



Presentation of the Sapporo Declaration of the 5th Japan Congress on Evangelism in September 2009

Invitation to the Sixth Japan Congress on Evangelism

The Sixth Japan Congress on Evangelism (JCE6) is not just about the design or the content of the program. We, as the Program Committee, hope that the whole process of preparation for, and follow-up of, JCE6 will reflect our gospel-centered life and our commitment to mission.



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1. Professing Hope

The overall theme of JCE6 is “RE-VISION Toward Regeneration: The Gospel, the World, and Opportunities.” In an age of crisis, we are to take a fresh look at the world we live in, as well as who we are, in order to discover God-given opportunities and to start walking toward regeneration. We hope JCE6 will be an opportunity to: embrace our legacy with thanks, face ongoing challenges with honesty, and boldly profess our hope in Jesus Christ. Dr. Christopher Wright will deliver four keynote addresses on the Congress theme.

2. Building Networks

Let us appreciate what we have, rather than lament what we lack. We hope the participants will be united in their focus on global mission and be reminded of our oneness (Ephesians 4:16). We invite mission laborers in Japan and abroad to

gather together in Kobe for JCE6. We believe that more opportunities and a greater unity will result from building kingdom networks during the Congress. Participants will be assigned to a table group for the duration of JCE6, so that they will be able to share their burdens and the realities of their situations, and develop new friendships.

3. Evaluating Mission Cooperation

Living in an age of crisis, from time to time it is natural to feel tired, disappointed, and anxious. We will encourage participants to look courageously at realities, and to evaluate their accomplishments so far. Let us also perform a thorough review of all the good things God has generously given to us—our talents, ministry opportunities, cooperative relationships, and varied missional visions. During JCE6, we will evaluate

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what the 13 projects of JCE5 have undertaken and how the missional context in Japan has changed since JCE5. We will attempt to redesign cooperative relationships, and launch out together toward JCE7 in 2023.

4. Sharing Goals and Strategies

While we appreciate the work of all the different denominations and Christian groups, we would be engaging in solitary battle without effective interdenominational cooperative partnerships. The theme of the First Japan Congress on Evangelism in 1974 was “Leading Japan to Christ.” Today, 40 years later, we must tackle the same missional vision with concrete strategies and action plans. There may have been a time when we tried to establish the identity of our own group with a competitive mindset toward others. It is time for us to overcome such attitudes. God invites us to serve each other as mature partners. We hope JCE6 will help each group to develop their goals and strategies for mission

in Japan and in executing their action plans in their respective ways.

5. Come as You Are

The door of JCE6 will be open to everyone, regardless of their situation. JCE6 will not be a place to showcase success stories or strong ministries. We hope that struggling people and servant leaders of small churches will feel welcomed. JCE6 will value praying for each another, sharing stories with each other, remembering blessings of the Lord, and receiving encouragement and power. We pray that the JCE6 participants will be sent forth with joyful expectations for JCE7.

I am committed to working on the preparations for JCE6, choosing not to dwell on my insufficiencies. I invite you to work together. Join the team to serve the Lord!

Re-VISION 2016 in KOBE

Theme and Concepts of The Sixth Japan Congress on Evangelism

◆ OVERVIEW ◆

Dates: September 27 (Tue.) – 30 (Fri.), 2016

Place: Kobe Convention Center

(Kobe City, Hyogo Prefecture)

Host: Executive Committee, the Sixth Japan Congress on Evangelism (JCE6)

Main Speaker: Dr. Christopher Wright

◆ THEME ◆

Re-VISION Toward Regeneration: The Gospel, the World, and Opportunities

As redeemed people of our Lord Jesus Christ, we serve each other and share the gospel with joy. The Lord forgives us, revives us, and uses us as his vessels.

We are about to remember a few significant anniversaries in Japan: the 20th anniversary of the Great Kansaï Earthquake on January 17, 2015, and the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II that follows in late summer. On March 11, 2016, we will celebrate the fifth anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake, and in the same year, the 170th anniversary of Protestant missions in Japan. In 2017, the Lutheran Reformation will mark its 500th year. At this historic juncture, let us gather together as a people rooted in faith through the Holy Scriptures to take a fresh look at the magnificence of the gospel, to reexamine who we are in historical and global context, and to examine the opportunities ahead.

