

An Easter Message from the Great East Japan Disaster Zone “Even now the risen Lord is going before you to Galilee.” (Mark 16:7)

by Konishi Nozomi, pastor
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Tohoku District Moderator

Three years have passed since the Great East Japan Disaster, but we cannot report yet that its effects have ended. Even now, we continue to walk through the aftereffects of that disaster. On the other hand, through great effort we can see that there is real change.

In the New Testament, there are various ways in which the word “time” is used. Among these, the Greek language of the New Testament includes the word *kairos*. This word has a special meaning and is not synonymous with other words for time. It is used to indicate a unique instant of time. In Romans 13:11 and following, (“Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers.” NRSV), we stand on the premise that the meaning of the time through which we are walking is being revealed through the light of the history of salvation. Also, the writer is saying that since we know history is fulfilled by God, we should walk as ones walking in the light even when we are passing through darkness.

We experience important *kairos* time in various ways: at birth, in certain encounters, when our lives are completed and we pass away. I think the disaster of March 11, 2011 was a *kairos* moment that cannot be exchanged for any other moment of time.

When the earthquake began, I was in the parsonage. The daycare program was in process at the church kindergarten, so I stumbled down the stairs amidst the severe shaking and with glass breaking and cracking, passed through the church, and went toward the kindergarten. Following prescribed procedure, four children vacated the premises and stooped down on the ground outside. The church steeple was moving and twisting. The kindergarten was about to close at the end of the March, that’s why there were only four children present.

After a few minutes the shaking stopped, and I foolishly thought that although what had happened was awful, it was all over. But it was not the end; it was only the beginning. I could not have imagined that at that moment one of the church members was being swallowed by the tsunami. This sister’s passing was confirmed in June, and the funeral was conducted in the kindergarten hall because the church was unusable. No answer was given to my recurring question of “why.” What might be the reason for all of this?

In early spring of 2012, when I participated in a pastors’ seminar in Kyoto District to report on the disaster, one pastor asked, “Is it all right to just let the earthquake be an earthquake, the tsunami be a tsunami, and the nuclear melt down just be a meltdown?” It was a call for us all to follow the Lord and to focus on Him as the one who brings renewal as a light shining in the darkness. After the disaster, many prayers and messages of comfort were offered. From all over Japan and all over the world volunteers rushed to help, pouring out their sweat and sharing our feelings. As has

been reported, the Tohoku District Relief Center “Emmaus,” through its bases in Sendai and Ishinomaki, has coordinated the work of over 5,600 volunteers, and that work is still continuing. Church buildings and parsonages have been rebuilt in Tohoku District. Of the 19 churches needing to be repaired, 15 have been restored, and the remaining 4 will be completed this year. The prayers and gifts of churches throughout the country have been behind all of this.

However, our inability to solve the big issue of radioactive contamination leaves us frustrated. Plans to reopen two small churches are stymied because of their location in no-entry zones. Last year in November, the Tohoku District Radiation Problem Response and Support Center “Izumi” was established, and cooperation with the local population has begun. Also, churches in other nations continue to give priority to this concern and to show their support. Through this, we are deepening our relationships, particularly with the churches of the United States and Taiwan. The great sorrow is turning to hope.

As I touch and join in these various efforts, my thoughts keep returning to the resurrection appearance of the Lord. In the passage describing the risen Lord revealing himself to the disciples on the road to Emmaus, the Lord Jesus approached the two disciples who were walking with downcast faces and began to walk with them. (Luke 24:13ff) As we read that account, we become aware that the risen Lord is walking with us, as we see ourselves wandering here and there.

Those who went to visit the Lord’s grave met an angel who told them, “He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.” (Mk. 16:7) These words resound in us: the resurrected Lord has been working ahead of us in the disaster area of Tohoku.

Still, the road we must travel is long. When John the Baptist sent a disciple to ask when salvation would come and if they would have to wait for another person, Jesus replied that if people who are suffering are being healed and helped, the salvation of the Kingdom of God is already appearing. (Luke 7:18ff) This is what we are now seeing and hearing.

Ecologist Tanaka Yu, director of the Activities Union of Future Bank, is a frequent visitor to Tohoku. In a speech he delivered to a Tohoku District gathering, he said, “In that sorrowful nuclear accident, I see a point of change. I have been given a dream and a sense of responsibility towards a better environment in the future.” A young person, who came to the Emmaus Center to encounter the devastation, decided through that experience to be baptized and will enter seminary this spring.

