

March 18, 2011
Japan Baptist Convention
Disaster Relief Headquarters for the Tohoku-Kanto Earthquake
Makoto Kato, Director

JBC has a website in both Japanese and English.

http://www.bapren.jp/mission2/earthquake/110311EARTHQUAKE_DISASTER.htm

We have established also an e-mail address for the JBC Disaster Relief Headquarters. jbcsaigai@bapren.jp

Update and Prayer Requests

Praise the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Following the disaster that occurred one week ago, it was labeled “Northeastern Japan Pacific Coast Earthquake,” but in the days to follow, the term “Tohoku (northeastern)-Kanto Great Earthquake” has been prevalent in the Japanese news. For clarity, the Japan Baptist Convention is using this terminology.

Our hearts tremble as the seriousness of the damages becomes more clear with each passing day. The magnitude 9.0 earthquake, the destruction from tsunami, the accidents at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant and compulsory evacuation of people in danger of radiation, and the inconvenience caused by planned power outages in urban areas including the JBC office, has thrown eastern Japan into a state of confusion and suffering.

The Japan Baptist Convention Disaster Relief Headquarters for the Tohoku-Kanto Earthquake has begun implementing the plans described below. We are deeply grateful for the immediate response from Christians around the world who have shown concern for the country of Japan as well as their compassion for Japanese Christians, expressed in the form of prayer, encouragement, and offerings. We ask you continue your prayer support in the challenging days to come.

I. Conditions and activities of week one:

A. Tohoku Association, North Kanto Association (especially Ibaraki Provence), Tokyo Association (especially Chiba Provence) – JBC churches were hit with 6 to 7 seismic intensity. Fortunately the inland churches did not have severe destruction. Although all of the church members’ safety has not been confirmed, at this point there are no reports of loss of life.

B. Victims in the disaster region are suffering a severe shortage of food. We are preparing food and other necessities. Problems, such as not having access to the Tohoku Expressway, and insufficient fuel for vehicles, plus accidents at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant, have prevented delivery of supplies.

C. Sunday, March 13, we were able to dispatch two vans carrying a BWAid Rescue 24 team and publicity department to Sendai city.

D. Wednesday, March 16, relief supplies that had been gathered and prepared by churches in the North Kanto Association were delivered by van to Sendai city. (The original plan was to send 3 vehicles filled with supplies, but because of the snowfall, supplies had to be compacted into one vehicle.)

E. Saturday, March 19, five more vans carrying relief supplies will travel to the disaster region around Sendai and Ishinomaki.

F. Tuesday, March 15, Pastor Masayoshi Fukuda traveled from Hokkaido by ferry to Aomori and Iwate cities to check on those church members and to pray with them.

II. Plans for rescue efforts and relief work during the coming two week period:

A. In order to meet the urgent need for supplies, we have a goal of sending food and necessities four or five times each week to churches and shelters.

B. Next week we will send a full-time worker to Sendai to conduct a survey of effective ways to meet urgent needs. In a situation where people are unable to help themselves, we plan to assist people living in shelters and elderly people having to survive in their own homes without basic necessities such as food, water or heat.

C. Although North Kanto and Tokyo were not directly damaged by the disaster, this region is sustaining negative effects. We plan to assist the people who have lost their jobs, especially foreigners from Asia living in the area.

D. Many people evacuating from the dangerous radiation zone, especially small children and pregnant women, are seeking refuge. We are offering shelter at the JBC office building, and are encouraging North Kanto and Tokyo Association churches to open their doors to these victims.

E. Following the experiences of the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake in 1995, we learned that there were problems in the relief shelters, such as sexual discrimination, harassment, and violence. We are urging the government and shelter officials to be aware of this issue.

F. We are also making long-term plans following this urgent first month to sustain the needs of the local churches and to provide supplies as the needs change.

III. Prayer Requests:

A. Pray that the Lord will provide His peace, encouragement, and hope to the victims suffering deep pain and grief.

B. Pray that the volunteers sacrificially reaching out to rescue and help the victims will remain safe and healthy. (Many of our JBC church members are serving as volunteers.)

C. Pray that the churches affected by this disaster will receive an abundance of the Lord's comfort and encouragement. Pray that the churches will share the love of Christ with the people in their communities.

D. Pray that the damages in the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant will be immediately repaired and that radioactivity will not be released.

E. Pray that in this disaster the Lord's church will seek and follow God's Will, that we will work alongside the Lord Jesus, and that we will give Him the Glory.