As messenger of the gospel of reconciliation, the Church endeavors to develop wider and deeper mission cooperation in an age of crisis. Sometimes we get tired and discouraged. We may feel troubled and uncertain. To evaluate our missional efforts to date, we need to look at the realities with honesty and patience. Let us

also perform a thorough review of all the good things God has generously given us, i.e., our talents, ministry opportunities, cooperative relationships, and varied missional visions.

As we gather in Kobe to focus on the mid- to long-range outlook of Japan, Asia, and the world, let us apply a brush to the canvas of our missional dreams and launch out toward JCE7 in 2023.

Re-VISION 2016 in KOBE will be an opportunity for us to be renewed in the Lord and to engage in renewed mission with renewed partnerships. Let us gather together, share our stories, and go forth together with the Lord! We hear the sound of marching footsteps. We invite you to join the journey and the conversation.

Then Elisha prayed, and said, “O LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes that he may see.” So the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. 2 Kings 6:17 RSV

◆ BASIC CONCEPTS ◆

The Sixth Japan Congress on Evangelism (JCE6) will convene in Kobe in September 2016, the 170th anniversary of Protestant missions in Japan. Early in the history of the JCE, belief in the Bible was reaffirmed as one of the foundational distinctives of evangelical Christians. The theme of JCE4 was The Gospel of Reconciliation, and the Church was identified as the messenger of reconciliation. JCE5 explored wider and deeper Mission Cooperation. JCE6 will review past accomplishments and present efforts in mission cooperation, facilitating more concrete collaboration and partnerships as it looks ahead to JCE7 in 2023.

Why Kobe and Why Now?

Standing on our belief in the Bible and the catholicity of the Church, we will gather to prepare better systems and environments for mission cooperation among local churches, denominations, and mission organizations. We will also aim to facilitate fellowship and networks that work effectively, in order for collaborative mission efforts to yield a great harvest.

*Following the Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11, 2011, the Church in Japan has been working to reconfirm the core message of the gospel and to revise mission strategies. Among local churches, new initiatives of cooperation are being developed. JCE6 will affirm our mission of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ—who is our hope in an age of crisis—and will work to ensure that our mission is embraced by the congress participants.

*JCE6 will offer opportunities to get to know current ministries, share ministry information and challenges, and to interact with each other. It is our hope that JCE6 participants will find new areas of cooperation and will build stronger partnerships.

*JCE6 will serve mission laborers through encouragement, in helping to deepen mutual fellowship in Christ, and in activating networks. In doing so, we hope to pass on a legacy of missional vision and ministry expertise to the next generation.

*The city of Kobe is one of the great contributors to the early history of the Japanese Church. Ever since the Great Hanshin Earthquake of 1995, the city has been on a journey of restoration. As we gather and remember the unique history of this international city, JCE6 will offer prayers of blessing for mission endeavors in this metropolis, as well as each region of Japan and the world.

What Do We Hope to Achieve?

In order to achieve the above objectives, we invite

participants to gather together to hear from God's Word, to pray, to listen to each other's respective stories, and to take time to bear each other's burdens. Furthermore, we will encourage participants to develop fresh cooperative initiatives with concrete goals, and then send them back to their respective fields with shared ownership of milestones to reach by JCE7.

*Each participant will be assigned to a table group for the duration of JCE6, so that they will be engaged in the congress with a sense of ownership, and will have opportunities for enjoying fellowship and developing new friendships.

*Keeping in mind the purpose of holding JCE every seven years, JCE6 will ensure that goals toward JCE7 will be set, and that expectations for JCE7 will be embraced by all participants.

From initiatives of mission cooperation, to local mission projects, to efforts at the local church level, denominational level, mission organization level, and each Christian's personal life, JCE6 will honor and appreciate past endeavors. JCE6 will provide participants with opportunities to share the specifics of their future plans and current engagements.

