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**Hope For The Broken: CRASH
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Volume 63 No. 4
Spring 2012

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Tohoku local holding a quilt she received
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Japan Harvest is the official publication of the Japan
Evangelical Missionary Association. It is published
quarterly to promote primarily the cause of the evan-
gelical church in Japan, and secondarily the ministry
and activities of the association. Individual articles
or advertisements express the viewpoints of the con-
tributor and not necessarily those of JEMA.

Submissions

The editors welcome unsolicited articles.
Writers' guidelines are available at:
<http://tinyurl.com/jh-writers-guidelines>

Deadlines for General Articles

Spring issue (April release) February 1
Summer issue (July release) April 30
Fall issue (October release) August 1
Winter issue (January release) November 1

JEMA Order Form: Page 31

Price overseas is \$30.00 (USD) per year.
Price in Japan is ¥2,800 per year.
Single copy is ¥750.

Postal Transfer: JEMA-Japan Harvest, Tokyo
00130-4-180466

MOVING?

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Living and Learning Smiles

by Randall Short, Tokyo Christian University

God must have a sense of humor. Here I am, an American in Japan, teaching the Old Testament to Japanese and Indians, to North Americans and South Americans, to Kenyans and Zimbabweans . . . to amazing women and men He has brought to Tokyo Christian University (TCU) from within Japan and around the world. It is a situation that often makes me laugh and give thanks at the same time.

How about you? Does it make you smile to imagine yourself, or a certain young person in your family or church, in a similar situation? Can you imagine living in an international community in Japan where you study the Bible and biblical languages, theology, history, missiology, philosophy, psychology, music, Japanese language and culture, and many other subjects? Not only that, but imagine worshipping and eating together, praying and playing together, and ministering and serving together. Does it make you smile? Does it make you excited? By the grace of God, who calls, enables, and equips, this is what we do at TCU.

Perhaps you are a high school student, or you have one close to you, who is praying about college. Whether you are a non-Japanese or a Japanese "returnee," consider what TCU has to offer you. You can get a Bachelor of Arts degree in Japan while using English as the language of instruction. You can achieve a high level of fluency in Japanese. If you work hard (or if you already speak Japanese), you can even take some courses together with Japanese students—all in Japanese!—to meet your degree requirements. And you can do this at a fraction of what it normally costs in countries like the U.S. (If you are already in college, check out our semester-abroad program.)

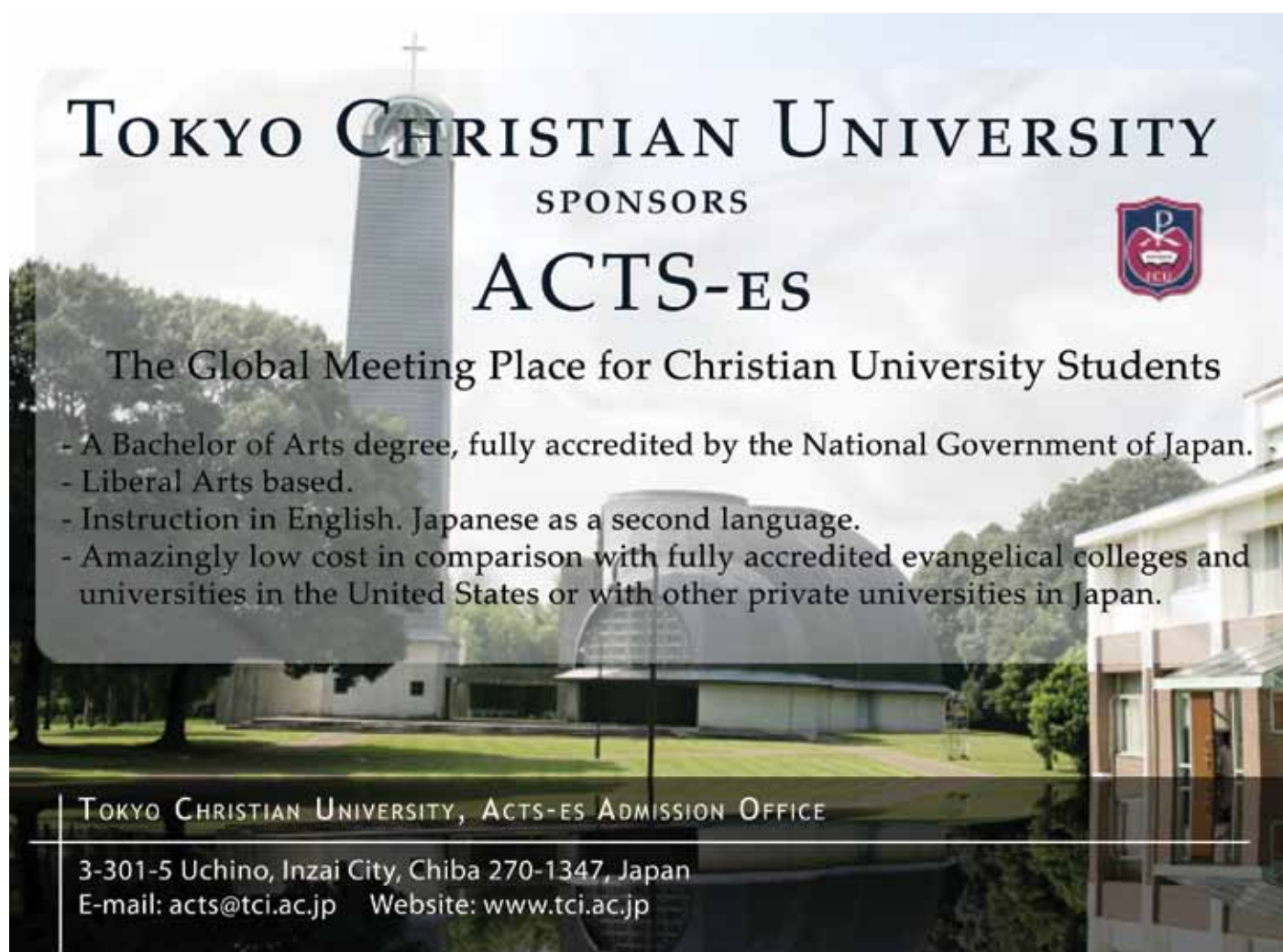
Maybe you are someone who has a special heart for Japan. You welcome opportunities to love and serve Japanese people, and you would do anything in your power to strengthen Christ's body in this country. You know that Christian education and training—whether general or specialized—is only part of the answer. But you

also know that it is a very important part of that answer. If this describes you, please help TCU strengthen the Japanese church through the educational ministries that God has given us. We need your prayers. And we need your help in telling Japanese and others who love Japan about TCU. If you could introduce them to us, we will share with them how we think TCU can help to equip them for a life of service to God and neighbor.

Seventeen years ago, a missionary in Japan told me about Tokyo Christian University. At the time, he simply mentioned it as one of several options worth looking into. I am forever grateful that he did. Would you tell one or two others about TCU this week? Who knows? You might bring smiles to their faces for the rest of their lives.

For ACTS-es, go to the Web site at:
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Witnesses to God's Hope and Love

When the writer of Lamentations declared that the mercies of God are new every morning, he did so from within the context of disaster, both personal and national. Verses 1–20 in Lamentations 3 are about suffering. But from verse 21, despair is transformed into hope as the author recalls the love of God: “The faithful love of the LORD never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning” (3:22-23, NLT).

The love of God is often most clearly proclaimed for the world to see when there is trouble and crisis. At those times the believer pleases God by willfully and tenaciously declaring: I will hope in God because he is my inheritance (3:24). Believers and unbelievers alike suffer the ravaging consequences of our human sin, the wages of which is death. But in the case of we who

walk around within the love of God through Jesus, hope shines into the darkness.

God has put us here in Japan to be witnesses to his hope and practitioners of his love. What a privilege to join hands with the JEMA community, as following the disasters of March 2011 we continue to point Japanese to Jesus, the author of eternal life and hope! ■



Dale and Ann Little serve in Japan with the Evangelical Free Church of Canada Mission. They are leading the EFCCM tsunami recovery ministry until November 2012 before launching their next church planting project, Tokyo Multicultural Church.

JEMA Datebook

Event	Date	Place
JEMA Writer's Workshop	April 12–13, 2012 1 p.m. – 12 noon	OMF Guest Home Ichikawa, Chiba
Kanto Prayer Summit	May 8–11, 2012	Okutama Bible Chalet
Western Japan Prayer Summit	May 21–24, 2012	VIP Alpine Rose Village, Hyogo
JEA General Assembly	June 4–6, 2012	Kakegawa, Shizuoka
Church Planting Boot Camp	November 5–7, 2012	Honda Chapel, Chiba
To stay up to date, check out the calendar at http://www.jema.org		

Free Children's Sermon Resource

Looking for free resources for your children's ministry program? Need some ideas for Sunday worship children's sermons?

A free online resource is available at <http://kidsermons.com>. You can also go to Kidsermons' Facebook page, click on "Like," and get weekly updates of free children's sermons: <http://www.facebook.com/Kidsermons>.

Children's sermons are posted on the site weekly. Keywords and categories make looking for specific sermons much easier. Links are included to free puppet scripts and church dramas to enhance your worship.

The Web site is designed and maintained by Ruth Gilmore Ingulsrud, who works as the elementary librarian at Christian Academy in Japan and is a published author through Augsburg-Fortress Publishing.

Ruth's father was a pastor with the Lutheran church in the United States. Her in-laws, Grace and Lars Ingulsrud, were missionaries in Japan for about 40 years.



