



# JBS News International

*Rise for the Great Commission*

**Vol.9**  
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“In certain ways we are weak, but the Spirit is here to help us. For example, when we don't know what to pray for, the Spirit prays for us in ways that cannot be put into words. All of our thoughts are known to God. He can understand what is in the mind of the Spirit, as the Spirit prays for God's people. We know that God is always at work for the good of everyone who loves him...” (Romans 8:26-28, CEV)

Dear Colleagues,

Magnitude 9.0 earthquake and the tsunami that hit the Tohoku region of Japan on March 11, 2011 resulted in the death of close to 16,000 people and 3,000 are still missing today. More than 350,000 houses were either destroyed by the earthquake or swept away by the tsunami and the victims were forced to live as evacuees for months. I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to the UBS friends, as well as brothers and sisters around the world for your generous support and prayer. As part of the recovery efforts, JBS teams visited the affected areas 5 times last year to distribute Bibles and relief goods and we continue to support the victims by working together with local churches. We are now entering the second phase to provide psychological support, and for that purpose, we are organizing four charity concerts in 2012 such as “the Messiah” to bring hope and love of Jesus Christ to those who are suffering spiritually.

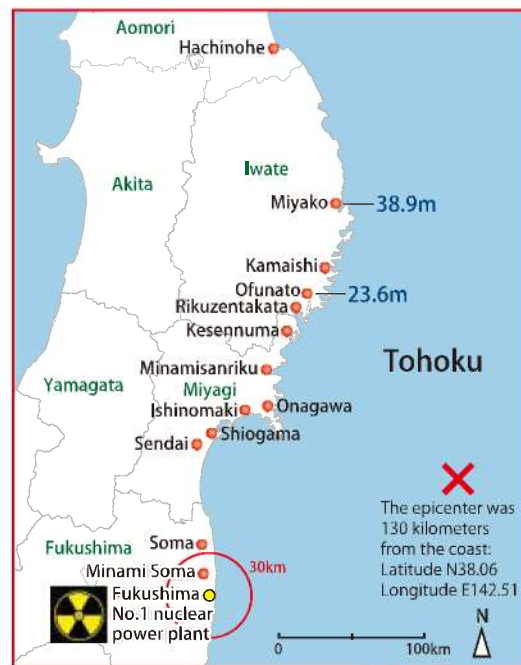
JBS became a self-supporting Bible Society in 1968, and this was the first time since then that we received warm financial support from the UBS family. We are once again reminded that this support is entirely rooted in Christ's love and the bond among the Bible Societies could only come from such fellowship.



A house turned over by tsunami



Rev. Makoto Watabe, General Secretary



Epicenter and the height of tsunami



When the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake hit Kobe in January 1995, JBS collaborated with the local churches to organize a Bible Exhibition which resulted in the establishment of “Christian Center Kobe Bible House.” Ever since, KBH plays a vital role in connecting local churches and promoting Bible Work in the area. JBS will continue to support Tohoku and work toward the establishment of a similar Christian Center that will be a lighthouse to spread the Good News of God's unending love and mercy. Please continue to pray for our dear brothers and sisters in the Tohoku area. God bless you.



Opening ceremony of KBH



## Reaching Out to the Victims

JBS started relief activity immediately after 3.11 earthquake, by running a fundraising campaign to collect 20 million yen to distribute 20,000 copies of the Bible in the affected areas. Up to now, the total amount of 259,305USD was raised (193,305USD from 23 Bible Societies and churches overseas; 66,000USD from donors in Japan). As a result, 50 churches and Christian-related institutions in the disaster-hit Tohoku region of northeast Japan (Miyagi, Iwate and Fukushima prefectures) received the Bible and relief goods and through them, many received the hope which can only be found in Jesus Christ. We thank you all for your generous support, encouragements and prayers.



Ship washed ashore by tsunami



7-ton truck was hired to take Bibles and relief goods



Relief goods came from all over the world



Donating the Bible to Shinsei-Kamaishi Church



Churches became supply centers



Volunteers' prayer meeting



## JBS Fukushima Charity Concert



Ms. Tomoe Sawa

Residents in Fukushima prefecture not only suffered from the earthquake and tsunami but are still living in fear of nuclear power plant threat. People living within 30km radius of the plant had to evacuate, leaving everything behind and the prospect of returning to their homes is uncertain.

