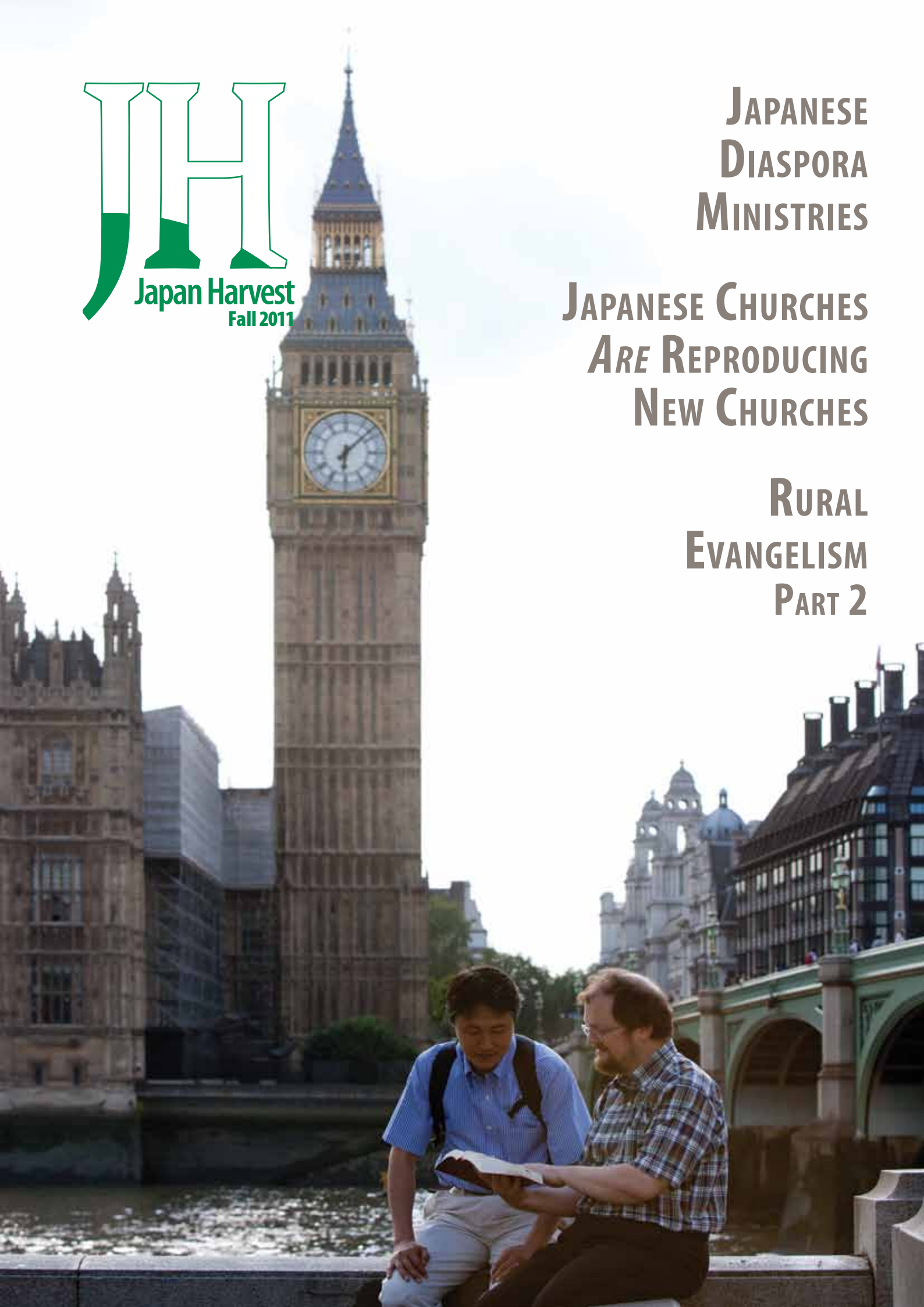




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*The Japan Evangelical
Missionary Association
exists to network and equip
its members to make
disciples for Christ*

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Japan CPI 2011 National Conference



The CPI National Conference exists to strengthen leaders and workers, all for the purpose of planting and developing healthy gospel centered churches. This conference theme is “together.” Together we can seek God’s glory, Kingdom, and Will in His church. We will pray, worship, learn, refocus, renew, share, and network together.

The CPI National Conference is more than a gathering or a training event. Since its inception, the CPI National Conference has been a hotbed for new vision and a stimulus for renewal and transformation. Participants represent an amazing diversity of countries, locations, ministries, denominations and agencies.

All participants together seek one heart to Glorify God by advancing his Kingdom through movements of churches, leaders, and disciples throughout Japan and the World. As God leads you, we hope and pray that you will JOIN US for this historical conference!

- A great line-up of speakers including Akira Sato of the Fukushima Baptist Church and Makoto Fukuda of the Tokyo Grace Center City Church. which will stimulate you in your walk with God and your ministry vision.
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- Many great services to assist you such as: Children’s Ministry Program, Youth Ministry Program, Consulting Center, and Resource Center.
- Pre-conference Day held Nov 8-9 (Tue–Wed) with special consulting center events, the launch of the Rural Church Planting Network, and individual groups meeting together.

The 2011 CPI National Conference will be held November 9–11 (Wed–Fri), 2011 at Fuji Hakone Land.

The deadline for registration is October 28th.

To register <http://conf.jcpi.net/>.

President's Pen



Prioritizing Our Ministries in the Post March 11 Era

Ken Taylor is JEMA Vice-President, Japan Baptist Fellowship field leader, and has been in Japan since 1997. He is involved in church-planting activities with a focus on creative and innovative strategies. Visit his website at: <kenandbola.com>

The March 11, 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake not only brought destruction and panic, it also created a new divide to the psyche in Japan—a pre and post March 11 way of living and thinking. We all have seen the visible destruction in the Tohoku area, but greater in scope is the impact it has had on the hearts and minds of the Japanese all over Japan. This is the new normal we are all living in.

As missionaries, we have a demanding task. This includes providing local assistance and new mission strategies in affected areas, while at the same time not neglecting those we have been ministering to wherever we are in Japan. The reality is that we are already stretched with our scarce resources, human limitations,

and finite minds. But in the post March 11 tragedy, many of our mission strategies have made Tohoku relief and response a new priority. Our missiological perspective and approach has to accommodate both the past and future. In other words, how can we have a concern for all of Japan and still focus on our chosen priorities?

During one of our Japanese network pastoral gatherings, the topic of how to prioritize our ministries came up. Most of the focus and energy was geared towards relief work in Tohoku. Rightfully so, and everyone agreed that this was of primary importance. Many mission organizations and churches are sending resources and

JEMA Datebook

Event	Date	Time	Place
JEMA Ministry Consultation	Fall 2011		Miyagi Prefecture
CPI Pre-conference Day	November 8-9		Fuji Hakone Land
CPI National Conference	November 9-11		Fuji Hakone Land
WIM Winter Day of Prayer	January 26, 2012	10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.	
JEMA Plenary Session	February 28, 2012	1:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m.	OCC
WIM 2012 Spring Retreat	March 7-9, 2012		Megumi Chalet

directing time and energy toward short term relief in Tohoku, while at the same time planning long-term church planting strategies.

However, all agreed there is also an obvious need to continue our present ministries. A profound comment that came from this meeting was: "Although we experienced a triple disaster in East Japan, the

greatest disaster is dying without Jesus Christ wherever you are."

One way to tackle this challenge is to collaborate and find strategic partnerships. As JEMA missionaries, we have the opportunity to do this. In fact JEMA, JEA (the Japan Evangelical Association <http://www.jeanet.org/>), and DRCnet (Disaster Relief Christian Network [\[net.jp/en/\]\(http://drcnet.jp/en/\)\) each are planning surveys to gather information. They are also planning to conduct consultations.](http://drc-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

May God grant us wisdom for effective ministry during the post March 11 era. JH



Planning to Attend the CPI Conference?

Come to the Pre-Conference Day "Writer's Workshop," get some "alone time" for that writing project you never seem to get off the ground, and meet the Japan Harvest editors.

Tuesday, November 8

3:00–5:00 p.m.

Editor Introductions (Gary Bauman and Wendy Marshall)

Our new, updated Writer's Guidelines –

"What is good writing?"

What is Japan Harvest looking for? (topics, length, style)

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Wednesday, November 9

Breakfast together

Devotional and prayer time

Individual writing time

11:00 a.m.–Noon

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<http://conf.jcpi.net>

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Gary Bauman has been managing editor of Japan Harvest since September 2005. He and his wife Barbara have served in Japan since 1988 with Asian Access.

Working Together

Partnership. Easier said than done.

We've all seen it. Steve* gets along great with Mark, and works well with Jim. But Mark and Jim? They would be happy if they were never to see each other again. How is it that two well-adjusted Christians we enjoy working with can't get along with each other? After all, Christians all should be able to love each other, right?

During the first month after the earthquake/tsunami, I worked over 10 hours a day in the hectic environment of CRASH Japan headquarters. In the midst of a crisis, personality conflicts that ordinarily might take months to discover can emerge almost immediately. And the conflicts I saw intrigued me.

Sheila, for example, knew she would make wrong decisions along the way. But she also knew strong leadership and quick action were essential. She was willing to act immediately and apologize later if proven wrong.

Henry, on the other hand, knew making the right decisions in the beginning would save much grief later. He preferred to wait for more information before moving ahead and chafed at hasty decisions that later needed to be withdrawn.

Both had valuable perspectives, but lacked the time or willingness to work through their differing approaches to leadership. More than once I saw volunteers pull away and move to another ministry as the result of a contrasting viewpoint.

Of course, one of the reasons we have so many conflict resolution workshops and personality assessments is because human relationships can be so challenging. As a missionary, you may have taken several assessments. I've taken more than I can remember.

However, we often focus on individual characteristics when looking at these assessments. In contrast, recently our mission brought in a consultant skilled in helping teams understand how an appreciation of differing individual perspectives can increase a team's effectiveness. Using the Strengths Finder assessment as a foundation (<http://www.strengthsfinder.com>), he showed how a mutual knowledge of our individual "themes" can help us partner more effectively.

(This consultant used the term "theme," rather than "strength," recognizing that the Strengths Finder assessment points out both actual and potential strengths—areas that can have both positive and negative sides to them.)

For example, one of my dominant themes is "maximizer." Although I want to see people maximize their gifts and skills, I can tend to focus on the success of their projects, and appear uncaring. On the other hand, my wife has a dominant theme of "empathy," and she helps me remember that projects are for people, not people for projects. Good partnerships include a mix of gifts that bring balance to a team, whether the team be two or twenty.

"But wait a minute, Gary," you may be saying. "I knew all that."

Yes, but it never hurts to remind ourselves that although partnerships take work, the rewards are worth it. JEMA was founded on the idea of partnership, and in this issue of Japan Harvest we mention numerous partnership opportunities.

The biennial Church Planting Institute Conference, the launch of a new Rural Japan Church Planting Network, upcoming Women in Ministry events, diaspora outreach, and several other possibilities are all mentioned in this issue. Pick one or more, get involved, and see what God does as we partner together in ministry.

Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

—Romans 12:4 and 5 (NIV) ¹⁴

Yours for the Harvest,

*All names are pseudonyms

Tohoku Recovery Spotlight: Danke for German Support

by Aliko Ban



When asked how he decided to volunteer in Japan, Matthias Bertsch says, “I had a thousand reasons not to go.” Bertsch travels abroad for business most of the year, but in July he had just come back to Germany for a short summer vacation. While home, his church asked him to plan several events. Both his parents’ birthdays were also during this time. But one day he was browsing the Internet and saw a call for volunteers to serve in Japan. “I just had the feeling that I should go,” Bertsch says. However, he thought that with his schedule it wouldn’t be possible. “Over the next three weeks, the feeling became stronger. Finally, I was reading in 1 Peter 3:8, about giving love with all your heart. I prayed, ‘God if you want me there, please prepare everything, especially with my boss and work schedule.’” There were many obstacles, but just three days later Bertsch left his home in Germany

to fly to Tokyo! “I didn’t know how God could use me and what would happen, but I knew God wanted me there.”

Bertsch came through Liebenzell Mission, which like many JEMA member missions, has sent numerous teams of volunteers to the Tohoku area. The team Bertsch joined served for two weeks, and was joined by interpreters Gerd Strauss, Liebenzell missionary living in Japan; and Josia Ockert, a Japan MK (missionary kid), who put his culinary studies in Germany on hold to come back and help with relief efforts.

