

# JBS NEWS INTERNATIONAL

Rise for the Great Commission

April 2017 Vol.14

God's Word - Living Hope for All

## Greetings from Japan Bible Society

"I am the way, the truth, and the life!" Jesus answered.  
"Without me, no one can go to the Father."

(John 14:6 GNT)

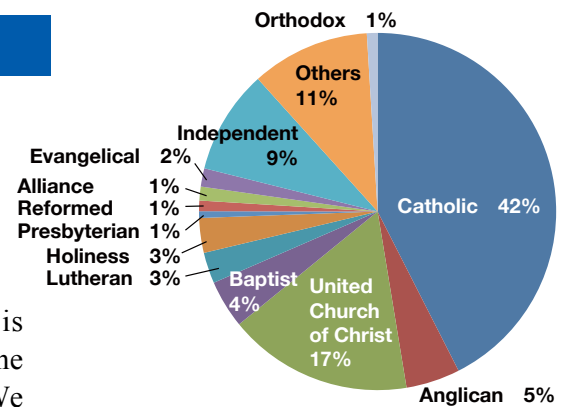


**Rev. Makoto Watabe**  
JBS General Secretary

**J**apan Bible Society is working on the third Bible translation after the World

War II. Our translation theory is the Scopus Theory adopted by the Netherlands Bible Society. We started translating in 2010 and are planning to publish it in the spring of 2019. Currently, more than 170 scholars, including Biblical language scholars, Japanese language specialists, theologians, clergies, archeologists, monitors, are engaged in this work.

Following this bible translation theory, we have decided that the Bible for this project is to be read and understood correctly as the



Denominations in Japan 2016

Word of God at the church worship service and it is being translated following this understanding.

It is an inter-confessional translation with the Catholic and the Protestant churches, and 80% of the Japanese Christian population are expected to adopt this Bible and it will be the Bible for the next generation for the next 30 years.

## The 500th Anniversary of the Reformation: A Celebration Week to be held in September 2017



Original Logo of the Reformation  
designed by JBS

**J**apan Bible Society is dedicating an entire week in September 2017 to celebrate the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. A commemorative exhibition will be held from 12th

to 17th, September, at the Ginza Church in the center of Tokyo. Here, a collection of valuable Bibles held by JBS Library and a commentary panel on the Reformation will be exhibited and mini lectures on topics such as art, music and bible binding will be held.

Also, a lecture entitled "Significance of the Reformation for the Contemporary World" by Professor Emeritus Hans-Martin Barth from Germany will be held in the afternoon of the 18th. In the evening, we are planning an "Ecumenical Memorial Dinner" at the Imperial Hotel, in which



Professor Emeritus  
Hans-Martin Barth

Professor Saiki Eguchi of Japan Lutheran College University will give a short lecture.

In order to commemorate the 500th Anniversary with the entire Christian community in Japan, JBS has created a unified logo for the Anniversary and is calling for its use.

# Republican and Democratic Party pray for their President



◀ Barry Black, chaplain of the United States Senate  
▼ Scripture selection produced and distributed by the American Bible Society



Rev. Watabe attended the annual US National Prayer Breakfast in Washington D.C., the capital of the United States, on February 2nd. President Donald Trump attended this breakfast. Participants exceeded the record 4,000 including politicians, military personnel and business people.

The highlight of the prayer meeting was the speech given before the President's by the first African American and the first Seventh-day Adventist, Rev. Barry Black, the former chief chaplain of the United States Navy. He said that if President Trump behaves proudly, God will cut down the root like the big tree and he will be driven from the throne. The audience

applauded. The media also said that it was the best sermon in history.

President Trump who took the rostrum next told that he would abolish restrictions on religious leader's political activities, saying "freedom is not a gift from the state, but a gift from God." He also expressed strong opposition to those who intentionally destroy world peace. It was impressive to see that immediately before the closing time, two representatives of Republican and Democratic parties who served as hosts gave prayers of blessings, with the President in the center, and he responded to it.

