

Japan Update

Spring 2013 Number 65



Whole Gospel Challenge in Tohoku

The theme of the October 2012 JEA Mission Forum in Sendai was “The Whole Gospel Challenge through the Experience of the 3.11 Great Earthquake Disaster”. The concept of the “whole gospel” was articulated clearly to twentieth century evangelicals in 1974 at the International Congress on World Evangelism in Lausanne. This movement traces itself back 100 years to the Congress on Evangelism held in Edinburgh in 1910. Those gathered at the Edinburgh Congress rose above denominational traditions to share a united vision for evangelism. But they failed to achieve a prophetic mission speaking into the historic and social realities that led up to world war—a war that would result in unprecedented human massacre.

In evaluating that failure, we hear a voice saying we should shift from church-centered evangelism to evangelism that responds to social realities and their needs. However, in tackling this subject, there are bound to be theologically opposing opinions as to whether traditional evangelism should take priority over mission that addresses social reali-



by *Yoshiyuki
Nishioka*

*Academic Dean,
Tokyo Biblical Seminary*

*Secretary,
Tokyo Mission
Research Institute*

ties. On the one hand, there are those who hold that the salvation of souls is the top priority and we should not take an active part in transient things of this world. On the other hand, there are those who hold that church-centered evangelism solely concerned with the salvation of souls will result in a church separated from social concerns. Antagonism between those holding these two positions has developed into an unfortunate division between evangelism and social responsibility.

This unhealthy division, not found in the mission of the Lord Jesus, has cast a dark shadow upon subsequent Protestant evangelism. However, a holistic view has been presented in the Lausanne Movement. The Third Congress on Evangelism was convened in Cape Town in 2010. The

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Cape Town Commitment was published as an expression of the determination to put into action what was decided at that meeting. Less than half a year later, on March 11, 2011, Japan encountered an unprecedented triple disaster involving an earthquake, tsunami, and the Fukushima nuclear power plant.

Churches with a self-centered agenda would see this crisis only as an opportunity for self-expanding evangelism and seek to exploit the situation so that the church might be blessed. On the other hand, churches with a holistic view of the gospel would naturally think about how they can be a blessing to the local community,

thinking about how they should respond as God's people sent into a crisis situation. As a result, they would try to present and live out the whole gospel. When placing oneself in a disaster-stricken area, one sees that in such a situation not only is the existence of the church and its mission challenged, but also the meaning of the gospel and the meaning of the presence of Christians.

*Dr. Rev. Yoshiyuki Nishioka served as the keynote speaker for the JEA Mission Forum in Sendai. He is a member of the Japan Lausanne Committee and the editor of Japanese translation of "The Mission of God" by Dr. Christopher J. H. Wright.

JEA Mission Forum in Sendai Report

by *Kenichi Shinagawa*

General Secretary, Japan Evangelical Association

The JEA Mission Forum in Sendai which convened under the theme "The Whole Gospel Challenge through the Experience of the 3.11 Great Earthquake Disaster" was held in the city of Sendai on October 29-30, 2012. Over 80 church leaders and relief workers from disaster-stricken Tohoku regions as well as other parts of Japan gathered to report and discuss the missiological implications of what we experienced since the 3.11 Great East Japan Earthquake Disaster on March 11, 2011.

Rev. Kazuo Iwatsuka (Miyako Community Church, Iwate) spoke about how a paradigm shift occurred in his church. "Before the earthquake, all the church functions took place within the church and we were trying very hard to invite people into our church. Now we do everything out in the community and local people are already involved in church activities. The disaster forced us to go out into the community and serve people where they are. Building trust through relief work really changed the relationship between the church and local people."

Rev. Ichio Kishinami (Conservative Baptist Kurihara Bible Church, Miyagi) shared his experience of meeting fishermen in small coastal villages where everything was washed away by the tsunami. He drove 100 km everyday to bring food and commodities provided by Christian networks all over the world. Later, he organized volunteer teams to help in the work. "These fishermen had no previous contact with Christians. The Ocean God and ancestor worship is very strong in this area. [At the start] I was very careful not to impose anything on them. The only thing I did with them was pray. But as I served them with Christ's heart, many of them started asking about the Bible and some of them have accepted Christ. Now there are about 15 to 20 house meetings in these small coastal villages, so we go around to encourage them."