The Liebenzell Mission is headquartered in Bad Liebenzell, in the Black Forest of southern Germany. There are 240 Liebenzell missionaries in 25 countries, including 20 in Japan, mostly in Ibaraki and Kanagawa Prefectures. Liebenzell missionaries have been in Japan since 1927, and although the mission supports many countries,

Strauss says, “Liebenzell has many supporters who see the great spiritual need in Japan, and they have a deep commitment to continue support for this country.” In 1952, the Mission opened Fukuin no Ie (House of Good News) retreat center at Okutama.

Soon after the March 11 disaster, Liebenzell missionaries gave an open invitation to house any disaster victims at their camps. About 60 members of the Fukushima First Bible Baptist Church, including Pastor Akira Sato, who had to evacuate their church and homes within the nuclear evacuation zone, have been living at Fukuin no Ie since early April.

In an effort to discover how God would lead them to help directly with recovery efforts, Strauss and three other Liebenzell Japan missionaries went to the Tohoku region on a scouting and volunteer work trip. When visiting the Sendai base of JEMA-endorsed recovery

ministry CRASH Japan, they met Yoshiya Sone, who had been serving on the management team at CRASH Sendai from the time the base was opened. Strauss said that upon seeing Yoshiya covered in muck, just back from a hard day of volunteer work, they were convinced that CRASH Japan was doing good work. They chose CRASH Japan as their partner in Tohoku and immediately began to mobilize volunteers.

Meanwhile, Makoto Tsumura at CRASH Japan headquarters helped Andreas Gross, a Liebenzell missionary-in-training, recruit and organize Liebenzell volunteers back in Germany. They wanted the first team to go as soon as possible, and they also wanted it to be made up of people who already knew each other well. Dr. Jürgen Schuster, a former Liebenzell missionary to Japan and professor at the Liebenzell seminary, volunteered to lead the initial group, while Gross continued raising support and screening volunteers for second and third trips. While here, the teams worked with passionate

intensity. Strauss, a fan of Japanese onsen, coined the following slogan: *Anzen dai-ichi; onsen mainichi* ("Safety first; hot springs every day," which rhymes when said in Japanese). True to his word, after a long day's work, he would take the team to a local onsen to refresh their spirits and soothe their tired bodies.

The teams, composed of German Christians from the Liebenzell net-

work of churches, consisted of volunteers like Matthias Bertsch who took time off from work and raised their own support to come. Like so many other volunteers from other organizations and countries, they felt a burden for Japan and wanted to put their faith into action.

We are so grateful for the devotion of these Liebenzell Christians: *Danke*, thank you very much! 卍



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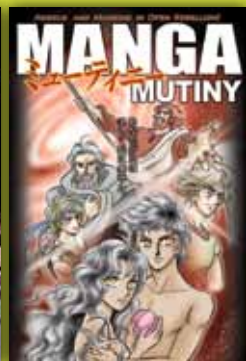
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In the News

(Christian Shimbun translations by Atsuko Tateishi unless otherwise noted)

Basketball's Big Man Helps Fukushima

CHRISTIAN SHIMBUN — JULY 3, 2011

Ray Schafer, professional basketball player with the Shiga Lake Stars in Shiga Prefecture, worked as a volunteer from May 9-13 in Iwaki City, Fukushima Prefecture. He was with a group organized by Otsu Baptist Church (OBC). Ray and his wife Sarah have been attending OBC since Ray started playing in Japan in 2008.

Soon after the Lake Stars lost the playoff in early May, God spoke to Ray to go to the disaster area. He immediately informed OBC that he and Sarah would go with the relief team to help and to encourage the people affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake. Working out of the Taira Christ Evangelical Church Global Mission Center, Ray helped clean mud out of homes and offices, while Sarah assisted with cooking for evacuees.

Ray also conducted three days of basketball clinics in several local junior high and senior high schools. The seven-foot-tall center taught the youth some new tricks and enjoyed playing and interacting with them. During an evening fellowship in Fukushima, Ray noted the importance of teamwork both in basketball and relief work, with each member doing their best in their assigned role.

Originally from Wasilla, Alaska, Ray grew up going to Wasilla Bible Church with his whole family. He believed in Jesus when he was 11. After a successful basketball career at Oregon State University, Ray married

Sarah. In time, God gave the couple the vision to use Ray's athletic skills for the glory of the Lord by playing on a professional basketball team. Pastor Ueda and the OBC people love the friendly and humble Schafers, while Ray and Sarah are thankful for the godly fellowship at OBC.

Teenager Comes to Know Jesus Through Relief Work

CHRISTIAN SHIMBUN — JULY 17, 2011

Yasuhiro Kaneko, a 17-year-old senior at Shiogama High School in Miyagi Prefecture, came to believe in Christ through the disaster relief effort of Eastwind Ministries (EM), a Christian NPO led by Makoto Fukuda. Yasuhiro's home in Miyagino Ward, Sendai City, was devastated by the tsunami on March 11, 2011. While living in a local shelter, he met the EM members, who were cooking meals for evacuees.

Yasuhiro began to work with EM. He heard stories of Jesus from the members over meals. He learned that Jesus was the Savior, and felt that Jesus was very much for real. It was not long before Yasuhiro became a believer.

Yasuhiro lost several friends in the disaster, with some still missing. He also expects to face difficulty finding a local job after graduating from high school. On June 18, in Tokyo, Yasuhiro gave his testimony at the second leaders' meeting for the Youth Convention to be held in August 2011 during the Tokyo Gospel Revival Meetings. He asked the audi-

ence to pray for the disaster survivors. Yasuhiro is also scheduled to give his testimony at the Youth Convention on August 12, in Kawaguchi City, Saitama Prefecture.

Seventh Asia Lausanne Conference Convened in Mongolia

CHRISTIAN SHIMBUN — JULY 17 AND JULY 31, 2011
REPORTED BY ATSUKO TATEISHI

The Asia Lausanne Committee (ALC) hosted the Seventh Asia Lausanne Conference on Evangelism (ALCOE VII) in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia on June 1-4, 2011. Four representatives attended from Japan, with each making some contribution to the program. A total of about 188 registrants from some 17 countries explored the overall theme of The Unchanging Gospel for a Changing Asia.

The ALC has been organizing periodic ALCOE events since 1978. By holding ALCOE VII, the first-ever international Christian event in Mongolia, ALC aimed at encouraging emerging Mongolian church leaders. Non-Mongolian attendees were greatly inspired by the passion and diligence of local Christians, who are relatively young both in age and in the Christian faith.

When Mongolia opened to Christian evangelism in 1990, very few believers were in the country. Today, there are some 60,000 Christians in some 600 churches, thanks largely to the long-term efforts of foreign missionaries.

Each morning of the conference

was devoted to Bible exposition and a plenary presentation. On June 3, Dr. Makito Masaki, President of Kobe Lutheran Theological Seminary and the outgoing International Secretary of ALC, preached from Psalm 96.

On June 2 and 3, small groups of about 10 people met for an hour before lunch. Each group consisted of both Mongolians and non-Mongolians, with at least one person who served as an interpreter between Mongolian and English. Some common challenges being experienced in Mongolia emerged out of the small group discussions. These included contextualization, discipleship, and leadership development.

Four parallel sessions on globalization, holistic mission, business as mission, and education prepared specifically for Mongolian representatives were offered during the afternoons of June 2 and 3. Non-Mongolians attended a strategizing session to discuss the future plans of ALC. Atsuko Tateishi, Secretary of Japan Lausanne Committee (JLC) and Masaru Aoki, Coordinator of Diaspora Network of Japan and Treasurer of JLC, gave presentations in the Holistic Mission and the Business as Mission sessions respectively.

The focus of the evening prayer on June 2 was Mongolia, and on June 3 was Japan. Hikari Matsuzaki, General Secretary of Japan Antioch Mission and Vice President, Japan Overseas Missions Association, led the Japan session, asking specifically for prayer for (1) disaster afflicted churches, (2) the response of the leadership of Japan and Japanese churches in the areas of nuclear energy policies and disaster relief, and (3) global diaspora ministries as a potential core impetus to evangelism in Japan.

Two major visions were discussed in relation to the future of ALC: strengthening the network among female leaders in Asia, and a larger-scale Asian conference on evangelism in a few years. ALCOE VII served as a great time of renewal for the ALC

leadership. Looking to the future, the Japan Lausanne Committee expects to work in close partnership with the ALC.

The Japan Christian Council of Evangelism Among the Blind

CHRISTIAN SHIMBUN —

JULY 31, 2011

TRANSLATED BY TOMOKO KATO

The Japan Christian Council of Evangelism among the Blind, chaired by Hidaka Keisuke, held its 37th General Assembly on July 18 at Howa Seminar Plaza in Nagoya. It had been 60 years since the founding of “MODEN” (盲伝 — “blind evangelism”) and about 90 members came from all over Japan for the worship commemoration.

Mitsuya Asa, pastor of Shin Izumi Church, who was General Secretary of MODEN for 24 years, delivered a message with the theme, “Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth” (Isaiah 43:19).

Several attendees shared blessings: “Since my father was blind, MODEN felt like home to me. I really enjoyed working with MODEN and was happy to share time with people in the group. MODEN is a group just like God’s family, where we pray for each other and share the love of Jesus without considering denominational affiliations. Through my work, I came to know the history of the Japanese blind, and was struck by the faith of our seniors who stood for the gospel of Jesus. Let’s carry on their powerful faith!”

“The appeal and energy of MODEN has been shining through each who are gathered here. God has been continually doing new things for the world of the blind. I pray God will bless our new steps in this sixtieth year.”

After the blessings, Toshimitsu Asano invited an exchange of ideas about what MODEN can do in the future.

Mental Health Care for Pastors and Their Families

CHRISTIAN SHIMBUN —

JULY 31, 2011

TRANSLATED BY TOMOKO KATO

Purpose Driven Fellowship Japan held a “Seminar for Pastors Hit by the Disaster” (June 27–28, Zao International Hotel), which was co-sponsored by JIFH (Japan International Food for the Hungry). Including pastoral family members, twenty-four participants attended.

One of the seminar staff, Yuichi Kono (Pastor, Midori Christ Church) explained why this seminar was held. “Ever since the disaster, the mission of each local churches was to be a support center. So instead of saying ‘please rest,’ we held a seminar which gave pastors the opportunity to leave their churches for a while.”

After Akira Fujikake, associate professor at Seigakuin University led participants in making collages as a form of mental therapy, Megumi Fukui (Pastor, Iwaki Christ Church) said, “I was able to see my mental condition and I was encouraged by the words for me.”

Dave Holden (International Training Director, Saddleback Church, USA) shared about his own experience in refuge and relief operations with forest fires in California. Nobuko Kokubo (staff member at Fukushima Asahimachi Christ Church) said, “A pastor cannot leave his church, but how much can he endure? I was impressed when Mr. Holden said ‘God will never give up on us.’”

Makihito Matsuda (Pastor, Rifu Christ Church) joined with his five family members. He commented: “We had common themes to talk about. We were able to exchange information and share our worries and dreams.”

Tamiko Kokubo (pastor’s wife, Fukushima Asahimachi Christ Church) said, “In Japan, a pastor has little chance to be invited to have a rest. I appreciate that what pastors have been doing is respected at this event.” ㊦

Home-country Stress

By Wendy Marshall

Before we came back to Japan last year, I read a book called *Honourably Wounded*, a classic mission text by Marjory F. Foyle. Though I've read a lot of mission-related books I hadn't picked this one up before. After all, who would think they might become "wounded" while serving the Lord?

In January this year I found myself watching as Brisbane, the city we'd just left, went under water. Areas where we'd spent most of our time in Australia were under threat. We recognised the places and knew the names. A large portion of the suburb we lived in last year disappeared under floodwaters. We watched in horror as streets we'd travelled many times became lakes. The aquatic centre where our boys learned to swim was completely underwater. The indoor basketball stadium where our eldest played weekly games had three metres of water in it. Friends evacuated their houses. Others stood by helplessly as neighbours and local businesses lost everything.

As brown river water dared to infringe on localities we knew well, I found it hard to concentrate on anything else. The shocking images stuck in my head and kept me from restful sleep. I found it strange, as it came after three weeks of floods in other less-familiar parts of the state, and I wondered why it hurt so much.

As the flood receded and revealed the terrible destruction it had brought about, I wrote a post on my blog entitled *The Pain of Watching at a Distance*. It tells how this is not the first time events in Australia have caused me pain. When a family member discovered a suspicious lump; when my friend's husband was diagnosed with a mental illness, throwing their marriage into chaos; and when other friends divorced after much distress. Even the good times — I've missed the birth of every one of my nieces and nephews — have caused pain.

At times like these I've wished I could do more than pray. Go and give a hand, a hug, a meal, or a listening ear. There is something painful about my life going on as usual while these beloved ones suffer in a place I cannot be.

