awkward interactions with people can put a damper on one's desire to be chatty.

Despite all of this, God has been sending people to us. Earlier this month, Tanja was invited over by two different moms. When Tanja mentioned that we might be moving to Yokohama for an internship, both insisted that they continue to meet. Furthermore, some of our neighbours have made gestures to deepen our relationship. One even brought us back some delicious apples from her trip to northern Japan and shared photos of the snow. We are so thankful that God is giving us opportunities to build trust with members of our community.



The kids gathered all the snow they could find to make a "snowman"



This coming month brings an important decision. Together with our pastor and mission we will decide where we should minister as interns for the two years following the completion of our full-time language studies. Also, Andrew is also looking forward to the completion of his testimony in Japanese. He has been working with one of his teachers, a retired pastor, to craft a natural-sounding testimony suitable for sharing in churches and with those who have not yet put their faith in Christ. We are excited to see how the Lord will lead us in the coming month.

In Christ,

Andrew, Tanja, John, Anna, and Peter

Home Assignment

We want to let you know that we will be in Canada from late April until early November this year to visit and update our partners, promote missions in Japan, and take care of some administrative matters.

We will be in Ontario mid-May through August, and in British Columbia August until early November. We are excited to report on our first term in Japan and spend time with you. We look forward to fellowshiping with you this year if your schedule allows.

Prayers and Praises

1. February 3, we will have a meeting with our field team leadership to discuss our future ministry placement. Please pray for wisdom and discernment as we consider which option will best help us deepen our language skills and learn more how to serve effectively in Japan.
2. Preparing for a home assignment involves many tasks including scheduling visits with our many supporting churches, working out the logistics of managing our home while we are in Canada, and making sure we have some space to adjust and find a bit of time for rest. Please pray that God would give us focus and vision to manage all the details, so that we will have a fruitful time in Canada.
3. God has recently been giving us opportunities to deepen relationships with neighbours and moms in the community. Please pray for a work of the Holy Spirit and ability to proclaim the gospel in a clear and faithful way.