Rev. Makito Matsuda (Oasis Life Care, Rifu Christ Church, Miyagi) went around temporary housing and developed a new business model of marketing leather products made by the survivors to department stores in

Tokyo. This project opened up a new avenue for community recovery in terms of both cash income and self-esteem. "People need a sense of self-worth as well as cash income to start walking up the path of recovery. As Christians, we know how to care for people's hearts, so why don't we combine that with a practical business model to impact the society with Christ's love? Working in the public sector and with secular organizations made me realize how Biblical perspective can impact and change our society."



Rev. Ken Jodai (Christ Kyodai-dan Fukushima Church, Fukushima) and Rev. Keiji Kida (Koriyama Christ Evangelical Church, Fukushima) both talked about the current dilemma and suffering from the nuclear power plant accident in Fukushima. Churches in Fukushima are determined to stand with the people of Fukushima in the long and difficult fight against radioactive contamination (see article on page 7).

Although the reports reflected regional differences, the common factor seemed to be that God is already ministering among people in local communities and that churches need to stop looking inward. We need to go out into our communities to live out the "whole gospel" among the people. We are not compromising the soul-winning gospel of the Lord Jesus, but actually deepening our understanding of it and acting upon it. This kind of paradigm shift, in turn, should happen elsewhere in Japan, as many churches across Japan are suffering from a lack of engagement with their local communities. I believe God has already moved a rock. It is our turn to take up the challenge of living out the whole gospel.

Why is the Hinomaru and Kimigayo Problematic to the Church in Japan?

by *Chietsu Shibata*

JEA Social Issues Commission member, Yokohama Uenomachi Church

Why is the Hinomaru (the national flag of Japan) and Kimigayo (the national anthem of Japan) problematic for the Church in Japan? The reason is because the Hinomaru and Kimigayo promote emperor worship and affirm the past war of aggression.

Before the war, the emperor was referred to as *Arahitogami* (a deity who is also a living human being). It is said that through his crowning ceremony, the spirit of the sun god *Amaterasu-ōmikami* (said to be the ancestor of the emperor) became one with the new emperor, making him divine. State Shinto placed the emperor at its pinnacle, enforcing emperor worship to support the deity and absolute sovereignty of the emperor, who was declared head of state in the 1889 Constitution of the Empire of Japan.

On special occasions, the “Goshin’ei” (a picture of the Emperor and the Empress) was brought out and lifted up before the students and staff in schools to be worshiped. Furthermore, on holidays, the raising of the Hinomaru and singing of the Kimigayo was forcefully implemented in elementary schools throughout the country. The national textbook for elementary schools that was issued during the war teaches that the words of Kimigayo mean “May the Emperor’s reign flourish forever.” Kimigayo is a song of worship directed toward the Emperor. Also, the Hinomaru, which was used in conjunction with Kimigayo, depicts the Sun, symbolizing the Sun god *Amaterasu-ōmikami* and the Emperor, who is believed to be a descendant. According to the textbook mentioned earlier, “the Hinomaru is the first thing to be raised when a land has been conquered.” The Hinomaru and Kimigayo are symbols of a “kingdom of god” with the Emperor at its center, and were symbols of militarism.

When Japan invaded the Korean Peninsula, shrines

were built in worship to *Amaterasu-ōmikami* and the Meiji Emperor. Idol worship was enforced and persecution was practiced, just as the Jews in Babylonian exile experienced (Daniel 3:1-15). Many pastors and believers faced imprisonment and martyrdom due to their refusal to worship the emperor at shrines.

Yet in Japan, most churches accepted shrine worship as part of *kokumin girei* (people’s rite). This included *kyujō yōhai* (bowing toward the Imperial palace before worship services), the singing of the Kimigayo, and the flying of the Hinomaru, all of which were practiced in some churches.

In recent times, “standing in honor of the Hinomaru,” which can be seen flying at the front of the hall, as if it has taken the place of the *goshintai*, [sacred body of the gods] and the singing of the Kimigayo, which is emperor worship, is still being enforced in entrance and graduation ceremonies of public schools. Some teachers have faced negative consequences for refusing to observe these rituals because of their beliefs.