The resurrected Lord does not leave an earthquake as an earthquake, a tsunami as a tsunami, or a nuclear accident as an accident. He brings something new out of these things. I want to walk forward looking toward that hope. That is my plea. (Tr. GM)

Aftereffects of Chernobyl Nuclear Disaster Still Evident

Excerpts from the lecture of Dr. Dorte Siedentopf of the Evangelical Mission in Solidarity as published in the pamphlet the Kyodan's International Conference of the East Japan Disaster held in March 2014

After the Chernobyl catastrophe on April 26, 1986, the German section of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), of which I am a member, agreed not only to fight for nuclear abolition but also to work towards a nuclear-free world. A world without nuclear weapons will only be possible if we also phase out nuclear energy.

As physicians, we are deeply concerned about the environmental and health implications of all aspects of the nuclear chain, from the public health impact of uranium mining and the creation of large radioactive tailing ponds to the inherent danger of processing and transporting highly radioactive fissionable material across the globe. Fissionable material can be used for both civilian and military use. Inherent is the proliferation risk, the global health impact of nuclear weapons testing, and of course, the unsolved problem of nuclear waste to be stored for millions of years and numerous generations to come.

I want to share some aspects of the Chernobyl accident in 1986 that affected the northern hemisphere, most of all Belarus, which has been an independent state since 1990. The Republic of Belarus was a part of the Soviet Union at the time of the accident at Chernobyl. (From Chernobyl to the border of Belarus is about 16km.) On 25 percent of its territory, 70 percent of the radioactive fallout was concentrated, and three million of its population of ten million people still live with its effects. The amount of radioactivity released equals about 17 Hiroshima bombs. In 1990, I went to Belarus for the first time. We visited a rehabilitation center for children who had been operated on for thyroid cancer. I will never forget their sad, hopeless, and questioning expressions.

Kasciukovicy is the name of the area where yellowish rain fell on its territory of 1,500 sq. km. in early May 1986. Cynical decision makers had not warned the people to stay inside their houses. Headache, nausea, vomiting, pain in the throat, various skin problems, and coughing were reported. Months later people learned that this rain had something to do with Chernobyl.

During the first days of the disaster, the winds blew from southeast to northwest. That is why the catastrophe was first detected in Sweden. When the winds changed direction, blowing from the west towards Moscow, clouds were artificially dissipated, which released rain by which 25 percent of the fertile land and nearly 30 villages were contaminated to various degrees through radioactive fallout. For ten years, we paid attention mainly to medical problems and provided their 100-year-old hospital with medicine and materials. Now the emphasis is on humanitarian and social help. Since 1991, we have invited children every summer to Germany for recuperation. Schoolteachers confirm that children who have spent several weeks in a stress-free atmosphere with good environmental conditions and clean food are less apt to become sick and are more attentive for at least one school year.

From my numerous visits to Belarus, I have learned how politicians whitewash the consequences of the catastrophe. Signs warning people not to enter contaminated woods to collect mushrooms or pick berries were removed, although even in Germany, game animals taken in hunting are still carefully monitored for radiation contamination. While the radioactive isotopes in fertile soil sink into the ground at the rate of about two cm. per year, in marshland and woodlands they remain on the surface and so are absorbed by plants and animals, thus entering the food chain.

Death statistics are falsified: in Kasciukovicy, people do not die from Chernobyl-related diseases but rather these are attributed to accidents, infections, alcoholism, tuberculosis contracted in Moscow while there as a guest worker, et cetera, and anyone over 60 is considered to be in old age. Childbirth statistics are difficult to obtain, but the number of premature births and developmentally delayed babies is increasing. If intrauterine malformations are detected through ultrasonic tests, abortions are performed to cut the number of genetic deformities. Practically no family is without a Chernobyl victim. People clearly state: "We do not live after Chernobyl, we live with Chernobyl." As Christians, we are responsible to protect and preserve the living world and inanimate nature. Let us use our skills to work for a nuclear-free world.

—Summarized by KNL Editor Kawakami Yoshiko

Looking at Fukushima in the Light of Chernobyl

A Report on the Study Tour to Chernobyl

For the past 27 years, since the Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident, the National Christian Council in Japan's Project on the Issues of the Chernobyl Disaster has been organizing study tours, and with the cooperation of the NCCJ Peace and Nuclear Issues Committee, a seven-day Chernobyl Study Tour took place last September. One of the participants, a pastor of a church less than 25 kilometers from the nuclear power plant in Fukushima, sent the following opinion about facing the problems of radiation.

A Recuperation Program for Children

by Park Jeong Yeon, former pastor
Haramachi Church, Tohoku District

Haramachi Church is in the town of Minami Soma in Fukushima Prefecture, about 25 kilometers from the Fukushima No.1 nuclear reactor. I was assigned there after the Great East Japan Disaster, so for three years I interacted with the local people and attended lectures about radiation.

The persons suffering from radiation, are insisting that the issues must not be allowed to dwindle away. However I could not help thinking that they themselves use the term "fuhyo higai" (financial damage caused by harmful rumors or misinformation) unconsciously to make the serious realities of the pollution fade into the background.

