

## Japan Baptist Convention Update #5

May 17, 2011

Japan Baptist Convention - Disaster Relief Headquarters  
Makoto Kato - Executive Secretary

Praise the Wonderful Name of our Crucified and Resurrected Lord Jesus!

Two months have passed since the occurrence of Japan's Triple Disaster of earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear accident on March 11. From the depths of my heart I thank all of you, my Christian brothers and sisters around the world who have remained informed of our situation here in Japan, have faithfully continued to pray, and have sacrificially given contributions as expression of your love and friendship.

During this time, we have watched news broadcasts of catastrophes in other countries. In the United States, many people are suffering from natural disasters such as tornadoes and floods. Also, we have watched in shock and sadness as man-made weapons have destroyed the lives of people around the globe.

Through your shining example of Christ-like love and friendship in spite of your own local problems, Japanese Christians have experienced anew the meaning of our Lord's Great Commission to "Go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature" compounded by His words "Blessed are the Peacemakers." Please pray that Japanese Christians will stand firm in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus and faithfully serve both God and humanity.

### Update on the situation in Northeastern Japan

Confirmed deaths – 15,000 people

Missing – 9,500 persons

Refugees – 150,000 people

Two months after the earthquake and tsunami, searches for human remains continue. Little by little the rubble is being removed and mud is slowly being cleared away, barely making an impact on the widespread disaster region. Damages in many locations remain untouched. Temporary housing is being assembled further inland, away from the danger of tsunami along the coast. For the thousands of people connected to the fishing industry, with strong ties to the sea, efforts for relocation inland are met with resistance. These victims face a reality of continued suffering, making very little progress toward reconstruction of their lives.

### Nuclear Power Plant crisis

In spite of all efforts, problems with the crippled nuclear reactors remain unsolved, and we are learning more details of the major meltdown of one reactor. Regrettably, this accident in a nuclear power plant here in Japan is creating world-wide fear of the spread of radiation. Humans have no control

over this unseen danger and cannot know the consequences. Here in this country we had been taught that this nuclear power generation would help prevent global warming, and that nuclear power would be an environmentally friendly natural source of energy. We are coming to the realization that these were false claims. We are now wondering if human overconfidence in science and technology was actually a sin of arrogance.

People living in the 30 kilometer radius of the damaged nuclear facilities have been forced to relocate, not knowing what the next day will bring. The other day, residents forced from their homes were given permission to temporarily return to their houses one last time, wearing protective suits. These victims were only allowed two hours to take care of all their needs before being forced to permanently evacuate.

The damaged nuclear facilities are in Fukushima Province, a land bountiful in agricultural resources. The nuclear power plant was built to sustain the lifestyles and business of other people living in the distant metropolitan area, not the local residents of Fukushima. It has become evident that people near the nuclear power plant have carried a heavy burden, providing an enormous amount of electric power for the urban cities. The metropolitan residents, including the Christian churches, should be accountable for the burden they have caused.

#### Japan Baptist Convention relief efforts

Our emphasis during Stage One, the first month following the earthquake and tsunami, focused on prompt delivery of life-sustaining necessities for the victims. Gradually during Stage Two, we have shifted our ministry to providing simple meals as well as clearing houses filled with mud and debris. Considering the width and length of the disaster area and the multiple challenges, we have divided the region into three parts: Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima, assigning three separate teams to these localities. These teams are starting specific relief projects:

Iwate team – is providing basic living necessities for people whose homes were destroyed by tsunami, and is also providing school supplies for school children.

Miyagi team – has begun a meal service for refugees, and is also clearing mud and debris from houses.

Fukushima team – has started a care ministry for people evacuated from the radiation zone. On Easter Sunday, Koriyama Baptist Church invited the children living in a nearby rescue center to come to the church. Following a fun, joyful day, their parents gratefully commented that “Since the earthquake, this was the first time we have seen the children laugh!”

Some of our plans for relief work have been limited. Because there are so few Convention churches in the vast disaster area, delivery of supplies and services must originate from Tokyo. Restoration of infrastructure (roads,

water, electricity, gas) is slow. We are in the process of setting up a “base camp” for future volunteer workers, to accommodate an influx of volunteers during the summer vacation period.

Disbursement of contributions for relief work during Stages 1 and 2  
as of May 17, 2011

Contributions - **61,430,000** yen  
(of this amount, **23,330,000** yen has come from outside Japan)

Disbursement for relief activities - **10,170,000** yen

JBC churches in the disaster region, relief funds, and funds for repair work - **2,000,000** yen

Disaster region relief supplies, including clothing, fuel, vehicle, and other necessities - **6,670,000** yen

Relief work and transportation - **1,500,000** yen

Prayer Requests

Pray that the crisis at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant will be resolved as quickly as possible and that the spread of radiation will be stopped immediately. Pray for the safety and success of the many people working diligently to end this catastrophe.

Pray for the physical and emotional well-being of the children living with fear of radiation exposure.

Pray for the health of thousands of refugees suffering from this prolonged upheaval; pray that they can expect their lives to begin to mend.

Pray for the Lord Jesus to touch the grieving, broken hearts and to pour upon them an abundance of His comfort, healing, and hope.

Pray for the Christian churches of Japan as we continue to pray together that our efforts will be a positive testimony for the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness.

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JBC website in both Japanese and English:

[http://www.bapren.jp/mission2/earthquake/110311EARTHQUAKE\\_DISASTER.htm](http://www.bapren.jp/mission2/earthquake/110311EARTHQUAKE_DISASTER.htm)

E-mail address for the JBC Disaster Relief Headquarters.

[jbcsaigai@bapren.jp](mailto:jbcsaigai@bapren.jp)

**Information for Contributions:**

- PAYING BANK : MIZUHO BANK,LTD.
- A/C WITH BRANCH : URAWA BRANCH
- ADDR : 1-4-9 Nakamachi Urawa-ku. Saitama City, 336-0062 JAPAN
- SWIFT CODE : MHBKJPJT
- A/C NUMBER : 541-1243429
- PAYEE NAME : JAPAN BAPTIST CONVENTION
- ADDR : 1-2-4 Minami Urawa. Minami-ku. Saitama City, 336-0017 JAPAN