A former missionary read my blog and pointed me back to the book, *Honourably Wounded*. As I picked it up again I found a concept the author calls, "Home-country Stress". She defines it as "stress experienced by missionaries serving cross-culturally who also have problems in their home countries for which they feel some responsibility." (p137)

Natural disaster is not the only cause of home-coun-

try stress. Family social problems, sickness, bereavement, and problems or changes within their home church can all cause stress.

Not long ago a church in Australia with which we are familiar encountered serious difficulties and disagreements within the congregation. Many young families left the congregation and the church became a shadow of its former self. It is a mission-minded church and I pleaded with the leaders of the church to be sure to look

after their missionaries. I urged them to communicate clearly with those they supported overseas. I tried to explain that difficulties of such type are stressful to missionaries, especially if they find out by accident, or communication is unclear.

In January it was helpful to me to put a label on the stress I experienced during the week of floods in South East Queensland. But even more, I was encouraged to know I don't suffer alone, that this is a common struggle for those who serve the Lord

far from home.

I went to a JEMA women's prayer meeting on the Monday following the week of flooding. The meeting helped me again centre myself in Christ — to be reassured that I am his daughter. God reminded me that I am not alone in my concern about events on the other side of the ocean. He knows what is happening and it hurts him too. Where I cannot be, he can go. When I cannot comfort, he can comfort in my stead.

So what can we do when we are feeling the burden of home-country stress? It is beyond the scope of this short article to talk about dealing with stress, however it is important not to deny the stress we're under. Usually home-country stress piles on top of the stress of living and working in Japan and can weigh you down. Be aware of your own stress symptoms and allow yourself time to process and deal with the issues involved.

It is also good to have a handful of trusted supporters with whom you can confide your struggles. Ask them to pray for your situation, for the anxieties you carry from home.

Follow Wendy's blog, "On the Edge of Ordinary" at: www.mmuser.blogspot.com ^{JH}

Wendy Marshall and her husband David have served in Japan with OMF International since 2000. She is kept busy looking after their three boys and various other roles, including Associate Editor of Japan Harvest. She loves to write and snatches a moment periodically to cross-stitch.

There is something painful

about my life going on

as usual while these

beloved ones suffer

in a place I cannot be.

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Dr. Hansen is the wife of Steve and mother of two grown sons and makes her home in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She is an educational psychologist. She has wide experience in a variety of ministries, including counseling, retreat ministries and relief work.

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.)

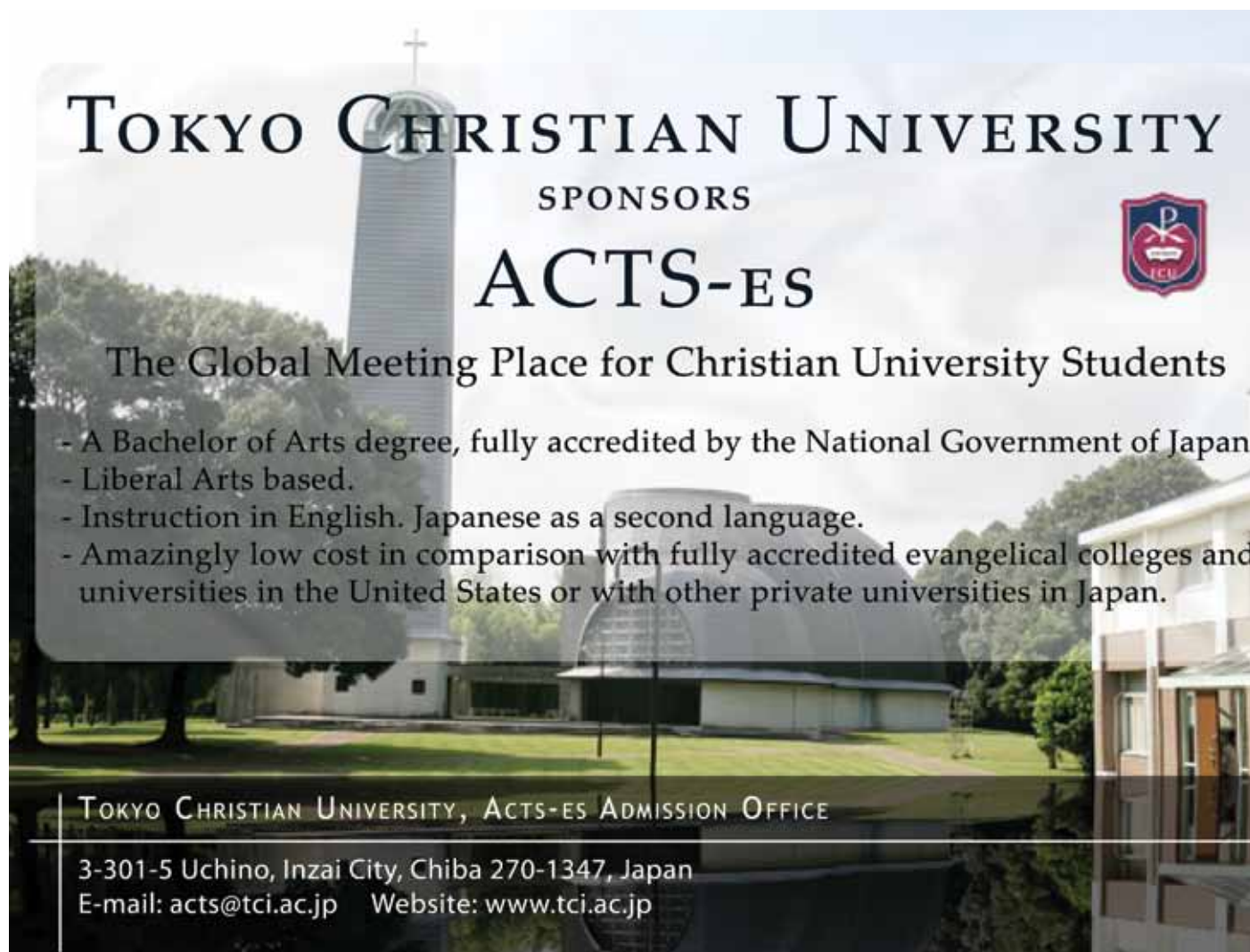
Maybe you are someone who has a special heart for Japan. You welcome opportunities to love and serve Japanese people, and you would do anything in your power to strengthen Christ’s body in this country. You know that Christian education and training—whether general or specialized—is only part of the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

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Introduction to YAM – Young Adult Ministries

By Karyn Zaayenga

Since June 2008, I've been working with the Tama Church in Tokyo in establishing Lighthouse, a young adults contemporary worship service. I am not an expert or an authority on young adults ministry. I just want to share what we have learned, through trial-and-error, so that your young adult ministry doesn't have to make the same mistakes we did. Hopefully, in this series of articles, you will find ideas that can be incorporated into any church service in helping to reach out to young adults.

In the spring of 2010, I attended an insightful seminar run by the 同盟基督教団 (Domei) entitled 「青年伝道を語る会」 (Discussion on Evangelizing Young People). The main speaker was キリスト者学生会主事の大島重徳先生 (KGK Director Oshima) who spoke the first night on 若者の心に届く説教とは (Sermons that Reach Young Adults).

Pastor Oshima described how post-modern young adults value worship and church experiences that are:

- E** Experiential (経験的)
- P** Participatory (参加型)
- I** Image-driven (イメージを喚起させる)
- C** Connected (所属意義)

Young adults value feelings over truth. The audience laughed as Pastor Oshima described how college students attend special camps because they want to feel closer to God. Value judgments aside, young adults are looking for churches where they can feel—churches that encompass the experiential, participatory, image-driven, and connectedness factors. We, as leaders, must strive to give them what they need in a way which they can receive it.

At the seminar, Pastor Oshima talked about a certain kind of service that attracts lots of young adults. If you spend a lot of money, get the right sound, audiovisuals, and light equipment; get the right kind of music; get a “hip” pastor who talks the way young people understand, young adults will come. For awhile. But, Pastor Oshima asked, “Will they be transformed?” He encouraged us to not forget the message of Jesus Christ amidst all the “trappings” of a worship service that appeals to young adults.

It's not the wrapping paper but the present inside that is most important. No matter how beautiful the package tied with ribbon and bows, if it is empty there is no meaning. However, at the same time, you can have the



most wonderful present to give someone but if you wrap it in smelly newspaper that was used to wrap old fish or dog poop, no one will receive it. Our goal is to present Christ to young adults. Without presenting Christ or helping young adults to transform their lives through him, there is no meaning to church. But if we don't present Christ in a way that they want to receive him, they won't be transformed either.

Jesus always found ways to relate to the people around him so that they could receive his message. Dorothy L. Sayers, a friend of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien, wrote: “Somehow or other, and with the best intentions, we have shown the world the typical Christian in the likeness of a crashing and rather ill-natured bore—and this in the Name of the One who assuredly never bored a soul in those thirty-three years during which He passed through the world like a flame.”* When we present Jesus in a boring manner, we do him a great disservice because he was never boring.

Through the suggestions in this series of articles, I hope that you will receive many ideas about how to present Jesus to the young adults that you know in a way that will capture their hearts, minds, and souls.

* Dorothy Sayers “The Dogma is the Drama” found in *Christian Letters to a Post-Christian World*, edited by Roderick Jellema, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969, p. 26.

Karyn serves with The Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM). ㊦



A Primer on Japanese Diaspora Ministry

by Gary Fujino

The first time I heard the term “diaspora” used in relation to evangelizing Japanese was during Tokyo 2010 in Nakano. In 2008, my sending agency began to restructure itself globally as it introduced us to “affinity groups.” Our strategic focus moved from geography to people groups, and beyond. For example, our focus changed from Japan to Japanese wherever they are. In hindsight, I now see that this was perhaps a precursor to the heavy emphasis on reaching diaspora groups worldwide that came out of Lausanne III in South Africa last year.

In a sense, “diaspora ministry” is nothing new. Some reading this article might think, “Oh, we’ve been doing that all along.” Terms like, “international,” “returnee,”¹ or “immigrant,” have been around for a long time, as has ministry in these groups. Scripturally, the Greek term *diaspeiro* appears in both the Old (Septuagint) and New Testaments. Thus, in its origins, diaspora is biblically and semantically linked to both the nation of Israel and to the church. But, as ministers of the gospel we should know that secular “diaspora studies,” even governmental organizations focusing on diaspora peoples have existed since the 1960s. So, the world has been decades ahead of the church in engaging diaspora proactively.

The Japanese Church is also ahead of us expats. One of the most encouraging aspects of Japanese diaspora ministry I have discovered over the course of a year of research is that almost all currently existing diaspora ministries are primarily Japanese-founded, Japanese-run, and Japanese-centered. For example, both JCFN and Diaspora Network for Japanese (DNJ) have roots dating back to the 1990s or before. At the same time, many new diaspora ministries led by Japanese have only emerged in the last few years. I will share a list of these in my next article.

On the other hand, diaspora ministry is radically “new.” It is so important

now in mission circles that only this year did the Evangelical Missiological Society create a new “track” for diaspora. “Scattered peoples” or diaspora was key enough for Lausanne III that not only did it feature prominently—the official Cape Town Commitment included the need to minister to global diasporas. At the present stage of my research, I know only of OMF International, some Korean and Filipino missions, and my own sending agency (Japan Baptist Mission—IMB/SBC) that have specifically designated diaspora ministries.

Why Is Diaspora Ministry Important?

I believe that reaching out to diaspora peoples, particularly the Japanese, is an indispensable element for our ministries in Japan today. Why do I say this?

First, there are a significant number of Japanese living outside Japan. In the 21st century, Japanese citizens are literally spread all over the world. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), as of 2008 more than 1.1 million Japanese are living overseas, with the largest numbers being in North

“...it is crucial to realize
how important networks are
to diaspora ministry”.

America (437,308), Asia (302,469), Western Europe (180,742), and South America (85,750). This does not include the nearly three million Nikkei—citizens of other countries, but of Japanese descent—who have established immigrant communities in their host nations. This means that there are presently more than four million human beings on the planet who relate to being Japanese² living *outside* of Japan.

Second, diaspora is not a one-way concept. Recently, as I have told people that my new job with my

mission is working with the Japanese diaspora, the immediate question I’m asked is, “That means Japanese overseas, right?” The answer is yes and no since every Japanese community or person overseas is somehow linked to somewhere or someone back here in Japan. So, it is crucial to realize how important networks are to diaspora ministry. Diasporas do not exist in isolation. Returnee networks pioneered by organizations such as Japan Christian Fellowship Network (JCFN) or Reaching Japanese for Christ (RJC) are reciprocal and multi-directional in their focus. Diasporic movement almost never operates uni-directionally.