At this point, as a result of hearing a lecture given in Sendai by Dr. Yamazaki Tomoyuki, a member of the Airin Church in Osaka who has been working through the NCCJ to support people suffering as a result of the Chernobyl disaster, I decided to take part in the Chernobyl Study Tour.

I was most interested to see for myself how people are living and dealing with the pollution that still continues 27 years after the accident. I hoped to receive hints for dealing with a situation in which, as time passes, rifts develop due to differences of opinion and priority is given to the continued existence of towns and economic factors. Through my visit, however, I discovered that Belarus is also producing vague

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Shinto no Tomo (Believers' Friend) —Reflections on 50 Years of Publication

By Yoshioka Mitsuhito, pastor
Kichijoji Church, West Tokyo District
Chief Editor, *Shinto no Tomo*

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Kyodan publication *Shinto no Tomo* (Believers' Friend), which was founded in April 1964, the year of the Tokyo Olympics and the beginning of a period of high economic growth in Japan. In the early stages of preparation for publication, the following four purposes were established for the publication.

1. Increase a Sense of Solidarity among Believers/Laity.
By doing write-ups on laity and churches across the country, we have endeavored to build solidarity by nurturing shared support and prayer. In cases of natural disaster, we have continued to do our best to raise the voice of individuals and churches in those areas and enable prayer support and connection to the larger church. We continue to cover newsrelated to the Great East Japan Disaster and the dilemma of areas affected by radiation.

2. Provide Nurture and Education for Believers/Laity.
For continued spiritual growth and faith development of the laity/believer, we have provided insightful articles on biblical studies, church doctrine, and church history. There is a Bible study related to the special theme for each issue. In the "Daily Bread" column, there are meditations based on daily Bible readings that provide spiritual manna. Many use these for their morning or evening prayer times. We also featured a series on suicide, which has been a bit of a taboo subject in both the society at large and the church. The series featured interviews with experts in the field as well as the voices of those whose family members have committed suicide, with the theme "How should we deal with suicides and support their loved ones left behind?" We are now in the midst of a new series on cancer, with the hope that we can encourage dialog with our readers concerning this modern problem that many laypeople face.

3. Share the Gospel.
In a generation that is seeing rapid change in our society and lifestyles, we endeavor to share the gospel in ways that communicate today. For example, we are now trying to learn the possibilities and limitations of sharing the gospel through the Internet.



1964年創刊号



1968年6月号



1988年4月号



2014年4月号

4 examples of *Shinto no Tomo's* front page

4. Provide Enjoyable Reading Material.
Over the years, *Shinto no Tomo* has included photographs and paintings as well as serialized novels and translations of foreign literature. From 1966, Miura Ayako's novel *Shiokari Pass* was serialized for 2.5 years in our publication. (Miura Ayako was one of the best-known Japanese Christian authors in the second half of the 20th century.) We have also included cartoons and quizzes for enjoyable reading. Japanese poetry, such as *tanka* and *haiku* as well as a section for poetry from our readers, has also been included. As the times change, the face of *Shinto no Tomo* will probably change as well. However, as we continue our publication, we will not lose sight of our mission to share the gospel and provide nurture and education for the laity of the church in Japan. (Tr. JS)

Looking at Fukushima (Cont'd from p. 2)

information about the reality of the pollution and falsifying data about radiation damage in the interest of the economy, so there is little difference from Japan. It seems the president of the country announced in 2009 that there was no connection between any illnesses and the Chernobyl disaster, as he figured the issue of compensation would lead to financial difficulties. On the other hand, help accepted from overseas for the purpose of building sanatoriums for children were used instead to build research facilities for specially chosen elite students. We only hope that the Japanese government does not follow the same path as the Belarus government, in refusing to give human life priority over everything else, but rather takes this as a negative example from which to gain the wisdom and strength to open up the way to true recovery.

Actually, doctors in Belarus have raised objections to the announcement that no harm to health has been caused by radiation. In Japan, the criteria for examining the thyroid deems it sufficient to check lumps of less than 5 mm and cysts of less than 20 mm again after two years. I asked about the situation in Belarus and discovered that any lump of even 2-3 mm is checked again after 3 months. This is quite different from the situation in Fukushima where, except at the Fukushima Prefectural University of Medicine, it is difficult even to get a thyroid examination.

It was extremely valuable to learn about the various programs and measures being put into effect by facilities in Belarus. Here in Fukushima we first must endeavor to provide programs through which children subjected to radiation due to the convenience and judgment of adults can recuperate elsewhere for at least three weeks. This will not be realized while the continued existence and economy of towns and villages is given priority over concerns about future health problems and the primary consideration is the fear that people will move away if their anxiety and sense of danger increase.