Illustration by Elsa Ingulsrud

Ruth may be contacted directly at:
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Implementing our “Master Plan”

In March, the Japanese Red Cross Society lamented that an entire year has been lost because the central government and local authorities have not been able to agree on a “master plan” for rebuilding areas destroyed by the Tohoku tsunami.¹ On the other hand, JEMA’s “master plan” for rebuilding lives is on the front cover of our JEMA Directory: “networking and equipping our members to make disciples for Christ.” How are we doing?

Networking

Our association’s cooperative response to the Tohoku disaster this past year has demonstrated the strength of our networking. CRASH Japan (page 12) served as the initial rallying point as JEMA members joined together to assess immediate needs and set up an infrastructure for long-term Christian response. In the following months, some of our members chose to work directly through CRASH long-term. Others developed their own cooperative responses, coordinating with CRASH efforts or serving in places that CRASH did not have the personnel to reach. It’s been an unexpected pleasure to view video projects and photo essays our members are using to share with their support bases—because these media reports often show members from more than one JEMA mission working together!

Equipping

Disasters have a way of revealing equipping needs that previously may not have been apparent. A huge challenge last year was getting up-to-date information on the constantly changing situation in Tohoku. We desperately needed a “real-time” database with information that was being updated daily.

As one response to this problem, JEMA, CRASH, and the JEA (see center insert) have joined together to maintain and update geographical data on a Google Earth map site. JEMA members can now log in to the JEMA Web site and download a Japan map file with current information on the locations of churches, church plants, recovery and outreach activities, CRASH bases, etc. in Tohoku. We encourage members to browse this resource and submit any new or updated information to improve its accuracy.

Making Disciples

Of course, the long-term goal behind all of our networking and equipping activities is making disciples

of Jesus Christ. This year we’ve been reminded that the deep-rooted compassion of Christians can have a significant impact in that process. Fear of becoming “social gospel focused” makes many evangelicals uneasy about long-term involvement in compassion ministries. But as we read in Eileen Nielson’s article on page 10, the fact that six out of seven remaining volunteer groups in her area are Christian-based has not been lost on the local government representative.

The challenge still remains—how and when do we move from a focus on compassion to “making disciples”? Japanese pastors have rightfully warned us not to rush in too quickly with premature “gospel presentations” when people are devastated. There is “a time to be silent” (Eccl. 3:7). But God is at work in hearts. Pastor Yoshiya Hari shares on page 12 of a survivor in temporary housing who told him, “It was good for me to go through this time of tragedy, because the experience made me think about what’s really important in life.”

As we learn lessons in compassion from Tohoku, opportunities to practice what God is teaching us will not be far away. All of Japan is earthquake-prone. And annual typhoons mean local disaster somewhere in this nation every year. As Caitlin Potter reminds us on page 17, “Don’t assume all this will be here tomorrow.” May we continue to apply what we’ve learned this year about networking and equipping as we implement our “master plan” to rebuild lives and make disciples for Christ. ■



Yours for the Harvest,

Gary Bauman has led the Japan Harvest staff since September 2005. He and his wife Barbara have been in Japan since 1988 with Asian Access.

P.S. This spring we welcome April (Selander) Mack as our new production editor. April grew up in Japan and is back with her husband serving in the Tokyo area. We’re glad to have her on the team—she’s worked hard on this issue and we look forward to more of her fresh design ideas in future *Japan Harvest* issues.

1. <http://ajw.asahi.com/article/0311disaster/fukushima/AJ201203070071>

Coming in the Summer 2012 Japan Harvest

Delayed from this issue

Diaspora Edition with special attention on the Japanese Diaspora. Articles by Dr. Enoch Wan (EMS), Setsu Kuroda Shimizu (JCFN), Don Wright (RJCN), Carlos Kavano (AMEJ), Gary Fujino (IMB), and others.

Annual JEMA Meetings Focus on Disaster Response

On the evening of February 27, JEMA members gathered on the eighth floor of the OCC building in Ochanomizu, Tokyo for fellowship and to hear reports on what the Christian international community had been doing in response to the needs of Tohoku disaster survivors.

The following morning, the Mission Leaders Consultation also focused on the disaster response. After a break for lunch, the JEMA Plenary Council convened and President Dale Little shared regarding the JEMA leadership structure and his vision for the future. JEMA commissions reported on their activities during the past year. Paul Nethercott, on behalf of CRASH Japan, thanked JEMA for its significant partnership and assistance and summarized CRASH's disaster response activities during the past 12 months. Dale Little and Carol Love were re-elected to two-year terms to serve as President and Treasurer respectively. Gary Bauman was elected to a two-year term as Member at Large. It was announced that the 2013 JEMA Plenary meeting will be held on February 26.

Tohoku Celebration of Hope Draws Record Number

After months of preparation, on March 2-4 the Tohoku Celebration of Hope with Franklin Graham drew nearly 12,000 people to Grande 21 Arena in Rifu City, a suburb of Sendai. This was probably the largest crowd ever assembled in the Tohoku region for a Christian event. The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association reports that more than 400 people made commitments to Jesus over the three days. But for most, hearing a clear salvation message and then being asked to respond to it required too much faith, too quickly. However, we remember God's words in Isaiah 55, "My word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire" (v11, NIV). One Sendai area missionary shared that a woman sitting next to her during one of the evening meetings said, "If I *could* believe this, it would be wonderful!"

Youngsters with Dreams of Serving God

Excerpt translated by Timothy Williams

CHRISTIAN SHIMBUN — January 8, 2012

ATV program focusing on Christian youth has been produced by Japan CGNTV (Christian Global Network). Entitled "You Are Special," it features youngsters in Japan with dreams of serving God. In the summer of 2011, a youth convention called "Reach Out: You are Special" was held. Here are the dreams of two of the attendees:

Tsubasa Horii, a homeschooler in his first year of high school, envisions serving in world missions through medical care. Horii said that this desire came about "through a conversation with the father of another homeschooler, who said having a special skill would be useful (for doing mission work). I thought medical skill would be a good choice . . . and it interests me. If it is something that would be useful overseas, like emergency or pediatric care, I would like to study it."

"I would like to use the unicycle to share Jesus," said Seika Abe, a second year high school student. Belonging to a local unicycle club, Miss Abe practices for two to three hours, four to five days a week. Unicycle performance categories include Extreme, focusing on technical moves, and Artistic, focusing on beauty. Artistic is further divided into group, pair, and solo. She said, "When I was chosen to perform solo, I could choose the accompanying music, so I performed with hymns, but for pair performance, the coach chooses the songs, which is a shame, as I cannot perform to hymns."

"Only a handful of people in Japan make a living from riding the unicycle," she said. Therefore her plan is to have another job as she performs or teaches unicycle. Miss Abe is the oldest attending the unicycle club, and wishes to share Jesus through performance and routine activities with those who are attending the club. "There is fellowship with members of the unicycle club, but it is not a complete oneness, as it is with fellow Christians at 'You Are Special.' I would like to see the members of the unicycle club come to Christ."

Raising Female Servants of God for Local Churches

Excerpt translated by Tomoko Kato

CHRISTIAN SHIMBUN — January 8, 2012

Tokai Theological Seminary (TTS) of Nagoya has a unique course for women serving in the church. This course for female workers offers basic theological

and biblical studies as well as classes on views in the Bible toward women, female pastors, and the home. TTS also offers a course for pastor's wives. As no other theological seminaries in Japan seem to run such courses, TTS has a pioneering role.

Monika Bruttel, missionary in charge of these classes said, "I like all the classes, but I especially enjoy teaching 'The Outline of the Bible,' in which we can see a panoramic view of the Bible."

Monika often asks questions of students in her classes to encourage them to express their opinions. "I want my students to enjoy studying together and share that pleasure with other church members when they work for their churches." Most of her students have been serving their churches by arranging flowers or preparing meals. "I think these are important roles as well, but after they study at TTS they can do more than that. They can lead Bible study classes in their churches or arrange meetings for their neighbors to learn the Bible and talk about it."

Christmas Tea Ceremony

Excerpt translated by Atsuko Tateishi
CHRISTIAN SHIMBUN — December 18/25, 2011

Shortly before her first Christmas tea ceremony at Kansai Bible Institute (KBI) in Nara Prefecture, Setsuko Imayoshi spoke to *Christian Shimbun* about how she came up with the idea.

Six years ago, KBI moved to its current location, which used to be a resort facility. Setsuko helped with the move. When she saw the building had a large tea ceremony room with a panoramic view of the mountains, she began to entertain the idea of hosting a tea ceremony there someday.

A few years passed, and a rare kettle came by her way. It was a reproduction of the kind of kettle commonly known as *jūji gama* (kettle of the cross). Christian feudal lords liked to use them when they hosted a tea ceremony. Having possession of the kettle sealed Setsuko's conviction that God was in favor of her hosting a tea ceremony at KBI. She planned every detail of the first ceremony last year around the Christmas theme.

Setsuko notes that, according to the records, some churches during the era of Rikyu, the grand tea master, had tea ceremony rooms. She also reminds us of the

prevalent assumption that Rikyu perfected the art of the tea ceremony under deep influence of Christianity. Setsuko claims it is possible to convey the message of different biblical passages through a tea ceremony.

It is Setsuko's wish to host a Christmas tea ceremony every year from now on. She dreams of hosting a ceremony for 1,000 guests.

In Memoriam



Cheryl A. (Johnson) Barton
May 24, 1955 – June 26, 2011

Cheryl A. (Johnson) Barton, 56, of Tokyo, Japan, died June 26, 2011, at St. John's Hospital in Anderson, Indiana, U.S., after an extended illness.

She was born May 24, 1955, in Anderson, Indiana, to Donald D. and Betty Jo (Hyman) Johnson.