## The Relationship Between the Bible Societies and the Catholic Church in the Asia-Pacific

Rev. Watabe and the manager of translation dept., Junichi Iwamoto, participated in "Asia Pacific Catholic Affinity Group Meeting" held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on July 26 and 27, 2016. Fifteen representatives from 11 Bible Societies in the Asia-Pacific region gathered for the first time to discuss strengthening the relationship between the Bible Societies and the Roman Catholic Church in each country. 3.9 billion people, 53.6% of the world's population, live in the Asia-Pacific region, among

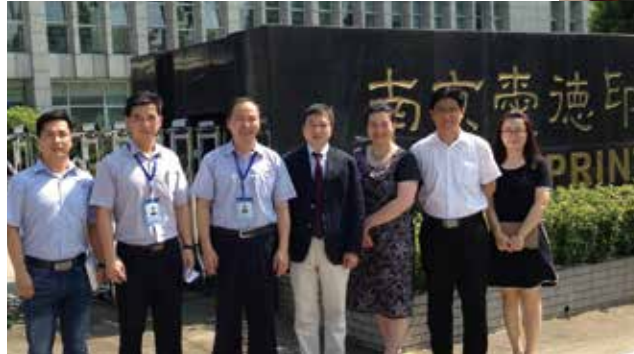
which 8.3%, 330 million are Christians (Protestants 54.2%, Catholics 44.9%). At the conference it was confirmed that the Bible Society of each country had room for further cooperation with the Catholic Church in distribution of the Bible, fundraising, education, pastoring, etc. The Inter-confessional Translation Project of the Japan Bible Society and the Catholic Church has been highly valued as a successful example in the Asian region.





# Chinese Manga Bible Published with the Support of JBS

**R**ev. Watabe, financial manager, Emi Béland, and production dept. manager, Makoto Nakano visited China Christian Council (CCC) and the Three -Self Patriotic Movement Committee (TSPM) from 19th to 24th July 2016. The Chair of the National Committee of TSPM, Elder Fu Xianwei reported to us that the "Chinese Manga Bible" was published under JBS' support. Béland and Nakano also visited Nanjing Amity Printing to negotiate some production orders.



▲ with Elder Fu  
◀ At Amity Printing

## Meeting of Northeast Asian Bible Societies held in Busan, Korea

**F**rom 17th to 19th January 2017, the Northeast Asian Bible Societies Meeting, known as the "chopstick meeting," was held at Haeundae, the scenic spot of Busan, the second largest city in Korea. Total of 18 people gathered from Taiwan, Korea and Japan including General Secretaries from each country. It was a good opportunity to exchange information on the situation of each Bible Society, to confirm friendship as Bible Societies in the same Northeast Asia region and to pray for one another. This meeting is held every two year with a purpose to

deepen friendship for young and new staff members. The last meeting was held in Okinawa in 2014 and the next meeting will be held in Taiwan in 2018, hosted by Taiwan Bible Society.



Everyone is holding chopsticks

## Digital Community Building Strategy in Japan

**J**BS held a staff workshop with Mr. Nelson Saba, the UBS Digital Publishing Strategist, in January 2017. After the workshop, two staff members of JBS participated in a workshop jointly hosted by UBS and You Version in Chiang Mai.

We are planning further to proactively utilize social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.



Mr. N. Saba

There is an AR in the article of Bible Video Contest 2016 on p.7 Download the application and try scanning.



## Participating in SBL Annual Meeting in US and RMG in Mexico

Rev. Watabe and bookshop manager Junnosuke Suzuki participated in the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting held in San Antonio, Texas, USA in November 2016. Many prominent scholars from all over the world gathered at this meeting. At the symposium, two prolific writers of New Testament theology, N.T. Wright of St. Andrews University and Richard Hayes of George Washington University, spoke on their most recent books. Many Christian book publishers opened their booths in the venue, and Richard Hayes' books in particular were piled.