Various organizations offer respite programs, but the majority are for overnight or two to three nights at most. The recuperation programs for children subjected to radiation in Chernobyl have shown that to stimulate the metabolism and eliminate the effects of internal irradiation, a minimum recuperation period of three weeks is necessary. I find it extremely hard to accept that the children of Fukushima are being offered an outing to relax, in the name of "recuperation," as if all they need is a chance to feel refreshed.

It is my prayer that although they have been forced to suffer and live together within a polluted natural environment, the children of this place will become adults who love people and nature. (Tr. SN)

—From *Shinto no Tomo* (Believers' Friends) March 2014 issue

Evangelizing Japanese People in Singapore

by Matsumoto Akihiro, pastor
Singapore Japanese Christian Church

After serving as pastor in a church in Hokkaido for 12 years, I became the pastor of the Jakarta Japanese Christian Fellowship for 7 years, from 2005-12. The church then called a Japanese pastor who is 16 years younger than I. So from April 2012, my wife and I became “traveling evangelists,” and so we called ourselves the “migratory bird couple.” Beginning with Jerusalem and the Middle East, we traveled through Europe and Asia, particularly taking the message to Japanese-speaking churches without pastors. For three months during that period, we served the Singapore Japanese Christian Fellowship, and after receiving an invitation from that congregation, I was formally installed as pastor in March 2013.

Expressing it in one phrase, Singapore is “a good fishing ground.” There is the sense that if you lower your net, you can make a catch of fish that are really lively. Compared to the 8,000 Japanese living in Jakarta, there are 31,000 living in Singapore, and this number is increasing. About 20 percent of the population in Singapore is Christian. In addition, there are many ardent evangelists. So there are many opportunities for Japanese people to meet Christians in their workplaces and neighborhoods, and as a result, there are many Japanese who have a favorable impression of the church. For example, from about ten years ago, the International Baptist Church has offered free English classes. Approximately 600 persons registered, about 70 percent of whom are Japanese, and they are not only studying English but the Bible as well.

The Singapore Christian Fellowship was begun by a British missionary couple after they had worked in Japan and moved to Singapore to serve as general director of the Overseas Missionary Fellowship (OMF). Formal worship began in 1975, and so this year, it will be celebrating its 39th anniversary. For 38 years of that period, the congregation had free use of the sanctuary and facilities of St. George’s Church of the Church of England. This was a great privilege. Three years ago, the church commemorated the 100th anniversary of the church building. This historic structure was used as a weapons storage area during the period when Singapore was controlled by Japan.

I am the third full-time pastor in the 39-year history of the Singapore Japanese Christian Fellowship. The first pastor served for four years during the 1980s, and the second pastor, who died of cancer, for three years from 1999. That means that the period without a full-time pastor was extremely long, and in the interim period, no doubt, it was the grace of God that continued to protect and keep the church going.

St. George’s Church has two worship services in the morning and one in the evening, so the Japanese-language worship service is held from 2:30 p.m. About 70 persons gather in the open-air church, which seats over 300 people. Unfortunately, it is inconvenient for some people to attend the Sunday worship service. Thus, since I have assumed the pastorate,



The 2014 Easter service at the Singapore Japanese Church

we have begun Tuesday morning and evening services, and I give the same message that I give on Sunday. Fortunately, there are many persons who like to study the Bible. Thus, Bible studies are held nearly every day in various places. Besides myself, there are several persons who take leadership, which is helpful. Within the short space of this year, 8 persons have been baptized, 17 persons have joined the church, and the church has become very active.

In response to a proposal from St. George’s Church, we started an elementary-level English-language class for Japanese wives from January of this year. The first time it was held, there was one class with 16 members, and nearly 10 persons came from St. George’s Church to help as volunteer English-language teachers. The class is very popular with the students. The second time, we increased the classes to two, and they are already full.

One of the issues facing our church is the scarcity of children and junior/senior-high youth. Church school is held during the 2:30 p.m. worship service on Sunday and is conducted by two teachers in a separate room, with less than ten students. To enable even partial participation by the minister and more church members, from May we began church school at 2:00. As an evangelism program for children, every year in August we hold a summer school for three consecutive days. Over 50 children participate, and on the last day nearly all the children express belief in Jesus. A total of 240 persons attended the “Christmas Worship Service for Adults and Children” at Christmastime last year. We are hoping that these children will become connected to the church.