Third, diaspora Christianity is a natural extension of life today. While experiencing globalization, pervasive Internet communication, and the ease of international travel, we still experience a deep need to be “connected” to family and friends. This is a common experience for missionaries living overseas, as well as Japanese abroad.

Most importantly, relationships, conversions, and discipling of Japanese begun abroad have the potential to raise up Japanese believers who could make a powerful impact on their homeland as they return. On the other hand, there are many Japanese Christians who could be equipped to go forth from Japan to other lands to make an impact for the gospel. The most obvious example for the latter case are the more than 400 Japanese missionaries who have gone overseas with evangelical mission agencies. However, I am suggesting the same potential for Japanese believers who go abroad to study, work or retire overseas. But the question of whether those coming back to Japan will make an impact is still a key missiological “if,” since the grim, statistical reality is that between 70% – 90% of all Japanese who make a profession of faith abroad “lose their faith” upon return to Japan—some as quickly as

within a few weeks or months—and never return to **any** church.

Types of Japanese Diaspora

Who are the diaspora Japanese?

There is not just one type of diaspora, because various Japanese live overseas for different reasons and in varied situations. So it might be helpful first to try to identify some types of diaspora.

Nobuko Adachi, a professor of anthropology at Illinois State University, has pioneered contemporary studies on Japanese diaspora. She breaks them into six subtypes:³

1. The *incipient* diaspora: They were the pioneers who were the first to leave Japan at the beginning of the Meiji Restoration in 1868. These initial emigrants often endured heavy manual labor, discrimination and a lack of legal rights as a part of their new lives in their adoptive countries.

2. The *displaced* diaspora: World War II profoundly affected Japanese immigrants and their offspring in places as diverse as Canada, Cuba, Mexico, the USA, Peru, Chile, Brazil, China and the Philippines. Adachi notes, “the social, cultural and psychological impact of relocation during World War II is one of the most important factors in the formation of social identity among later generations.”

3. The *model* or *positive minority* diaspora: Both the Japanese immigrant communities themselves and their surrounding host cultures began to view the Japanese in this manner after World War II. Adachi observes that the idea of being a model/positive minority helped Japanese in these countries to stimulate their own consciousness of Japanese ethnic identity. It gave them a means to win local civic and political rights, and brought solidarity and community to them as a minority population.

4. The *Nikkei* diaspora: While this term also could be used for subtypes 2 and 3 above, Adachi uses the term

to technically denote two types of persons, *dekasegi* and war orphans.

• *Dekasegi* or “migrant worker” refers to the enormous population of South American emigrants (over 300,000), most notably from Brazil and Peru, who have come to Japan since the 1990s, as the Japanese government sought to expand its blue collar work force.

• “War orphans” does not refer to children but to adult children of Japanese who lived in places such as China, where more than 1.5 million Japanese were living by 1945. With the end of WWII, as Japanese settlers tried to return to Japan, “as many as 10,000 children were left behind,” according to Adachi. Decades later, the Japanese government is allowing these “children,” now in their sixties and older, to be repatriated to their “homeland.” Yet, like the South American *dekasegi*, Japan is not home, its language and culture foreign.

5. The *Okinawan* diaspora: The size and influence of Okinawan emigrants is a distinct example of how non-homogenous and varied the Japanese diaspora can be. Okinawan emigrants face discrimination and treatment as disruptive “non-Japanese” by the Japanese government yet simply are regarded as “Japanese” overseas. Okinawans have consistently been disproportionately more populous among Japanese overseas. Before World War II more than 10% of Japanese abroad were of Okinawan origin. Even today, among three million *Nikkei*⁴, there may be as many as half a million immigrants who call Okinawa their ancestral homeland.

6. The *long-term/permanent resident* diaspora: According to the 2009 MOFA report, of the more than 1.1 million Japanese citizens living abroad almost one-third live as permanent residents of their host nation. The rest are classified as “long-termers,” who are on visas allowing them to stay in their host country beyond three months. Vari-

ous life choices describe Japanese who fall into this sixth subtype:

a. Career-oriented, single, young Japanese females who leave Japan because of dissatisfaction, poor pay or lack of advancement, or workplace discrimination.

b. University and graduate students who advance to research institutes, governmental or private sector jobs. This is especially common in North America and Western Europe.

c. Manager and mid-level company executives sent abroad by Japanese companies. Most of these are men and many are accompanied by their spouses and children.

Two additional classifications of long-term/permanent resident diaspora Japanese today not listed by Adachi but which I have researched on my own include:

d. *Kaigai hikikomori*: This is a recent phenomenon. *Hikikomori* (“shut-ins”), mostly single, young, unemployed males, buy one way tickets to destinations outside Japan, and live on subsistence income, by themselves, in a foreign land—contendedly, I might add.

e. Retirees, both single men and older couples: a popular trend among persons who don’t want to retire in Japan. For as little as 100,000 yen a month, Japanese couples can live happily overseas in such unexpected destinations as Spain or Switzerland, as well as the Philippines, Australia, Canada, Indonesia, or New Zealand. Number one choice? Malaysia.

Missions and Diaspora Japanese

According to the Diaspora Network for Japanese:

• More than 17.5 million Japanese go overseas for short-term studies and tourism

• Over 15% of Japan’s entire population visits more than 200 countries around the world

• There are 30% more decisions for Christ made while abroad than while in Japan

These statistics, as well as the 70-90% attrition rate from Christianity upon return to Japan, have far-reaching implications for ministry.

On the level of mission outreach and strategy to the Japanese diaspora, these figures are crucial for understanding who we are trying to reach and to which part of society they belong. Knowing what motivates such persons to go abroad or to return to Japan, plus knowledge of the history or background of these new emigrants can aid us greatly as we share the gospel and disciple new Japanese converts—wherever they are.

That is why I entitled this “A Primer on *Japanese Diaspora Ministry*”—so we would think more broadly and creatively, not be limited by geography, even though we might start there. I also purposely used the word, “primer,” as I tackle these new concepts and groupings,

since I am still a beginner at this, along with many of you.

What's Ahead

In my next article, I will review some key data and findings coming out of the 2011 JEMA Consultation on Diaspora with Dr. Enoch Wan, who is one of **the** global experts on diaspora missiology. We will see what other evangelical groups are doing to reach diaspora peoples, Japanese and non-Japanese, both here in Japan and overseas.

And I will suggest potential avenues for reaching Japanese diaspora using biblical examples and recent case studies. I'll look at some new missiological paradigms that are rising up to meet the challenge of sharing the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ to peoples scattered around the world, wherever they might be.

End Notes

1. Describing groups of people can be difficult, especially when they become labels. Some “returnees” understandably struggle with being categorized by this name. I will address this issue more in-depth in the next article.

2. Thanks to my friend, Tommy Dyo, for this idea of describing Japanese outside of Japan.

3. Nobuko Adachi, “Introduction: Theorizing Japanese Diaspora,” *Japanese Diasporas: Unsung Pasts, Conflicting Presents, and Uncertain Futures*, ed. Nobuko Adachi, (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 1-22.

4. I use this term more generally like Tommy's idea of those who “relate to being” Japanese. ¹⁴

Gary and his wife, Lynn have two college-aged children and two still at the Christian Academy in Japan

God's Word Changes Japanese Lives



Last Confession of Katsu Kaishu, Yoshimasa Moribe. 2nd book in *Samurai Who Read the Bible* series. Samurai Katsu Kaishu promoted interaction with the West at the end of the Tokugawa era. He is the father of the Japanese Navy. His doctor, missionary Willis Whitney, wrote to his sister Clara, Katsu's daughter-in-law, that 2 weeks before he died Katsu said, "I believe in Jesus." Forest Books. B6* size, 128 pp. ISBN978-4-264-02758-4 (Katsu Kaishu no Saigo no Kokuhaku) (11420) ¥1,050



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Spotlight on Rural Japan: Part 2

Engaging Rural Japan: Case Studies & Unique Aspects

by Dawn Birkner, Martin Ghent, and Donnel McLean

Thousands were swept to their death this past March in Tohoku, many without ever having had the chance to hear about Jesus in their hometown. This is an unprecedented time in history to show Jesus' love to Japanese in the least churched part of Japan. The eyes of the Christian world are on Tohoku, but will we remember Tohoku's need for Jesus as relief efforts wind down?

Fourteen million people in unchurched rural areas in Tohoku and throughout Japan are still waiting for their chance to encounter Jesus. Whether you live in urban or rural Japan; you, your church, agency, or denomination can play an important role in reaching them. City churches can play a key role. Jesus commissioned us to make disciples in Jerusalem . . . and to the ends (Unreached Rural Areas or URAs*) of Japan.

This article considers four rural church planting case studies and draws out common threads. It also looks at unique aspects of rural Japan ministry, and highlights how collaboration across regions, agencies, and denominations could make it possible to reach rural Japan in our lifetimes.

Four Mini-Case Studies on Rural Japan Church Planting (1965 to the present)

Case Study #1:

Shikoku-Kochi Church Planting by Saturation Evangelism Penetration Model

Setting: An effort led by the Donnel McLeans in an isolated region of Kochi Prefecture.

Keys:

- Saturation evangelism via a consecutive door-to-door "building up" tract series along with follow-up events.
- Evangelism in other URAs while planting a church in the first URA.

Prioritization:

Saturation evangelism to every house and person in the URA of focus and where feasible, to surrounding URAs.

Target Group: Everyone. It was a largely middle-aged and elderly population.

Basic Method/Approach:

1. Engaged in intense intercession.
2. Found a meeting place for the church that was accessible and visible,

but not too much so (rural people exploring Christianity prefer to come unobserved).

3. Introduced themselves to strategic local officials to explain purpose.
4. Saturated the area with church flyers and a tract, followed up by an invitation to the first special meeting in the new church. Later, a series of six sequential tracts, one per month, were distributed and notes taken as to who seemed more open. Sometime assistance came from short-term teams, often from city churches in Japan.
5. Used event evangelism.
6. Made brief distribution forays into other URAs in the broader region.



Results:

Three churches in URAs, saturation evangelism in more URAs and a new Japanese pastor.

Case Study #2

Tohoku—Aomori Tsugaru Region URAs—Multi-Site Church Planting—Attraction Model

Setting:

Mainly rural area of Tsugaru region, Western Aomori. Previous seed sowing from 1953 for 20 years via a number of missionaries resulted in eight churches. Urbanization in the '60s and lack of personnel resulted in the three rural church plants being handed over to city churches or closed. In 1991, Martin and Ruth Ghent were called to Itayanagi (population 18,000). A church with 30 attendees in the '70s had dwindled and closed. The few Christians still living there went to church elsewhere, except for one young mother who had recently come to faith. She became the founding member.

Keys:

- Multi-Site approach
- Various event and side door evangelism activities used to build relationships and share the gospel.
- Internal resourcing—that is, development of a group of committed church members to mutually resource multiple ministry sites (three plus congregations as well as a bookstore, a café, and a mail order business) so together they could meet needs and do outreach that no one of these ministries alone could have done.

Prioritization:

Internal resourcing via a multi-site model with an emphasis on activities as entrance points.

Target Group:

Multi-generational.

Basic Method/Approach:

1. A meeting place large enough to facilitate future growth needs was pur-

chased. Worship service began.

2. Ongoing events and side door evangelism with diverse activities (building, crafts, clubs, cooking, meals, concerts, etc.). Men were approached via renovating and farming contacts as Martin is from a dairy farm. Party evangelism with meals for up to 60 people was begun as a way to welcome whole families, to provide a relaxing environment to present the gospel of Jesus after the meal, and to fulfill the twofold com-

Rural Japan is not
unreachable. But it is
at a different stage
than urban Japan.

mand of Jesus to love God and others.

3. By 1998 there were 25 in morning worship and many contacts through relational evangelism.

4. In the fall of 1998, the vision for a multi-site ministry model was born when Martin was in the hospital for four months. During this time he pondered the seven years of church planting which had produced one church in one URA. Then he considered the 500,000 people in the region who were yet to be reached. With so many unreached areas and so few workers, the

most feasible way forward seemed to be simultaneous church plants, networking together, and internally resourcing each other.

5. In 1996 OMF missionaries had started another church in the region, Kanagi. But in 2000, the missionaries were leaving with no one to replace them, so the Itayanagi and Kanagi churches formed the multi-site Tsugaru Fukuin Kirisuto Kyoukai. God began sending many people from one area of south Tsugaru, swelling numbers in Itayanagi to 80. In 2008 they decided to expand, and so began Harvest Chapel. A fourth chapel is anticipated soon.

