

JBS NEWS INTERNATIONAL

Rise for the Great Commission

April 2016 Vol.13

God's Word - Life for the World

Greetings from Japan Bible Society

**I give you a new commandment, that you love one another.
Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.**

(John 13:34)

Rev. Makoto Watabe

JBS General Secretary

I am pleased to send you JBS's Newsletter at the season of cherry blossoms.

The Japanese language has different ways of reading from Chinese language and different characters and readings from the Korean language. The Japanese sentence mixes freely three types of characters: Chinese characters (Kanji), traditional Japanese phonetic letters (Hiragana), letters to write words adopted from foreign languages (Katakana). 日本 (written in Kanji, Chinese

character), にほん (in Hiragana, Japanese traditional letter derived from Chinese character), ニホン (in Katakana). These three words are pronounced in the same way, Nihon, meaning JAPAN. Japanese language has a history that can be traced back to 1,500 years ago, and only the people who live in Japan use it. The characteristic of the pronunciation is that the consonants always accompany vowels.

If you write words in Romaji like TO-YO-TA, SU-ZU-KI, or TOKYO, non-Japanese people can

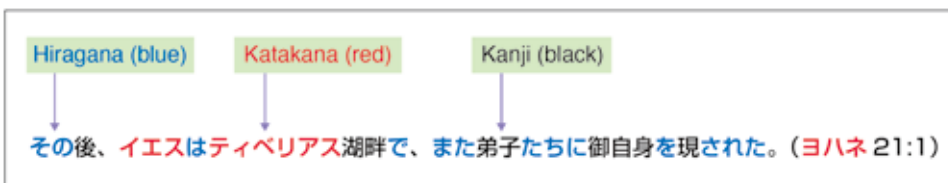


easily read them. But the grammar is so difficult that you can hardly master it unless you are young. The population of those who speak Japanese is about 130 million in Japan.

It is our mission to let the people throughout the world know JBS's activities by publishing the newsletter in English once a year. I hope it will be a joy to know through these articles and photos how God is working in our midst.

Lastly, please come to Japan for the Olympic Games 2020.

Elements of the Japanese language: a verse from John 21:1



UBS Publishers Convention: Creating Content for Changing Cultures

Rev. Watabe and five JBS staff members attended UBS Publishers Convention held in Seoul, South Korea, from May 3rd to 7th, 2015. To carry out Bible Work in the face of the decline of churches and Christian schools, delivering God's word to younger generations is a crucial issue. For that purpose, JBS hopes to further expand the IT digital field.

At the convention, we found that there are still undeveloped areas such as Study Bible, the Bibles for women or younger generations. We were much motivated by the meaningful convention.



Pilgrimage to Germany and Poland

Prior to the 500th Reformation Anniversary two years ahead, JBS conducted a tour “Pilgrimage to Germany and Poland” from June 22nd to July 1st with Rev. Yasuhiro Tateno, pastor of Oe-Udo Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church, as leader and lecturer. Sixteen people joined the tour to follow the trails of Martin Luther and to visit historical sites associated with the Protestant Reformer. They

also visited Auschwitz Concentration Camp, and the Berlin Wall. They confirmed the importance of putting their trust in the Bible and to hope for peace through everyday learning.



Praying together at Auschwitz Concentration Camp



In front of the statue of Luther at Lutherstadt Eisleben, Germany

Visit to the Mongolian Union Bible Society

Rev. Watabe and Shoko Takahashi of fundraising department visited the Mongolian Union Bible Society (MUBS) in June 2015. Joining the United Bible Societies officially in May 2016, MUBS will be a member of the Northeast Asia region which includes Japan.

JBS wants to make our bond stronger as Asian neighbors and will be starting fundraising for the

“Mongolian Bible Translation Project Fund” to support them.

PhD. Garam Bayarjargal came to Japan to give a lecture on the Bible translation into Mongolian on March 18th. The lecture was a good opportunity to deepen understanding of the current situation of Christianity in Mongolia.



