"Church planting is . . . the most urgent business of humankind. It is through the creation [or planting] of churches that God’s kingdom is extended into communities which have not yet been touched by . . . the presence of the kingdom of God in their midst.”—David Shenk and Ervin Stutzman, Creating Communities of the Kingdom

Last fall we celebrated the one-year anniversary of our “Family Room” with five adults and six kids. This is the current name of the nascent house church God is forming through our work in Ishinomaki—one of the areas hardest hit by the March 2011 tsunami and earthquake. Besides our ministry team (a national believer and our family), all attendees are non-believers. Our plan is to start a new church from new believers. We want to disciple people who will then lead their families and friends to Jesus.

While we wish we were further along, the reality is that we are ministering in a country where biblical concepts such as one God, sin, and even faith are often foreign, confusing—or just plain strange. It is because of these cultural challenges that the Joshua Project estimates only 0.6 percent of Japan’s 127 million people are evangelical believers. In this context, people need time to think and process before making such a life-changing decision. We take comfort in knowing that the Holy Spirit is at work, and His pace for opening eyes and softening hearts is always perfect.

With Jesus as our ministry model, we spend lots of time with people right where they are. We share, preach, nudge, encourage, challenge, answer questions, pray with and for, and often help connect dots in their understanding. For the last 12 months at Family Room, we have been sharing the Bible story from Creation to the new creation. Now that we’ve laid a foundation, we are walking through the gospels marveling at Jesus Christ.

Pray for our friends to see how Jesus’ story intersects with theirs. Pray that they will soon believe and become part of God’s family at our Family Room. We want to disciple people who will then lead their families and friends to Jesus.

While we wish we were further along, the reality is that we are ministering in a country where biblical concepts such as one God, sin, and even faith are often foreign, confusing—or just plain strange. It is because of these cultural challenges that the Joshua Project estimates only 0.6 percent of Japan’s 127 million people are evangelical believers. In this context, people need time to think and process before making such a life-changing decision. We take comfort in knowing that the Holy Spirit is at work, and His pace for opening eyes and softening hearts is always perfect.

With Jesus as our ministry model, we spend lots of time with people right where they are. We share, preach, nudge, encourage, challenge, answer questions, pray with and for, and often help connect dots in their understanding. For the last 12 months at Family Room, we have been sharing the Bible story from Creation to the new creation. Now that we’ve laid a foundation, we are walking through the gospels marveling at Jesus Christ.

Pray for our friends to see how Jesus’ story intersects with theirs. Pray that they will soon believe and become part of God’s family at our Family Room. We want to disciple people who will then lead their families and friends to Jesus.

By Jill and Alan Kropp, Alliance international workers in Japan
TO ACCESS ADDITIONAL PRAYER REQUESTS, PLEASE VISIT CMALLIANCE.ORG/PRAY.

Thank you for praying for Alliance workers and for the people with whom they share the gospel.
To receive the Call to Prayer and weekly prayer requests via email, subscribe at cmalliance.org/pray.
Alliance ministries are supported by gifts to the Great Commission Fund and CAMA.