In order to draw young people, we will sponsor a three-day evangelistic concert in July, inviting “Night de Light,” a Christian rock group from Japan. This is made possible by the financial support of the Singapore Church. I am so grateful that in this way we are able to transcend church and race to evangelize the Japanese people together. (Tr. RT)

Ringing the Alarm Bell to Churches Worldwide— Experiences and Insights from East Japan

by Ulrike Schmidt-Hesse, EMS deputy general secretary
Head of Mission and Partnership Department, Stuttgart, Germany

I am most grateful to Kyodan for organizing the March 11-14 conference “Against the Myth of the Safety of Nuclear Energy,” and I am grateful that the Evangelical Mission in Solidarity (EMS) was invited to participate. It was a moving experience to get together as Christians from Japan and from other countries, to pray jointly at the memorial service on March 11, and to listen to the sermon about the darkness and silence that survivors experienced after the earthquake and tsunami, which was in vast contrast to “normal” modern life, and their longing for a word—a word of life, and for light—a light of hope.

I was deeply impressed at the conference by the reports from students, men and women, lay persons and pastors, who have been working with and for the survivors of the disaster for three years, as well as by the speeches on political, theological, and other dimensions of our theme from Japan and from other countries. I learned a lot about the system of sacrifice, about the kairos for repentance and new direction, about radiation information and “foot washing,” about the need for reliable information and space for critical discussion; and I got to know many persons with compassion, commitment and courage. Working with the statement committee was a challenging experience for which I am most grateful.

As a group of persons from the Kyodan and several other countries and churches, we underwent an intense process in terms of theology and spirituality and intercultural communication. It was good to see that our text was appreciated and well received by the plenary. The statement—along with the reports and speeches from the conference

as well as personal reports from participants—is a good instrument to help ring the alarm bell to the churches around the world.

In my view, the objective of the conference to reflect together on the problems of nuclear power generation and the efforts to solve them in different countries, has been fulfilled. The important task now is to share our common insights with the churches of the world. EMS as an institution and I personally are most willing to contribute to this. Many churches in the EMS Fellowship are located in countries where nuclear energy is used and produced, such as India and Korea. In other countries, such as Ghana, the government is considering the introduction of nuclear power generation. There are countries like Germany where, after the disaster at Fukushima Daiichi, the government has decided to abolish nuclear energy; yet in the meantime, the voices of those who want to prolong the use of nuclear energy are being raised again. All of us need alarm bells to keep warning us about the danger of nuclear energy and reminding us to develop a civilization without nuclear weapons and nuclear energy. It is important for the churches to learn to deal with controversies, to promote critical discussion, to become agents of change in our societies, and to build a global solidarity network. I hope that the worldwide ecumenical movement and the World Council of Churches will amplify the sound of the bell from Japan.

The visits after the conference to the memorial sites in Ishinomaki and the nuclear power plant in Onagawa, as well as the encounters with survivors of the disaster and with persons protesting the use of nuclear power, will remain in my heart and mind. Let us be missionaries of life; let us walk together.

The Kyodan's International Conference on Nuclear Issues Found Significant for Taiwan

by Rev. Ching-An Yeh
Program Secretary for Ecumenical Relations, The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan

“I am Human, and I am Against Nuclear Power!” This is the slogan we always hear during anti-nuclear demonstrations in Taiwan. It is a call for awareness of how inhuman it is to pursue economic growth through the development of nuclear power at the cost of the Earth and humanity. In present-day Taiwan, as well as in many parts of the world, we are witnessing the destruction of the environment due to greed and selfishness coupled with mistaken political policies, which leads to a loss of harmony between human beings and nature. This is all the more critical as we see people of many developed countries gradually recognizing the inherent destructive qualities of nuclear power, halting future construction of nuclear power plants, and abandoning present plants. At the same time, our government still stubbornly maintains the necessity of using nuclear power, ignores the great threat to Taiwan's survival and development, and disregards the wishes of the people and the warnings of scholars and experts.

Based on its theological tradition, the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan believes that the whole universe is the creation of God and that humankind is called to protect the integrity and harmony of the whole natural order. Thus, it is the responsibility of all Christians to be the agents of God to work for the change of present human-centered behaviors, so that nature can be self-sustaining and the ongoing welfare of our succeeding generations will be insured. Therefore, our church earnestly presented the following statements to our government in 1992.

1. Nuclear power is not a completely safe source of energy; Taiwan should not develop nuclear power stations.
2. There is no satisfactory method of handling nuclear waste. The construction of future nuclear power stations, as well as the use of the present ones, should be stopped.
3. Review again Taiwan's energy policy; create a safe, clean alternative source of energy.
4. Change the lifestyle of all our citizens, and promote the economization of energy resources.

The last point, which is surely not the least, reflects why the ruling KMT (Kuomintang) government in Taiwan still keeps emphasizing the necessity of nuclear power, even though our other power plants are, in fact, able to produce more electricity than we really need. The government's policy is focused on economic growth, which requires a whole economic system that encourages consumption. Naturally, a superficial “quick-fix” to the high demands of energy is nuclear power plants. However, this kind of “quick fix” always produces far more problems than solutions and, as we have seen in the aftermath of the Fukushima disaster, costs much more than people expect.