6. For discipling resources, a Christian bookstore with a café was begun; the café aided in outreach. A mail order business established in 1992 and run by church members to purchase land and renovate buildings also provided financial resources for the coffee shop/bookstore.

7. ALTs (Assistant Language Teachers) from four other towns assisted by providing contacts, prayer, and energy. Frequent short-term teams from abroad also contributed to the outreach.

Results:

The mail order apple business provides financial support. Café Iris is the ministry providing first step entry for people before they become seekers.

A multi-site church has been



established that shares non-financial resources (personnel, prayer, leadership) among three congregations. The congregations meet separately but have occasional joint activities. Kanagi Chapel reaches out to the north with 10-15 people and recently sent a young man to Bible school. Itayanagi Chapel in the central area has 20-30 people who meet for worship and a youth group of 10. Harvest Chapel with 10 people is in the southern part of the region. The multi-site church (plus outreach in additional URAs) is ready soon to be handed over to national leadership.

Any one of these ministries would struggle with lack of manpower if not for the churches networking together to resource each other internally. By so doing, an ongoing developing ministry is emerging that is stronger than would otherwise be possible.

Case Study #3

Shikoku—URAs of Kagawa—Simultaneous Church Planting—Circuit-Riding Model

Setting:

Unreached rural areas in Kagawa Ken. Mainly Ayauta (inland, population 11,500) and Aji (seaside, population 6,500). Some outreach in other URAs in inland farming, mountain, or commuter communities. These URAs have scant prior outreach. Ayauta is a typical countryside town. Aji is unusual. With only one household with Christians, Aji is the hometown of three pastors and a pastor's wife who now live elsewhere in Japan. Aji's people are earnest in religious devotion, with a diverse number of evangelistic Buddhist, New Age, and other cultic groups, plus a high density of shrines/temples. Aji lacks the spiritual apathy of much of Japan, but its spiritual interest is misdirected.

Keys:

- Simultaneous evangelism and church planting in multiple URAs via a circuit riding team of two permanent members. Assistance from church towns

and urban missionaries in the region.

- Interactive sermons (midstream questions and comments) as a safe exploratory atmosphere.
- Side door and music event evangelism to draw people and deepen relationships.
- Going to people by joining community classes, events, hiking.
- Initial contacts developed via distribution/event evangelism, further expanded via networking along relational lines.

Prioritization:

Multiple, simultaneous church plants and outreaches by a lead church planter, part-time and short-term workers, and occasional assistance from regional city churches.

Target Group:

All, but especially adults aged 30 to 60 years old.

Basic Approach/Method:

1. Selected accessible, easy-to-find meeting locations with good parking, but not-so-visible entryways. Ayauta (2002), Aji (2007) .
2. The lead church planter Birkner adopted a flexible methodology that one full-time person could manage, but with room for expansion anytime more people were available to help. Additional personnel resources included:

- part-time, long-term missionary team members
- short termers (2 weeks to 1.5 years)
- the few Christians already in the community
- Japanese pastors and retired pastors
- Christian JET Program teachers
- Bible school students
- lay Christians in the broader region
- partner churches in the region's cities.

Tiny steps leading to larger ones proved helpful in mobilizing Japanese.

3. Distribution of event flyers in several URAs plus event evangelism (with music and a message). These were initial entrance points in Ayauta, Aji and elsewhere.

4. Began regular worship services in Ayauta in 2004.

5. Spiritual formation, discipleship, and leadership development in Ayauta and Aji gradually increased, while continuing contact making and evangelism. Annual church camp from 2008 opened door to deeper discipleship, spiritual formation, greater "ownership", and leadership development in Ayauta.

6. Biannual mom and child events and summer-only Sunday School for kids by short-termers led later to a sustainable year round Japanese-led monthly Sunday School from 2010 and one baptism in 2011.

7. Occasional outreach in other URAs since 2005, including an eight tract series town-wide in Aji.



Results:

- Ayauta church plant well underway. Members taking on increased responsibility.
- Church plant in Aji with regular events, but no weekly worship service yet.

Case Study #4

Tohoku—Yamagata Ken—Rural Areas—Partnership Church Planting—Base/Satellite Church Model

Setting:

The less reached section of the city of Yamagata Shi, and surrounding URAs.

Keys:

Saturation evangelism leading to a central ‘hub’ city church and satellite churches in surrounding URAs via cooperation across denominations with established city churches.

Prioritization:

Saturation evangelism to less reached in city and surrounding URAs with multiple church plant strategy.

Target Group:

Those in the newer areas of the city and everyone in the surrounding URAs.

Basic Approach/Method:

1. The McLeans began to plant a ‘hub’ church in a less church part of the city. They then simultaneously evangelized outlying URAs.
2. As the first ‘hub’ church was planted, they began to plant additional churches in those URAs. Between the ‘hub’ church and partners in other churches, they resourced a team for

Recurring Themes in Rural Japan Church Planting

These four case studies demonstrate common themes representative of church planting in rural Japan:

- Multiple simultaneous phased-in church plants resourced by a single team. This is vital, as church plants take longer in URAs. Working in multiple URAs is efficient and counters discouragement.
- Circuit riding/human resource sharing. A single ministry team worked to establish multiple congregations by sharing abilities, time, energy, and mutual encouragement.
- Doing much with little. Rural church plants are constantly faced with a worker shortage, yet must make the most of each and every opportunity with contacts/seekers. Creative, effective use of workers is key.
- Tract series/wide-spread seed sowing. Methods were weighted toward penetration (e.g. a tract series, participation in the community) in more rural traditional areas. In larger semi-rural areas, attraction methods (offering various activities and classes) were used more often. Recurrent awareness building was important.
- Interactive Bible exploration. Though achieved in varied ways,

an informal, interactive opportunity to engage in exploratory Bible learning was crucial. The interactive environment was especially important.

- Relationships. All cases involved both attraction and penetration models, not as ends, but as avenues for making contacts, deepening relationships, developing group belonging, and facilitating networking along relational webs. The latter is easier in rural areas.
- Lowered entry point. Each case used event and side door evangelism to make it easier for people to become a part of the group.
- A location that is identifiable, accessible, yet not too visible. Each had a location that conveyed stability and commitment, was easy to find, and had parking—while not being too detectable by passers-by. Many seekers came not from the local neighborhood but adjacent ones (no watching eyes).
- Targeting 30- to 60-year-old men and women. Activities often were multi-generational and across genders. Rural Japan’s net population has been stable over the decades (though commonly assumed otherwise) because of the unique dynamic of people leaving in their 20s and people relocating to the

countryside in their 30s or later. This dynamic means that reaching the 30- to 60-year old age group is critical to Japan’s rural churches enduring as lighthouses in their communities.

- The challenge of a starting core. Achieving critical mass initially can be difficult and may take years.
- Protracted perseverance. Without perseverance and a long-term presence, none of the churches in the case studies would have been established or survived. No matter how many other team members came and went, all cases had a single or couple committed for the long haul. This ministry unit continued to actively mobilize a changing team from a diverse resource pool. Long-term ministry commitment also leads to trust relationships that are important in rural Japan.
- Varied, but ultimate fruit. Degrees of fruitfulness and timeframes varied among URAs even in the same region with the same approach by the same person. Even so, with perseverance until each contact was offered a chance to receive or reject the gospel, church plants proved possible in the hardest, darkest areas.

satellite church plants in URAs.

3. Occasional joint special meetings across hub/satellite churches were held for encouragement.

Results:

A city church was established that, in partnership with other churches in that city, reached out to and planted satellite churches in surrounding URAs using a simultaneous phased-in church planting model.

Rural Japan—A Different World

After a while in rural ministry, one begins to notice that conventional wisdom derived from urban Japan ministry settings often ‘does not compute’ within the realities of rural Japan ministry. I’ve now been in rural Japan for a decade. And it is clear that rural and urban Japan are different worlds. Trying to use urban methods in rural settings can be counterproductive. Rural Japan is not unreachable. But it is at a different stage than urban Japan. Rural Japan is in a pioneer stage with few prior seeds sown, while urban

Japan is in a transitional stage after decades of prior seed sowing and with more established churches, decreased pioneer needs, and increased numbers of “finishing” or niche roles. Age demographics also differ. Challenges differ in intensity and sometimes in nature. Mega-city Japan, urban Japan, and rural Japan, though culturally similar, are in three different places sociologically and missiologically.

Major Rural Ministry Challenges.

Fear and oppression:

Pervasive peer pressure and lack of inner freedom are stronger in rural Japan. This is the greatest challenge to ministry. The level of monitoring and oppression isn’t much different than in the Tokugawa era. Fear of being killed for being a Christian has been replaced with fear of ostracism, especially for eldest sons who are numerous in rural Japan. Rural Japan is the heartland of Shinto and Buddhism. Many are nominal, but the active proportion is higher than in urban areas. Neighborhood associations and the local shrine/

temple exert a stronger influence over community life.

No prior knowledge of Christianity: Most know only that Jesus founded Christianity and Christians use the Bible. Christian concepts take time for rural seekers to grasp. A relational and accepting church environment helps keep them engaged and gives a chance for gradual interactive exploration of the Word.

Resource limitations: Most rural Japan church plants have far less manpower than city church plants.

No starting core: A starting core can take years to build in a URA. Four church attendees seems to be necessary to achieve enough ‘community’ for a sustainable starting base, yet four are rarely interested at once.

Language: A lack of functional Japanese limits all aspects of life in rural Japan, more so than in urban ministry.

What makes rural Japan unique?

Setting: Visible differences include more space, no high-rise buildings, beautiful scenery, and cleaner air. The flow of life is seasonal. There is little public transport so lifestyles are centered on cars, not trains.

Community living: You encounter the same people wherever you go. Extended family live in multi-generation homes and grandparents help raise kids. More activities are cross-generational and both genders. Men have more time. Word of mouth information abounds. Everyone is watched everywhere, for good or ill.

Demographics: Almost no one is in their 20s. Divorced single moms and never-married singles may be a growing segment. Some families

move to rural areas upon having kids. The bulk of the population is comprised of 30- to 65-year olds. Dialect makes those over 65 hard to understand.

Its pioneering stage: In many URAs, there has been no prior seed sowing or none since the 1930s, compared to 60 to 150 years of seed sowing in many cities. Most URAs have 1 person in 1000 who is a Christian, far less than urban settings. Rural Japan is the reservoir for traditional barriers to the gospel. Because most URAs have had almost no prior engagement with the gospel, spiritual warfare upon beginning outreach in a URA is especially intense. The pioneering setting and other factors mean a longer timeframe till harvest.

Aging and bi-vocational pastors: The most outreach-minded rural Japanese pastors tend to be in their 60s to 80s. Few have been raised up to replace them. Many are bi-vocational or pastor multiple churches.

Dynamics that shape patterns and opportunities differ: For example, rural Japan is car-based, often with no trains, so outreaches like street music have no audiences. Availability of parking is far more important than proximity to a train station. Yet it is easier to be invited into relational webs or to strike up a conversation with a person working in their field. Everything is more traditional, yet more relaxed and casual.

Personal Challenges Often Experienced by Foreign Missionaries and Japanese Pastors in Rural Areas

Isolation:

There is often no safe, meaningful Christian fellowship locally or regionally for months to years. Deep friendships may not be viable during the first few years, and there is little chance to relate to other Westerners.

Spiritual warfare:

Spiritual opposition in rural Japan is intense, frequent, and brutal, especially in URAs with no prior seed sowing. It can occur in the physical, emotional, psychological, or spiritual arenas.

Emotional strength:

It is to be expected that most rural workers will struggle more with mild depression, loneliness, and/or discouragement than the same worker would in an urban setting.

Cannot rely on others:

“God alone” has to become enough. The isolated setting, little visible fruit, enemy attacks, little fellowship, and an emotionally challenging environment mean reliance on God alone is necessary.

Lack of understanding:

Misguided, well-intended “support” by those who don’t know rural Japan can increase challenges.

Educational and social issues for missionary kids (MKs):

These challenges can be substantial, especially if MKs are older when they arrive.

Mobilization:

Rural Japan is under-resourced, and recruitment for rural teams is especially hard.

Is There a Role in Rural Church Planting for City Churches, City Missionaries, and Collaborating Agencies?

One key to rural Japan church planting is strong commitment to an area

by a lead church planter for as long as it takes, doing whatever possible with available resources. To reach the 1,514 URAs** in our generation, more lead church planters (foreigner or Japanese, clergy or laity) who are committed for the long haul are needed. Yet it is unlikely that 1,514 lead planters will emerge, and even less likely that teams of full-timeworkers will be able to join them. **But if missionaries, pastors, and believers in cities played a role by volunteering a small amount of their time and abilities to provide assistance to church plants in nearby URAs?** Then just a few hundred lead church planters would be enough, each focusing on a cluster of adjacent URAs and benefitting from the gift diversity and manpower volunteers from the city would bring. This would make it possible to plant churches in all 1,514 URAs.