In schools where free education should be practiced, freedom of thought and conscience has been compromised by the enforcement of Hinomaru and Kimigayo as if it were a *fumie* (a picture of Christ or Mary which Christians were forced to step on in the Edo era). For Christian teachers, requiring such a complement to idol worship is threatening their freedom of religion.

The Liberal Democratic Party, newly in power, intends to enforce emperor worship and shrine worship as social rituals by amending the constitution. This most definitely will intensify the enforcement of Hinomaru and Kimigayo. We will oppose such changes. And we must be determined that from this day forward, even if such an age may come, we will never bow to the enforcement of idol worship (Daniel 3:18).

JEA Disaster Response Project Update

On February 5-7, 2013, JEA Relief Commission and DRCnet (Disaster Relief Christian Network) hosted the first official training of the “Disaster Response Chaplain Training course” in Narita, Japan. We invited Dr. Kevin Ellers of the Salvation Army USA who has developed extensive training courses in ESC (Emotional and Spiritual Care) after the 9.11 terrorist attack in the USA.

Most of the 51 participants have been involved in relief work in Tohoku and they said the emotional status of the survivors is getting worse than ever. As many relief organizations are closing their ministries, regional church networks in Tohoku are trying hard to continue to help the survivors. The JEA Relief Commission will

continue to support such regional church networks in Tohoku as well as equipping churches for the next disaster. Fukushima HOPE project (p.7) is one of such projects that we support.

Please continue to pray for Japan.
Send donations to the JEA Relief Commission:
The Bank of Tokyo Mitsubishi UFJ
[SWIFT code:BOTKJPJT]
Jinbocho Branch 013-0305243
JEA Relief Commission
Please send an email to adminoffice@jeanet.org
to let us know your name and the amount sent.
Visit <http://jeanet.org/> for more updates.

Testimony: Relief Work and Evangelism Following the Great East Japan Earthquake



by *Aya Ito*
Japan International Food for the Hungry, Tohoku Office

It has been two years since the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11, 2011 in which 15,880 people died and 2,700 people remain missing. On

behalf of the earthquake survivors, I would like to express my deepest thanks for all the funds that were gathered from within Japan and abroad, and for all the volunteers who gathered to help and encourage the survivors of the earthquake.

Especially for the earthquake survivors, these last two years have been a long and hard two years. At the same time, it has gone by quickly. Amidst these difficult circumstances, Christians were quick to take action. Even when communication networks were cut off and it was difficult to grasp what was going on, various denominations and interdenominational organizations put together relief supplies and sent truckloads to the disaster areas. Although survivors themselves, church congregations in the disaster region gave a lot of support by taking in volunteer workers from the outside and helping out in distributing supplies in their areas.

One does not need a reason to help hurting people right before one's eyes. Peoples' hearts naturally moved them to action and they became "Good Samaritans." Within a few days after the earthquake, volunteers were cooking and serving meals to survivors, handing out supplies, and helping out in the removal of rubble and clean-up.

Non-Christian volunteer workers were also working hard in the same way. Their work can in no way be discounted. However, the comments that came from many survivors with whom I had the opportunity to fellowship was that the enthusiasm and the finishing touch of Christians was different. In this way, I sensed that among those who saw and heard how Christians worked and helped out, there was a stronger sense of attachment.



These Christian volunteers may not have preached the gospel in a loud voice. However,

through these volunteers, earthquake survivors definitely saw the "Light of the World." In this way, an unspoken gospel was heard, and many survivors, on the edge of despair, were encouraged, comforted and led toward the path of Truth.

Japan is considered to be one of the most difficult

countries in the world to evangelize. It is especially difficult in the countryside, where old customs have a strong hold and the pressures and expectations within relationships are binding. In rural areas, often there is little or no fruit even after decades of evangelism. However, through this disaster it is no mistake to say that the hearts of many people have been opened to Christianity. Also, I believe this has given us an opportunity to reevaluate our methods of evangelism. That is to say, evangelism is not just about inviting people to church, but it is about going out, and unconsciously fulfilling the Great Commission, "to go out into all the world and make disciples."

Pastor Yukikazu Ōtomo of Shiogama Bible Baptist Church, who has continued to be involved with volunteer relief work since the earthquake up until the present says, "The Kingdom of Heaven moves forward when the wheels of both relief work and evangelism are turning. If one is greater or lesser than the other, it is hard to make good progress."