Cheryl was a missionary in Japan for 32 years and most recently had been associate pastor of Tamagawa Church of God in Tokyo. She served the international Church with her writing skills by editing 15 books of international testimonies, a missions curriculum for children, and authoring two devotional books (*Through A Glass Dimly* and *Steady Till Sunset*). She also wrote a history of Church of God missions. Cheryl served on the board of TELL (Tokyo English Life Line) telephone counseling center and was a trained telephone crisis intervention counselor.

Cheryl's husband, Bernard S. Barton, continues to serve in Tokyo as a pastor and as Headmaster of Tamagawa Seigakuin Girls' Junior and Senior High School.

Help, Healing, Hope

In our Tohoku base camp, a sign with the words “Help, Healing, Hope” hangs in our main meeting room. These three words are often included in our daily prayers for Iwate-ken, but have also defined our nearly nine months in relief work.

Help

The “help” stage seems to be completed. In many ways, this stage was relatively simple. “Reach as many people as possible with as much physical aid as possible” was our mantra for the first six months. Many gaps remain, but with so many survivors settled in temporary housing, finding jobs, and their lives returning to a new normal, most find they have no choice but to be content with the way things are for the present. However, for those in *kasetsu jūtaku* (temporary housing), the two-year limit on living in these units looms large. The future is uncertain for many survivors.

It is difficult to leave this first stage without mentioning the many “heroes” that were involved—from the Japanese *jieitai* (Japanese Self Defense Forces) who had the gruesome job of looking for bodies, to the volunteers who found themselves covered with rotten fish as they removed layer after layer of debris. From the mission and relief organizations who worked 24/7 during the first couple months receiving, organizing, and distributing aid; to all the behind the scenes people who kept base camp and volunteer centers up and running. These “heroes” never lost hope, even in the face of the 450 kilometers of cleanup needed along the Tohoku coastal area.

Healing

The next stage, “healing,” is well under way. This stage has proved challenging just by definition. What does “healing” look like? We seasoned missionaries long

to share the gospel, and allow God to bring healing in ways only he can. But this is jumping way ahead of where most survivors are. For those of us working in Tohoku, being part of the healing takes a different form. Jesus said, “if you share a cup of water with the least of these . . .”¹ In this case, it looks more like a cup of coffee, a listening ear, making crafts, singing a favorite *enka* song, delivering blankets, and a myriad of other activities. In other words, entering the survivor’s world and going through this time with them. One survivor said with tears, “Thanks for not forgetting us.”

The change has come slowly, but communities are rebuilding. We have started to hear more and more from survivors, “I think we are getting better.” At a recent café, a woman wistfully lifted a cracker and said, “My first meal after the tsunami was one of these rice crackers.” With a slight smile and teary eyes, another shared how delicious the first rice ball tasted that she ate on the third day after the tsunami. Another told of how during the first few nights she slept under newspapers, blankets being in short supply. The stories are beginning to sound more nostalgic than tragic.

The healing continues, but is much slower for those who have missing relatives. One survivor shared, “I still have my wife and kids, and I’m thankful, but I can’t forget my aunt who was washed out to sea.” The role Christians have played at this stage is invaluable. At a local *fukushi* (welfare) center meeting recently, it was hard not to notice that most of the volunteer groups were gone. Out of the seven groups left, six were Christian groups. Christians are staying, being faithful to their Master’s call of continuing to give that cup of water. The government representative expressed his appreciation over and over, saying he knew he could depend on us to stay and help.



Photo by Jim Nielsen

Hope

Even though “hope” is the final stage, hope has infused each step of our journey here in Tohoku. When a local church member, skilled in calligraphy, asked if he could design a sign for the mobile café, he wondered if we wanted to include a Bible verse. It only took a few moments to decide that the Japanese characters for “faith, hope, and love,” found in 1 Corinthians 13:13, should adorn our sign.

According to the Bible, the greatest of these is love. But actually, hope is the characteristic that has gotten us through all the tough times. How can one look in the face of the truly broken hearted and promise

better things without hope? How can we make sense of this tragedy without hope? The biblical definition of “hope” as a confident expectation rings true for us each day. Even though we don’t know the outcome, we have confidence God will work for good in each situation, no matter how difficult. Whether or not the Japanese embrace this hope as their own is yet to be seen. We continue to pray and work for this daily. One volunteer told us that he felt carried by the prayers of believers all around the world during his time in Tohoku. Those of us here for the longer haul feel the same. ■

Eileen Nielsen also writes for the Language & Culture column.

1. Paraphrase from Matt.10:42.

God’s Patchwork in Tohoku



Photo by Hajime Abe

Threads of hope. Who would have thought patchwork and tsunami relief could go together? Look up the history of quilting, and you’ll learn that our frugal ancestors would keep any usable patch of cloth from old clothing and sew these patches together to make quilts. But what relationship does patchwork have to tsunami relief?

It all started soon after March 11 with an email from Bev Rogan in Canada, asking if disaster survivors might find help and comfort through handmade quilts. When we answered “yes,” we had no idea Bev would mobilize a force of quilters throughout Canada, the U.S., and elsewhere (even Saudi Arabia) who would eventually create almost 1,700 quilts for survivors. An offer of help from Larry Musick of Global Samaritan Resources took care of shipping to Japan. Meanwhile, Christians in Germany began to knit and ship afghan blankets. And the distribution began.

The quilts became an integral part of CRASH Japan’s “heart care” outreach, bringing joy and hope to many families and individuals. But the generous quilters

wanted to do more and proceeded to assemble hundreds of patchwork kits. Organizations in Hong Kong and Singapore donated funds to purchase sewing machines. Since then, patchwork, quilting, and handcraft groups have been popping up throughout Tohoku.

A young woman who had been a nurse’s aide in a convalescent home in Higashi Matsushima drowned in the tsunami. Her mother, Mrs. Abe, driven by grief, came to the Ishinomaki House of Prayer, where she became a believer. The House of Prayer pastor had agreed to host one of the first patchwork groups. When 12 *hisaisha*¹ ladies (who’d previously received quilts) arrived for the first gathering, and each shared their story, Mrs. Abe unabashedly shared her testimony of faith. She is now happily coordinating the group.

Each person who participated in this effort is a “patch,” which God is assembling into a beautiful quilt. ■

Tim Cole and his wife Katie have been with TEAM since 1984 doing camp ministry and church planting, as well as recently directing Family Forum Japan (FFJ).

1. Disaster victim

Hope For The Broken: CRASH Japan's Message to Survivors

In Rikuzentakata, a lone pine tree is left standing out of thousands. Thousands that were planted to form a barrier against future tsunamis. During the past year, this lone tree has been sending a powerful message of hope to survivors—that survival is possible even in the most desperate of times. Each survivor who sees this tree in some way identifies with it. “Like this tree, I too have survived.” But even the valiant, lone surviving evergreen has little chance of survival. Salt water has seeped into the ground and the tree is dying.

Hope to the broken through Jesus Christ is our message to survivors of the triple disasters. The harsh Tohoku region winter has exacerbated already alarming levels of depression. Hundreds of thousands have lived through winter with the grief of lost loved ones, possessions, livelihoods, and communities weighing on their hearts.



Photo by Kenji Kondo

But the sad reality is that some did not survive the winter—not due to cold temperatures nor malnutrition, but from a broken spirit. Proverbs 17:22 teaches us that a broken spirit dries up the bones. Just like the tree of hope in Rikuzentakata, tsunami survivors are in danger of withering away. Their most urgent need is for emotional and spiritual care.

There is good news amidst the gloom of winter and the hopelessness of suicide. Juxtaposed with this lone pine tree is a symbol of the tree where Jesus Christ died. A cross stands, in another location, as the only surviving remains of a church building.

“He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed” (1 Peter 2:24 NIV). There is hope for eternity. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came and shared our sorrows and our joys. But

he himself became our hope when he gave up his life for us on the cross.

Unseen deep wounds still remain in the hearts of survivors, and there is little comfort from external sources. However, the very presence of Christians after many months points the way to everlasting hope. CRASH¹ Japan staff and volunteers were present a few days after the disasters, and we are still there today many months after the Tohoku region was struck. A hot cup of tea, a freshly made waffle, a hand-made quilt, a hand massage, a children's booklet—all these bring comfort and hope. These seeds of hope sown by Christ-followers will someday lead many to faith in Jesus Christ. Join us in this most special time of God's favor upon Japan. ■

Jonathan Wilson, CRASH Japan President/Founder

1. CRASH: Christian Relief, Assistance, Support, and Hope



Photo by Greg Thompson

Q&A With Pastor Hari

Q: Do you see changes in the spiritual climate of Japan?

A: Yes, this is evident. Historically, Tohoku (the northern part of Honshu) has been closed to the gospel. The disasters and local people's exposure to Christians, however, have softened the spiritual soil.

Q: How has God been working in the affected areas?

A: The number of churches in Miyagi and Iwate prefectures is increasing and the cooperation among churches and pastors is stronger than ever. About sixty pastors and other church leaders gathered for the first meeting of Miyagi Mission Network. God has been working on non-Christians directly, too. Survivors are sensing God's presence even in areas that have no churches. They appreciate visits from pastors. One survivor in temporary housing said, “It was good for

In the middle of these sad and hopeless communities, Christians have set about to do what most would never have believed they could do. They were considered too small to do much.

Dr. Brian Stiller

*WEA Global Ambassador,
who toured the disaster areas
with JEA leaders last fall*

When I felt the earthquake on Friday, March 11, 2011, I had no idea it was the beginning of a major disaster. An event that would change the course of my life.

Within twenty-four hours, Jonathan Wilson, founder of CRASH Japan, announced a meeting for Sunday afternoon, March 13, to organize a response—and over one hundred of us showed up. That day Jonathan presented a rather wild vision to work with local churches, establish forward bases, and send thousands of volunteers.