Such partnerships would take diverse forms. Likewise, the types of church plants might vary. But what is clear is that reaching Japan’s rural population in our lifetime is possible. Not all are called to focus on leading a rural church plant, but the whole body of Christ shares in the responsibility of reaching the whole of Japan. Will we?

In addition, the challenges mentioned earlier need to be addressed. Those challenges need not be excuses for not reaching URAs. Some could be addressed within an agency, denomination, or ministry. But perhaps many could be addressed via a mix of the following?

- **Virtual options.** Relevant member care, prayer, and encouragement provided via phone or the Internet.

- **Broad level equipping by those experienced in rural ministry and a connecting of those working in rural Japan.** For example, a rural workers conference, networks, and mentors.

- **Inter-agency regional collaborative approaches.** Many challenges work against missionaries going to or staying in rural Japan, but what if agencies collaborated to address these? For example, sending new missionaries to

rural areas without support and experienced supervision is unwise. But an inter-agency approach, including cross agency first term placements, could help provide adequate support, training, and supervision of new missionaries by experienced rural Japan missionaries. This would make it easier for agencies not presently working in rural Japan to start doing so. For another example, rural teams each focused on a different cluster of URAs but living in the same prefecture could find regional ways to address many challenges mentioned earlier.

* Unchurched rural areas (URAs) have a population of between 3,000 and 50,000 and are without a church. Fourteen million live in URAs in Japan. Refer to the first article of this series in the summer 2011 edition of Japan Harvest.

** These 1,514 rural areas refer to the number of unchurched rural areas (where 14 million Japanese live). ^{JH}

Dawn Serves as a missionary with Commission to Every Nation (CTEN).

Collaboration Possibilities

(1) The **Rural Japan Church Planting Network (RJCPN)** as introduced in the first article in this series. For more information and an update on RJCPN’s development, email rjcpn@hotmail.com or see website www.rjcpn.upgjapanmissions.com. Maps and statistics showing unchurched communities in Japan are available. Formal RJCPN launch is at the CPI Pre-Conference Day on Tuesday, November 8 (3-5 p.m. and/or 7-9 p.m.) Relevant for both urban and rural church planters.

(2) In North Iwate, a church planting team with a goal to sensitively bridge disaster recovery, emotional care, and church planting. If interested in joining, email RJTAJapan@hotmail.com to learn more. Team members from different agencies are welcome.



Lessons from Japanese Leaders Reproducing Churches

By John Mehn

I passed two personal milestones last December. First, I became a grandfather for the first time. Second, I completed my doctorate. To be honest, being a grandpa is a greater honor. There is something about seeing the reality of the next generation, which instills in us tremendous pride and hope for the future. The same is true for the church. During this crucial time since the triple disasters in March, I think all of us have had a heightened concern and interest in the church of Christ as the only hope for Japan. We want to see the church grow in the wake of these disasters and flourish through reproduction.

I have worked in church planting and leadership development in Japan for over 25 years. Like many of us, I have been looking for good models of gospel-centered church multiplication. We want to learn from the best models of ministry. For over 25 years I have followed the growth—or the lack of growth—of the church. I started asking around and doing some database research on churches that were not just bigger than normal, but were reproducing. I have always believed that church reproduction and multiplication is the best method of reaching Japan, or any other people, with the gospel of Jesus Christ. This

is the drum we continually beat at the CPI (Church Planting Institute) conferences. The purpose of my research was to discover and describe the characteristics of Japanese leaders reproducing churches.

What I found was good news. Research showed that in spite of some downward trends in the growth of the church, there are at least 60 churches reproducing churches in the Japanese culture. A careful study of 6 of those churches found that in 20 years they had started at least 62 churches between them. That is an average of over 10 churches per church. One church of 40 worship attendees that was only 3 years old had already established 4 churches. And the total worship attendance at all the daughter churches was 1,244, or an average of 20 per daughter church. Praise the Lord!

There Are Reproducing Churches in Japan

When I first told a pastor of a large healthy church about this proposed field research, he responded, “Are there really reproducing churches in Japan?”

The knowledge that there are reproducing churches and leaders in Japan will bring renewed hope to the church.

Thanks go to Seiichi Toyama at the *Christian Shimbun*, Yukio Hanazono, the director of Church Information Service (CIS), and the JEMA community for helping find reproducing churches in this CPI endorsed research.

When I shared some of the results with one leader, he insisted that I must be talking about the church in America, as this could not be happening in Japan. I feel there is a spirit of discouragement within the church and among Christian leaders in Japan. This erodes our faith and our vision of what God can do. Maybe you are like me as I constantly struggle with what I know God wants to do, and my unbelief that it will happen or that it will happen again.

In some sense we should not be surprised that there are reproducing churches in Japan. God is blessing Japan, building his church, and using effective leaders. This information should jolt us into greater belief that God can and will reproduce his church here in Japan. So do not give up on church reproduction. God has not given up and neither have some Japanese church leaders. What many of us dream to accomplish is indeed happening.

Reproducing Churches are “Everywhere”

One Japanese leader asked me, “Is there one regional area where these churches are more numerous?” My reply was, “Nope.”

For the purposes of the research, churches were asked to complete a questionnaire to determine basic information on church reproduction. To eliminate other reproduction factors besides leadership, I narrowed down the number of churches for in-depth study. There are certainly many contributing factors that provoke a church to reproduce, but I believe the leadership factor is key. The final six churches were from figuratively “everywhere” on the spectrum.

- Six of eight different geographical regions of Japan were represented.
- The “mother” churches were established between the late 1950’s and 2005.
- The churches exist in rural, prefectural capital, suburban, and urban contexts.
- They vary in size as the average worship attendance of these churches ranges from 40 to 250.
- These six churches are from four separate Japanese church denominations and two independent churches (one which belongs to a loose network).
- They represent various church models including two cell churches, two churches with small groups, and two that would be considered standard models. (Unfortunately, no house church leader was available for the final stage of the research.)

It is true that Christ will build and reproduce his church—wherever. God will work where you are and with whom you are working. Knowing that the Japanese are reproducing churches should encourage us to ignite a new vision to attempt ministry that effectively mobilizes and empowers others for church reproduction.

Leaders for These Reproducing Churches Seem a Bit Different

“That is quite different from a typical pastoral leader in Japan,” has continually been a comment by leaders when they heard the research results.

Six churches were selected and in-depth interviews were conducted with six primary leaders and eight secondary leaders. My real fear was that the responses would be too varied, but the leaders gave the same message. I am pretty sure three of the leaders have never heard of the other three that I studied. Clearly God has been speaking to them and reminding them about his true purposes for the church.

But these leaders are Japanese, have similar backgrounds, and are much like many other church leaders I have known. These are indigenous Japanese leaders reproducing the church in the Japanese context and planting in Japanese soil (the study did not include foreign missionaries or overseas churches). They share having a clear vision, a good understanding of the church and of leadership, and their unique role in church reproduction.

These leaders are reproducing a church, which is encouraging and hopeful. There are leaders out there doing what needs to be done.

The research found six leadership characteristics that were common to these reproducing leaders. However, I will warn you ahead of time against selecting your few favorites from the list. These six characteristics seem closely interrelated and all work in concert, so they should not be considered individually.

1. Receive ministry vision from God
2. Exercise risk-taking faith
3. Envision the church as a dynamic sending community
4. Develop lay people for ministry
5. Lead relationally through encouragement
6. Implement aggressively through practical ministry

Through the coming series of articles I will outline my research findings and the implications for each of these characteristics. I will explain how different these leaders really are. I will also contribute my impressions on developing leaders for reproducing churches in Japan. There are many implications for us personally as well as for our ministry. As we take this journey together, feel free to write me with questions and comments and we can explore the answers together.

There are real challenges for the church here in the cultural soil of Japan. In spite of Japan’s economic strength and technological development, it still remains one of the least reached countries in the world. We must understand this background in stark contrast to the larger religious climate of Japan. Both the Gallup and Elijah Group studies show there is far more interest in Christianity than what is commonly believed. Many are sure that after the recent triple disasters, Japanese are now more open than ever to the gospel.

From my field research I found that there are reproducing churches in Japan in many places and humble men of God lead them. May God grant us repentant hearts as we root out unbelief and believe again in his promises for the church. May God bestow new visions on the entire church that it may be healthy and reproduce in every nook and cranny of this great nation, and beyond, that the Name of Christ may be worshipped in his Kingdom through the church. 卍

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Focus on Prayer

by Ken Reddington



Prayerlessness is my declaration of independence from God.

Prayer is not a preface or an addendum to the work of the ministry.

Prayer is the work of the ministry.

—Daniel Henderson, president,
Strategic Renewal International

If My People...

We were all shocked by the events of March 11, 2011. And, while for most of us things have not changed as drastically as they did after the events of September 11, 2001 (increased airport security, for one thing), things have changed for us here in Japan. When I was watching the TV on March 11, I remember thinking “things will never be the same again”—the very same thought that ran through my mind when I saw the twin towers of the World Trade Center coming down. Then I thought “I wonder how I would react if it had happened to me?” Would I be seen on YouTube smiling and saying “The Lord gives, the Lord takes away. Blessed be the

Name of the Lord”, after seeing my church and home (with my library of thousands of books collected over the years) washed away in the tsunami? Probably not. But as I was thinking about it, I realized that God has told us what to do when disaster comes—and it relates to prayer.

It comes in a conversation that God had with King Solomon recorded in 2 Chronicles, chapter 7, beginning in verse 12. Solomon has just finished the Temple, given his moving prayer of dedication, and God responded by making His presence known: “fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the house” (vs. 1)

Then Solomon and all the people sacrificed to the Lord and celebrated until the eighth day, when they returned to their homes filled with joy and gladness. This brings us to where God makes His final visit to Solomon. Verse 12 says: “Then

the LORD appeared to Solomon at night and said to him, “I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice.”

The Problem

He is about to repeat His covenant conditions once more, but first He says something amazing to Solomon: “If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” (vs 13 & 14)

- 1) He asks, what **“If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain”?**
- 2) He asks, what **“If I command the locust to devour the land”?**
- 3) He asks, what **“If I send pestilence among My people”?**

With these three haunting questions, God is here describing three distinct kinds of tragedies that can happen to an individual, a group of people, or a nation that will cause them to realize they are under the judgment of God and seek reconciliation. He lists three different situations, similar sounding on the surface, but decidedly distinct.

First of all, God asks the question, “What if I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain?” God is saying, “What if I choose to withhold blessings you think are natural? What if something as commonplace as rain just stops? What will you do?”

Then, without even a pause, He asks another question just as devastating. He says, “What if I command the locusts to devour the land?” What if God takes away from you as an individual, as a church, as a people, as a nation, the very things you have considered to be signs of His blessings? What would you do then?”

With rapid-fire timing, God then adds another blow to Solomon’s mind. “What if I send pestilence among my people?” In other words: “What if I actually allow my judgment to **touch you?** What if I send such a tragedy that destroys you or your people, and possibly ends in death? What then?” In other words, Solomon, there are three logical steps to judgment. The first would be not getting what you think you deserve. The second would be losing something you have come to enjoy. But the third is the harshest of all, an experience that touches your body, your life, and even may cause you to lose your life.

Three terrible thoughts indeed. But God had a reason for painting such a bleak picture. **Israel was to experience all three.**

A couple of things need to be considered.

One is that obviously not all such occasions are the result of sin. Though a wake-up call, I do not

think that the disasters in Japan this year are a direct result of any certain sin. A quick look at Scripture illustrates that. Sometimes, as with Elijah, God will withhold natural blessings in order to demonstrate His power. Sometimes, as with Paul, God will actually take away all that you are accustomed to enjoying, in order to emphasize the spiritual in relation to the physical. And sometimes God will even touch or take the body, as in the case of Stephen, to glorify His power and magnify His grace in impossible situations. So God was not saying that He would withhold all blessings, destroy all things, or bring about all sickness or death as the result of sin. What He was saying is that no matter how or why it happens, God has a marvelous solution.

God has told us what to do

when disaster comes—

and it relates to prayer

Another is that nothing can come into our lives without God’s permissive will. God’s message to Solomon was: “What if I . . .” or “What if I, in order to get your attention . . .”

The Provision

Now that we have seen the situation, we must ask, “Is there no solution?” Is this plight of God’s people a permanent condition? Is there no way of escape?