PhD. Garam Bayarjargal (center), leader of the translation team
Rev. Bayarmagnai Bayardalai (right), General Secretary of MUBS



Gigantic statue of Genghis Khan in Ulaanbaatar

UBS Roundtable Exchange 2015 Held in Ethiopia

Rev. Watabe and Shoko Takahashi attended the UBS Roundtable Exchange 2015 held in Addis-Ababa in June. It was reported that over 100 Bible Societies are facing economic difficulties today. 40 Bible Societies that are economically more stable are committed to supporting them on an annual basis. Despite the situation, it is exciting to know that the Word of God is proclaimed through many creative and effective projects.



Participating in the International Gathering

The International Gathering was held in Berlin from June 6th to 12th 2015. Over 200 people from 60 countries attended. Rev. Watabe was invited to the Gathering.

The theme was “Accepting Others, Bridge Over the Gap.” The goal is overcoming the differences of politics, religion, and culture, and contributing to world peace. The Parliament that was used as the place of the gathering is located on the former border of East and

West Berlin, which is symbolic and meaningful.



Dr. Lamart,
President of Confederation Parliament,
an organizer of the Gathering



JBS Board Visits Korean Bible Society



Rev. Hiroshi Omiya, JBS Chairperson (in white shirt), Rev. Watabe, (right), the board members and the auditors

From September 3rd to 6th, JBS's six board members and auditor led by Rev. Hiroshi Omiya, JBS Chairperson, paid a courtesy visit to Korean Bible Society. They visited the bookbinding factory with Mr. Kwon, President & CEO's guidance and met with KBS's 12 board members at the welcome dinner. Rev. Watabe and four JBS staff members accompanied the tour.



Seeing the display at KBS

Second Japan-Korea Joint Mission Conference Held in Seoul

From October 24th to 27th, the Second Japan-Korea Joint Mission Conference was held in Seoul, South Korea. Fifteen pastors from South Korea and twelve pastors from Japan met to share and discuss missions and visions for Japan and Korea.

Rev. Watabe and two JBS staff members attended the conference. Rev. Watabe gave a keynote address.



Participants hug after the conference

The 65th National Prayer Breakfast in the US

On February 4th, the 65th National Prayer Breakfast with President Obama was held as an annual event in Washington DC. JBS Chairperson Rev. Omiya and Rev. Watabe participated.

This being the last Breakfast he attends as the President, Obama said that "we all experience fear ... faith is the great cure for fear. Jesus is a good cure for fear." Faith that accepts the differences of other religions helps us overcome life's challenges. He remarked that we could do that because we are driven by the common value that many of the faiths teach us: Seeing God in others. He also pointed out that to love neighbors is to understand one another through dialogue with others.

More than three thousand from around the world joined the National Prayer Breakfast, hosted by

members of the United States Congress, including a dozen participants from Japan.



President Obama giving the address
(c) www.ibtimes.com

JBS Inks Scholarship With Taylor University of US

Rev. Watabe visited Taylor University, Indianapolis, US on Feb. 8th, and paid a courtesy visit to President Dr. Eugene Habecker, ex-President of American Bible Society. Both agreed to establish a scholarship and signed the contract. JBS plans to recruit applicants mainly from the area hit by the triple disasters of the East Japan Great Earthquake, Tsunami, and nuclear power plant accident in 2011, and send a student every year to study at Taylor.

The program aims to educate young people by

offering them an opportunity to experience Christianity in the US. It also aims to support people in the disaster area in 2016.



Students heading to worship



Scholarship Agreement with Dr. Habecker



Assembly Hour

Current State of the New Translation: Work reached 60%

In 2015, the new translation work made a big progress. 60% of the draft is completed. 45 translation committee's meetings were held during 2015 and the drafts of many scriptures were sent to the editing committee. The main goal of the new translation is based on the Skopos theory - to be suitable for usage in the worship in church.



Translation committee's summer meeting

More than 150 people, including 60 translators are engaged in the work. Under the cooperation of the Greek/Hebrew language team and the Japanese language team, we aim at translating into refined beautiful Japanese. Since December 2015, books that we finished translating are published as pilot editions to call for monitors to give feedbacks.



