## The Future of the Convention’s Cooperative Missions

### The 2011 Mid-Range Plan

The year 2007 saw the 60th anniversary of the formation of the Japan Baptist Convention and the 120th anniversary of the arrival of the first Southern Baptist missionaries to Japan. Looking back on this history it is evident that we have received abundant blessings from the Lord, and we have been reminded of the work that has been done by many dedicated people. In the drafting of the 2011 Mid-Range Plan, we have fundamentally reexamined the meaning of a convention dedicated to missions, and with the prayers and input of each and every member church have set upon a new course of action. In this world of ever-growing division and strife where it seems ever more and more difficult to see hope in the future, the gospel of reconciliation that God has granted us through Christ’s suffering on the cross is our salvation, our hope and our light. Overseas as well as at home, the Convention is commissioned to much wonderful work still to be undertaken. Let us widen the circle of joy in the Convention’s cooperative missions, ever mindful of the words “Independence and Cooperation” that have guided the Convention in respecting the subjectivity of its member churches.

### The Annual Activities of the Japan Baptist Convention

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<th>Mo</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Department in</th>
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<tr>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>Anniverary of the Establishment of the JBC</td>
<td>Executive Secretary</td>
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<td>May</td>
<td>Regional Association Liaison Meeting</td>
<td>Missions Dept.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun</td>
<td>1st Meeting of the Trustees Baptist Hospital Day/Seminary Work (May/ending on the last Sunday)</td>
<td>Executive Secretary</td>
<td>Second Sunday</td>
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<td>Sep</td>
<td>Church School Month 2nd Meeting of the Trustees Workshop for Newly Dedicated Church Workers</td>
<td>Missions Dept.</td>
<td>Executive Secretary</td>
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<td>Oct</td>
<td>Japan Baptist Women’s Union General Meeting/ Layperson’s Convention</td>
<td>Women’s Union</td>
<td>Varies Annually</td>
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<td>Nov</td>
<td>Baptist Welfare Day Annual General Meeting World Baptist Missions Prayer Week (Lottie Moon Christmas Offering)</td>
<td>Executive Secretary</td>
<td>Second Sunday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>Regional Association Liaison Meeting</td>
<td>Missions Dept.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>Cooperative Missions Week</td>
<td>Executive Secretary</td>
<td>8 days beginning on the first Sunday</td>
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<td>Feb</td>
<td>3rd Meeting of Trustees</td>
<td>Executive Secretary</td>
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## History of the Japan Baptist Convention

In 1889, the Foreign Missions Board of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) of the United States sent two missionaries, J.W. McCollum and J.A. Brunson, to Japan. They began their mission work in Kyushu, and in 1903 the West Japan Baptist Convention was formed. This association eventually joined with the United Church of Christ in Japan (Kyodan) and participated in the general war mobilization efforts of World War II.

In 1947, in response to calls by the missionary E.B. Dozier, the Japan Baptist Convention (JBC) was formed at the Seinan Gakuin Church. 16 churches comprised of some Kyodan churches which had separated from their denomination for reasons of evangelical policy, church politics, and liturgical understanding, participated in the formation of the new convention. The JBC adopted the slogan “The Light of Christ to all of Japan” and began by establishing churches in prefectoral capital cities and from there spreading out to other cities.

Through the prayers and personal, material and economic support of its members, the JBC proceeded boldly with its church development program. Many SBC pastors and laypersons came to Japan as part of the “Preaching Missions” in which well-known preachers were invited on circuit preaching tours and, in 1963, as part of the “New Life Movement”.

Along with its promoting of Home Missions, the JBC was also active in promoting Foreign Missions. In 1955, the JBC sent missionaries on a “foreign mission” to Okinawa which was at the time still under US occupation and in 1965 sent missionaries to Brazil in response to calls by the missionary E.B. Dozier. From 1955 to 1980, the JBC continued to send missionaries to Indonesia, Thailand and Singapore.

The JBC, which had been generously supported by SBC offerings, decided in 1976 to become financially independent from the SBC. After having a such abundant support, independence was difficult and it was not until 1983 that the JBC was finally truly financially independent. Also, along with financial independence, the JBC took a more self-assertive stance in faith with its “Confession of Faith” in 1979, its “Statement of Faith concerning War Responsibility” in 1988, opposition to the imperial enthronement ceremony, and its “Peace Declaration” in 2002. Additionally, as concrete actions in support of its commitment to proclaim the gospel in every corner of life, the JBC has been active through various special committees in the areas of the Yasukuni Shrine Problem, Japan-Korean Relations and the Problems of Korean Residents of Japan, Pollution Problem, Buraku (Discrimination) Problem, Handicapped and the Church, Homeless, and Sexual Discrimination Problem.

In 1987, the Convention instituted a retirement fund system for retired church workers, and in order to fulfill the Convention’s goal of “500 Churches, 50,000 Members” sold the land (in the Shinjuku Ward of Tokyo) where the Convention’s office then were and established a fund. Then, in the 1990s, the Convention was active Church Planning in nationwide and assisting churches in the purchase of real estate. In 1995, the Convention further increased its efforts in supporting churches by establishing the Research & Training Institute and by taking on responsibilities such as the publication of texts to help in church formation and the management of sales for the magazine “Bible Education” (Seissho kyoiku).

However, changes over time have compelled the Convention to change its activities from those planned in the original funding, and at the 50th Annual General Meeting of the Convention in 2004, a reorganization was undertaken in which activities would be financed by cooperative missions tithing without depending on the fund. Further, at the 55th Annual General Meeting of the Convention in 2009, it was decided to phase out the retirement system for retired church workers and instead seek the cooperation of individual churches in providing retirement plans on their own.

### Notes

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### 284 Churches 42Missions

- Registered Members 34,827
- Current Active Members 15,648

(as of May 2015)
The Japan Baptist Convention Cooperative Missions

**Home Missions**
- Special Support for Church Planting in nation-wide Support of Missions Development
- Real Estate Acquisition
- Cooperative Support
- Regional Cooperative Project

**Foreign Missions and International Cooperation**
- Sending of Missionary Units
- Cooperative with BWAnd(World Baptist Alliance, ABP(Western Pacific Baptist Federation)
- Support of International Relief Efforts through BWAnd

**Human Resource Development**
- Workshops
- Workshops for Deacons and Church Officers
- Workshop on the “Bible Education”

**Cooperative Missions**
- “The Light of Christ to All of Japan” Tree

**Organization of the Japan Baptist Convention**
- JBC Annual General Meeting (Member Churches)
- The Board of Trustees
- Executive Secretary
- Comptroller Board
- The Amagi Assembly
- Amagi Administration Committee
- The Research and Training Institute for Missions
- R & TI Administration Committee
- Missions Division
- Executive Secretary
- “Baptist” editorial staff
- General Affairs Division
- General Affairs Department
- Accounting Department
- Sales Affairs Department

**Affiliated Baptist Entities**
- Seinan Gakuin University, Fukuoka City
- Seinan Jogakuin (Women’s) University, Kita-Kyushu City
- The Japan Baptist Medical Foundation, Kyoto City
- The Amagi Assembly, Shizuoka Prefecture

Although, they are not included in the official organization of the Japan Baptist Convention, several groups such as the Japan Baptist Women’s Union and the Baptist Men’s Union use space at the Japan Baptist Convention headquarters.

**The Three Pillars of Cooperative Missions**
1. Cooperative Missions Offerings
2. Attendance at Annual General Meetings
3. Reading the Baptist magazine