March 11, 2014 marked the third anniversary of the 2011 Great East Japan Disaster. What happened in Fukushima, especially the radioactive contamination after the explosions at the Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, has impacted many

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An Ardent Longing for our Home in Heaven

by Shimada Masayoshi
Former Director of University Religious Activities
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“Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one.” (Hebrews 11:16)

Dora Schoonmaker, Julius Soper, and Robert Maclay, the three missionary founders of Aoyama Gakuin, left their country behind them and set out across the ocean, as did the pilgrim fathers of the U.S. However, it was not the Atlantic Ocean but the Pacific Ocean that they crossed to stand on the land of Japan. We refer to these three missionaries in the order of Schoonmaker, Soper and Maclay, because of the founding order of the predecessors of Aoyama Gakuin, namely the schools to which they were called: the Girl's Elementary School, the Kokyo Gakusha Boys' School and the Methodist Mission Seminary.

The last one, Maclay, was indeed the oldest and most experienced and, at that time in the Methodist Episcopal Church, the person at the center of Far East evangelism. In 1848, at the age of 24, Maclay embraced a vision for evangelism in China and, after 166 days aboard a ship from New York, arrived in Fuzhou in Fujian Province. He could not speak the language, had no place to live, and was starting from nothing. Then for over 25 years, Maclay poured out his heart and soul for the evangelization of China. He compiled and published a Fujian language dictionary, founded a school, and built a hospital as well as two large churches. His first baptism service was held the ninth year after he began evangelistic work in China, which indicates the extent of his hardships. (In contrast, during the second year after his arrival in Japan, Soper baptized Tsuda Sen and his wife Hatsuko, and while in her second year in Japan, Schoonmaker led four of her students to baptism.)

Maclay had hope and persistence that brought flowers to bloom. However, this was accompanied by great sacrifice and sadness. He and his wife Henrietta had eight children, but during the couple's period of evangelism in China, four of them were called to heaven. Furthermore when he worked in Japan, his fourth son George, who was studying at Syracuse University to become a missionary like his father, also passed away.

So of their eight children, five died. While the child mortality rate was certainly high 150 years ago, having to bear such loss must have been a very severe cross to bear! Without the hope of reunion in our heavenly home, how could anyone ever endure such an ordeal?

Maclay and his wife arrived in the port of Yokohama on June 6, 1873. They had been engaged in evangelism in China for some 25 years, and their mission was producing a fruitful harvest. Thus, it was time to make way for younger men, so Maclay came to Japan to serve as superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Church's Japan mission, which had been experiencing many difficulties. His lifestyle certainly did not include seeking a pleasurable cozy spot where he could put down roots. Maclay was 49 years old, so he would be handicapped by trying to learn

a new language. Nevertheless, he discontinued use of the Chinese language he had mastered and came to Japan.

In 1879 Maclay founded the Methodist Mission Seminary, and then in 1881, he changed the name of the Kokyo Gakusha Boys' School to Tokyo English School. The following year, the Methodist Mission Seminary was merged into Tokyo English School. In 1883 that school's name was changed to the Tokyo Anglo-Japanese College and was moved to its present location in Aoyama. This was made possible by the continuing support of his close friend John F. Goucher. Goucher's enormous financial backing of Japanese evangelism and education was realized because he had such a trustworthy prayer partner. In the 21st century, Aoyama Gakuin, which is probably built on the most expensive land in the world, developed to its present state through the support of these two persons' friendship in the Lord.

Maclay was further given a vision for evangelism in Korea. At the age of 59 he studied Korean and was appointed superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Church's mission in Korea. In actuality, Maclay spent only 24 days in Korea but guided the work in Korea from Japan. Thus, Robert Maclay, founding chancellor of Aoyama Gakuin, indeed went far beyond the framework of Aoyama Gakuin, leaving great footprints as a pioneer of Far East evangelism in China, Japan, and Korea.

Maclay returned to the U.S. in 1888 to become dean of a seminary in San Fernando, California and held that position for 14 years until his retirement at the age of 78. [This school later became the Claremont School of Theology.] What we are prone to forget is that in their latter years, those who devote their lives as missionaries encounter difficulty and loneliness. Their memories are of a period when they poured out their lives, body and soul, in missionary work, and there are no colleagues with whom to share these memories.

Two years before Maclay's death, when he was 81 years old, Rev. Ukai Kichijiro visited him and wrote about the experience as follows. "I entered the single room of the boarding house he was renting and saw him living alone. There was only one bed and a dresser, a sink, and toiletry items. In one corner was a dirty, damaged bag and trunk. The sparseness of things in the room made it appear humble, and as I looked over the condition of the elderly teacher in his later years, I could not help being choked up with tears of sympathy."