Translation committee's meeting for Pentateuch and Historical books

Thanksgiving Service Commemorating the 120th Anniversary of the Korean Bible Society

The Thanksgiving Service Commemorating the 120th Anniversary of the Korean Bible Society was held at the Chungdong First Methodist Church in Seoul on November 24th. From other Bible Societies, General Secretary Ms. Elaine

Duncan of Scotland, General Secretary Rev. Dr. Mkunga Mtingele of Tanzania, and General Secretary Rev. Watabe of Japan were invited and delivered the congratulatory addresses.

In South Korea, the missionary Rev. John Ross first translated the Bible. Also Rev. Lee Su Jeon, who was baptized in Japan, translated the Bible in Hangeul. Those Bibles were used to minister to the general public. Korean Bible Society has been supporting the growth (development) of today's Korean churches. Moreover, they are printing Bibles for more than 100 Bible Societies throughout the world as the production center of the UBS fellowship.



Shippoyaki (cloisonné) art was gifted to KBS

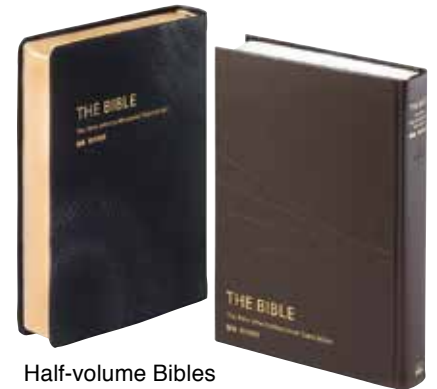


Chungdong First Methodist Church

“Award for Contributor of Bible Promotion Project” to Royal Jongbloed

JBS awarded the Royal Jongbloed, the Netherlands’ Christian printing and bookbinding company, with “The Award for contributor of Bible promotion project” at the Christmas worship on December 8th, 2015. This award has been given to corporations, organizations, and individuals who contributed greatly to spreading the Bible. Jongbloed is the first winner of the award from

an overseas country. In October, JBS published the half-volume Bible in A5 size that has reduced the weight and thickness by 40%. The production was done by Jongbloed.



Half-volume Bibles



Headquarters located in Heerenveen, Netherlands

Bible Quiz Championship Held in Three Cities

JBS holds the Bible Quiz Championship aiming to promote the reading of the Bible through enjoying quiz. We had the games in three cities in 2015. The games were combined with programs such as Bible quiz and mini-concert. There were many voices from the participants that the game made them

want to know more about the Bible.

This year the games will be held in Sendai, Kanazawa, and Kobe. We hope more participants will join and that this effort will help people engage with the Bible.



At Sapporo



At Nagoya

new products

Listening Bible

MP3 player that contains all the 79 volumes of the New Interconfessional Bible published in October 2015. You can appreciate the Bible through listening with this gadget of easy operation. Other than listening to the Bible, it includes other functions such as recording worship messages, listening to the FM radio, and a pedometer for health care. 14,000 yen only for the first edition (excluding tax)



New Testament with the Cover of Chagall's "Song of Solomon"

The New Testament with Psalm in a brilliant red cover was published in July. The painting of the cover is "Song of Solomon" by Marc Chagall. The book wins a favorable reception for its big size font and soft casual cover design. 1,300 yen (excluding tax)



topics

Japanese Car Manufacturers Seek Realization of Automatically Driven Cars



Automatic driving test on the public road, (c) clicccar

Japanese car manufacturers are experimenting the automatic driving system on public roads. Toyota performed the experiment on the Metropolitan highway on October 6th. The car responds without touching the wheel to multiple operations such as curving, joining at the junction, and surpassing. At the Tokyo Motor Show on October 28th, Mr. Carlos Ghosn, President of Nissan Motor Corporation, showed a pilot model for automatic driving. Honda, Mitsubishi, Fuji Heavy Industries are also working on the technology. Coming 2017, the system will likely to be realized under limited conditions such as on highways or driving in a traffic jam.