To bring comfort and encouragement, JBS organized a charity concert in Fukushima on September 16, 2011 featuring Ms. Tomoe Sawa, a well-known gospel singer. Ms. Sawa, born to a Japanese father and a South Korean mother who are both pastors, grew up in Japan, South Korea and the United States. She opened the concert solemnly with “Amazing Grace” in a cappella. Her next number “Go tell it on the mountain” brought bursts of applause from the audience. 200 seats were completely filled with people of all ages including 20 pupils from nearby kindergartens. The children

joined her in the encore of “Te no hira o taiyo ni” (“We are not alone”), a very up-lifting popular Japanese song. In the finale, a well-known and loved “Furusato” (“Home”) sung by the entire audience echoed throughout the hall.

A Messiah concert in four other cities in the Tohoku region is planned for 2012 and JBS is calling local churches and choirs to participate in them.

## Children Receive “Bible Packages”

Further distribution effort was made to the tsunami-affected areas where we were unable to visit in person. Bible packages (including a full Bible, 36-volume picture-book Bible, and Manga Bible) were sent to 72 churches, 66 kindergartens and nursery schools. The picture-book Bible and the Manga Bible were given to children to ease the trauma. We pray that through the Gospel message, they will be touched by the love of God, and find peace in this time of difficulty.



At Onahama St. Timothy's Church Kindergarten

## Financial and Distribution Report of The 3.11 Earthquake and Tsunami

	Amount (US\$)
<b>Income</b>	
Local donation	66,000
Donation from overseas	193,305
<b>Total</b>	<b>259,305</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Bible & relief goods distribution	179,305
Ecumenical Support Center fund	80,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>259,305</b>

Distribution Items	Copies
<b>Bibles</b>	
Full Bibles	3,807
New Testments	1,320
Portions (The Hand-copying Bibles)	535
Picture book Bibles	6,092
Manga Bibles	730
Others (Christian books etc)	1,314
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,798</b>
<b>Relief aids</b>	water, food, hygienic goods, daily necessities



## ABS VP Visits Disaster-hit Area

JBS welcomed Rev. Simon Barnes, the vice-president of American Bible Society, from October 20 to 23, 2011. Including the JBS office in Ginza, Rev. Barnes paid a courtesy visit to the president, Dr. Tomoya Yoshioka, and the vice-president, Rev. Prof. Renta Nishihara of Rikkyo University (founded by the Anglican church), and took a short trip to the tsunami-stricken Ishinomaki-city in Miyagi. In Ishinomaki, official statistics show that 3,832 of the 162,822 residents were killed by the earthquake and tsunami.



Rev. Barnes tries ON-PITSU, a scanning pen, to listen to the story



In front of a fire department destroyed by tsunami

## BS Singapore General Secretary Visits Japan

In January 2012, Mr. Lim Khay Tham, the General Secretary of the Bible Society of Singapore, along with Mrs. Lim, visited the tsunami-ravaged coastal cities of Kesennuma in Miyagi and Rikuzentakata in Iwate. They visited the temporary public housing units in Kesennuma, which were now renovated with double-glazed windows and insulation to survive the long Tohoku winter. In Rikuzentakata, a city with a population of just over 24 thousand, more than 1,700 were either killed or missing.



Mr. and Mrs. Lim in Rikuzentakata-city



A former church site and the cross built with debris



## ICRS 2011 Atlanta

International Christian Retail Show 2011 was held at Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, USA from July 10 to 13, 2011. JBS General Secretary, Rev. Makoto Watabe and Ms. Jun Kajihama, assistant secretary to GS, attended. ICRS is the largest gathering of more than 8,000 Christian retailers and suppliers in the world, and is a good opportunity to gain ideas, new information, and see tomorrow's leading products on display. The hall was filled with excitement all day with people checking and trying out new products.