*Throughout the course of JCE6, we will value people's growth, the passing of leadership batons to the next generation, the talents of youth, women, and lay people, and the nurturing of closer relationships.

*JCE6 will pray for, study about, and work with local churches in Kobe, the host city, so that JCE6 will leave behind concrete blessings for the city of Kobe and its churches.



Kobe Convention Center

A Quick Guide to Kagawa Memorial Center

by *Atsuko Tateishi*, Assistant Editor

When you are in Kobe, be sure to visit Kagawa Memorial Center! Toyohiko Kagawa, well-known Japanese Christian, began his ministry in a poor area of the city in 1909. The Center now stands in the same area and continues to serve the needs of the local community. Visit the museum on the fourth floor to learn about Kagawa's life. Pause at the cafe Tengokuya on the same floor. Ponder the extent and diversity of the programs the Center houses: a local church, a nursery school/kindergarten, after-school childcare, support programs for intellectually challenged children and non-Japanese families,



community groups, and more.

"Kagawa is considered to be one of the greatest Christian evangelists in Japan," says Yoshihito Nishi, Center Advisor. "We invite you to come and see his continuing legacy."

Hours: 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. (Enter by 4:30 p.m.)

Closed: Mondays

Admission: Adults – 300 yen; Students – 100 yen

Address: 5-2-20 Azuma-dori, Chuo-ku, Kobe-shi, Hyogo-ken

Access: 15 min. walk from Sannomiya station

7 min. walk from Kasuganomichi station

1 min. walk from Azuma-dori 4-chome bus stop (Hankyu Bus)

English website: <http://core100.net/e-index.html>

Roundtable with Young Staff in Media Ministries

interviewed by Atsuko Tateishi, Assistant Editor

How to use new and emerging media effectively for ministry is one of the most important challenges for Japanese Christians today. Japan Update (JU) invited three young men from different media ministries in January 2015 to discuss their successes, collaboration possibilities, and future vision. Excerpts follow:

JU: Please introduce yourself and a little about what you do.

YO: I am Yoshitomo Takahashi, a reporter for Christian Shimbun, a Word of Life Press Ministries (WLPM) weekly newspaper.

JU: We owe you a lot, because most of our news articles are summary of those published by Christian Shimbun.

YO: We try to report on what is happening among churches and Christians in Japan. In addition to the paper edition, we started the electronic version in December 2013. We are also working to make an article database available on the Internet.

HI: I am Hisho Uga of OneHope Japan (OHJ). OneHope is a global ministry headquartered in Florida, U.S.A., to reach out to children and youth through media and literature. Our materials are distributed for free. Our smartphone app Bible App for Kids has reached over 10,000 downloads in Japan alone. In general, materials involving manga tend to enjoy popularity in Japan.

YU: I am Yujiro Takagi of New Life Ministries (NLMS). Originally founded with a focus on printing Bibles, NLMS celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2014. While we serve the Christian community in Japan as a printing company, we also raise funds to print and deliver literature in other countries. One such project is the donation of a million manga to the church in Uganda. We have donated 600,000 copies so far.

HI: NLMS also helps OHJ in managing our inventory and shipping.

JU: NLMS prints Japan Update, too.

YU: Printing orders support NLMS. Our manga materials are popular not only in Japan, but also overseas. Even in areas that are closed to Christianity, manga may be used as school materials. We need more Christian media content designed for younger people. To that effect, we would like to explore more collaboration opportunities with OHJ.

YO: As a weekly newspaper, we always try to report news and stories, but we also aim to uncover the needs of the church and make them known.

HI: We have consulted the results of a survey by CS Seicho Center of WLPM, to learn what needs the church has in Japan. We live in a country where great manga are published every week. There is also a plethora of media content. We must give a serious thought to what to offer.

YU: People tend to have only brief periods of time in daily life to browse different media content. Our content needs to grab their attention within that brief span of time.

JU: Manga is clearly one powerful form of media in Japan. Do you engage in developing the next generation of Christian manga artists?