The desire of Christians involved in relief work is only that perishing souls will be saved. However, they don't try to force people to believe because they are helping them. Instead, through building good relationships over time, they wait for survivors to show interest in Jesus Christ or in the Bible. Looking on from the outside, some people may think this is an inefficient way to evangelize. However, many examples have been seen in which relationships that have come out of strong evangelistic efforts have suddenly fallen apart. To be honest, I cannot say for sure which is the most successful way to evangelize. However, I do know that through continuing volunteer relief work, people who have never heard the gospel will see the "Real Gospel" in action, right before their eyes.

These last two years, Christians have labored in many ways. Each small action might not look like much, but just as many small dots joined together make a line, it is now the job of the local church to not let that line break. For those of us who have true hope, it is sometimes difficult to know how we should approach those who were saved right after the earthquake and those who will get saved sometime later. I do believe that from now on, mission work, in the real sense, is just starting.

Finally, for those who have prayed for revival in Tohoku, the question comes up, "Was there no other way for the gospel to be spread without the sacrifice of so many?" At the same time, God speaks to me saying, "What have you been doing up until now in response to the Great Commission, and what is your response to the call from here on?"

"Among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain" (Phil. 2:16 NKJV).

Interview: Sharing True Hope with Fukushima Families

Interview by *Atsuko Tateishi*
Assistant Editor, *Japan Update*

In Fukushima Prefecture, deep anxiety and extreme uncertainty have become something like the norm in the aftermath of the nuclear disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant in March 2011. Mariko Fuyama and Kyoko Nakajima are walking with and caring for young local children and their families. They are the coordinators of the Fukushima HOPE Project (<http://fukushimahopecoalition.com>), a ministry of the Fukushima Christian Conference (FCC). During the first week of January, the two ladies agreed to be interviewed at their Sendai office by Skype. Excerpts follow.

Atsuko (A): Please tell us how HOPE was started.

Mariko (M): The FCC launched HOPE in September 2012 in response to the specific needs of families with young children in Fukushima Prefecture. In some families, the mother and children evacuate for a prolonged period of time, while the father remains at home. There have been a number of divorces among such families. Seeing that, more and more mothers and children have been returning to Fukushima to be together as families. Our programs provide families with opportunities to be away from Fukushima temporarily, so they can breathe and enjoy the outdoors without worries.

A: Tell us about some of the HOPE programs and what responsibilities each of you carry.

M: We have two programs. One is the short-term camp program and the other is the long-term homestay program. Both are for Fukushima families with young children. I am responsible for coordinating short-term camps.

Kyoko (K): I am based in Aomori Prefecture, where I coordinate the homestay program. I am also a pastor in Aomori City. Three venues in Aomori Prefecture are currently available for Fukushima families. One of them is the nursery facility of my church. The nursery has not been in use for awhile. The other two are Aomori Christian Center in Aomori City, and a holiday home in Goshogawara City owned by a Christian.

M: I had been a pastor in Fukushima City for four years when the Great East Japan Earthquake hit. The leaders of my denomination did not think it wise for a young woman like me to remain in Fukushima. But I was not comfortable with the idea of leaving Fukushima right away. Through my local connections, Keiji Kida, the leader of HOPE, approached me and invited me to work with him. That is how I got involved in HOPE from the beginning.

K: Mariko is also a licensed nurse, and I am a certified kindergarten and nursery school teacher. Our credentials seem to reassure the parents who participate in our programs. We believe God placed us

in Fukushima and Aomori in advance for such a time as this.

A: What blessings have you been receiving through working for HOPE?

M: Today, deep divisions are hurting Fukushima, because people have a variety of opinions and responses in relation to nuclear power and radiation issues. It is a joy to provide a safe place for families to pour out their anxiety. I also thank God when I see parents smile while their children play freely outdoors. Our programs are for Christians and non-Christians alike. During each camp, we hold a Bible time, through which a few people have started going to church.

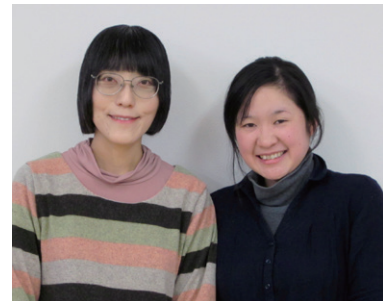
K: I feel privileged to share the love of God and true hope and peace with Fukushima families. I see people's relationships being restored during the homestay program. Recently I heard of two families who have begun to attend church following their homestay experience in the summer of 2012.

