



reading duration – about 6 minutes

7 Years of Awakening Asia, a Café Opening in Shibuya, an Earthquake & Plenty of Rain

AUGUST IN TOKYO

In my previous Friendsletter, I already shared that the new facilities for the church and café in Shibuya, Tokyo, were nearing completion, with the move-in scheduled for August 24th.

However, there was still plenty to prepare and organize in the weeks leading up to it to make the transition as smooth as possible.

Those weeks were filled with team meetings, administrative tasks, small group gatherings, the start of the Bible school, my first teaching sessions, and numerous barista training sessions.

And somewhere in between, I even found some time to make a few improvements to the podcast studio area, so that podcasts and video recordings can now be set up and managed by just one person.

FINALLY IT´S STARTING..

On August 24th, we started setting up the kitchen and café bar with our equipment and the first products.

At the same time, preparations began for a pastors' lunch, our first Sunday service, and finally the café's soft opening on August 31st.

One of my personal highlights was, of course, dialing in the coffee grinder and espresso machine. As a coffee lover, I simply enjoy adjusting the grind size, dose, and extraction time until the espresso runs exactly the way it should.

Besides that, there were plenty of other tasks to take care of. We also did a photoshoot of our food, drinks, and the venue to create content for flyers, social media, and Google.





We also held a team training day where we went through the different areas of the café — the coffee bar, service, ordering system, and kitchen.

The goal was for every team member to understand the basic procedures and get a better sense of how the different areas work together as one team.



A TABLE FOR PASTORS

On August 27, we held our first pastors' lunch at the new venue.

The vision behind it is to create a place where pastors and leaders can connect, build relationships, grow in unity among churches, and come together to pray for Japan.

Pastors joined us not only from the surrounding area, but also from further away — including Okinawa, an island group in southern Japan, as well as from the US and Korea. In total, more than 50 pastors and leaders attended.

It was encouraging to see pastors connecting with one another, sharing experiences, praying together for Japan, and then even heading out onto the streets to share the Gospel.

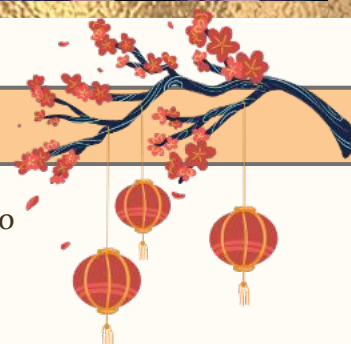
And this is not meant to be a one-time event.

We want to make these gatherings a regular part of what we do and intentionally use the café space to build relationships and foster unity within the body of Christ.





7 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF AWAKENING ASIA



The following Sunday, we finally held our first church service in Shibuya — while also celebrating Awakening Asia's 7th anniversary.

With just over 200 people attending, the service was very well attended.

Afterwards, we shared lunch together before a large part of the church headed out onto the streets to tell people about Jesus.

One thing I particularly appreciate about Awakening Asia is this culture of evangelism. Not only on Sundays, but also throughout the week, several small groups regularly go out onto the streets to talk with people and share the Gospel.

For me, it was therefore especially meaningful to celebrate the seventh anniversary in these new facilities and at the same time see the space immediately filled with church, community, and mission.



AND THEN ..MONDAY..

On August 31st, the day had finally come: our soft opening.

After weeks of preparation, we were able to open the café doors to customers for the very first time. At the same time, this marked the beginning of a new phase for me.

Since the opening, I have been focusing heavily on improving our workflows, taking care of various administrative tasks, and working on marketing.

Especially during the first few weeks, you notice many small things that you simply cannot anticipate beforehand:

Where do we need to adjust our processes? What is working well? Where are we losing time? And what does the team need to make their work easier and more efficient?

My goal is to give the café and the team a strong start during this initial phase, so that I can gradually shift my focus back toward other areas of ministry in the near future.





WHAT AM I WORKING ON RIGHT NOW?

At the same time, there is one question that has been on my mind a lot lately:
How can I practically integrate discipleship and talent development into this area of work?

We don't want people to simply "work" at the café.

Our desire is for them to grow spiritually through their work, take on responsibility, and develop the gifts and talents God has given them.

I believe a café can actually be an incredible place for this.

People meet one another, work together, take responsibility, and learn from each other — and right in the middle of all this, discipleship can happen in a very practical way.

PERSONAL LIFE



To be honest, I barely had any time for personal things over the past few weeks, as a large part of my time and energy went into building the café and getting everything up and running.

But I guess that's what seasons of building are like:

You invest a lot of time and energy into laying a foundation that others can later build on in a stable way.

In the middle of all that, we also experienced a 5.9-magnitude earthquake that woke me up at 2 a.m., along with several days of heavy rain.

It has gotten windier, and the temperature has dropped over the past two weeks. Autumn seems to be slowly approaching.

I'll share more about how the café and church continue to develop since the opening in my next Friendsletter.

-Thank you so much for your prayers, support, and for walking alongside me on this journey!-





If you received this Friendsletter through someone else and would like to continue following the developments of my work here in Japan, please sign up through [my profile page](#) to receive future newsletters, as I will not be publishing every newsletter on the website.

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Health
- Wisdom for building and improving the café, as well as preparing the teaching sessions
- Clear prophetic impressions in everyday life for the church, staff and the students

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Johannes S.