YO: Ramii, a monthly WLPM magazine, uses budding artists from time to time.

HI: But there is a dilemma. We would like to work with a variety of artists depending on the style needed. We cannot retain artists as full-timers, so then it is not an ideal environment for Christian artists.

JU: Changing subjects a little, recent statistics revealed that one out of six children in Japan live under the poverty line. These children would not have a smartphone to have access to the rich media content out there.

HI: As part of the advocacy effort, we work with The 4 to 14 Window Movement (4to14window.com).

YO: Numerous Christians in Japan have been working in such areas as children living in poverty and disaster relief. I believe these are some of the areas where younger Christians could serve effectively.

JU: Finally, do you see opportunities in partnering with other media ministries?

YO: I have been trying to learn about different ministries. I would be interested in learning what overseas Christian news media is reporting.

YU: Working with overseas Christians can be challenging. A tool that is successful overseas does not necessarily meet the needs of the Japanese. Tools must be contextualized.

JU: In that regard, I suppose there is a lot that bilingual Christians like you could do in communicating the needs of Japan and expanding networks.

HI: One of the exciting things to be associated with The 4 to 14 Window Movement is that you get to know a broad spectrum of ministries for the next generation in Japan and overseas.

JU: There you go. Thank you all for your time today.



DRCnet 3.11 Disaster Fourth Anniversary Symposium “Reevaluating the Church from Perspectives Gained from the Disaster Area”

Christian Shimbun article translated by *Hiromi Kiuchi*

On February 21, 2015, Disaster Relief Christian Network (DRCnet) hosted the Great East Japan Earthquake Disaster Fourth Anniversary Symposium: “Relief and Mission since 3.11” at Ochanomizu Christian Center in Tokyo. Two panelists, Masaki Sasaki, pastor of Kitakami Bible Baptist Church and secretary of 3.11 Iwate Church Network, and Hiroaki Yonai, pastor of Kokubunji Baptist Church and Sola NPO representative, spoke about their work in the Tohoku region.

Both Rev. Sasaki and Rev. Yonai have published short books with Word of Life Press, reflecting on their experiences in the disaster area: 「境界」その先へ (“Kyoukai,” Sono Saki E / Beyond the Boundaries!) and 見上げる空 (Miageru Sora / Look Up to the Sky) respectively.



Rev. Sasaki

Rev. Sasaki first spoke about boundary lines. “A boundary line is quite important, as it draws a line between you and others and allows you to affirm your identity. However, sometimes boundary lines may become irrelevant—for example when there is an emergency, such as a disaster, or when you show love to your neighbor. When I decided to love my neighbors, interaction took place at the soul level with people on the other side of the boundary line. We are gradually redrawing our boundary lines as we rediscover the gospel and cooperate interdenominationally.”



He also mentioned the fact that many churches and individual Christians have questioned whether we should continue supporting relief operations, since it is “not true evangelism.” Despite such opinions, Rev. Sasaki declares, “No matter what, we will not separate support work from mission work. It is important for

Christians, who have received hope and encouragement from Jesus, to remain with the disaster victims and to eat and drink with them. When you remain by someone’s side, you will be able to work in many different ways with them.”

Rev. Sasaki also commented on difficulties in rural evangelism: “There are regions around Japan that are being disregarded. Their population is decreasing and talented people are concentrating in the cities. The problem of small church support is unavoidable.”



Rev. Yonai shared his experience of interacting with disaster victims and of how he was constantly reevaluating the gospel, the message of the cross, and the Church.

He discussed the word *okamainaku* (please don’t bother) that a disaster victim said to him. “This is my personal take on this, but I believe this word conveys to us we have no right to make a distinction between the one helping and the one being helped.”

Rev. Yonai also mentioned early churches—their aim to live together and keep the church as a place where everyone can gather and eat, despite one’s social status, rank, or gender. He challenged the attendees, “With whom will present churches eat? Can you change yourselves to do so? To eat with disaster victims is no different than living together with people at your workplace or a situation when you are sick.”



Rev. Yonai

After Rev. Sasaki and Rev. Yonai shared, the attendees broke up into small groups to discuss issues such as relief operations and what churches or ministries ought to be doing.