M: Another great blessing is the support of a broad interdenominational network. I am thankful that God has brought Kyoko and me to work together, though we belong to different denominations.

A: How can we support HOPE?

M: Our initial commitment is for five years through 2017. Please pray for us. Financial support would also be appreciated. Donation information is on our web site. It is currently in Japanese only.

K: A book is going to be published in February, *Kodomo no Inochi o Mamoritai* (Hoping to Protect Children's Lives). Published by Word of Life Press, it is about my experiences as a consultant for some 200 mothers since the disaster, as well as my work as a homestay coordinator. I hope the book will help expand the support network for these precious children.



*Rev. Kyoko Nakajima (left) and
Rev. Mariko Fuyama*



Families from Fukushima visiting apple orchard

JEA Relief Commission is supporting Fukushima HOPE project. If you are sending donation for HOPE project through us, please send an email to adminoffice@jeanet.org indicating your name and the amount sent for HOPE project.

NEWS and NOTES

Christian Art Giving Hope and Comfort

The “Exhibition of Tomihiro Hoshino’s Drawings of Flowers and Poems in Ochanomizu” opened at Ochanomizu Christian Center in downtown Tokyo on November 2, 2012. The four-month exhibition was subtitled *More Precious than Life (Inochi yori Taisetsu na Mono)* and featured a total of 101 drawings, including 11 new ones. A new collection of Tomihiro’s works was published by Word of Life Press on the occasion of the event and carries the exhibition’s subtitle.

Tomihiro paints with a paintbrush held in his mouth. In 1970, as a young junior high school physical education teacher, he had an accident that rendered him a quadriplegic. In the midst of his despair, following a friend’s recommendation he began to read the Bible. Over time, he found the joy of life and began to draw flowers with a short inspiring poem written to one side of the drawings.

Through his work, Tomihiro and the exhibition organizer hope to convey a message of comfort and hope to those who have experienced serious loss and grief since the Great East Japan Earthquake. The organizer hopes to hold a similar exhibition in a disaster-afflicted area in the future.

Suicide Prevention Through Manga



Risk Ride is a short manga story about two young men, Kenji and Shin. Unemployed and rejected by his girlfriend, Kenji makes up his mind to commit suicide. However, when his old friend Shin invites him on a motorcycle excursion and poses some soul-searching questions, Kenji’s healing journey begins.

The story was written by writer and counselor trainer Andy Meeko and illustrated by manga artist Kelly Shinozawa. It was created as a tool for starting a spiritual conversation in the context of emotional care. It is available online (<http://riskride.net/>) and printed copies may be purchased at Christian bookstores. It is currently available in Japanese and English.

During a five-month period from August 2012, Andy led a Risk Ride Campaign so that the manga could be used for suicide prevention in the Tohoku region, which is still struggling to recover from the triple disaster of 2011. The story was promoted in a series of events, and local Christians in Fukushima and Iwate Prefectures were trained how to make use of it.

TCU Social Welfare Project

With over five million people in need of care, Japan is a substantially aged society. Many challenges face local churches and communities. The aging of pastors and congregations is becoming a serious problem. Compelled by the need to get involved in the welfare of local societies, some

churches have started putting effort into this area.

Tokyo Christian University, which recently opened a Department of Christian Welfare, has started the “Care Church Project” with the aim of supporting churches in thinking about and starting welfare ministries. With this in mind, on November 17, 2012 an open seminar was held on the theme “Thinking of the Future of Welfare and the Church.”

The Care Church Project looks to accomplish its goal by 1) networking churches involved in welfare ministry, 2) becoming a resource center for welfare ministry, 3) defining the reasons for welfare ministry, both theological and physiological, and 4) training personnel who can minister in these fields.

A Facebook group has been created, in order to facilitate networking.

The launch committee consists of students and staff of TCU, ministers of churches already involved in this endeavor, and personnel from welfare facilities.