Monday morning a core group of about twenty of us got to work. Others gradually joined. The job was huge. Most of the time I felt completely overwhelmed. We all did. One day in the second week I sat at my computer and wept. In many ways we didn't know what we were doing or how to do it. We

talked about how we were trying to fly a plane while building it.

I heard from numerous sources, “CRASH has crashed.” But against all odds we kept moving forward.

God provided—volunteers, vehicles, travel permits, containers of supplies, expert advice, and financial support from around the world. Tons of supplies were delivered to survivors by our early assessment teams. By early April we'd established our first base and started sending volunteers.

Now, one year later, CRASH Japan has mobilized over 1,900 volunteers, and forty percent of them have returned at least once. Our five bases strategically located in Tohoku house our volunteers and enable us to help numerous local churches. The “wild” vision that Jonathan presented last year gave us the direction we needed. I am so thankful to have been a

small part of it.

Jonathan Wilson's JEMA year end report: “CRASH has owed much of what has been accomplished to the prayers, support and cooperation of the JEMA member missions and missionaries, and the JEA churches and pastors. Throughout this year we have realized that not only has help and hope been brought in great measure to Tohoku, but also we have seen greater unity and stronger relationships between missions, missionaries, pastors, and Christians from many different churches. We have also seen a great number of CRASH staff and volunteers grow in leadership and their spiritual walk. We ask for your continued prayers and help in this next year.” ■

Paul Nethercott (TEAM), CRASH Japan Command Staff, Public Information Office Chief

me to go through this time of tragedy, because the experience made me think about what's really important in life.”

Q: How has the church been used for restoration of the affected areas?

A: Local churches are gaining a lot of trust and credibility by serving people in practical ways. Before the earthquake, few people living in the devastated town of Ishinomaki knew about their small local church of about ten members. However, after March 11 the church became a distribution center and played a significant role in the recovery of that community. Many other churches across the Tohoku region have become significant presences in their communities.

Q: How should churches be involved in further restoration efforts?

A: Churches have been meeting the needs of local communities through providing supplies and volunteers. As a result, survivors have a good image about churches today. Now local churches need to have a vision to disciple and train people in their communities. Churches need to continually provide biblical values and the meaning of true restoration (hope in Jesus Christ) in their communities. Christians need to connect with the administrative officials in their community. We shouldn't be satisfied with simply increasing church membership; rather, we must have the perspective of impacting whole communities in positive ways. We need a paradigm shift in how we view the church. I believe that planting churches is at the heart of what it means to bring real restoration to affected areas.

*Yoshiya Hari, Pastor, Keisen Christ Church Saikyo Nozomi Chapel
Member, CRASH Japan Church Liaison Team*

Being in the Right Place at the Right Time, Part 2

A Report from Iwaki City in Fukushima-ken

In the Spring 2011 *Japan Harvest* I wrote about how the fire of our former church building prepared us to receive volunteers and goods to bless the needy in refugee shelters. The fire forced us out of our previous building but by March last year our church was settled in a partially renovated three-story building that formerly had been a Japanese inn and pachinko parlour. This enabled us to have a good base to reach out to hurting individuals and communities throughout 2011 and into the new year.

From late March until the end of the year, around 200 tons of supplies arrived at our Global Mission Chapel (GMC) along with volunteers. During April to November, an average high of nearly 50 people per night stayed at GMC while serving our area.

I admire some great pastors in our city who received lots of supplies and served the needy using their small buildings and with few or no people to help. One of these churches baptized four people at the end of the year.

A Heart Changed while Distributing Supplies

Non-Christian Mr. Iijima came to Iwaki from Tokyo as a volunteer in March to help in the public relief work. The city had lots of food and other goods for giving out (brought by the military on the 17th of March), but the distribution did not function well. A disappointed Mr. Iijima came to us and asked if he could stay and just watch what we were doing as a church. A lady in our church has a transportation company for milk products and she let us use five of her trucks, as business in Iwaki was at a standstill anyway. Mr. Iijima liked what he saw and became one of our workers. By and by he opened his heart to the Lord. The tough group of “Fire Fighters for Christ”, who crossed the Pacific from the U.S. to move rubble, also made a change in the retired executive’s heart and this spring he will be baptized at the “Fire Fighters for Christ” conference in California.

After Iwaki started functioning more normally again, we were able to take over two of the trucks and one car. (Because of the radiation problem, business with



milk products has not been easy.) We have not opened any other centres, but our trucks and cars have regularly visited the hardest hit areas in Iwate Prefecture and sometimes Minami Soma in addition to our own widespread city.

Paid Workers

We have 10 paid workers who keep the wheels at our center and relief work going around. One of them, Mr. Domae (49), was a communist when he arrived last July to help with relief work and sought our cooperation with his work. However, his soft heart soon responded to the gospel, especially seeing its power through a team from Taiwan that stayed several weeks this fall and now he works at GMC. In November he was baptized and is doing a great work visiting people in temporary housing.

Unfortunately, it seems we can continue paying these workers only through March this year, due to a lack of funds. But teams of volunteers and individual helpers are still scheduled to arrive after that.



Photo by Akira Mori

Changes in Iwaki

A large number of those who resided within the 20 km radius of the shattered nuclear reactors have come to Iwaki. Compared to Fukushima City and Koriyama City, the radiation level is low here. Most of them live in one of the many small clusters of temporary housing that were finished in August. It is almost impossible now to find a vacant apartment or house.

All the hotels are also full of workers for the nuclear power plants. From 2,000 to 3,000 workers have been struggling all the time to protect us from further explosions and leakages. The task is overwhelming and we need to remember these heroes in our prayers.

Early on we visited the refugee halls with hot meals, washing feet in hot spring water. These shelters were all closed by the end of August.

Pastor Akira (my husband) and volunteers have frequently visited the hardest hit village in Iwaki, Usuiso. The community leader there, Mr. Shiga, lost his wife

and two sisters by the tsunami. “We want to do something to encourage you,” our pastor said to Mr. Shiga one day in July. “Can we arrange a lunch-party for your villagers here on the land of your village?” (Of the 300 houses, 280 were wiped away there.) Mr. Shiga agreed on the condition that all Usuiso survivors should be invited. Five hundred people!

Two weeks later they were all served delicious meat and much, much more. Tsuchiura Megumi Kyoukai came to help us, and actually 600 people were fed and happy. The next month, a similar event took place in Onahama, a nearby harbor-side town, and this time our people did it alone. Several events have taken place since and opened natural communication between Christians and city people.

Now it is our prayer that we can actively take part in building up our city on a new foundation. God has given us this chance. Our vision is to start with Usuiso village, and help them build a model village where Christians also can live and show forth God’s love and plans.





Photo by Akira Mori

Changes in our church

Prior to the disaster we had just a few foreigner believers in our congregation. Most left Iwaki after the radiation problem was known. Even if they wanted to stay, their families insisted they should flee. But throughout the year God sent us many new foreigners, people from 35 countries have worked with us. They humbly took on all kinds of jobs and encouraged us so much alongside our Japanese volunteers. Our two sons also came, from Minnesota and Norway for the whole summer. And one of them is here still, helping especially with the youth work.

People in our church, many of whom were more in the background or often absent before, have proved so strong and faithful in the new challenges and joined to help in the relief work. In addition, many Japanese from other areas and especially Koreans came for many weeks, even months. They have meetings and meals morning and night in the second floor of our building. The third floor is a sleeping room area. At one time 130 squeezed in for supper and big tents on the flat roof provided for the last sleeping bags.

The first floor was a storeroom till mid May. Then it turned into a chapel again with curtains on both long sides concealing a row of beds on one side and a storeroom on the other.

From June we opened a little free market and had people sit in a sofa area near the entrance of the chapel to have coffee or tea while our staff looked for the

goods they asked for. This waiting time provided a great opportunity to answer questions about God and the Bible. This "Supply-Help-Center" functioned five days a week till the end of the year.

Some of our believers who could not take part in the relief force felt lost and sometimes frustrated as they were greeted as guests when they entered their own church building and looked in vain for a quiet room where they could pray. By and by I realized that my task was caring for these believers plus former contacts and some mentally challenged persons in my neighborhood who were shocked and suicidal because of the catastrophe and all the aftershocks. The latter group

requires daily follow-up, but praise the Lord, since September they are among the most faithful attendants at our Thursday evening prayer meeting. Patience is so much needed as we go two steps forward and one step back over and over again, but God has made some real changes in their hearts and lives.

Finally it seems that our first floor will be properly turned into a sanctuary, a café, and a Christian bookstore. It has been very hard to get hold of carpenters, but now we have got a building company for the job and hope it will be finished in the first part of May.

Encouragement

So many people are tired and without hope, nervously checking the level of radiation. In May a brave pastor-wife in Koriyama, our neighbor city, sensed God told her to go to the closest church to Chernobyl. She came back with a wonderful message from our brothers and sisters there. "Look at us and our children. We are all fine and healthy 25 years after the disaster! God will protect you too!"

Yes, God is our Shield and faithful Shepherd and we pray he will show that to all the suffering people around us. Let us also lift up to God the many tired pastors and workers! ■

Anniken Mori has been a missionary with EOM (Evangelical Orient Mission) from Norway since 1973. She is married to Akira Mori, pastor of Global Mission Chapel (GMC) in Iwaki and also a missionary with EOM. They have three children. In addition to serving GMC together with Akira, Anniken is engaged in painting shows, bridal ministry, and English classes.