Campaign to Receive the Nobel Peace Prize

Although the citizens of Japan who have maintained the Constitution of Japan (in particular, Article Nine) have failed to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, more than 440,000 signatures have been collected in the course of this campaign, and attention has been given to it both inside and outside of Japan.

When the Nobel Prize Committee announced the names of Kailash Satyarthi and Malala Yousafzai as winners of the Peace Prize in 2014, Naomi Takasu (Ohno Christ Church, Japan Baptist Church Association), who initiated this campaign, smiled and clapped for Malala in front of the Internet



screen at the Unicom Plaza in Sagami-hara, Kanagawa Prefecture. This was where the members of the Organizing Committee for the Nobel

Peace Prize for Article Nine of the Constitution, its supporters, and 100 journalists gathered to see the result of the announcement. Yoshiaki Ishigaki, one of the members of the organizing committee, said, "Unfortunately, we failed to receive the prize this year, but our Constitution, Article Nine in particular, is now known all over the world. Japanese people should have a better understanding of the value of our Constitution and share its greatness with the people of the world. We will continue our campaign until the citizens of Japan are awarded the Prize."

Takasu explained her motivation for the campaign. "So many children the same age as mine have been sacrificed through war. I asked myself what I could do for them and found I could send email to the Nobel Prize Committee asking it to award the Peace Prize for Article Nine [of the Constitution of Japan]. I think, 'Let's stop war' is the ardent message of many people." She also expressed appreciation for elderly people who had experienced World War II and who collected signatures for their children and grandchildren, saying, "I felt their strong belief that we must not fight anymore."

One of the co-representatives, Masayuki Ochiai, mentioned that in the beginning, four core Christian members tried to get signatures from their relatives. Then the campaign spread among non-Christian groups such as Buddhists. "Religious people who seriously think about life aspire to keep Article Nine."

Another co-representative, Tsuneo Hoshino, expressed his hope for Christians who have international influence to receive the award next year.

Takasu adds, "What one person can do is limited, but as group, great power can be exerted. I hope we can move ahead together with a strong hope for peace."

The Constitution of Japan, Chapter ii. Renunciation of War, Article 9.

Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a

sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes.

In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.

Loving Our Muslim Neighbors

The Mission Committee of the Japan Evangelical Association (JEA) held a symposium entitled, "We Love Our Muslim Neighbors" on February 7, 2015 in Tokyo. In recognition of the emotional stress that followed the massacre of two Japanese by the Islamic State, one of whom was Christian journalist Kenji Goto, 80 people attended the lectures to learn how they best could pray for the situation.

The first speaker, Rev. Fumio Hamada, explained characteristics of Islamic societies and how they control faith-centered lifestyles. Culture, education, politics, customs, and religion are all integrated within Islamic law. Being a Muslim is synonymous with being a member of the community, which provides him with a job or even a wife. Generally, tribal Islamic societies have their own governing systems, and their members are united under their exclusive laws. These societies identify as either Sunni and Shiite, and disagree as to who is the right successor of Muhammad. For many Muslims, their tribes are their nations, while what we call "modern nations" and "country borders" are considered boundaries forced upon them by western countries. Hamada explained, "People suffer within the gap created by the 'new nations.' We need to understand the people living 'within the gaps' or people who cannot live even there anymore."

The second speaker, Masaru Aoki, who works as a business partner for Muslims, spoke about the radical expansion of Halal approved food markets in Southeast Asia and the role of Japanese Church Family Camp in Asia which has been shared by many multicultural families and individuals. After that, Kenichi Shinagawa, General Secretary of the JEA, talked about AEA: The Gospel and Neighbors of Other Faiths Congress in 2011. He reported that in Japan, where at least 70,000 Muslims live, many students and businessmen have converted to Islam after they study abroad or when they marry. Shinagawa pointed out that we need to learn how to respond to these Islamized changes in the world. "A convert from Islam to Christianity said his conversion was the result of the help and love given to him. The first expression of love is to know them. We need to know them, understand them, and support them for the next step."