The man who had laid Aoyama Gakuin's foundation, a pioneer of Far East evangelism who had done such a great work, spent his latter years so very simplistically and humbly. But beyond doubt, the man himself possessed a spirit-filled peace. Why? Because he "...was longing for a better country—a heavenly one," and he knew without a doubt that he was a temporary resident on earth. (Tr. RT)

—Summarized by KNL Editor Kawakami Yoshiko

The Joy of Proclaiming Christ on Campus: Acting from the Heart rather than from a Sense of Duty

by Hayashi Misato

International Politics and Economics Department 4th year student

The first time I attended church was as a second-year junior high school student while living in the United States. For someone raised in a home with no connection to Christianity, everything at church was fresh and new. At the time, I had no desire to be baptized, but when I returned to Japan, I was led to attend church and was baptized a few days before the opening ceremony of Aoyama Gakuin High School.

In high school, I joined the Aoyama Bible Fellowship (ABF), which met once a week at lunchtime to study the Bible and sing praises. For a new Christian like me, the ABF study group was an interesting and fun way to spend my time.

On the other hand, there was also conflict within myself. I wanted others to know about my faith but at the same time feared what they might think of me. While I was feeling this way, my turn came to give the message at the weekly homeroom class worship. As I was struggling with what to say and praying about it, I decided to talk about how I was led to my faith. Afterward, several people showed interest in my story, and the fear and discomfort within me began to vanish. By taking a small courageous step, I was definitely blessed by God. In my days at high school, I was not ashamed to be a Christian, and decided to witness boldly for Christ during my three years there.

At the university, I joined the Aoyama Christian Fellowship (ACF), volunteered to support foreign students, and was also able to experience traveling abroad. As my encounters with others increased, opportunities to talk about my faith did as well. As a first-year student, telling the same story

over and over got to be somewhat of a burden. But now, I am truly able to enjoy sharing with my friends. When confronted with a difficult situation, the appropriate words were given to me; the church and ACF prayed with me; and little by little, God helped me to grow as a Christian. My feeling changed from a sense of duty, which dictated to me that "I must evangelize others," to one in which I love God so much that "I want to evangelize others."

There is an event at Aoyama Gakuin that I look forward to every year and have attended for seven years—the Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony. Just before Advent a huge Christmas tree is lighted, and the ceremony is attended by about 4,000 people, including students from the kindergarten through the university. In the midst of total darkness and cold the candles are lit, the choir sings, the brass band plays, and gradually the entire tree is lit up from top to bottom. For some reason, witnessing this makes me remember the birth of Christ. And every time I participate in this event, I remember the joy of having been led to Aoyama Gakuin as well.

Although Aoyama Gakuin is in the middle of a big city, there is worship every day; lectures and activities related to Christianity are abundant; and there are many opportunities to commune with God. As I think about graduation, I am very grateful to have had an environment like this, where in the middle of a busy day, there is a time to worship God and quiet my heart. Even after graduating and entering the workforce, I want to shine the light of Jesus Christ by remembering our school motto, "Salt of the Earth and Light of the World." (Tr. WJ)

Explanation of the school motto: "Salt of the Earth and Light of the World"

"Salt of the Earth" and "Light of the World" are terms used by Jesus to describe how the lives of Christians affect society and are more a declaration than a teaching. Aoyama Gakuin stands on the declaration that "you are precious."

"Salt of the Earth." Salt gives flavor, stops decay, and cleanses. Our bodies consist of 0.7 percent salt and need about 10 grams of salt each day. Just as salt is unseen in us, we should do things for others and for society without particularly being noticed to add flavor, stop decay, and cleanse what is unclean.

"Light of the World." Like a beacon or guiding light, light is what provides us with brilliance to lead us and warmth

to comfort us. Light also kills germs and provides us with energy. In the same way, the acts we do that are seen can provide others with hope, encouragement, and energy; this should be our school's goal.

Although the words "Earth" and "World" refer literally to our planet, "reality without God" and "humans deprived of dignity" are closer to what these words mean in this context. So through God's grace, because we are called "salt" and "light," Aoyama Gakuin should be demonstrating these truths in its education and cultivation of others. (Tr. WJ)

—From *Shinto no Tomo* (Believers' Friends), December 2013 issue

International Conference (Cont'd from p.5)

people—not only those in the affected area but also people of other countries. The impact of the nuclear disaster on the people in Taiwan is very significant because the nuclear disaster and its aftermath totally shattered the myth created by government propaganda that used Japan as an example of nuclear safety.