Bound Together

We made global headlines for one week—we who felt the earthquake shake our bones, who saw our loved ones swept away. Then the world moved on. Yes, many came to help, but many—rightly—turned to other tragedies, other joys. Now, one year on, a smattering of publications around the world commemorate Tohoku. We too pause to reflect on our year, considering what is behind, but also what lies ahead. In the midst of so many responses, one word, *kizuna*, names and shapes the past twelve months.¹ Just as nostalgic friends compile a set of memories honoring their common history, we pause to reflect on our shared experiences. For those of us who lived through this past year in Japan, *kizuna ga aru*. We are bound together.

In the days following the tsunami, we see workers bind clumps of debris, floating offshore, into bundles of raw wreckage. A ship prow awkwardly vertical in the water, lumped in with a shingled house roof and a mangle of fishing nets. Tied together, they become buoys, warning of deeper wreckage below.

Spring warms into summer, and we who are bound to Japan deliberate: do we swim and surf to help everyone move forward, or do we leave beaches bare to commemorate those we lost? Do we shop at our favorite stores and eat at our favorite restaurants? Tentatively, we creep down to the beach, and wander into the *ma-chi*, eager to support renewal efforts. Will the beaches and storefronts ever be the same? Breathless, we see cranes lift the tied wads, digging the debris out of the depths and leaving the ocean clean; we see windows washed and shelves re-stocked. Like so many bundles, we brave aftershocks by clinging together, mingling our hope and despair. Is it okay to be happy again?

Joy finds us in July. We unite with Nadeshiko Japan, the women's soccer team, who claim the world cup championship. The nadeshiko is a delicate flower, long used to symbolize the demure perfection of the ideal Japanese woman. Through the humility of the simple flower, entwined with the brute determination of world-class athletes, the Nadeshiko leads us into a new stage: we can laugh through our tears.

Then fall, and farewell to summer relief teams. The immediate defers to the mundane; we tire of earthquake talk, *We know, we know—now what?* Schools, stores, and offices pick up speed. But still the undercurrent of



aftershocks reminds us, *Don't assume all this will be here tomorrow.*

Winter, when even the mundane defers to the daily grind: life will never be the same, but we continue our daily faithfulness. We who are bound to Japan and to each other take one good step at a time. Still the dilemmas: how do we commemorate the first new year? Can we send cards? Can we hope? We close this year with *kizuna*, tied to the future by hope and bound to the past by memory.

And yes, spring comes again—for what will *this* new year be known? The buds, set many months ago, do bloom. The blossoms remind us that each new birth requires the death of the old, but promises new life.

Remembering such a year, we feel the familiar cords of pain and joy that all who are bound in community feel. We remember the past—even what was lost. We move forward, bound together more tightly to our neighbors all over the world, hopeful about what comes next. ■

Caitlin Potter is a teacher at Christian Academy in Japan and a volunteer for Not For Sale Japan. Caitlin and her husband Ryan, who also teaches at CAJ, live in Tokyo with their one-year-old son, dog, and cat.

1. Each November, the Japanese Kanji Aptitude Testing Foundation names a kanji to sum up the closing year. The tradition began in 1995, the year of the Hanshin Kobe earthquake, with *shin* (quake). In 2011 *kizuna* was selected, which means tie or bind.

The Film *Magdalena*

The idea of a film that could save someone from being killed was new to me. What kind of film might cause a husband to seek to kill his wife for seeing it? What kind of film could then prevent that man from going through with his word?

A lady in a Middle Eastern country wanted to see the film *Magdalena* when it came to her hometown, but her husband forbade her. Later when he left to do some errands she went anyway. Finding her gone when he returned home, he knew she'd disobeyed him. He went to the film venue, planning to pull her out and kill her for her defiance. But instead the film captured his attention. By the end he'd given his life to the Lord. After it finished, he sought his wife to apologise for how he'd treated her, and found she'd also become a Christian.

The creators of *Magdalena* constantly hear exciting reports about its impact. Often they are astonished at how God is using such a simple tool as this film and the companion Bible study.

A worker in a closed Asian country tells this about the film's impact:



Photo by Nardine Productions



A recently divorced woman moved to our city from the poverty stricken countryside. She was faced with the task of raising her teenage daughter alone. With limited options for work she sought the riches of the city, which led to opening a brothel. Most of the ladies trafficked into her shop were like her, single mothers who didn't have many options as they sought to provide for their children.

Last spring on National Women's Day we handed out several copies of the *Magdalena* film to these women. The next time we saw them, we asked if they had watched the film. Two broke down in tears as they talked about the compassion and kindness of Jesus. Since then, their shop has closed down and most of the ladies have returned to find work in their hometowns.

In Brazil, YWAM and a group of local pastors shared this report:

We went to 6,000 houses in Senhor do Bonfim (a city in the least evangelized area of Brazil and the center for spiritism in the country) where we offered to give them *Magdalena*. They generally asked whether it was a gift and we told them 'Yes!' We also said we wanted to return to ask some questions after they watched the film.

Not only did many people pray to ask Jesus into their lives, but the churches began to grow. One pastor said he had to buy 100 chairs for their church because there were no more seats for the people.

Another pastor's church had 80 people but they moved to another meeting place that holds 250 because there was no room for the people coming. New people coming would ask, "Is this the *Magdalena* DVD church?"



Photo by Nardine Productions

The atmosphere of whole neighborhoods has changed. Crack houses are no longer tolerated and crime has dropped drastically across the city.

We're yet to hear stories of changed lives from Japan because the film was only released in Japanese late last year. How exciting it will be to see what God will do with this new tool. ■

Wendy Marshall (OMF International) is the managing editor for Japan Harvest magazine.

Additional Materials

Created by the makers of *The Jesus Film*, *Magdalena* has been shown in many countries around the world. It's been translated into 75 languages.

But the film isn't just for showing. It was designed to be a platform from which to launch Bible study groups. The creators wrote eight Bible studies based on Jesus' interactions with seven women we see in the film. In the eighth study, participants are encouraged to make a plan to reach out to others. Ministries across the globe have seen amazing connections develop between women doing these studies. "The biggest blessing is seeing Jesus being tender with women," said Maureen Hornstein, one of the producers/writers.

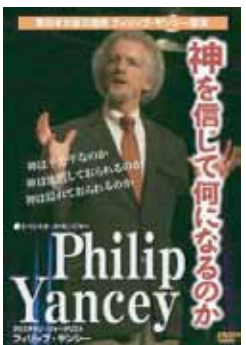
The studies have been written so that any woman in any church can lead them. The leader's booklet includes answers for those who are concerned they might need help leading. The studies have been translated into Japanese and are available free online at <http://www.japanccc.org/magdalena/download>. The DVDs are available from Japan Campus Crusade for Christ. Orders can be made online at <http://www.japanccc.org/en/material>.

Timeless Truth for Today's Japanese



Eternally Unchanging Truth (Eien ni Kawaranai Shinri), Billy Graham Evangelistic Association/ Life Creation 100 minutes. English with Japanese subtitles. Three classic sermons by Evangelist Billy Graham in a collection great for giving to today's Japanese searching for timeless truth. 1. Who Is Jesus? (1962 Chicago Crusade at McCormick Place). 2. Value of a Soul (1986 Washington DC Crusade at Washington Convention Center). 3. Loneliness (1987 Rocky Mountain Crusade at Denver Mile High Stadium).

Home Use DVD #49004 ¥500



If I Believe in God, What Difference Will It Make? (Kami o Shinjite, Nani ni Naru no ka?), Life Creation. 58 minutes. English with Japanese interpreter. Philip Yancey's message spoken at Sendai First Bible Baptist Church on March 8, 2012, for survivors of the East Japan earthquake/tsunami/ nuclear disaster on March 11, 2011. Yancey speaks with characteristic honesty and compassion. Is God unfair? Is God silent? Is God hidden? In Christ God entered our world and suffered for us. God is with us in our pain giving comfort and strength. Home Use DVD #49005 ¥1,890



Bible Verse Hero - Mighty Sheep (Mikotoba Hiirō - Maiti Shiipu) LifeCreation. 44 minutes.

Animated DVD version of 3 books for children by Shigeru Yanagawa and illustrated by Noah Kawai that teach children to learn Bible verses and apply them to life. (1.) Transform! I Am a Child of Light. 14 minutes. (2.) Who Is My Neighbor? 14 minutes. (3.) Day Jesus Was Born. 16 minutes.

Home Use DVD #49003 ¥2,940

Public/Church Use #49002 ¥3,990



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To the Noise Musicians, I Became a Noise Musician

I'm late for the gig. Speed-walking down the narrow Tokyo side street, I swing left at the drinks machine and skip down some steps. Mansion above, laundrette to the right, and a sign under my nose: "Please close the door neatly." I pause to obey the instruction. As I descend another flight of steps into the darkness, I hear a low rumble getting steadily louder. My heart skips a beat — I'm here!

Through the door I go, and BAM — a torrent of noise engulfs me. Waves of discordant sounds fill my ears and cause my chest to vibrate. Loud — yes, very loud — but the physical impact is as much from the frequencies and textures as it is from the sheer volume. A constant barrage with no let-up and no rhythm. Layers of feedback and distortion. Sizzles, screams, crackles, whooshings and thunderings, all entwining and fighting and cascading.

I carefully weave through the captivated crowd to position myself in the centre of the room. It is full but not crammed, maybe 60 bodies all standing calmly in the near-darkness.

I have been to a number of noise gigs¹ by now, but this is one I have been waiting for. ASTRO is one of Japan's noise legends, famous in global noise circles. I can understand why straight away: textures carefully layered, subtle movements in dynamics and timbres, clear vision and focus as he executes his craft.

The music feels somehow stationary as though time has been locked still, yet it is being propelled forward with an unstoppable, evolving momentum. Chaotic, yet under control. ASTRO stands behind two open suitcases full of electronic boxes and devices, the units all liberally strewn with an array of dials and switches.