Richard Hayes' books

After SBL, they went to Mexico City to participate in the Resource Mobilisation Group (RMG) meeting. RMG is a UBS conference where supporting Bible Societies exchange their views on the support of the Bible Societies around the world. The Bible Society of Mexico conducts activities to encourage improvements in the Mexican society. We prayed that the Bible Societies around the world would cooperate together even more for the furtherance of the Gospel.



Praying for the Bible Society of Mexico

## Reports on Support for Overseas Bible Production: Remitted 24,878,526 yen to 13 countries

JBS provided 24,878,526 yen assistance to support ISP project in 13 countries around the world in FY 2016. As a partner in the same Northeast Asia region, we sent 2,000,000 yen to support the translation of the Bible from the original languages in Mongolia. Also, we were able to give 2,000,000 yen to a project to distribute 1 million copies

of the Bible to support Bible education at schools in Cuba. For both projects, we are helping children who will be responsible for the next generation. We sincerely thank you for all your prayers and donations. Through your generosity, we were able to support the fruitful projects of Bible Work. Please continue to remember and pray for our ministries.



Prayer Meeting: JBS staff praying for Mongolia and Cuba

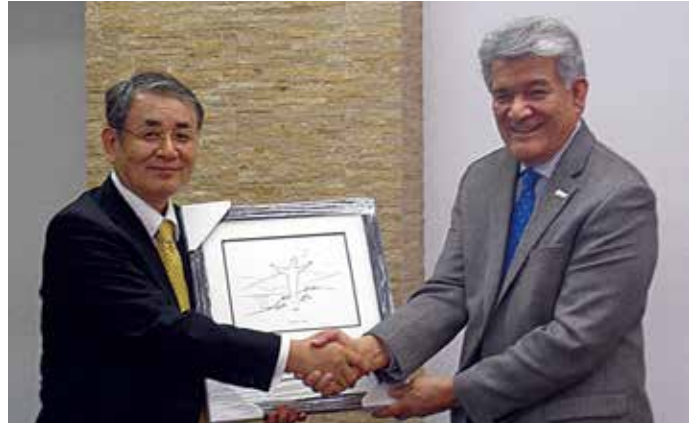


The Bible distribution in Cuba



## ABS and JBS to Partner in ISP Projects

**M**r. Marco Herrera of the American Bible Society and Ms. Jackie Nasreddine visited JBS on February 13th and 14th. They also visited the translation work place of Japan Deaf Evangelical Mission in Japan and learned the current state of the new Japanese sign language Bible translation. Agreement was made between ABS and JBS to strengthen cooperation on translation projects in Japan.



Confirming strong bonds between ABS and JBS



Visiting the translation work place of Japan Deaf Evangelical Mission

## UBS President Cunville Spoke at Japan Keswick Convention 2017

**U**BS President Rev. Dr. Robert Cunville was invited as the main speaker at the 56th Japan Keswick Convention held in the vicinity of Tokyo from February 21st to 23rd of February, 2017. Rev. Cunville preached three times

in three days and exhorted Japanese Christians "to evangelize with hope." 500 participants gathered at the venue and received encouragement.



Rev. Dr. Robert Cunville, President of United Bible Societies  
©Christian Today



500 people at the venue of Heritage Resorts, Kumagaya City, Saitama Prefecture  
©Christian Today

# The Earthquake-ridden Country Promised New Support to the United Bible Societies in Ecuador

In April 2016, a massive earthquake occurred in Ecuador. General Secretary Watabe visited the United Bible Societies in Ecuador on January 30th, 2017, and heard about the progress of reconstruction. Nearly 30,000 residents lost their homes due to the earthquake of magnitude 7.8 and are forced to live in temporary housing now. The United Bible Societies in Ecuador, in collaboration with local churches, disaster relief organizations, the American Bible Society, etc., launched a project to distribute

26 million copies of the Bible and 3,000 copies of selections in the afflicted area located about 170 km northwest of the capital city of Quito. General Secretary Watabe said, "Japan is an earthquake-ridden country, so we have supported Bible Societies that have suffered from earthquakes such as Chile, Nepal, Haiti, etc. This summer I would like to encourage JBS supporters to visit this site," and promised support to Executive Director Freddy Guerrero.