This fact shows how important the International Conference on the East Japan Disaster, hosted by the Kyodan in Sendai, March 11-14, was to the Taiwanese. While whether or not

to employ nuclear power is still a hot issue being debated in countries such as Japan and Taiwan, the International Conference in Sendai provided Christians from around the world the opportunity to show our solidarity in the struggle for a world that functions in harmony with Earth's God-created order. Together we must voice our concerns about the dangerous effects of nuclear power on the environment, especially that of the waste it produces, and the potential for physical as well as psychological damage to all the people on Earth.

Message from the General Secretary:

59th PCT General Assembly Addresses National and International Concerns

The Presbyterian Church of Taiwan held its general assembly, the 59th in its history, this past April 22-25 in the large sanctuary at Jiang-Jung Girls' High School, with the theme "Stretch Deep the Root of the Gospel into Country and Tribe! Live out the Faith of the Church and Become the Sign of Hope!"

The assembly began with an opening worship service, attended by the approximately 700 representatives from around the nation, who joyfully sang hymns and offered fervent prayers. There were numerous foreign guests from all over the world, including Africa, who were introduced to the assembly. The three who gave formal greetings to the assembly were from the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), the Disciples of Christ Global Ministries (DOCGM), and the Kyodan.

Kyodan General Secretary Nagasaki Tetsuo expressed the gratitude of the Kyodan for the outpouring of support in the aftermath of the March 11, 2011 Great East Japan Disaster. In addition to its large financial contributions, PCT has sent many volunteers to help in the cleanup as well as twice receiving groups of children and their families from the radiation zones for "Kohitsuji (Lamb) Camps in Taiwan."

There was also a special program at the general assembly that featured a PCT layperson by the name of Lee Teng-Hui, the former president of Taiwan, who is 90 years old. He gave a lecture in a powerful voice that deeply moved the audience, focusing on Gal. 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

Those who listened to his presentation were moved to support even more those addressing the various threats to democracy in Taiwan, such as the economic and political pressure being applied to Taiwan by China. This includes support for the students involved in the peaceful March 18 protest, led by a seminary student at the Yu-Shan Theological College and Seminary, which was directed against the Ma Ying-Jeou government for its promotion of the "Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement" between China and Taiwan. Both the leadership of the PCT and the CCA threw their support behind these protests.

On the second morning, the moderator of the 58th General Assembly, Hsu Rong-Feng gave a report concerning this

situation, and it was referred to in the prayers led by General Secretary Lyim Hong-Tiong and others, which could be viewed on the large screen in the auditorium. We could sense how concerned the PCT is about the direction Taiwan is taking and the church's intent to take responsible leadership among the people of Taiwan.

The proceedings were led by Rev. Lo Jen-Kuei, who was elected as moderator of the general assembly. The agenda included numerous contentious issues, including ones common to churches around the world, such as the issue of sexual minorities, as well as more local issues: the institution of age limits on representatives, which is being promoted by the younger generation to encourage generational change; the issue of PCT women and their desire to retain works of service; issues surrounding the increasing difficulty in promoting youth evangelism; and a host of local issues involving linguistic and economic concerns. The prayers that were offered at points during the proceedings certainly gave us a clear indication of where the PCT as a whole is heading.

At the same time the general assembly was being held, the former head of the Democratic Progressive Party, Lin Yi-hsiung, continued the hunger strike he began on April 21 to protest the construction of the second reactor at the Yenliao Nuclear Power Plant, which is to be the fourth such plant built in Taiwan. This was reported in detail at the general assembly, and letters of support were sent to Lin. On the final day of the assembly, everyone fasted during the noon meal time in support. (Incidentally, after continued pressure, such as sit-ins by citizen's groups in front of the National Congress Building, President Ma announced on April 27 that the project would be cancelled.

As guests of the PCT, we were treated royally, and during such proceedings as election of the leadership, we were given tours of PCT-related places like Sin-Lau Christian Hospital, Tainan Theological College and Seminary, the National Museum of Taiwan Literature, the first church in Taiwan, Dr. James Maxwell Memorial Church, and An-Peng Old Town.

As Kyodan general secretary, I also visited with Kyodan missionaries sent to Taiwan, Usuki Midori and Hayashida Yoshiyuki, and met with the former moderator of the PCT, Kao Chun-Ming, and his wife, whom many older pastors in Japan remember fondly. (Tr. TB)

—Nagasaki Tetsuo, general secretary

Executive Council Holds Special Session on Relocation of Offices

The Executive Council called a special session on Monday, April 21, beginning at 1 p.m. in the board meeting room at the Kyodan headquarters, to discuss the temporary relocation of the head office of the Kyodan with the Board of Publications and Board of Pensions. The result of their deliberations was the decision to temporarily relocate these offices to the Asahi New City Building in Okubo (until the safety issues of the present building are solved). The timeline for this temporary relocation is to be within the next two years. (Tr. TB)

KNL Corner

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