To end his performance, ASTRO suddenly turns the volume right down. It is as though the journey he has just taken us on was merely a puncturing of the normal world we live in, like a lucid dream. Applause and a few whoops and cheers ensue. I speak to ASTRO briefly afterwards to thank him for his music and to look at his equipment. He is gentle, polite, and appreciative — quintessentially Japanese. It has been a memorable evening.

Scroll forward a few months. Connections, collaborations, and live performances have been steadily increasing for me within Tokyo's underground music scene. Yes, I love the music, but more importantly I love these guys. Most, if not all, of them consider themselves outsiders, and they're certainly not wrong about that in this culture of conformity.



Photo by Emily Malbon

A noise musician who is well-loved in the scene tells me how he feels lonely despite having many friends, and that he likes to keep busy so that he doesn't have space to think. Another noise musician describes to me how noise for him is a form of whole-body meditation in which to attain a dreamlike state. An electronic musician tells me about how he feels guilty when he has an argument with his daughter. One jazz musician talks to me about how he dreams of a better world where love and respect rule.

In these conversations I am simply there to be a friend who has time to listen. Sometimes I have the opportunity to share about my faith and how Jesus helps me. But for me, cultural immersion involves a literal immersion into small, dark, smoky basement venues. It involves becoming a part of communities that are forged upon a common passion of extreme and experimental music. Wherever I find myself, I want to be the aroma of Christ in a subculture where he is not yet known. And what a privilege that I have so much fun at the same time!

I have not been in Japan for very long, and my language skills are basic, but it is exciting how God has clearly been opening doors for me into this unique environment. The story is far from finished. ■

Dave Skipper and his family moved to Tokyo from the U.K. in 2010 to work in the Innovative Ministries Team of Japan Baptist Fellowship (JBF). Their focus is on music ministry to help Japanese churches reach subcultures outside their normal reach. Dave plays electric guitar and analogue synths, and enjoys making music across a diverse range of styles. You can listen to Dave's music at <http://daveskipper.bandcamp.com> or contact him at skipper.dave.heidi@gmail.com.

1. What is noise music? Well, probably not "music" to most people! Noise music creatively explores those parts of the sound world that are usually unwanted and avoided. Feedback, distortion, atonality, and discord are pushed to the limit and enjoyed for their own sake. Elements such as form and timbre are prized instead of melody or harmony. Noise music is not a single style but encompasses a wide spectrum of instrumentation, methodology, and approaches. There are strands of noise music that spring out of jazz, electronic, rock, and classical traditions. Japanese noise music is renowned internationally in avant-garde and experimental music circles as having been highly influential in pushing the boundaries of noise music to radical extremes.

Take Heart: Women in Ministry Retreat, March 7–9, 2012

For this year's JEMA Women in Ministry retreat we discovered a different venue north of Tokyo called Nikko Olive no Sato. Sixty women took time out of their busy lives to fellowship together and soak in the Word of God. We were not disappointed. Jan Hansen, our speaker, led us phrase by phrase through the key verse, John 16:33: "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (NIV). After the troubles of 2011, this was a comforting verse to dwell on. I came away with these words quietly echoing in my soul: "Take heart, dear one, Jesus has overcome the world. Christ is bigger than any troubles you'll encounter."



Photo by Ann Little

Many tears were shed as we worshipped our Overcomer, remembered our troubles, and took heart in God's promises. The unhurried programme allowed for many opportunities to fellowship over snacks, in the hallways, and in the on-site onsen. I was surprised at the many resources available over the two days. Three counsellors, two ladies willing to pray for and with us, and one life coach were there to support in any way needed. We were given free books, and provided with optional seminars on worship and using an evangelistic

DVD, among other things. At the end, everyone I spoke to was disappointed the retreat was over so soon. It was a precious time of refreshment and renewal, a taste of heaven. ■

JEMA Women in Ministry

WIM 2012 Fall Day of Prayer PLUS

October 4 Thursday

Location: Okutama, starting at RoseTown - the lovely home of Edie Town on the Tama River in Okutama.



View from our venue.

9:30– Drinks and snacks
10.00–12:30 Worship through music, prayer and Scripture & fellowship
12:45–3:00 Lunch and relaxation just down the river at Okutama Bible Chalet.

Cost: ¥1,500

For more information: visit www.jema.org or email wim@jema.org

Come and join us



Above:

Some of last year's attendees enjoying lunch at Okutama Bible Chalet.

2013 Women's Retreat

March 6-8, 2013

Speaker:
 Sandi Bradford
 from Barnabas
 International

Creating Engaging Messages for Young Adults

“A message that’s hard to fall asleep in!” That was the number one answer the young adults gave me when I asked what kind of message they would like to hear when I spoke at Tama Church’s regular morning service. This bears no reflection on our pastors, of course.

In this article I’ll discuss a message style that is attractive to young adults; and in the next article I’ll share some of the message topics that we have used in Lighthouse (our young adult contemporary worship service).

One of our ninth graders said, “I like Lighthouse. The messages at Sunday School are too easy. The Sunday morning messages are too hard. But Lighthouse is just right.” (Our Sunday School messages are given to children first grade through twelfth grade, but they are aimed at third or fourth grade.)

“Just right,” a bit like *Goldilocks*, I thought. After years of going to Sunday School and morning church it was exciting to see this young lady accept Christ and be baptized at Lighthouse. We had reached her at her level, at her place.

I mentioned in my first article in the Fall 2011 issue of *Japan Harvest* that I’d attended a seminar about evangelizing young people. Pastor Oshima (KKG director) spoke about sermons that reach young people. He told us young adults want worship services and messages that are image-driven (イメージを喚起させる), experiential (経験的), participatory (参加型), and connected (所属意義).

Image-driven

Young adults are visually oriented and need more than a “talking head.” So you *need* to use tools like PowerPoint®.

There are so many images available off the Internet. We’ve used famous paintings that illustrate biblical

scenes. We’ve used links found on YouTube. Charts, maps, photos of places in Israel, manga pictures, movie shorts, people and events in the media—all can provide visual interest.

Experiential . . . participatory . . . connected

To facilitate participation, we encourage discussion during our messages. When we occasionally ask a question directly from the pulpit, our young adults like most Japanese, are hesitant to answer. So we use “Table Talk,” questions they discuss in groups of twos, threes, or fours. After three or four minutes of discussion we ask, “What did your group come up with?” Often they’ll be embarrassed to share their own opinion in the big group, but are not upset if someone else restates it. The questions are usually about personal experience, knowledge, or application (see below).

When we divide into groups, we make sure that there is an older, more mature Christian with the younger Christians or non-Christians to help direct discussion. We also make sure that someone sits near visitors from the beginning.

We find that same-sex groups and same-age groups tend to come together naturally. I think this helps in the discussion but is not something that needs to be forced. The speaker for the night wanders between the groups, giving an insight or clarification as needed, and also gauging when the discussion is dying down.

Another technique to foster participation is to have the



Examples of questions for discussion during messages on various topics:

Fear: Talk about a time recently that you felt afraid.

The Book of Esther: Why is Esther in the Bible? What can we learn from Esther?

Intimacy with God: How much time do you spend each day on sleeping, eating, watching TV, bathing putting on make-up/fixing your hair, playing on the computer, studying, etc.?

The Fruit of the Spirit: When you look at this list, which is easiest for you? Which is hardest?



Photo by Karyn Zaayenga

congregation read passages aloud. For example, sometimes I'll divide the group to read the odd and even Scripture verses. Ways to do this could include dividing between the left and right sides, the men and women, or the over-30s and under-30s. Reading aloud and hearing other voices helps keep people awake.

As a "lead in" into the message, we also encourage participation. For example, we might have a true/false quiz in which each person has an "O" and an "X" sign and holds up their answer. Or divide into groups in which each writes down all the different "jobs" that are in the Bible, and the group that gets the most "jobs" gets a prize. Or read "Top Ten" lists in which the young adults guess the answers. I've also written short plays and skits we've performed before messages. I find our young adults don't like to practice beforehand, so we often have impromptu skits in which I hand them the script and they read and do as it says (which leads to a lot of laughter).

After the message, we have everyone write down one or two things they've learned in small, personalized notebooks we keep at church. No one looks at other people's notebooks; it's just to get them to consolidate what they've learned. Then once a month or so (usually at the end of a "theme"), we have them look back over the last month's notes and share with another person the thing that struck them the most. Again, this reinforces what they have learned and encourages practical applications.

What kind of messages are young adults looking for?

From a survey by Pastor Oshima of KGK, in which he asked about 300 Christian and non-Christian teenagers and young adults about their attitudes toward church.

Easy to understand

- 18% who had attended church said they stopped attending because the messages were too difficult.
- 19% said in order to attract young people to church, the messages needed to be easier to understand.

Applicable to their lives

- One young adult complained that the messages sound like they are talking about some other world.
- Another encouraged concretely explaining things from the Bible.
- Application should not be "do this" and "don't do that" but an explanation of why and the benefits/detriments behind them.
- Messages that are given with non-Christians in mind.

Participatory

- One student wrote that messages would be more interesting if "not just one person talked but a chance where we can express our own opinion about what the Bible says."

In summary, to engage young adults during messages, we give them visual input and opportunities to experience, participate, and connect with others.

Our message doesn't change. The truth of the gospel doesn't change. But how we present it must change to fit the people we are trying to reach. Paul wrote: "Though I am free and belong to no one, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible . . . I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel that I may share in its blessings" (1 Corinthians 9:19, 22b, 23 NIV). Let's recognize that we need to change our message style so that "by all possible means" some may be saved. ■

*Karyn Zaayenga (TEAM) has served in Japan for 16 years. Besides working with young adults, she also has a heart for Japanese Christian singles. Her book *Hitoribochi de Akenai Yoru ni* was published by WLP. If you're interested in a copy, contact her at zaayenga@aol.com.*

The Importance of Etiquette

The girl looked at me calmly for a moment before chucking me on the floor. Humiliated, I abandoned any thought of black belts.

