



The Japanese Lantern

Sponsoring Church:

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- [Carrell Family News](#)
- [Japanese Lantern \(past issues\)](#)
- [Japan School of Evangelism](#)
- [Ibaraki Area Churches](#)
- [Paul & Stacey Herrington](#)

Photo Albums (Click on this link for photos for this issue) [Japanese Lantern Photos](#)

[Click here for Japan Earthquake Information at Park Ave. Church](#)

Earthquake 9.0 Hits Tohoku and Kanto, Japan

As you probably remember what you were doing on 9/11, those of us in Japan will never forget 3/11! The biggest earthquake of my lifetime lasted 5 minutes, but brought great desolation to northern areas of Tohoku and northern Kanto.

Debbie had gone to violin class and I had just returned from the dentist to do e-mail on my computer - it hit at 2:46 pm knocking out phone service and shaking our entire community. All our neighbors were outside marveling and wondering about what we were all experiencing. When it was over, I grabbed my digital camera to examine our house for damage. I tried to call Debbie, but discovered no phones worked. So getting on my 50cc Scooter, I hurried across town to try to find her. She and her teacher had also come outside in case the house

would fall down. Seeing she was safe, I returned home, checked our church building, then started calling church members. Finding them to be OK, I was greatly relieved.

Next, on the Internet, I started checking to see what had happened and learned of the tsunami in Sendai and Tohoku.. A great concern was to find out WHO was safe and who was still missing. Bro. John Straker, former missionary to Sendai, the epicenter of the quake fortunately created a site on Facebook - *"Working and Praying for Japan Earthquake Victims."* It has and continues to be a wonderful information source to keep on top of what is happening, find out what is needed, up to date conditions of the victims of earthquake and tsunami and how congregations and/or individuals can help

with relief efforts. Another site for those NOT on Facebook is shorter, but provides necessary information: <http://www.workingandprayingfor-japan.org/>

I tried to contact as many as possible as soon as it happened, but time and energy did not permit answering everyone individually. Instead, all were directed to the Facebook or other website for information. Everyone's prayers and concern are greatly needed and sending funds to those ready and able to help already in country is thought best.



Devastation and Relief

Relief Efforts Under Way - What You Can Do!

Rather than "reinventing the wheel," working with those who are already in Japan, speak Japanese, know the geography and culture of Japan, and can go there was the first thought. Besides praying continually, which is always needed, sending funds to [Park Ave. Church of Christ in Memphis, TN](#) to

be forwarded to Mito Church of Christ in Japan for further distribution seems to be the wisest idea. Other places to send funds in North America can be found on the site above.

Radiation at the Fukushima site is a concern, but we are following the Japanese govern-

ment limitations and monitoring news sites which show where we live to have relatively safe levels. Some have chosen to leave Japan or go to places far south. Further discussion of the situation and choices is found at the sites given above. Thanks for your prayers!

50th Anniversary Celebration of Matsudo Church of Christ



To celebrate the 50th year of Matsudo Church of Christ, we invited Bro. L.T. Gurganus to be our featured speaker. He and his wife agreed to come and were scheduled to bring

Ricky Brewer, L.T.'s nephew with them.

We all decided to make a book to celebrate the occasion and all wrote articles to include. Many who had a part in the history of the church were invited and much excitement built as the day for celebration took place.

When the earthquake struck, what had been a well planned program suddenly had to be adjusted. Although radiation fears were in the Stateside news, con-

sulting four Japanese sources, we felt we could assure the Gurganuses and Ricky that they could stay with us in Matsudo in safety. So they came and our program went as planned.

We had 26 attend the meeting from churches in both Tokyo, Ibaraki, and other places. L.T. spoke in Japanese through half of his Sunday morning sermon, while I translated the 2nd half from English to Japanese for him. We were all very encouraged by the lesson on God's kingdom, following His word,

and hope for the future. After a fellowship meal, we enjoyed sharing stories about Matsudo's past history and thankfulness to God for His guidance over the years. Please pray that we can continue to shine the light of the gospel in Chiba prefecture.



Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.
(Proverbs 22:6)



Tachikawa members come to Matsudo to visit Debbie in the hospital after lymphoma surgery

In January, Debbie was diagnosed with lymphoma cancer of a "slow growing type." She had 3 CAT scans and was seen by 3 doctors prior to being told she needed hospitalization for a surgery. Since Japan is on "social medicine," we could not have an immedi-

ate surgery, because February was full, we wanted to wait until our March meeting was done, so April 7th became the day for hospitalization.

We had not been caught up in Japan Health Insur-

Debbie's Operation Successful

ance payments, so through several generous contributions from our sponsor and supporters, these bills could be completed, so that funds from the government could help pay for the surgery. In March, those were finished, so all that remained was awaiting the day of hospitalization.

We decided to keep a running update of Debbie's condition on Facebook to keep friends and relatives informed of what was happening from day to day. Along with the earthquake news and our upcoming

Anniversary meeting, I was kept very busy at the computer nearly every day. So many have offered prayers and encouragement all along and we are very thankful.

Finally Debbie went into the hospital on April 7th and had her operation on at 2:30 p.m. on the 8th, lasting about 2 hours. By the 13th, of April, Debbie was able to be out of the hospital and is recovering at home now. Chemotherapy will follow with 3 treatments scheduled for April. Our daughter Marcia arrived on the 12th and plans to be here 2 weeks to help out.

We are thankful to many of our members and friends who gave us gifts which enabled us to pay her hospital bill. Thank you all for your prayers and support.



for helping us in this challenge as well. Dad just turned 86 in April. Please keep him in your prayers too.

Moving Steve's Dad to a New Location

Dad has lived in an assisted care living facility in Nashville for about 6 years. Initially costs were manageable and Dad liked the place, making several friends there. Recently, however, costs have increased to the level where he could not remain and still pay his costs. So over the phone and Internet from Japan, I found help to move Dad to a place which is not only

larger, but will be cost effective each month. He is now closer to his brother, has more church members from Granny White and Crieve Hall churches living there, and can even attend worship in the new location when he can't make it out. A moving company specializing in helping seniors was hired to pack all his things and resettle him in the new place. He's quite happy with his new place and we're thankful to the Lord

Sickness Among Matsudo Members

In the midst of all the excitement and stress of earthquake, moving, and Debbie's sickness, two other members of Matsudo church also fell ill, needing hospitalization and surgery.

One Sunday during worship, Bro. Nakahara, suddenly found that he was unable to read the Bible and felt dizzy. He was taken to the hospital and was diagnosed with a tumor in the brain! Needless to say, all of us were shocked because he normally seemed the picture of health. He was hospitalized in a cancer hospital in Matsudo and

his operation was successful! He wanted so much to attend our 50th celebration that he got special permission to come, then returned the same day back to the hospital. His wife, who is not a Christian, also came to church for the first time since we had visited him in the hospital. Several went by to see him there. On April 10th, he was able to come to church with his wife once again.

Later, Bro. Tamura, was diagnosed with prostate cancer and was hospitalized on the

same day Debbie left the same hospital. His surgery and recovery should be 4 or 5 days, so we hope he will be able to be back with us very soon.

We have all learned much about sickness, care, and love for one another through these various sicknesses which have come to Matsudo church. I've been delivering a series of lessons on hospitality, based on Matthew 25. It is my prayer that we will learn to be a more compassionate, loving, and caring congregation.



*Visiting Bro. Kohei Nakamura
In the hospital*

Continuing During Stressful Times

Recently I've been reading the Book of Job. Seeing how Job was severely tested with personal losses, sickness, and pain, has helped me consider a perspective we need when stressful times come our way. When earthquake, tsunami, deaths, destruction, sickness, possible threats of economic, political, or other ruin are on our horizon, how should Christians cope? God did not explain everything to Job on WHY it all happened

to him, but he was told that when God is sovereign in all things and has shown He is in control of all events, we have nothing to fear. We should trust the Lord and know that He will give us what is best (Rom.8:28). We may die, we may lose our possessions, our health, our job, or our loved ones, but we can always rely on God's promises to continue in all circumstances. We are saddened certainly by all the death and destruction, sickness and suffering of these past months, but throughout these ordeals, we see the hand of the Lord working to bring about great opportunities (if we choose to look at them that way). Doors have opened which may not have been avail-

able to us in any other way. Japan and all the churches of Christ were "shaken up," but so many came together to help in the crisis. People are being taught God's Word, benevolence and hospitality are being shown in countless ways, prayers are being offered for Japan and its people perhaps more than ever before in recent years. All this is for the glory of God!

