

JBS NEWS INTERNATIONAL

Rise for the Great Commission

April 2018 Vol.15

God's Word - Living Hope for All

Greetings from Japan Bible Society

“Then the LORD will be king over all the earth; everyone will worship him as God and know him by the same name.”

Zechariah 14: 9 (GNT)



Rev. Makoto Watabe
JBS General Secretary

I am grateful that we can send this issue of JBS News International to our

international friends and supporters this year.

Despite the present age where economies and politics of the world constantly change, God has been unchangingly protecting our ministry so that we can continue delivering the Bible into many people's hands.

We need to target our outreach activities in order to best accommodate the needs of this postmodern era. Various attempts and efforts are required for this purpose. By exchanging information and ideas with our international

counterparts, we can inspire each other in order to draw people's attention to God's Word which shines as the light of the world at any time and place.

From 2018, I will be serving as the Moderator of the National Christian Council (NCCJ) in Japan, along with my service here at JBS. It is my prayer that the name of the Lord will be praised in Japan even more with your prayers and supports.



New committee members (Moderator, Vice-moderator, General Secretary, Secretary) were elected at NCC 40th General Assembly

The 5th UBS Asia Affinity Alliance Meeting



Rev. Makoto Watabe leading morning devotion



Sharing challenges and best practices in Asia region

In April 2017, Asia Affinity Alliance (AAA) Meeting was held in Singapore. 13 General Secretaries and 7 UBS staff from 13 Asia Pacific countries, including our General Secretary Watabe, reported their activities and discussed challenges they

are facing today.

The participants also joined the event commemorating the 180th anniversary of the Bible Society of Singapore.

NCCJ visits CCC/TSPM



The National Christian Council in Japan started its relationship with China Christian Council (CCC) and the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) when the churches started reopening their doors after the Cultural Revolution. NCCJ sent its first delegation in 1983. The first delegation from China visited Japan the following year and so the reciprocal visits to renew and reaffirm friendship began.



At Langzhong Church

The fifth delegation (8 members including Rev. Watabe, vice-moderator and Emi Beland, chair of China committee) from Japan visited Shanghai, Chengdu, Langzhong, Chongqing and Beijing in May, 2017 and met with CCC/TSPM as well as brothers and sisters at local churches and theological seminaries. Since NCCJ's last visit, new curriculum was implemented such as piano lessons and Chinazation of theology. Christians (Protestant) now number more than 45 million.

UBS Roundtable Exchange 2017

The UBS Roundtable Exchange 2017 was held in Sydney, Australia. General Secretary Watabe and JBS staff, Jun Kajihama, joined this conference where 240 participants gathered from 100 Bible Societies.

Each day of the week, the attendees discussed the agendas on Philadelphia Promise: Translation and Literacy, Diaspora, Migrant and Refugees, Churches under Pressure, Church Relations and Digital Bible Engagement. Specialists on each agenda were invited to facilitate the discussions.

Resource Mobilization Group Meeting of the supporting Bible Societies preceded the Roundtable Exchange. Participants discussed issues such as how to support the Bible Societies with difficulties. In 2018,

JBS will support the Bible Societies in Portugal, Cuba, Mongolia, Guatemala, and Ecuador.

During the conference, participants also joined the Hillsong Conference. This conference held by Hillsong Church, a megachurch in Australia, attracts tens of thousands of participants every year. At the Conference, the Bible Society Australia which celebrated its 200th anniversary last year was honored.



Jun Kajihama leading morning devotion during RMG meeting



Roundtable "discussion" Exchange



Hillsong Conference at Qudos Bank Arena, Sydney

Creation Care and the Gospel Conference in East Asia



Participants from Japan

As part of the activities in East Asia related to the ongoing Lausanne/WEA Global Campaign for Creation Care and the Gospel, East Asia Conference took place in Hsinchu City, Taiwan in July 2017.

About 100 participants including General Secretary Watabe discussed the future prospects of environmental issues and discovered from the Word of God what our calling and responsibility were for caring for God's creation.

The First UBS East Asia Affinity Alliance Meeting in Mongolia



(Right) Rev. Bayarmagnai Bayardalai, MUBS Executive Director

The Mongolian Union Bible Society joined the United Bible Societies in 2016. To commemorate, General Secretaries from five North East Asian countries - Mongolia, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Japan gathered to meet at the 1st East Asia Affinity Alliance Meeting held in Ulaanbaatar. The attendees from North East Asian Bible Societies promised to support and strengthen ties with the Mongolian Union Bible Society.