ANRC12 -- Encouraging and Equipping Returnees

The Third All Nations Returnees Conference (ANRC12) was held in Kakegawa City, Shizuoka Prefecture on November 22-25, 2012. The overall theme “Respond to the Calling as a Vessel of Mercy” was set to encourage and equip “returnees” (young Japanese people who have become Christians while living overseas). Among the 600 attendees, some 120 were ministers or ministry leaders. However, to help develop natural relationships, it was decided to address everyone during the conference with the generic honorific *san* instead of *sensei* (teacher), the honorific customarily used to address pastors and ministers.

The four keynote speakers, Nobuyuki Uchimura, Yuichiro Nakano, Michael Oh, and Akira Sato, preached on God’s powerful and infinite mercy while sharing their respective life stories. During the panel discussion, representatives of regional returnee groups shared about their ongoing efforts in networking and equipping old and new members. Some of the commonly mentioned challenges were the geographical scattering of members and the scarcity of active members. In the “Follow-up of Returnees” multiplex session, a few follow-up leaders shared tips for supporting returnees, and ways being used to connect returnees with local Christian communities. One of the leaders stressed the importance of empathizing with the unique struggles of returnees going through cultural adjustments.

Regional gatherings of 10 regions of Japan served to facilitate networking, information exchange, and follow-up at the local level.

There was also a time for 35 leaders of all regions to get together, to promote partnership across the regions, and to confirm



that effective returnee ministries were able to serve the local church through following up each returnee across the regions. During the post-conference fellowship, vision was cast to build returnee groups in the Chugoku and Kyushu regions and to enhance understanding about returnees among local churches.

Information about returnee events and regional groups may be obtained by writing to info@allnations.jp.

JEA Religious Liberty Seminar

The Social Issues Commission of the JEA hosted the 2012 Religious Liberty Seminar on December 1, 2012 in Tokyo. Keynote speaker Norikatsu Sasagawa, Professor Emeritus of International Christian

University, discussed the issue of the imperial succession in relation to the Constitution.

Sasagawa noted that in 1989 the rites of the imperial succession from Hirohito to Akihito were carried out according to the pattern of the Imperial Household Ordinance, even though the ordinance had been abolished the day before the current Constitution became effective [in 1947]. He observed that the rites were Shinto, implying the Emperor's lordship over his subjects. The current Constitution stipulates in Article 2 that the imperial succession shall be carried out in accordance with the current Imperial Household Law. The Law, however, does not stipulate the details of the imperial succession rites, and Sasagawa pointed out that this is a problem.

He also referred to Emperor Akihito's wish for his own funeral rites to be simple, which was reported in April 2012. Sasagawa will be watching how the Imperial Household Agency will officially reply to Akihito's statement in the near future.

Interdenominational Holy Communion Service in Okinawa

The Okinawa Evangelical Federation (OEF), an interdenominational association in Okinawa, will have a united Holy Communion service at Ishikawa Gospel Church on March 13. Their purpose is summed up in the thought, "Although we belong to different denominations, the gospel in the name of Jesus is just one. We should build our churches together."

The OEF includes about 30 denominations, including the Japan Church of the Nazarene, the Japan Evangelical Church Association, Immanuel General Mission, Japan Alliance Christ Church, Japan Holiness Church, Evangelical Free Church of Japan and other independent churches in Okinawa. For more than 50 years, they have been meeting once a month and planning various gatherings, but have never had an interdenominational Holy Communion service.

A visit by Rev. Toshio Takahashi, Pastor Emeritus, Kasukabe Evangelical Free Church in Japan, to Okinawa in 2011

was the beginning of this event. He appealed, "We need to see the future of mission in Japan. We must not be against each other, but go forward together in the name of Jesus." He suggested having an interdenominational Holy Communion service. The pastors of the OEF, who approved his suggestion, discussed it in their general meetings, regular meetings, and with their boards of directors. Finally, they decided to schedule it for March 13. On this day, all the pastors of OEF will meet and share Holy Communion together. Pastor Kazunari Fukushima, Naha Evangelical Church Japan, a member of the OEF, said, "This is a testimony that we can collaborate to make by the mercy of God. This will be a great encouragement for each church. It will be good news for future mission in Japan as well."