After my first encounter, aged 11, with Japan's 'gentle way', judo, I never thought I'd try it again. But recently I took my son to a class at the local sports centre. A couple of other dads were there, and after watching the class several times I was invited to join in. It seemed like a good opportunity to get exercise I needed, so I took the plunge and agreed.

I'd taken it for granted that judo is mainly about the strength of two contestants pitched against each other, and who comes out triumphant. Of course, this is a significant aspect of the sport. What I'd missed, though, was its most fundamental part: etiquette.

Sazaki-sensei, our cheerful instructor, explained to me that however good someone gets at the judo moves, unless they pay attention to how to bow well to their partner, stand and sit properly and show general courtesy, they can't be said to have understood judo itself. Failure to appreciate and work at these basic ingredients of judo would be to go wrong at the outset.

I pondered Sazaki-sensei's advice. Doesn't it apply to all of us seeking to identify with the people and culture of Japan for the sake of the gospel? The early CIM (China Inland Mission, now OMF International) missionaries gladly adopted the customs and dress of the Chinese people in order to draw closer to them in Jesus' name. And they were by no means the first to do so in the history of missions. But it's easy to miss how this principle may apply in daily life.

I'd assumed I knew what judo was, whilst missing its essence. How might I be at risk of making the same mistake, despite trying to be an effective missionary, perhaps with more serious consequences? This isn't necessarily at the level of the grand issues of contextualization explored in missiology textbooks. It could involve the very things I've learned to regard as trivial. To bow, sit, and greet properly are examples from the traditional art of judo. It could just as well mean showing up (if at all possible) for neighbourhood cleaning duties or meetings. In Hokkaido or other snowy regions, it could be as mundane as snow shovelling.

Vision, strategy, and goals are central to our approach to mission. Of course these are important and worthy of our attention, but if we dismiss etiquette we may not gain enough credibility to put vision, strategy, and goals into practice. If we fail to be faithful in small things, how can we expect to be entrusted with the big things for Christ's sake? I hope I can make progress in judo this time. But even if I never get a black belt I want to be able to bow well. ■

Tim Walker, from the UK, has been married to Mibo since 2003. They have two children, Kent (4) and Naomi (2). They joined OMF in 2009 and have just completed their first year of ministry, serving alongside the first Japanese pastor of Nanae Evangelical Christian Church.



Photo by Tim Walker. Pictured are Tim, his son Kent, and Sazaki-sensei.

New Voices is a new feature by missionaries who have been in Japan for less than five years.

Japan Harvest aims to support and encourage new missionaries as well as those who've been here awhile. We welcome your submissions for future issues.

Trends in Japanese Social Networking

Before the Lord brought me to Tokyo in August 2008, I worked in California's Silicon Valley—most recently as a software engineer in iPhone development at Apple. My primary ministry is equipping Japanese churches with mobile phone based evangelism and outreach. When God called me to minister in this land where people communicate heavily on mobile devices, he strategically placed me to help churches use this tool in their ministry.

In this article I'd like to give you an overview of what the world of Japanese social networking looks like today:

Facebook

Facebook is enjoying tremendous popularity in Japan after having been ignored for some time. When I first arrived in Japan in 2008, mixi, a popular homegrown Japanese social network, was the only player on the block. Facebook was nonexistent. Now, in early 2012, the landscape has changed significantly. One of the catalysts for this uptick in popularity has been that Facebook introduced a Japanese-language interface for its site, thus removing the language barrier. Another reason is that the Japanese media has been featuring Facebook prominently, which has raised awareness and participation. Finally, with increasing numbers of Japanese joining Facebook daily, those not yet on the service now have many friends already there, giving them even more reason to sign up.

Action Points for Ministry through Facebook

- Be sure your ministry has a Japanese Facebook Page or Group for the Japanese Christians and not-yet-believers you are connected with.
- Create a friends sub-list made up of your Japanese friends, and post messages in Japanese for them.

Mobile Social Games (Gree and Mobage)

Gree and Mobage (*mobage* is an abbreviation of "Mobile Game") are probably unfamiliar to most non-Japanese in Japan. They are game-based social networks, where through playing games on their mobile phones, users can connect with friends inside of games, compete, share scores, and send messages back and forth. These services make money by charging users for special power-ups, add-ons, and additional levels inside of the game. Mobile social games are immensely popular in Japan.

Christian ministries have yet to take advantage of this

popular phenomenon in Japanese culture. As a result, one of the projects God has led me to begin is to design a Christian mobile-social game that will show Japanese the basics of the gospel and the Bible. The plan is that it will also connect with churches.

Action Points for Ministry through Mobile Social Games

- Weave in references to popular mobile games when illustrating gospel presentations or sermons.
- Ask people at your church what mobile social games they play on their phones.

"Smartphonization"

When I arrived in Japan the iPhone hadn't been released here, and smartphones weren't yet popular. However since then, the iPhone has enjoyed tremendous success in Japan, followed later by Android phones. As a result, smartphone usage has skyrocketed. All of the major Japanese carriers are trying to phase out traditional phones in favor of smartphones, since the monthly fees and profit margins on smartphones are much higher.

Action Points for Ministry through "Smartphonization"

- Be sure your church or ministry's homepage is iPhone and Android friendly.¹
- Investigate creating a mobile app that your users can download onto their phone. ■

John Gibbs is a missionary in Japan with WorldVenture. He can be reached at john@johnngibbs.info

1. The Church App is an easy-to-use platform that lets churches manage an iPhone, iPad, or Android app via a simple Web-based administration tool. The initial cost is \$499, plus \$79 per month. The management interface is in English, but all content can be in Japanese. I can provide training and setup for any Japan-based ministry interested in this. <http://thechurchapp.org/>

Modern Tech is a feature highlighting technology that can help today's missionary be more effective.

We have no regular columnist at this time, so we're looking for articles from a variety of writers. We welcome your submissions for future issues.

People Grow as They Take Responsibility

I grow when I take responsibility to define, commit to, and achieve my goals. Defining my goals helps me understand how I can more effectively pursue God's calling. Committing to my goals helps me know what to focus on and what not to focus on. And working to achieve my goals results in things like a growing spiritual life and better life balance.

How about you? How does taking responsibility affect your growth? And how does taking responsibility to define, commit to, and achieve goals affect the growth of the leaders you're developing?

Want to help others grow by empowering them to take responsibility? If so, do these four things:

1. Listen in order to help them talk through their goals. Help them take responsibility by listening, instead of talking. Listen a minimum of 80% of the time, and be sure you look interested and sound interested.

2. Inquire about their goals. Help them take responsibility by asking questions, instead of suggesting goals. Ask questions like: What are your goals? How can you pursue God's calling even more? Where are you and where do you want to go? What can you do to move forward on your goals? What will you do?



Michael B. Essenburg (*Christian Reformed Japan Mission*) serves as a coach, consultant, and trainer at *Christian Academy in Japan*. Time permitting, Michael works with missions.

3. Focus them on their goals. Help them take responsibility by encouraging them to identify their goals. You can do this by inviting them to take five or ten minutes to list their goals for areas like spiritual life, relationships, leadership, work, and life balance. After they have identified their goals, invite them to select one and identify the action steps they can take to achieve that goal. Encourage them to make their action steps SMART—specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound.

4. Encourage them to achieve their goals. Help them take responsibility by encouraging them to talk about progress on their goals. It's easy to do—when you see a leader, say, "Tell me about the progress you've made on your goals." And when they achieve their goals, encourage them to celebrate!

Reflect on Responsibility

1. What is one way you encourage leaders to take responsibility?
2. What is satisfying/unsatisfying about getting leaders to take responsibility?
3. How does taking responsibility affect the growth of leaders?
4. What can you do to help leaders increasingly take responsibility?
5. What will you do to help leaders increasingly take responsibility? ■

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What is Member Care?

The WEA Global Member Care Network wrote this definition of Member Care in March, 2008:

Member Care is . . . the ongoing preparation, equipping and empowering of missionaries for effective and sustainable life, ministry and work.

An older but more comprehensive definition was written by Dr. Laura Mae Gardner and Richard Gardner of Wycliffe Bible Translators:

Member Care is an organizational ethos, a pervasive awareness of and commitment to care for one another, a commitment that impacts time use, interpersonal relationships, policies and legislation, proportion of funds and services—care of members and children, employees, visitors and short-term helpers—so human need is acknowledged while at the same time accountable and responsible attention is given to task, product and goals.

Both definitions paint a broad picture of Member Care as encompassing not just the time a person is on the field, but including care given from the sending office beginning with screening and pre-field training through end of service or retirement. The ultimate outcome is effectiveness in life and ministry, while achieving the goals of the organization.

A Model for Member Care

A comprehensive model for member care is found in *Doing Member Care Well*, edited by Kelly O'Donnell. The flow of care is initiated both by oneself and others, and it is always a two-way street. It is not something that the mission organization does for me, without my participation. The “heart” of member care is an individual’s relationship with the Lord. Care for oneself and one another within our mission community forms the “backbone” of member care. An important question to ask within your organization is, “How do we demonstrate care for each other?” If there isn’t an ethos of commitment toward one another, organization member care services will be harder to implement.

Sending organizations (both churches and mission agencies) sustain member care by making a commitment to care for their missionaries from recruitment through retirement. This can be done through the appointment of on-field Member Care Facilitators, a task force or team, or an entire department of specially trained personnel. Rarely are these filled by professional counselors, however training programs are available to learn the skills used in these positions.