The next verse gives the answer to that question. A loving God has described the disease so He can prescribe the cure. Look at verse 14:

“But if My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

Each part of this promise is vital.

Just because this passage is familiar to us does not mean we can take it lightly. It is often quoted because it is important.

First, God says: What can you do if you or your nation find yourself/ yourselves suffering from one or more of the trials described in verse 13? There will be five conditions that you must meet. Then there will be three things that God will do.

Condition #1: Be a qualified pray-er.

To be qualified to pray this prayer, you must be one of God’s own. “Solomon”, God said, “Here is the first prerequisite. ‘If My people who are called by My name . . .’” Perhaps one of the most interesting truths found in Scripture is the truth that the God of Eternity, the creator of Heaven and Earth, the One who spoke the worlds into being, called out a people for Himself. Of all the people on the earth, only the Jews did God call “my people”. So this message is for God’s people, the Jews. But it’s also for us. Of course, not every Old Testament promise can be applied to the church. But this promise was written to whatever group could be referred to as the people of God. In our time, “My people” means all people who name the Name of Jesus. God tells us through Paul that “I will dwell in them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” (2 Corinthians 6:16). So you and I who have been born again into the family of God constitute those who are “His people who are called by His name—the Name that is above every name; the Name before which one day every knee will bow.” (c.f. Phil. 2:10)

The promise was for Israel, and the promise is for us. But the promise is conditional. If God’s people (those called ones who bear His name, the name of His only begotten Son) meet four basic requirements, heaven will touch earth!

Condition #2: Humble Yourself.

“If My people, who are called by My name, shall humble themselves.” To humble yourself does not mean to disregard who you are and move about apologetically as though being one of God’s people were a passport to anonymity. The Hebrew word translated “humble” in this passage literally means to be subdued, to be brought low, to come under the subjection of another. Often used in the military sense, it indicates one under the dominion or control of another. It portrays the image of coming to the end of self and throwing oneself in reckless abandon at the feet of God. It is an attitude of deep remorse over sin. The same word is used in 2 Chronicles 34:27, where God speaks to His children: “Because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before God when you heard His words against this place and against its inhabitants, and because you humbled yourself before Me, tore your clothes and wept before Me, I truly have heard you.”

Their heart was tender when they heard God’s words. At the mention of God’s Holiness they realized their wickedness, tore their clothes and wept to be in the very presence of the Creator God of Eternity. That’s humility. Humility is acknowledgment that **apart from God you can do nothing.**

As God’s own, it is time for us to humble ourselves. It’s time for the church to fall on its knees in absolute awe at who God is until it sees itself as it is; absolutely nothing apart from Him. It is time for the Body of Christ to be reminded again that so long as we remain arrogant or self-sufficient, God can do nothing for us, and nothing with us!

But this humbling of ourselves is but an attitude that precedes an activity.

Condition #3: . . . and pray.

This is the activity that we are to be about once our attitude is right. “If My people, who are called by My name, shall humble themselves . . . and pray.”

The word translated “pray” here is a Hebrew word used 84 times in the Old Testament, and can literally be rendered in any of the following ways:

1. To invoke God as judge,
2. To be broken or contrite (before God),
3. To settle an account; to act as a mediator, and
4. To seek a proper assessment of a matter.

Prayer is the act of consciously appearing before the True Judge, broken in spirit, acknowledging that He and He alone is LORD. And in that spirit to ask Him to settle an issue or solve a problem.

Prayer, then, is not sinful man instructing a Holy God as to the state of His universe and giving Him direction as to the best way to handle it. Prayer is not man bringing God into harmony with man’s will. Prayer is the church on its knees before God in a spirit of deep contrition, seeking to determine what the mind of God is so that we, the church, can come into harmony with His will.

Condition #4: . . . and seek My Face.

“If My people who are called by My name shall humble themselves, and pray . . . and seek My face . . .”

To ‘seek God’s face’ is to remain before Him in absolute awe until you discern more of His character than you knew before. It is to have a heart that so desires to do His will that you will stay before Him until you know without a doubt what His will is. Seeking to know God. Knowing God has not become a priority of the church in this generation. While we have more technology, more psychology, and more

theology than any generation before us, we seem to lack one thing above all else—as a people, we simply do not know God.

Condition #5: . . . and turn . . .

“If My people, who are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways . . .”

The word “turn” or “return” is the act of consciously altering your direction so that whatever course you might have been on that was repugnant to God is immediately rejected, and instead head down a path directly to God. To turn from evil is to stop practicing it. To turn from evil is to see it as God sees it, and thus not be able to look upon it and God at the same time.

So, again, here are God’s prerequisites:

If My people, those who are my called-apart ones, shall see themselves for who they are: wretches, desperate, needful, helpless apart from me . . . if, in that state of subjection they shall call to me; not instructing me, but rather beseeching me to give them my plan for their lives . . . and if they behold my face, they reflect upon who I am, and see me for who I am—they begin to see sin as it is. If that happens, God is saying, true revival will take place.

The Promise

True revival is characterized by three things.

First, the church has the ear of God. There will be such answered prayer that a whole nation—the whole world—will begin to respond to the things of the Spirit because the Spirit of God will have taken control of the Body of God.

Second, there is a significant return to holiness. The church will stand apart as forgiven sinners rather than as self-righteous. We will see sin for what it is—as God sees it—and we will hate it in us, in the church, and in the world. But we will be

forgiven and know it.

Third, there is a healing of the land—physically, morally, spiritually, and emotionally. The disease of sin will be stopped by a powerful dose of righteousness and the results of that sin will be eradicated, leaving wholeness and holiness.

The world is able to look at the people of God and see Him!

That's the message God gave to Solomon that night just after He had astounded the nation with His presence at the dedication of the temple. The message was: "Solomon you have a choice and the nation has a choice. You are going to choose wrongly. You already have, and the nation you serve will suffer with you. But Solomon, there is a way of escape."

"...if My people, who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways... then Solomon, I will hear from heaven, and forgive their sins, and

heal their land." (2 Chron 7:14, NKJ)

God is saying: Any time my people come back into harmony with my plan and my purposes, and become again infused with my power, heaven will touch earth. Lives will come aglow, and the whole world will stand in awe, as the Glory of God in the form of His Holy Spirit flows through lives and floods this weary, sin-torn world with His light again.

When that happens, the church won't have to advertise for visitors. It will be a lighthouse spreading its lifesaving beams to any and all who might be perishing.

The church of the Lord Jesus Christ was never meant to be a "comfort zone" to which its select membership escapes to avoid the realities of the world. The church was meant to be the channel through which that world sees God.

To say that we live in a world where heaven is shut up and the

locusts are devouring the land, and pestilence is infecting mankind, is an understatement to be sure. But I believe God is saying to us, "Wake up Christians, you are not here to reflect the mood of the world, you are here to restore My mind to the world. Yes, mankind is drowning in its own sin, but if My people (that's us), who are called by My name, humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways... I will hear from heaven. I will forgive their sins. And I will heal their land." 卍

Ken and Toshiko Reddington are church-planting missionaries in Kochi-ken. Ken, an MK who returned to Japan as a missionary 30+ years ago, 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.

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Faith De La Cour, Human Resource Development Coordinator for Asian Access, serves as the chair of the JEMA Member Care Committee.

Faith and the JEMA Member Care Committee welcome your feedback at membercare@jema.org

Stewardship of Me

Gary Collins writes in a recent People Builder's Blog¹ "It is easy to pursue worthwhile activities that nevertheless wear out our bodies, undermine relationships, or weaken our mental and spiritual health." He goes on to write about how the current concept of *self-care* should more accurately be thought of as "*stewardship* over the resources, opportunities, and responsibilities that God has given."

One tool that is available for us to use in evaluating our stewardship of ourselves is an article by Kelly and Michelle Lewis O'Donnell. "Giants, Foxes, Wolves and Flies: Helping ourselves and others."² Using four Biblical metaphors, they explore struggles that missionaries often experience as they seek to serve God in new ways or unfamiliar places.

Giants seek to disable us by exploiting

our vulnerabilities (2 Sam. 21:15-22). The O'Donnell's remind us that Satan would love to exploit our vulnerabilities to diminish the intensity of our witness. The only antidote is to fight those giants and face those vulnerabilities with the Lord's help and support of close friends.

Foxes try to distract us and cause us to drift off our primary tasks (Song of Solomon 2:15). In the context of cross-cultural work, the O'Donnells use this metaphor for the everyday distractions that take workers away from their primary tasks. They are the daily chores as well as the internal preoccupations that demand our attention. "These all eat up workers' schedules and energy, and they often interfere with the very reason they are in ministry." After looking closer at seven of these distractions, they give some strategies for capturing the foxes.



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.

Believe in Others to Empower Them to Grow

You and I both want to grow. We want to grow so we can pursue God's calling even more. So we target growth areas like leadership, spiritual disciplines, conflict management, life balance, and Japanese language proficiency.

You and I both know that people who believe in us empower us to grow. I've experienced it in my own life. You have, too. When people believe in me, I can do more. I remember talking with my regional director about a workshop. He invited me to lead workshop sessions about focusing on the mission's purpose and on asking open-

ended questions. I felt hesitant. So, I asked some questions. He responded, "Do what you want. I trust you. You'll know what to do." I was energized to develop and deliver quality workshops.

I've also experienced that believing in others empowers them to grow. For example, I was working with a missionary who was serving in a new ministry, one that really stretched him. I was listening as he reflected on the past nine months. And then he said, "One of the biggest things you did for me was believe in me. You thought I could do it. That gave me confi-

Wolves endeavor to distress us, keeping our stress levels high and our lives out of balance (Matt. 10:16). Referring to this passage where Jesus sent his disciples out as sheep among wolves, the O'Donnells warn us that we don't want to become "lamb chops." They have developed an inventory using the acronym CHOPS to evaluate 10 general categories of stress common to those serving overseas. They recommend going through these at least once a year, and discussing them with a listening friend. The PDF document referred to at the end of this article reproduces the CHOPS inventory.

Flies purpose to disgrace us by the contaminating effects of sin. "As

dead flies give perfume a bad smell, so a little folly outweighs wisdom and honor." (Eccl. 10:1, NIV) Some flies are merely pests, like annoying but minor character weaknesses, but some can harm us. These are more serious, such as unconfessed sin, unrecognized arrogance, addictions, and personality patterns that are unhealthy or unholy. These harmful "flies" can neutralize our work effectiveness, compromise our integrity, destabilize our emotional life, and hurt others. The article lists major categories of "flies" and then discusses the process involved in getting rid of these menaces.

I recommend you take this article (also found as a PDF online)³ and use it as a four-part study for person-

al or small group reflection. Feel free to contact me with any comments at jemamembercare@gmail.com.^{JH}

End Notes

1 Collins, Gary, <http://people-builder.wordpress.com/2011/07/14/newsletter-444-rethinking-self-care-and-life-balance>, accessed 8/8/2011

2 O'Donnell, Kelly ed. *Doing Member Care Well: Perspectives and Practices from Around the World* (Pasadena: William Carey Library 2002) 237 – 247.

3 O'Donnell, Kelly and O'Donnell, Michelle Lewis <http://www.ethne.net/wp-content/uploads/2008/08/giants-foxes-etc.pdf>

dence to accomplish new things."

As a result of these and other experiences, I've become increasingly

I've become increasingly

convinced that believing in

others helps them grow.

convinced that believing in others helps them grow. I now work to interact with others in ways that show

I believe in them. For example, I target helping others become better problem solvers (instead of targeting solving their problems). I also strive to listen (instead of talking), ask questions (instead of advising), focus on drawing out (instead of on putting in), and encourage (instead of critiquing)—remember, Barnabas encouraged Paul.

Empower God's people to pursue their calling. Believe in someone. Today.

Reflect on Believing in Others

1. Who is someone who believed in you? What was the impact of being believed in?
2. Who is someone who didn't believe in you? How did he/she communicate this?
3. What excites/concerns you about believing in others?
4. How does believing in others empower them to pursue God's calling?
5. How could you show that you believe in others?
6. How will you show that you believe in others? ^{JH}



The Missionary Geek

Parting Words

This article marks exactly ten years of my writing the Modern Tech column. That's a good place to stop.

As I think about what to say in my last article, two things immediately come to mind.

- First, back up your files. I know it's a pain, but more and more we keep important and often irreplaceable data on our computers. When you make your backup, make sure your email files, your address book, music, and picture files all get included in the backup. Then test your backup to make sure it's readable.

- Don't expect a computer to last forever. Today's notebooks will last three to five years. You might be able to squeeze out a few more years, but maybe not. Budget and expect to replace your computer about that often.