Obituaries

Dr. Tsunagu Tenda, composer, Professor Emeritus, Tokyo Christian University, passed away at home in Chiba on November 17, 2012, at the age of 74. After completing his studies at Tokyo University of the Arts and Kunitachi College of Music, Tenda dedicated himself to composing and teaching worship choir at Tokyo Christian Theological Seminary (Tokyo Christian University) until he retired in 2012. For 44 years, Tenda's sincere attitude toward church music and his gentle personality greatly influenced church music major students at TCU, who have inherited his spirit. He was honored with the Meritorious Person in Otsu City award in 2011. His masterpiece composition is *Kirisuto no Ai Ware ni Semareri* (Christ's Love Compels Us)

Rev. Nobuo Watanabe, former pastor of Okubo Baptist Church, died of pancreatic cancer on November 16, 2012, at the age of 82. He was a researcher of Buddhism for Christian mission in Japan. In 1948, he was baptized at Todoroki Church. He studied Buddhism at Komazawa University and Christian theology at Seinan Gakuin University. He then served various churches in the Japan Baptist Association as pastor. At the same time, Watanabe visited many local towns for lectures or mission activities as head of Evangelists Fellowship of Japan (EFJ). As a comparative religions scholar, he wrote many valuable books such as *Oshoo to Yobareta Bokushi* (A Pastor Called "Buddhist Monk"), *Kirisuto-kyo to Nihon no Shukyo* (Christianity and Japanese Religions)

Rev. Yasuo Sakakibara, Pastor Emeritus, Reformed Church in Japan, passed away of cancer of the esophagus on January 6, 2013 at the age of 81. Sakakibara studied in the engineering department of Osaka University but left to enter Kobe Reformed Theological Seminary to become a pastor. While serving Tokyo Oncho Reformed Church until he retired in 2001, he held a number of important posts, including Director of Kobe Reformed Theological Seminary, Lecturer of Tokyo Theological Seminary, and Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Japan Evangelical Theological Society. He also wrote or edited many books about the Bible that have been published by well-known Christian publishers.

『天皇の代替わりと憲法問題』

■日 時: 2012年12月1日(土) 午後2時-4時

■講師: 菅川 紀勝 氏



【プロフィール】
1948年 北海道生まれ。北海道大学法政経済学部。法政博士。
法政大学法政経済学部教授(2011年3月定年退職)、
国際基督教大学客員教授
法政大学名誉教授(2010年)

【講演テーマ】
「天皇の代替わりと憲法問題」
【講演会場】
【講演場所】
【講演料】

【お問い合わせ先】
【電話】
【FAX】
【Eメール】

衆議院選、都知事選が間近に迫り、結果によっては改憲潮流(本格的化)することが予想されます。
政治が次期天皇の代替わりを利用して、天皇元号を推進しようとする中、改憲・天皇の代替わりに向けた動きがキリスト教と教会の課題を共に考えたいと思います。

Please Pray for Japan

1. That the Holy Spirit would lead and empower the churches in the Tohoku disaster areas to go out into their local communities and live out the “whole gospel” with Christ’s love.
2. That churches elsewhere in Japan would learn from Tohoku churches and take up the challenge of the “whole gospel” in their own local context, as well as continuing to support the recovery of Tohoku region.
3. That children in Fukushima would be protected from the effects of radioactivity and that true hope in Christ would be shared with those families.

* You can also find prayer requests at our website:
http://jeanet.org/bind/Relief/relief_en.html

JEA Schedule

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>PLACE</u>
May 20-21	JEA Youth Mission Seminar	Okutama
June 3-5	JEA General Assembly	Kobe
July-August	Disaster Chaplain Training	Tokyo
early in Sept.	JEA Next Generation Event	Tokyo
Nov. 18-19	JEA Mission Forum Fukushima	Fukushima

Editorial

When we started planning this issue, the working theme was “Holistic Mission in Tohoku”. Since the 3.11 Great East Japan Earthquake Disaster in 2011, churches in Japan have learned many lessons from serving people in the disaster-stricken areas through relief work—removing mud from houses, cleaning destroyed photo albums, listening to stories of suffering, and so on. All these experiences weren’t very clean-cut. They often were rather dirty and clumsy.

These feelings lead us to use the term “whole gospel” = *marugoto no hukuin* in Japanese. The term *marugoto* conveys the meaning of “everything included and not separated”. I feel we need to get our hands dirty and really start to engage people’s lives as a “whole” rather than as separate bits and pieces—because the gospel of Jesus Christ is so much richer than our limited conception!

Kenichi Shinagawa, Editor in Chief

<http://jeanet.org/>

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