In all our classes, sermons, visitations, and service, we are praying that God will allow His light to shine brightly to lead souls to come to know our Savior and Lord. May His name be forever praised!

"Cast all you anxiety on him because he cares for you"

(1 Peter 5:7)

Baptisms into God's Family!

More excitement at Matsudo has come with 2 ladies who have decided to become God's children by being immersed into Jesus.



Nahoko Kiyooka, a young lady, who learned the gospel of Christ during the past

2 years in China, recently returned to Japan. She informed her non-Christian parents of her decision to be baptized

and contacted me to say she would like to be baptized in Japan, but had very little time since she had to go to the States on Sunday. She was referred to us from Bro. Dwight Albright of Memphis. Our encounter reminded me of Philip and the eunuch in Acts 8 who briefly taught the man while riding in a chariot, stopped to baptize him, then sent him on his way with joy in his heart.

Nahoko told me by e-mail that she was coming, so I met her and we discussed her faith for about 2 hours. She came to

worship the next morning and after worship, I immersed her into Jesus for the remission of her sins. It was a day of great joy for all of us. Bro. Nakahara got to be there too! Added bonus... and her wife (not yet a Christian) saw it as well.

Another lady, Junko Hisamura, was invited by her co-worker, Sis. Suzuki, to come to church. I have taught her for over six months in Bible classes at Matsudo church. Recently she informed us that she wants to be baptized on April 17th, so we are very happy that she will be immersed into Jesus as well. Please keep these ladies and their faith in your prayers.



**Shining the Light of the
Gospel in Japan**

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light
for my path.” (Psalms 119:105)

Highlights - February thru mid-April (see more in the Photo Album)

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We're on the Web!

<http://sites.google.com/site/matsudococ>



Planning for 50th Anniversary Mtg.



**A Neighbor visits church
after earthquake**

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Bro. Yoshida at 50th Anniv. Mtg.



Debbie after Lymphoma Surgery

Prayer Requests

- Thanks to God for growing faith of Matsudo church members
- Thanks to God for two Christian men sent our way to help in leadership.
- For God's healing hand to help Debbie with her lymphoma sickness.
- For the 50th Anniversary Celebration at Matsudo Church of Christ.
- For more spiritual leadership and insight for Japanese Chris-

Skype Marriage Counseling Class: Beginning in April, I began a weekly Friday class for JSE (Japan School of Evangelism) teaching Marriage Counseling to a brother in Okinawa. Bro. Sato is unable to come to Tokyo, so 12 weeks of classes will be conducted by Skype over the Internet.

Marcia Visits Matsudo: Marcia arrived on a night flight from Seattle through Seoul to Narita. She came on her own to Kamihongo by train and will be with us for 2 weeks to help out as Debbie is in recovery from her surgery. It is good to have her here.

Thanks for Many Prayers and Encouragement: So many of you have kept Debbie and me in prayer for her sickness, surgery, and recovery. Also prayers have been offered for us and many others in regard to the earthquake and tsunami with its relief efforts. Thank you all so very much! It is greatly en-

Family and Other News

couraging to us to know that you are all petitioning our Father for these specific needs. It is our prayers that each of your lives will be richly rewarded by the Father in His abundant supply.

Other Celebrations: Debbie and I celebrated 32 years of mission work on March 21st, and I had my 61st birthday in March, while my Dad celebrated his 86th birthday in April.

Facebook and Skype Contacts: We are happy that many of you keep up with us more often through Facebook and Skype. Please contact us if you'd like to become a Facebook or Skype friend.

In His love and service,
Steve & Debbie Carrell