## Strengthening Ties with BS Guatemala



With the staff of BS Guatemala

To show our gratitude for their 3.11 earthquake contribution, and to discuss about project support in the year 2012, Rev. Watabe and Ms. Kajihama visited the Bible Society of Guatemala in July 2011. Guatemala is among the seven most dangerous countries in Latin America and is facing social problems such as the increase in juvenile gangs. BS Guatemala launched a project for such youngsters who needed a second chance, a radical change of life that can only be achieved through the Bible and with specific spiritual assistance and specialized psychological help. Mr. Saul Sosa, the General Secretary of BS Guatemala and Rev. Watabe exchanged opinions to find ways of working together for the success of the project. Mr. Marco

Martinez, the director of programs and projects says "we are really grateful to God because we know it is God's will that we, Sociedad Biblica de Guatemala and Japan Bible Society collaborate and be a tool of God."

## Challenges and Response-BS Panama

While in the region, Rev. Watabe and Ms. Kajihama also visited the Bible Society of Panama for the first time to show our gratitude for the 3.11 earthquake contribution. According to BS Panama, education in Panama is going through a crisis proven in the different levels of education. Ministry of Education recognizes that there is a high level of dropout among the students - the rate of 12.8% and a disturbing failure rate of 30.4%. BS Panama is working together with schools so that they will become centers of integral education based on Biblical values through Bible engagement. Mr. Marco Gomez, the General Secretary of BS Panama and Rev. Watabe discussed the possibility of supporting the project.



With Mr. Gomez (second from the left) and the staff of BS Panama



## Sunday Service in Sunflower State

Rev. Watabe visited the Eastminster Presbyterian Church in Wichita, Kansas and attended the Sunday worship service on February 5, 2012. JBS had received contributions from Eastminster for the 3.11 earthquake. Our GS conveyed gratitude and gave a thorough report of the JBS relief efforts.

Rev. Watabe giving 3.11 report



## “Floating Church” and “Church Under a Tree”

Rev. Watabe visited the Bible Society in Cambodia in August 2011. In the water village of Tonlé Sap, the largest freshwater lake in South East Asia, sits a “floating church.” The Bible is a precious book for people who worship here and Rev. Watabe had the opportunity to do Bible distribution. Furthermore, JBS promised BS Cambodia for future support.

In September 2011, Rev. Watabe visited the Bible Society of Tanzania. While there, he was greeted by the Maasai in red cloth gathered under a tree and praising God. The opportunity to introduce Bible Society's work was given. It was a joy as well as an encouragement to worship the Lord with the Maasai on the other side of the globe.



Floating village in Tonlé Sap



Worship with the Maasai

## Sharing Pain and Friendship-Visit to Thailand BS



Handing our donation to Rev. S. Lorgunpai

Rev. Watabe visited the Thailand Bible Society on January 25, 2012 and expressed our heartfelt gratitude for the 3.11 earthquake support. In return, JBS offered support for the recent flood in Thailand, the worst in 50 years. Among the 460 Japanese enterprises in Thailand, eight Japanese carmakers in Bangkok had to suspend factory operations and therefore the disaster and suffering of the victims were not foreign to us. The devoted hard work of TBS staff to assist the churches and local residents was presented. Our prayers go out to the on-going relief effort of the staff and to the victims for their quick recovery.

## Bible Ministry Exhibition of the Protestant Churches in China

Rev. Makoto Watabe, our General Secretary and Ms. Emi Beland, Secretary to the GS and also UBS Asia Pacific Area Board member, were invited to attend the opening ceremony of the Bible Ministry Exhibition of the Protestant Churches in China at Mount Vernon Place United Methodist Church in Washington D.C. on September 28, 2011. Dr. Geoff Tunnicliffe, Chief Executive Officer/Secretary General of the World Evangelical Alliance remarked “one of the most exciting developments in global Christianity in the last hundred years has been the growth of the Churches in China.” It was an event in which one can know the history of Chinese Christianity and its missions as well as the history of the Chinese Bible translation.

