

This April, 5 years since the East Japan Great Earthquake, there was a big earthquake centered in Kumamoto. My heart aches when I think of those in Kumamoto and Kyushu that are in pain and sorrow. We are at a time when earthquakes such as these can happen anywhere. Through the recent earthquake, we in northeast Japan are also freshly reminded of the earthquake 5 years ago and are also saddened.

Many people from Kumamoto and Kyushu have supported us over these five years. We are praying that we will know how to support Kumamoto and Kyushu.

We also pray from the bottom of our hearts that the hearts of bodies of the people, churches, Christians, and pastors of the devastated areas will be protected. At this time unfair occurrences, to fear god and to love our neighbors is a repeated trial. There are times when these efforts are never rewarded. However God will always give an answer. Even at times when there seems to be no hope. Even at times when fatigue overwhelms us. God's love and friendship will never dry out. We have hope and pray that God will not ignore those who cry out for him day and night (Luke 18:7). We pray that this hope and prayer will shine in Kumamoto and throughout the world.

(Local Aid Committee President Makoto Kanamaru)

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### Nuclear Issues Column

Koriyama Kosumosu Dori Christ Church Atsushi Watanabe

“Is there anything that we can do for Fukushima?” Is something that I am often asked. Along with gratitude toward these words, there is something that I would like to say in return. This is to ask the same person to please know your area's emergency evacuation plan. Fukushima is my home, and as I continue to live my life here, this is what first crosses my mind when asked this question. It is important look at Fukushima, not as a symbol of devastation, but as a reminder of the importance of being aware of disaster prevention and as a way to know what disaster and accidents can actually look like.

As a graduate student, I have visited the areas that used to be danger zones and where evacuation orders have been issued, and have also visited the disaster areas of each prefecture. The reality is that there are many places where hardly any work has been done. The national highway that has been opened to the public still has high levels of radiation on the areas that pass by the nuclear power plant.

Earthquakes, tsunamis, nuclear power plant disasters, are all things that can happen in “my” home. The people that we now support at the temporary housing estates could be “me”.

However, while living in these circumstances. The people here still live with smiles. My young friend who lost his family due to the tsunami worked hard at the disaster volunteer center at his university and now has a job where he faces the sea everyday. The family that were forced to evacuate from their homes due to radiation pollution remember their home in their new environments and move forward, hopeful for a day to return. Those that were moved out to other prefectures continue to speak about the reality of Fukushima. Those that returned to Fukushima from outside, while taking care of their children's well being are optimistic as they look toward the future. There are many friends from churches around Japan that continue to give donations and volunteer even after 5 years. I am so happy because of the choices that each of these people make. God's truth can be found here.

However there are still those that are forced to live in temporary housing estates. There are also those that live in solitude in their new homes. There are still places where people cannot return to and places where people cannot even step foot in to. I am always reminded of the importance of continuing the relationships that have been built so far, and the importance of protecting life and those that are dear to us.



Ukedo Fish Port (Left)



Sign for Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant (Right)

## **Do Not Forget 3.11 – Great East Japan Earthquake Disaster Aid Charity Concert**

Sagami Chuo Christ Church Takahiro Kawakatsu

The “East Japan Great Earthquake Disaster Aid Charity Concert” was held in Sagami Chuo Christ Church. This is a continuation of the same concert that was held last year in Nishikawaguchi Church. The Sagami Chuo Christ Church Disaster Plan Team held this concert to tell people the message to “not forget 3.11”. This charity concert was held with the support of the Japanese Baptist Convention Ministry Music department and the Great East Japanese Earthquake Disaster Area Support Team. The singers were Kaori Ishihashi, Mikako Ehara, Kanade Toyohara, Michio Iizuka, and the pianist was Setsuko Totoki.

We made 2000 flyers and sent them out to the three conventions. We advertised this within our convention at each opportunity, and handed out flyers in the post boxes of the homes near the church. However the day of the concert was a cold day in comparison to the warm weather we had been having. We were worried at how many people would be able to come. However this worry did not last long. We ran out of the 170 copies of the program sheets, and we had to print out extra copies. In the end there were a total of 211 guests that came to the concert.

The four singers’ had breathtaking voices and the choice in music was amazing. A DVD made by the Convention’s local aid committee was also shown, along with a testimony from the Great East Japanese Earthquake Aid Committee member, Ms. Junko Hirukawa. The two hours sped by with the many programs that were planned. We received words from church members and visitors that the concert was a good opportunity to be reminded of 3.11. The donations that were made during the concert will be placed with the to the convention’s disaster donations.



**Thank you for your 2015 Donations**

**Please continue to pray in 2016 – Great East Japan Earthquake Disaster Support Team**

	2015 Goal	2015 Final Total	Number of donations
Total Donations	14 Million Yen	14 Million 253 Thousand Yen	348 donations
Domestic Donations: 13Mill 279 Thousand (344 Donations)			
International Donations: 974 Thousand (4 donations)			

## **2016 Donations in February and March (in order of time the donations were made)**

**126 donations were made. We would like to send our deep gratitude.**

Hitachi, Ijuin, Koga, Kagoshima, Yokodai, Fuchu, Yurigaoka, Ainoura-hikari, Kansai Reimei, Shinagawa, Seinan Jyogakuin University College Trinity Bell Choir, Fukuma, Seinan Jyogakuin, Kansai University High School, Kansai University High School Ikuyukai, Kokubu, Edamitsu, Chofu, Nakano, Keisen, Seinan Jyogakuin, Shonandai, Marugame Jotocho, Iizuka, Omura Kogashima, Koga, Kansai District Women's Convention, Midori no Makiba, Kagoshima, Urawa, Fukuoka District Women's Convention, Kubo Yuko, Okuda Ritsuko, Torikai, Hummingjoe Company, Sawara, Fukushima Charity concert, Asahara Yoko, Kiku, Okayama, Kurume, Puppet Theatre and Otakogumi, Yokosuka Nagasawa, Amano Goro and Fumiko, Nishihara Shinsei, Amakusa Chuo, Tokushima, Hachioji Mejirodai, Nokata, Nakano, Higashiyama, Ageo, Yamgata, Kumamoto Aisen, Fukuoka, Sales of “New Primary Pastor Training Forum” documents, Kobe, Seinan Gakuin High School, Seinan Gakuin Middle School, Chofu, Fukuoka South, Wajiro, Beppu International, Kasumigaoka, Mobarra, Torikai, Urawa, East Osaka, Nokata, Houhu, Omiya, Kochi-isesaki, Buzen, Hitoyoshi, Chikushino Futsukaichi, Oita, Kasugabaru Church Women’s Group, Ichikawa Yahata, Yokodai, Shimonoseki, Koga, Mejirogaoka, Tokyo North, Nishikawaguchi, Itami, Hirao, Ainoura Hikari, Kurume, North Kyushu District Music Committee Worship Gathering, Chikushino Futsukaichi, Ito, Chofu South, Shimizu Eiko, Miyazaki, Ijuin, Hanno, Moji-ko, Akatsuka, Tsukuba, Ai no Sono Kindergarten and Kohitsuji Nursery, Sagami Chuo, Kasugabaru, Megumi, Omura Kogashima, Yokohama totsuka, Ichikawa Yahata, North Osaka, Keisen, Kagoshima, Takasaki, Nakagawa, Toyohashi, Shion no Oka, Kobe Shinsei, Takasaki, Oi, Fujimino, Fukuma, Nahashintoshin, Yamagata, Shimura, Myogadani, Oume Akebono, Fujisawa, Sakai, Marugame Jotocho, Takasu.