(From left) General Secretary from Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Rev. Arun Sok Nhep (UBS-GMT) and Hong Kong

The Week of Celebration for 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

In September 2017, JBS dedicated a week to mark 500 years since Reformation by holding various events, such as a memorial lecture by professor Hans-Martin Barth from Germany, a banquet attended by ecumenical leaders and guests, an exhibition of the Bible and its history and a classical music charity concert.

Leaders from the National Christian Council in Japan, Japan Evangelical Association, and Japan Pentecostal Council were also among the attendees. We prayed together for the unity of churches in a spirit of oneness to overcome denominational differences.



Church leaders from NCCJ, JEA and JPC

Professor Hans-Martin Barth

Scan here to view the lecture



The Simon Choir, their Inspirational Activities

JBS held a charity concert at the Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall in Shinjuku, Tokyo on September 22, 2017. Around 900 people enjoyed the concert performed by the Simon Choir. The concert caught attention of the Ambassador of Gabon, which later led to their cooperation with Gabon's

cultural programs.

The Choir performed without charge at the Carnegie Hall in New York in March, 2017. They will be performing at the United Nations Headquarters this August, by the invitation of the Secretary-General of the UN who saw their performance at the Carnegie Hall.



Makoto Hoshino, the conductor

UBS CRC members received in audience by Pope Francis

On October 5th, 7 Church Relationship Committee members of the United Bible Societies were received in audience by Pope Francis in Vatican. At the meeting, it was confirmed that the Catholic Church and the UBS will continue to collaborate together.

General Secretary Watabe presented the Japanese Interconfessional Bible to the Pope, in demonstration of the firm ties between the Catholics and the Protestants in Japan. The Interconfessional translation is a common translation between the two churches.

The Pope expressed his wish to visit Japan if the opportunity arises.

Japanese Interconfessional Bible was presented as a gift



Wittenberg 2017 Congress

General Secretary and Mrs. Watabe attended the Wittenberg 2017 Congress commemorating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation, held in Berlin and Wittenberg, Germany in October 2017.

500 international attendees invited from around the world participated in 3-day sessions that focused on the past, present and future of the Reformation. On the final day of the Congress, the participants gathered at the Castle Church in Wittenberg to recite the FINISH*

Declaration together.

One of the co-hosts was Billion Soul Network, a ministry with a worldwide network, founded by Dr. James O. Davis who was listed as one of the “Top Ten Christian Influencers in the World” in 2010.

*FINISH is an acronym for Find, Intercede, Network, Invest, Send and Harvest, the strategic steps necessary for completing the Great Commission.



Dr. James O. Davis, the co-founder of Billion Soul Network



Attendees of the Wittenberg 2017 Congress in Castle Church

The Annual US National Prayer Breakfast

General Secretary Watabe joined the 66th annual US National Prayer Breakfast in Washington D.C. on February 8th. This tradition started when Dwight Eisenhower was the President. It started from a prayer meeting in the Capitol for Congressmen and Senators with faith.

Mr. Douglas Coe, who played a key role in founding the Prayer Breakfast, contributed to the peace building in the Middle East. Mr. Coe passed away last year but his legacy continues. President Trump offered his condolences and stated that the Christian “faith is central to American life and liberty”.