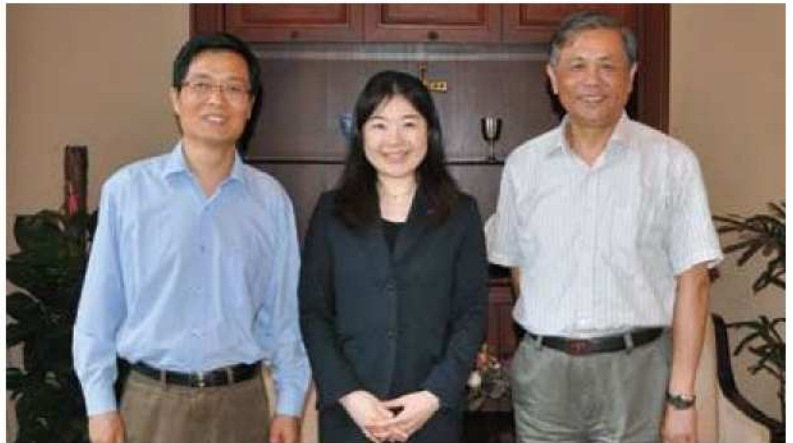


Over 300 guests attended the opening



## Staff Exchange Visit Takes Off Between JBS and TSPM/CCC

Ms. Akiko Ito of JBS fund-raising department took an official trip to China by an invitation from TSPM/CCC in June 2011. The 12-day tour took her to Shanghai, Hangzhou, Nanjing and Beijing to visit churches, theological schools, social welfare institutions and Amity printing. It was the first trial of the exchange program between JBS and China. JBS will also invite staff from China to deepen fellowship even at the grassroots level.



With Elder Fu Xianwei (right) and Rev. Bao Zhimin (left)

## Visit to Dubai



At the bookshop in Dubai



Mr. Babu Ganta, Senior Communication Officer

In the past couple decades, Dubai has quickly become one of the most exciting and booming cities in the world both as a tourism and commerce hub. Although UAE is an Islamic nation, 50% of the population is expats, many of them Christian, and the Bible Society in the Gulf caters to the people through its bookshops. In January 2012, Rev. Watabe visited the shop and observed the distribution of the Armenian Manga Bible produced with the support of JBS. Since JBS has printed Arabic Bible in the past, they discussed the possibility of future cooperation in the area.

## ICAP Training in Korea

The Institute for Computer Assisted Publishing training was held in Seoul, sponsored by the Korean Bible Society from September 26 to October 1, 2011. Mr. Koichi Hakuta of publishing department attended. The training introduced basic operations and new functions of the Publishing Assistant software. The latest version, Publishing Assistant 4, supports layout of Study Bible content authored in Paratext 7.3, and automates nearly all of the layout operations in Adobe InDesign that were previously done manually by the typesetter.



Attendees tackling with Publishing Assistant



## New Translation in Progress

It has been 25 years since JBS published the New Interconfessional Translation Bible in 1987. As of October 2011, 48 translators from both Catholic and Protestant denominations are collaborating to translate the new Japanese Bible. The first general meeting was held from August 24 to 26, 2011. Dr. Takamitsu Muraoka, the professor emeritus at Leiden University in the Netherlands and a scholar in Hebrew and Septuagint, gave a special lecture on translation. JBS is planning to hold several international Bible forum and seminars in 2012 inviting prominent scholars from overseas.



Kick-off meeting



Dr. Muraoka

## New Publication

JBS published a photo book "Omoi" ("Thoughts") in August 2011. This publication is a collection of photographs selected from hundreds submitted by the public along with Bible verses that inspired them. Compared to the 1st volume launched in 2010, more photographs show bonds between people, scenes from daily lives, and most of all, with respect to 3.11 survivors, the beautiful sea that surrounds the nation. The Bible is sprinkled with thoughts of God and thoughts of human and this photo book intends to bring together such thoughts with depictions of our everyday experiences in this modern era.



## "Nadeshiko Japan" Reaches the Top

Topics



The Japan women's national soccer team, or "Nadeshiko Japan" as is nicknamed, won the Women's World Cup championship for the first time in history. The team's captain, Homare Sawa was awarded MVP as the top scorer. The Japanese government praised Nadeshiko's unified teamwork and enduring spirit, and presented the team with the "National Honor Award" on August 18, 2011. 2011 FIFA Ballon d'Or for the best female player was also given to Sawa. (The FIFA Ballon d'Or for the best male player went to FC Barcelona forward Lionel Messi for the third consecutive year.) Norio Sasaki who coached Nadeshiko Japan received the Women's Coach of the Year as well.



Japan Bible Society

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