Ms. Gladys Rengifo, Executive Director Assistant, showing one of the productions to Rev. Watabe



Project presentation by Executive Director Freddy Guerrero

## Engaging the Scripture Message of Hope in the Gulf

The world "Gulf" of the Bible Society in the Gulf means regions around the Arabian Gulf, which have seven countries: Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Their official language is Arabic, and the religion is Muslim. The proportion of foreigners living in this area is 50-80%, the majority of which are low-income workers. More than 50% of the approximately 2.3 million Christian migrant workers residing in these countries are said to be non-readers or illiterates. In order to convey the Good News to them, the Bible Society in the Gulf currently offers Bibles and



Dr. Hrayr Jebejian, General Secretary in the Gulf  
(photo taken in Nicosia, Cyprus)

selections in more than 60 languages. JBS assisted the Bible production project by Hellenic Bible Society, and it is now sold in Cyprus Bible Society bookshop.



# 1st JBS Video Clip Competition Award : Best Work Award goes to High school Students

**J**apan Bible Society asked for original animated works created based on Biblical words and contents from April 2016 to October 2016. As a result, there were 67 entries in total. Four judges selected outstanding works according to the criteria of (1) correctly presenting Biblical messages, (2) excellence in creativity, composition and skill, (3) resonant, intriguing, and impactful.

On January 9th, 2017, at the Yamaha Ginza Studio in Tokyo, the 1st JBS Video Clip Competition Award was held, screening 20 films nominated, and presenting and awarding the works preselected by the judges. All Award winning works can be viewed on the Bible Society website until the end of the year.



Best Award (creative category): "Love your neighbor "



Best Award (general category): "Remember the Lord in everything you do, and he will show you the right way"

## Bible Quiz Championships 2016

**B**ible Quiz Championships were held in Tokyo, Osaka, Fukuoka, Nagoya and Sapporo from 2014 with the aim of familiarizing people with the Bible, and calling for reading the entire Bible, through quizzes from the Bible. In 2016, championships were held in Sendai in April, Kanazawa in July and Kobe in September. A participating team would consist of three people, mainly middle and high school students to university students, from twenties to thirties of age. The prize

to the winning team in each region was a three-day trip to Tokyo Disneyland and they became heated competitions. The staff members were happy to hear from the participants that they wanted to read the Bible more.

In 2017, the championships are scheduled to be held in Fujisawa City, Kanagawa Prefecture and in Hiroshima City. JBS would like to send representatives from Japan to the world quiz competition that will be held in Prague, Czech Republic in 2018.



At Sendai



At Kobe

new product



topics

## "One Minute Devotions Power of Prayer"

In order to taste the word of God everyday for 365 days a year, "Power of Prayer" has Bible passages, E. M. Bounds' words of meditation and powerful prayer. You can start reading it from anytime of the year, and even on a busy day, you can find one minute to meditate on the Word of God.

List price 1,800 yen (excluding tax)

## Foreign tourists visting Japan in 2016 have increased 22% from the previous year

Foreign tourists visiting Japan in 2016 reached 240.3 million, an increase of 22% over the previous year. Traditional historical sites such as temples, shrines and Japanese gardens in Kyoto, Nara, Hiroshima and Tokyo (Asakusa), as well as beautiful nature are still popular among foreign tourists.

However, in recent years popularity has moved from large cities to rural areas. Jigokudani onsen in Nagano prefecture where Monkeys (snow monkeys) soak themselves in hot springs is getting popular and 70% of the entrants are foreigners.

Universal Studios Japan in Osaka has 13.9

million visitors a year, and about half of the 1.2 million that increased since the previous year are foreigners. Harry Potter Area opened in 2014 is particularly popular. This is the biggest Universal Studio outside the United States.



Snow monkeys are taking a bath



The Wizarding World of Harry Potter in USJ