

2011.3.11 Great East Japan Earthquake
Local Aid Committee News Letter from Tohoku
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Issue # 16

To all the churches through out Japan, thank you for your daily support through prayer and offerings. We are in our 5th year of aid work since the disaster, and it is because of your prayers and support that this has been made possible. However, five years from the disaster, we have yet to find an end to the radiation problem from the nuclear power plant accident. Many people's lives are still in danger. Please keep this in your prayers. After the Nepal earthquake, the North East Japan Union sent donations to support the work of APB Aid and BW Aid. We pray in solidarity with those suffering in Nepal as we too received support from throughout the world. We pray for the Lord's comfort. In this issue, we will share about the aid work that has been carried in Otsuchi-cho, Iwate Prefecture.

Aid Work at Otsuchi-cho Kozuchi Temporary Housing

“Welcome home! Come and eat. Come and eat. Make sure you wash your hands. Welcome home!” This is what we always here the mothers saying every time we visit the Kozuchi Number 4 Temporary Housing common room. Though I cannot remember from when, but for some time now, when we visit, we are treated with a meal and a warm greeting of “welcome home”.

We started visiting in the August of 2011, almost 5 years ago. I cannot express how much they have cared for and love on us. God has used the Seinan Gakuin University students, the Tokyo Women's University students, and the volunteers sent through the Baptist Convention Churches to wipe away the tears of those in sorrow. And through this, we have also seen God.

Currently, the whole of Otsuchi-cho is surrounded by enormous landfills. Trucks, cranes and tanks run through the narrow, maze like streets. Since my first time visiting, I have been taking a photo from the same spot in Shiroyama Park. Since the summer of last year, the view has been drastically changing. I felt as though my heart could not keep up with the changes. I felt left behind. I have heard similar things from the people living in the temporary housings in the area.



Kozuchi Number 4 Temporary Housing

Making Flower Baskets



Knit Wool Hats

“ I don’t know... I feel like I’m being left behind...” These are the sorts of words I fear from people who have no clue when they will leave the temporary housings. These are people who have been appointed to new housing that have yet to be built. Sometimes all we can do together is sigh.

Despite this, we have started seeing happy times as well.



Hand Crafted Kittens

“It’s hard to face the morning. If I open my eyes another long long day has to begin.”

Hearing this, I wondered if there wasn’t any way to support the everyday lives of the residents. I decided to hand out the rolls of wool that had been donated to us from through out Japan. These were then wonderfully

transformed in to cute fluffy bird and cat decorations, handkerchief cases and warm wool hats. Lately, these have started being sold in church and university bazaars. The money raised from this has been used as for goodbye hot-springs gifts to those that leave the temporary housings. This is such delightful news.

The other day there was a magnitude 5 earthquake. I phoned the residents at the temporary housing straight away. I was told, “We’re fine. We’re fine. We are going to have tea time all day today at the common room because the people living alone must feel lonely.” It is wonderful to see how the common room space, which was doubled thanks to the donations, is being used. When I heard this I thanked the lord for allowing us to make the common room into a bigger space. Life here will probably continue like this for some time. I want to visit Otsuchi-cho again. This is the feeling I have as I write this report.

(Koriyama Kosumosu Dori Church Chikayo Kaneko)



View of the Land-fills from Shiroyama Park



Reconstruction plan



Stretching Exercises at the Kozuchi Number 7 Temporary Housing

Ando District Update

The Reconstruction Agency set out a policy that decided to end the concentrated North East Japan Disaster reconstruction period at the end of 2015. After this period, the local government is expected to partially cover the reconstruction of its district. The stage of reconstruction in all three of the prefectures in North East Japan is different but what is most worrying is the health of those that must continue living in the temporary housing estates.



Maintaining the table that was donated.



Concert at the community hall by a Opera Group from Osaka and a café with volunteers from Morioka church.



Mini bouquet sent to Ando District by the Seinan Team.

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Japanese Baptist Convention Great East Japan Earthquake Local Aid Committee

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