The attendees gathered into small discussion groups and prayed that: 1) we can continue our support with love where needed, 2) we can continue sending missionaries to the world without hesitation, and 3) we can remember the people or the countries behind the sensational news of extremists.

(translated by Tomoko Kato)

Led to God Through Her Brother's Disease

Naoko Suetsugu works in a facility for the disabled run by Yodogawa Eiko Church. Four years ago she wrote *Unstoppable Love*, a booklet about both her faith and the life of her brother Hirofumi Ishii, who passed away in 2007. In the opening acknowledgements she writes: "I express my gratitude and respect to my beloved brother Hirofumi to whom I dedicate this booklet. Hiro-kun—you fought your illness bravely and with your disability ran your race until the end. I am proud and thankful that God chose me to be your sister." Through Hirofumi's gospel testimony, not only did his sister Naoko become a Christian, but also her father, step-mother, step-sister, step-brother, cousins, and close friends. This "storm of grace and miracles" continues today.

—Tomiko Fujiwara

Naoko Suetsugu

Health care worker with Independence for the Physically Disabled Association



Her brother's helper

Naoko Suetsugu's brother Hirofumi was born in 1965 as a normal energetic baby. It wasn't until six months later that the family discovered he suffered from hemophilia A. Hemophilia A is an illness in which factor VIII (FVIII) is lacking in the bloodstream and impairs the body's ability to stop bleeding. Hirofumi had no FVIII in his body, which made his a severe case. If he were to bleed, he would need a blood transfusion or all the blood would drain from his circulatory system. As a result, it was his family's daily duty to make sure he didn't get hurt or bleed internally. Naoko says, "Since I was the eldest of the siblings and my grandparents' first grandchild, it should have been me who was treated as special—like a princess in my family. However, our roles were reversed, and I became Hiro-kun's helper."

Naoko was the one who noticed the most how much anguish her mother Tomie went through. Tomie would accompany the repeatedly hospitalized Hirofumi to and from the hospital and would blame herself for having given birth to him. Once she was brought to the point of attempting to kill him and then committing suicide.

However Naoko says, "When my brother was a child, his doctor would say 'His smile is like that of an angel.' He was treated as precious by everyone, loved by all, and grew into an innocent boy who lived an unconstrained life. My brother's smile rescued my mother from this desperate situation."

Daily life revolved around Hirofumi, so Naoko led an unsatisfying childhood. She was jealous of her younger brother, felt she didn't get enough attention from her parents, and was constantly angry—wanting to get revenge against her unfair situation.

Naoko couldn't forget the sorrow and discomfort she felt when her mother would say, "Don't tell anyone about Hiro-kun's illness." There was still much discrimination and prejudice against the disabled. Hirofumi had various other illnesses as a result of his hemophilia, and as a result had other disabilities, both physical and intellectual. Naoko continually suffered from the difficulty of being in the same family as a disabled person.

When Hirofumi started working at Yodogawa Eiko Church, which had a workplace for disabled people, things started to change for Naoko and her brother. Hirofumi put his faith in Jesus Christ with little hesitation and earnestly started inviting Naoko to church.

"I tagged along hesitantly, but since I found it difficult to trust anyone, I sat hidden away and would doze off in an attempt to go

unnoticed. Strangely enough, sometimes the words of the sermon would enter my ears and I would find myself crying. I later understood that this was the Holy Spirit working in me, but since I was stubbornly determined to get through difficulties by myself, I didn't realize at the time that I needed Jesus as my Savior."

My brother, mother and I are precious creations of God

Years later, Tomie passed away from a illness of her lungs. In response to Hirofumi's wish, her funeral was held in the church. Pastor Kazumasa Yamanaka said in his sermon: "God had a purpose in creating Hirofumi with his disabilities, and in God's eyes he was a masterpiece. In the same way, Tomie is a strong and wonderful woman whom God chose from all other women to be his mother, as he knew that she would be able to take on this role." Naoko was stunned. She had always thought of her mother as a victim who had to overcome struggles. For the very first time, Naoko felt proud of her mother. It was also the very first time she came to know how wonderful the Creator is. She had always thought that her own life was victimized due to Hirofumi, but she realized that she might have been wrong. It was as if the gray clouds around her had broken and a ray of light was shining through.