Faith De La Cour serves with Asian Access/Japan and encourages Member Care among the missionary community in Japan.



*A best practice model of member care.
Kelly O'Donnell and Dave Pollock © 2000*

There are times when specialist care is needed. This can be provided by qualified pastoral care givers, medical professionals, team building and interpersonal care trainers, advisors for families and third-culture kids (TCK's). Financial, logistical, crisis, and contingency specialists, and trained counselors and psychologists can also provide care. The work of specialists encompasses prevention, development, support, and restoration. Sometimes this care is provided by persons within an organization, but often it is contracted from the outside.

There are member care networks that serve as catalysts, consultants, resources, and service providers. In April the Global Member Care Network will hold its first global conference on the theme: “Global Voices on Global Challenges,” April 23-27, 2012 in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The presenters are a “who’s who” of the Member Care world. More information can be found at <http://www.globalmembercare.com>.

If you have been tasked with starting member care in your organization, spend some time looking at what is happening currently with your field missionaries. How is their relationship with the Lord? How are people caring for themselves? How are people demonstrating care for one another? What are some ways you all can grow in self-care and mutual care?

In the next issue we'll look at assessment questions that can help to focus next steps for your member care program. ■

Kelly O'Donnell, ed., *Doing Member Care Well: Perspectives and Practices from Around the World*. (Pasadena, CA, USA: William Carey Library 2002)

The greatest thing anyone can do for God and man is pray. It is not the only thing, but it is the chief thing. The great people of the earth today are the people who pray. I do not mean those who talk about prayer, nor those who say they believe in prayer, nor those who can explain about prayer, but I mean those who take time to pray.

S.D. Gordon

Let's Praise Him!

A glance through the pages of Scripture will reveal that most of the “proper prayers” in the Bible—the Lord’s Prayer, Solomon’s prayer at the dedication of the Temple, Jehoshaphat’s prayer in 2 Chronicles 20, and most of David’s psalms—start and end with praise. Thus praise is an important part of prayer.

The Will of God

We all want to do God’s will. But what is it? Specific things God wants us to do may differ from person to person. But there are some things God tells us all to do. For instance, “Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).¹

In every area of our experience as believers, we are to be joyful, prayerful, and thankful. So when the unexpected happens, our response should be to rejoice that our loving God has seen fit to bring it into our lives. That leads to prayer and thanksgiving, in other words, praise—in and for everything. He is in control, so all we need to do is rest in His sovereignty, and do His will.

He has made it clear. His desire is for us to live a life of praise.

What Are We to Praise God for?

First, we are to praise Him just because He is who He is. “You are my God, and I give thanks to You; You are my God, I extol You. Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting” (Psalm 118:28, 29). If we were to search the treasures of the character of God, we could never come to the end.

Next, we praise Him for Calvary. “For God so loved” . . . you, me, everyone! . . . “that He gave” . . . Himself away (John 3:16)! Bowing in utter humility before His Cross, from our lips comes nothing but praise.

Then we need to praise Him for our past. Nothing has ever happened to us that He will not use, if we allow Him to. So we alone can sing our song of praise to Him for the experiences He has allowed into our lives. We sing with the Psalmist, “Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget none of His (past) benefits” (Ps. 103:2).

And we should praise Him for things as they happen. God is as real in our present as He has been in our past. So Paul and Silas could give praise from the prison (Acts 16: 25). He was there, guiding and superintending them—in the moment. And realizing He is worthy of our praise in the present should lead to contentment. Paul and Silas could have given in to resentment, but they decided to allow contentment to come to the fore and lead them into a praise session in the most unlikely of times and places!

Finally, we praise God for what He has waiting for us in the future. Our life of praise down here on earth is just training for what it will be like in Heaven—uninterrupted praise forever! Even the things that bring distress into our lives are just reminders that in Heaven, none of those will exist. “. . . and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; . . . no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain” (Revelation 21:4).



Ken Reddington and his wife Toshiko are church-planters in Kochi. Ken is on the Servant-Leader Teams of the Prayer Summit for Western Japan and the Shikoku Prayer Summit. He is also on the executive committees for the Kochi Global Day of Prayer and World Food Day Kochi. He is secretary for the Kochi Citywide Interdenominational Pastors Group.

So, let’s praise Him! Praise Him in the quiet place, when you are alone with God. Praise Him in the marketplace and let others know that you belong to God. Praise Him in the congregation, where God’s people gather to worship Him. Praise Him with your family. Praise Him when life (and God) is blessing you. And praise Him when the skies are gray and it looks like there is no way out. “Let everything that has breath praise the Lord” (Psalm 150:6). Only He is worthy! ■

1. All Bible quotes are from the NASB version.

Uchi and Soto: The Challenges Faced by Returnees, Part 2

Last issue's article dealt with the Japanese concept of *uchi* and *soto*. These two ideas define and shape Japanese relationships. The thought of a foreigner being *soto*, or in the outer circle of relationships, doesn't surprise us. Japanese have always been suspicious of anything foreign. Most of us have heard ourselves called *henna gaijin* (strange foreigner) for little more than not being Japanese.

But what about the Japanese person who has lived outside his/her culture and returns to Japan? They are still Japanese ethnically (*uchi*), but with a fundamental change in their worldview and experience (*soto*). In a *Japan Times* article on returnees, or *kikokusha*, artist Kentaro Yamada says he felt "a loss of identity" and was "puzzled" on his return to Japan after living abroad.¹ A Japanese musician was told during a job interview, "Mō nihonjin ja nai" (you aren't Japanese anymore), when the interviewer saw on her resume she had studied abroad. This discrimination continued with each job interview, so much so that she was unable to find a job in Japan. One returnee said she found that Japan "remains a closed, walled-in country."²

It's even more challenging for the many Japanese who become Christians during their stay abroad. Setsu Kuroda Shimizu of Japanese Diaspora Ministry/Japanese Christian Fellowship Network (JDM/JCFN) estimates that over 1,500 return to Japan every year as believers or seekers, and according to Hiroko Higashi, more Japanese are saved overseas than in Japan each year.³ One would think the whole face of the Japanese church would be revitalized by this influx of believers. But something like 70-80% disappear from Christian fellowship (including churches) within two to three years.⁴ This seems strange until one considers the concept of *uchi* and *soto*.

Japanese who have lived overseas for any length of time come back to find themselves regarded with suspicion by family and friends. They are *chigau* (different), *tokubetsu* (special), or as one returnee said, "exotic." Most have embraced a new freedom overseas, which makes them square pegs unable to fit back into the Japanese societal round holes.

In their jobs, it's difficult to revert back to the long hours and conservative work environment. In their home life, large homes, long vacations, and holiday breaks with family are only a memory. And what about the church? Warm times of fellowship, acceptance, affectionate hugs, and upbeat worship times are replaced with traditional church services and often seemingly indifferent church members. One returnee talked about an unseen wall between her-

self and the church members. Another returnee complained that she was unable to understand the religious vocabulary at church. There is also a difficulty for many returnees with the more formal style of Japanese used in prayer which is challenging to understand and use, especially for those who are used to Western informalities.

The returnee can get stuck in reverse culture shock, which often takes months or years to recover from. Unfortunately, many Japanese consider church to be part of their overseas experience and never intend to make Christianity part of their Japanese lifestyle. This kind of returnee fits back into society, conforms outwardly to social norms, and rarely shares their international experiences.

The other extreme is the returnee who becomes hypercritical of Japanese culture and the church. They often give up before finding a good church fit, and begin looking for opportunities to return overseas.

Obstacles seem insurmountable, but there are some bright spots. Many Christian organizations have made returnees targets of their ministry and recruit Japanese returnees who have successfully acclimated both to Japanese culture and the church to come alongside other struggling returnees. It takes patience and time to be part of this assimilation process, but it is worth the effort.

There are encouraging success stories. One good friend of ours returned from America, having become a Christian through a young people's group at a church in the States. He not only worked with a Japanese college ministry successfully for many years, he later became a pastor. Another returnee friend is a pastor's wife. She became a Christian during her stay in the States, assimilated back into the Japanese church, and got married. She has returned to Canada with her husband, where they've had a fruitful ministry in a Japanese church.

A recent returnee wrote: "I look forward to witnessing how God will use returnees to revitalize the spiritual condition of Japan. The returnees may play a key role in kick-starting the spiritual revival of Japan." (Reaching Japanese for Christ Network newsletter.) ■



Eileen Nielsen has served as a church planter with her husband Jim in Aichi for the last 20 years and has a masters in counseling. She is presently working with CRASH Japan as a base camp leader. She is available to do counseling by Skype (contact: eileenpielsen@gmail.com).

1. Vanessa Mitchell, "Home is where hardship is for Japanese returnees," <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/fl20050419zg.html> Tuesday, April 19, 2005.

2. Ronald E. Yates, "Japan's 'returnees' face rejection, find that coming home isn't easy," *Chicago Times*, September 23, 1990. Accessed from: <http://www.davidapleypark.com/japan/jp40.htm>

3. Returnee Seminar, Presenter: Hiroko Higashi (JCFN), Toyoake, Japan, Fall 2009.

4. Ibid.

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Length of time in Japan:	<i>0-5 years</i>	<i>6-15 years</i>	<i>16-30 years</i>	<i>31+</i>	<i>Not in Japan</i>	
Currently living in:	<i>Urban Japan</i>	<i>Rural Japan</i>	<i>Outside Japan</i>			
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When disaster struck on March 11, 2011 JEMA members responded. CRASH Japan deeply appreciates our partnership with JEMA and its member missions. Praise God that He has enabled us to

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We serve **LOCAL CHURCHES** by
MOBILIZING the body of Christ to bring
HELP AND HOPE to people affected by disaster.

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