3,800 people from 140 countries filled the hall
© Official White House Photo



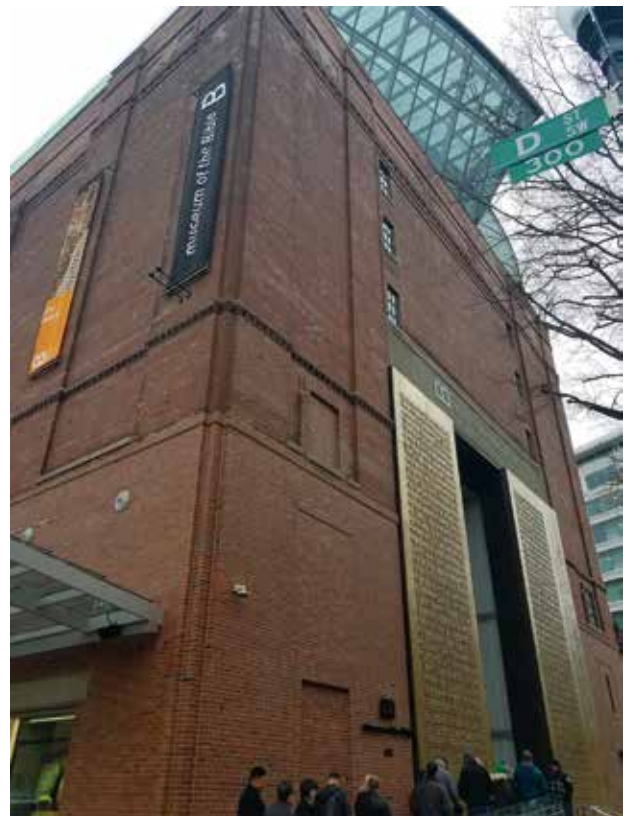
The gathering began in 1953

The Museum of the Bible in Washington D.C.

Prior to the National Prayer Breakfast, the guests were invited to tour the White House, the Capitol and the Museum of the Bible.

The Museum of the Bible which newly opened in November 2017 is a four-story facility where the visitors can learn about the Bible from all angles. Other than exhibits, visitors can enjoy theatres, guided tours and attractions.

A special art exhibition highlighting the work of Makoto Fujimura is on display through the end of April. He is a Japanese Christian artist whose work has been used for the cover of one of JBS' Bibles.



1,150 items from the museum's permanent collections are on display

The 2nd JBS Video Clip Competition Award 2017

We held the 2nd JBS Video Clip Competition Award at AVACO Studio in Waseda, Tokyo. There were 55 entries for the Award. We screened 17 nominated films and awarded the works selected by the judges. Young generations were involved actively in this competition.

For the 3rd Competition, we are calling for entries from March to October 2018.



Encouragement Award, "From Beginning to Eternity"



Candidates and audiences together watched nominated films



Photo session with Outstanding Performance Award winners

The 50th Korea National Prayer Breakfast

The 50th Korea National Prayer Breakfast was held in Seoul on March 8th, 2018. This Prayer Breakfast with 50 years of history is almost as old as the American National Prayer Breakfast which has been held for 66 years.

The 50th anniversary was compared to the year of Jubilee, the year of liberation and freedom. Devoted prayers were offered for unification of North and South Korea, which was one of the focused issues of prayers at the Prayer Breakfast.

The Korean President Mun Jae-in, the first lady Kim Jung-sook and nearly 5,000 attendees participated, making the event the biggest Prayer Breakfast in the

world and in history.

On March 9th, another prayer meeting with foreign visitors was held in the chapel of the Parliament House. Representatives from the US, Switzerland, Germany and Japan gave speeches.

On the last day in Korea, General Secretary Watabe attended the Sunday Service at Yoido Full Gospel Church, the world's biggest church with more than 700,000 members.

JBS has been hosting meetings every year to forward communication between Korean and Japanese church leaders.



President Moon Jae-in and the first lady Kim Jung-sook ©Korea Christian Today



Praying for the world peace ©Korea Christian Today



Sunday service at Yoido Full Gospel Church, Seoul

topics

The International Bible Championship Jerusalem in Prague 2018

JBS has hosted Bible Quiz Championships 10 times so far in cities all over Japan since 2014. In June 2018, we will hold our last Championship in Matsuyama, Ehime Prefecture. This will lead to the national Bible Quiz Championship in Tokyo to be held on August 11 this year.

The International Bible Championship Jerusalem will be held in Prague on May 13, 2018. JBS is cooperating with this event and hopes to bring the event to Japan in the near future. Stay tuned for updates. Delegations from your Bible Societies are most welcome.



Scene from 2014, Prague



(Second from right)
Karel Sedlacek, Director
of International Bible
Championship Jerusalem
Prague 2018

topics

Toilets - Japanese Style Hospitality



When traveling, we often have troubles using toilets different from home. Japanese toilets are well-known for being clean and functional. It has been so for the past 30 years, ever since the shower toilet appeared on TV in 1982. The automatic washing toilet is now widely spread and up to 80% of the Japanese households are equipped with one. New and updated versions have been developed and used in various places, such as airports, department stores and luxury hotels. Please try the various functions if you have a chance to visit Japan.



Offering natural scenery, heated seats, automatic odor-neutralizers and lids that rise when you approach