Speaking of backups . . . recently one of our missionaries brought me the external hard drive that he used for backups. Many of the files on this hard drive did not exist anywhere else. As you might have guessed, the drive was corrupted. I could hear the drive spinning when it was plugged into the USB port so I began to look around for a free program to rescue his files. I downloaded the free program, "Mini Tool Partition Wizard (home edition)" from www.partitionwizard.com. This program has an option to "recover your partition." I did that, and in a couple of hours, all his files were back. Any USB drive (either external hard drive, or flash drive) can become corrupted. The easiest way to corrupt a drive is to unplug the drive while your computer is writing a file to it.

It's always fun to try out new apps (applications) on your smart phone. Recently I've come to appreciate the free app, "Viber." It allows you to phone or text for free any other Viber user, anywhere in the world. Just today I was texting with my wife in Orlando. About 30 minutes after the earthquake on March 11, when I was

frantically trying to get in touch with my daughter, who was living on the 16th floor in Ikebukuro, the only thing that worked was Viber. It's free for both iPhone and Android phone users.

Another app I've been using lately is "RedLaser." This free app will scan barcodes or Qcodes. One of my pet peeves is stores that don't price anything, but only put a barcode on it. Lots of times there is no way to find the price of an item unless you track down a clerk. RedLaser seems to find about half of the bar codes I've tried it on here in Japan. It's free for iPhone or Android.

If you were in Tohoku in the early days after the earthquake/tsunami, you know that the most popular guys around were those that had a portable Wi-Fi connection (also called "Pocket Wi-Fi"). There are at least three companies in Japan selling these (DoCoMo, Softbank and EMobile). These are usually a small box about the size of a smartphone, and they use cell phone signals to broadcast a Wi-Fi signal, so you can use your computer even if there's no landline working. You can get the box itself for almost free, but they require a monthly subscription fee of between ¥5,000 and ¥6,000, and are sold only with a two year contract. You can terminate the contract early, but of course it will cost you. Each model has its own specifications but generally about five computers can be connected at once. The DoCoMo model that our mission bought for Tohoku trips will run on batteries, but it also comes with a dock so it can be plugged in the wall, and the dock has an Ethernet port for any desktop computers around that don't have a Wi-Fi card installed.

Well that's it for this decade.

missionarygeek@yahoo.com aka Steve Kunnecke 卍

Steve Kunnecke serves with SEND International along with his wife Janet.



By Language Students
at OMF's Japanese
Language Centre,
Sapporo

Genji Monogatari

By Murasaki Shikibu
(Translated by Arthur Waley)

It's over 1,000 pages long and over 1,000 years old, so why read it?

Genji, a tale of a promiscuous Japanese prince, is a great read with fascinating characters, beautiful imagery and unexpected twists. It is a classic that most of your Japanese friends will know of, but more than that, it gives insight into Japanese history and culture.

Today's Japan is deeply rooted in history, and the trends we see today were already apparent 1,000 years ago. Genji also sheds light on the unique Japanese way of communicating. Most striking, however, is the spiritual emptiness, fear of death, and completely ineffective religion that runs through the heart of the book. Japan's need of Jesus Christ has not changed, and Genji is full of good sermon illustrations.

Reviewed by: John Newton Webb

When the Bamboo Bends

By Masao Takenaka

Masao Takenaka, one of the best known ecumenical theologians in Asia, wanted to study bamboo, since it is so commonly found throughout Asia and so strongly rooted in Asian culture.

The purpose of this book is to reflect the spiritual meaning bamboo has for our earthly life in the light of the Christian faith.

Masao Takenaka writes about four spiritual symbols he thinks bamboo shows us:

1. Clean Wind: which reminds us of the work of the Holy Spirit in us.
2. Bending Stem: which explains loyalty and hope.
3. Strong Roots: the importance of standing firm.
4. Empty Centre: Christ emptying himself, taking the form of servant (which the author considers to be the most important aspect)

Reviewed by: Tina Figilister

The Essence of Shinto: Japan's Spiritual Heart

By Motohisa Yamakage

Shintoism contains many beliefs that seem to be a key to the Japanese mindset, but are rarely explained. In that light, I suggest this book will help you understand. It is an easy to read viewpoint written by the head of Yamakage Shinto.

He admits that Shinto is very different from one person to another so that in a lot of ways he can only describe Shintoism as he knows it. Still, this book covers many common elements in Shinto: among other things, the concept of kami, as well as forms for mental and spiritual cleansing. However, the book contains several contradictions and assumptions that hampered my appreciation of it.

Reviewed by: Rijke Rombeek

Shiokari Pass

By Ayako Miura

The main themes of this book are:

1. Sin – all men being equal, no one righteous
2. Christianity seen as a foreign religion
3. Character being more important than body (e.g. not getting angry, not complaining)
4. Death and the purpose of life
5. Self-sacrifice

I was struck by three things: (1) modesty in Christians being seen as a reason to investigate Christianity, (p128). (2) the many Bible references (although I don't think any were from the Old Testament). (3) and the theme, 'it doesn't matter how good you are, you're still a sinner like everyone else', as opposed to 'it doesn't matter how bad you are...'

Reviewed by: Anna Ayling JH

Helping Children Appreciate Bicultural Living

By Flossie Epley



Jennifer is bitter. She feels she missed out by not growing up in her passport country. Ruth, on the other hand, appreciates her upbringing in Japan and as an adult has chosen to live in several different countries. What makes one child loath a bicultural childhood and another cherish it?

Each person is responsible for his/her own choices, but as parents we can create a climate that encourages our children to eagerly embrace the bicultural experience. I have a U.S. passport, but have lived most of my life in Japan. Over the years I have seen thousands of children respond in contentment or regret, but seldom with indifference to being raised in a country other than one's passport country. Here are characteristics I have observed that foster appreciation.

Children generally appreciate their bicultural upbringing when parents . . .

- Are positive about cultural differences and living circumstances.
- Consistently show respect for people of all nations.
- Acknowledge the hardships, but are not overcome by them.
- Are genuine in their faith and attitudes towards others.
- Prepare their children before returning to their passport country for difficult questions (i.e. Where are you from?) or ignorant inquiries (i.e. Do you have Internet in Japan?). Role-playing before returning to one's passport country can help children know how to respond. When parents answer graciously rather than with smart remarks that point out ignorance, children are more apt to do so as well.
- Prepare children for independence in areas such as travel, time management, money management, and entertainment choices before leaving home.
- Make learning both languages

a priority for themselves and their children, but don't make bilingualism a god.

- Ensure that their children have a solid command of at least one language rather than partial understanding of several.
- Take time to listen to their children.
- Invite their children to be part of the ministry so that the whole family values what they are trying to accomplish by being here (notice the word "invite" as opposed to "force").

Our children are privileged to be well acquainted with more than one language and culture. I pray that you'll have the wisdom you need to help your children appreciate their bicultural upbringing.

See more from Flossie's Blog at <http://sss.caj.or.jp/blog/> ^{JH}

Flossie serves at the Christian Academy in Japan as TEAM missionary with her husband Russ.

Called Home

Men in Ministry

by Evangelists
Kenny & Lila Joseph

Before JEMA was formed from the 1968 merger of the Evangelical Missionary Association of Japan (EMAJ) and the Japan Council of Evangelical Missions (JCEM), and the JEMA Directory became the primary listing of missionaries in Japan, the Japan Mission Blue Book (put out by Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan missionaries) served as a missionary directory and carried an obituary column of those who had died each year. In time, the JEMA Directory supplanted the Blue Book, but the tradition of honoring those who had died was lost in the transition.

Just as in past articles we have honored some of the missionary women who served in Japan and have passed into the presence of the Lord, in this issue we are listing some of the missionary men who have been called home in recent years so that we may honor their service.

Vic Springer, who served with TEAM (The Evangelical Alliance Mission), gave us a list of a number of men:

John Budd
Dan Dale
Charles Eagle
Delbert Kuehl
Bill Pape
Vern Strom
Wes Wilson

Wolfgang Langhans of OMF International submitted the follow-

ing list of men from OMF:

Bill Baird
Hubert Elvin Fisher
Bengt Reinhold Hallgren
David Highwood
Victor Johnston
David Michell
Arthur Reynolds
Leonard Arthur Street
Rolf Wimmelmann

Stephen Young gave us the name of John M.L. Young of the Japan Presbyterian Mission.

Bob Sorley gathered a list of men with the Baptist General Conference:

Dale Bjork
Sten Lindberg
Ronald Skoog
Francis Sorley
Glen "Shine" Swanson
Clement Walbert Jr

Editor's Note: There are many other missionaries who have given their hearts to reaching the Japanese, have gone on to their eternal reward, and have not been mentioned within the pages of Japan Harvest. If you have a friend or loved one who served in Japan and has been called home, send your information or an obituary to president@jema.org and editor@jema.org, so that your loved one can be remembered by JEMA.

When you send your email, we

would appreciate it if you could share one thing that stands out in the life or ministry of this missionary that could benefit newer missionaries who are just starting ministry in Japan.

In Memoriam

Elizabeth Wilhelmina Visser passed into the presence of the Lord on the 14th of September, 2011, after spending her final days battling terminal cancer at the Oita Hospice in Oita Prefecture.

She and her husband, Jacob Philippus Visser, together started the Japan Rural Mission, concentrating on the rural areas of Kyushu, especially Oita Prefecture. They came from South Africa as a couple betrothed to be married as soon as circumstances would allow, and were united in holy matrimony in Japan on the 5th of April, 1958. They lived happily together for 53 years and 5 months.

She is survived by her husband, Philip, two daughters, Martha Maria and Isabella Wilhelmina, ten grandchildren, and two great granddaughters. Her entire extended family still lives in Oita prefecture, with the exception of two grandchildren working in Tokyo, and one grandchild working in Nagoya.



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 in Tohoku with CRASH Japan as a base camp leader. She is available to do counseling by Skype (contact: eileennielsen@gmail.com). Eileen loves writing and her three kids.

The Curious World of Japanese Medicine

The world of Japanese medicine is a curious thing. Japanese health care practices often cause frustration for foreigners. And it is usually more than just a language problem. The following are just some of the differences between Western style and Japanese.

Herbal medicine

It's strange for those of us from Western countries to go to a Japanese doctor and not only receive herbal medicine, but find out it's covered by Japanese insurance. Unlike other countries, herbal medicine is strictly regulated and monitored by the government. This herbal medicine is milder than its Chinese cousins and mixed in different formulas.

The most common herbal medicine is called *kampo*. Kampo is a combination of herbs, a different combination for each illness. Two cautions; first, herbal medicines usually work much more slowly than modern medicines. Second, use kampo only under a doctor's care. There can be dangerous side effects when used without supervision.

Tenteki

Foreigners are surprised to go to the doctor in Japan for something as simple as a cold and find themselves getting an intravenous drip as part of the treatment. Japanese believe this to be a fast and effective way of dispensing medicine, as well as helping with hydration and supplying vitamins.

Masks

Masks are usually worn to keep allergens out. The ever-polite Japanese also wear them to prevent spreading their germs to others.

Doctor's visits

In Japan, appointments are rare. Foreigners are often frustrated by the over-crowded

waiting rooms, and long waiting lists at the doctor's office. One reason for this is the socialized medical system, where fees for medical treatment are low, and doctor's visits more common. The trick is to get there first thing and sign in early. Otherwise, if you are in a hurry, it is usually better to wait until later afternoon, when the chance of a shorter visit is more likely. But during the flu and cold seasons, expect to be there for a while.

Iodine

It's interesting that iodine is still used widely in Japanese medicine. It is used for skin abrasions but also is in the gargle the doctor prescribes for a sore throat. Seaweed, a common Japanese product, is high in iodine and is thought to prevent cancer and fight infection.

Menthol

Menthol has no real medicinal value, but does produce a cooling sensation when used on the skin or inhaled. Japanese seem to love the smell and associate it with healing. You can find it in cough drops, gum, eye drops (ouch!), lip balm, medicinal rubs, and creams.

Heating/Cooling Pads

Japanese love these little pads. The cooling ones are used on the forehead for fevers and the heating pads are used to keep you warm or are to be used on sore muscles. They are cheap and found seasonally. Certain types are handy, since they usually have adhesive on one side to adhere to the skin.

Adapting to life in Japan can be challenging. But accepting that Japanese do things differently, and have a certain "method to their madness" when it comes to medicine, can go a long way to making cross-cultural living run more smoothly. ¹⁴



He reached down from on high and took hold of me; he drew me out of deep waters.
Psalm 18:16

主は、いと高き所から御手を伸べて私を捕らえ、私を大水から引き上げられた。
詩篇18篇16節

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For a continued flow of volunteer workers

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