After that, Mrs Suetsugu started working where she still works today. She thought "caring for people is my calling," but she soon came to realize that loving people with disabilities wasn't easy.

"Love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31 NIV)

When Naoko heard this Bible verse, she understood—unless a person can love oneself, they will not be able to love others. She once heard the parable of the prodigal son, which she understood as herself. "I could feel the warmth of the Lord's arms all across me as he came running towards me and held me in his arms. I sobbed like a child and jumped into his arms."

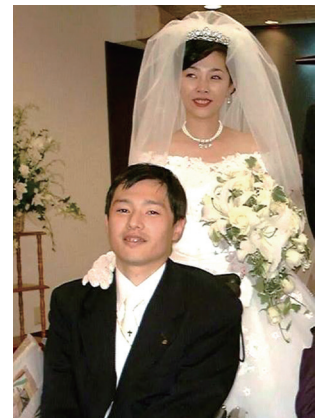
On New Year's Day 2002, Naoko was baptized. In the same year, she married Kaoru Suetsugu.

Hirofumi went to be with the Lord in September 2007 at the age of 42. That he made it to that age was a miracle. The staff at the Kansai Medical University Hospital, who had taken care of Hirofumi for 42 years, lined up in a row to bid farewell to his body.

To deal with the gap in her life, and as a means to spread the gospel, Naoko wrote an essay entitled "Unstoppable Love" and paid for it to be published as a booklet.

"Thinking about it now, it was my brother who kept my family together. Whenever my brother smiled my family was happy. Instead of being a burden to us, he was someone we all needed. Because Hiro-kun loved me at the risk of his own life, he brought me to God. It was he who guided our family. He came into this world with an illness that would eventually kill him, but he was loved to the full and returned that love directly back to us."

Last year, Naoko's essay was published in serial form in the Osaka Daily News (Osaka Nichi-Nichi Shimbun) and resonated with the public. Her desire is to help the disabled and their families as they overcome difficulties. She thinks that no matter who a person is, they can live their life shining brightly and she would like to support that. (translated by Grace Koshino)



Please Pray for Japan

1. That God will use the Sixth Japan Congress on Evangelism (JCE6) to advance the Kingdom of God here in Japan and pave the way for a greater sense of unity in mission and creative collaboration among churches in Japan.
2. That through the preparations for JCE6, younger leaders will be connected, encouraged, and equipped for ministry for this next generation.
3. That churches throughout Japan will continue to stand together with the churches and pastors of the Tohoku disaster area in service and ministry to hurting people in their local communities.
4. That we will get to know more about ministry to our Muslim neighbors who are increasing in number here in Japan.

JEA related Schedule

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>PLACE</u>
June 29	Metro Tokyo Disaster Response Church Network Summit	Tokyo
July 19–20	Mission Forum in Aomori	Aomori
Sept. 19	JEA Youth Gathering for the 70th Memorial of World War II	Tokyo
Sept. 28–29	JEA Mission Forum in Osaka	Osaka

Editorial

When JCE4 was held in Okinawa in 2000, I was a young participant. It was my first year as a senior pastor and I was feeling overwhelmed with all the responsibilities. I remember I was very much encouraged by the whole gathering because I felt I was not alone in ministry. Meeting fellow pastors and missionaries and hearing messages and testimonies at the Congress really helped me to see the bigger picture of how God is working in Japan.

Later, I served as a member of the administration team for JCE5 in 2009 and met with many pastors who I work with now. JCE is a great opportunity to connect and encourage young leaders. I can certainly say that from my own experience. Please pray for the young participants who will come to JCE6—that God will prepare their hearts for the next generation of mission in Japan.

Kenichi Shinagawa, Editor in Chief

<http://jeanet.org/>

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Chairman : Takao Nakadai
General Secretary : Kenichi Shinagawa

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