

To all the churches throughout Japan, thank you for your daily support and encouragement. In Tohoku, we are gathering our prayers, one year after the occurrence of the Kumamoto and Oita Earthquake. Furthermore we are continuing our aid work in the disaster areas of the Great East Japan earthquake. In this issue we would like to share about what is going on in the temporary housing estates, 6 years after the earthquake, and share about what happened in Ayukawahama, Oshika Peninsula, Miyagi Prefecture. We kindly ask for your continued prayer and support.

Report from Oshika Peninsula

Many people lost their lives, or went missing after the Great East Japan Earthquake. Through the visitations that we carry out at the temporary housing estates, we have gotten to know the residents there and are always greeted with smiling faces. These are people who have lost everything. We have been given these amazing encounters with people who we can encourage and be encouraged by.

Solitary death in temporary homes and public housing estates was a prevalent issue after the Hanshin Awaji earthquake. The Local Aid Committee kept this issue in mind while carrying out aid in the disaster areas, and were always in hopes that solitary deaths would not take place.

According to the media, since the end of 2016, 188 people have died solitary deaths in the three prefectures hit by the devastation. Within those deaths was the death of Ms. Eiko Abe, who lived in the Ayukawahama Teramae temporary housing. This is where the Miyagi team carried out its visitations. We are greatly saddened, as we remember Ms. Abe and her wonderful smile.

6 years have passed, and it is always sad to say goodbye to those who leave the temporary housing. There are also those who lost their lives in the temporary housing due to accidents or illness. We would like to introduce to you two people from the Ayukawahama Teramae temporary housing, who we will never forget. (Hiroshi Mukaida, Sendai Church)

- You said you would come again -

This February, I visited Ayukawa, Oshika Peninsula to carry out cancer checkups. When I visited, I talked with Ms. Eiko Abe's neighbor who had come to have her cancer check up. She told me that because she had not seen Ms. Abe for two to three days, she had visited her house to find that the door was locked. This worried her so she called the police and the fire department. Apparently the time of death of Ms. Abe could not be determined. According to the staff of Ishinomaki city Oshika general branch office, Ms. Abe had attended an information session about the transfer of the temporary housing estate in mid January. She looked well then. I had visited the home of Ms. Abe on the 9th of January. She seemed excited about moving to her new home. She was also worried about Ms. Takeyama, who had been her former neighbor and had just moved to a new home. She had said that she wanted to visit her. Through visiting the Teramae district we encountered many things. We made shelves for the temporary housings with international volunteers. We met a couple that would give presents of Whalebone crafts to volunteers. We also have all the memories of Ms. Endo who lost her life in a fire. We also met the family that left the temporary housing and started the Taiheisou guest house. We met Ms. Takeda restarted her beauty salon. We also met Ms. Takeyama who always had tea with Ms. Abe.

When we think of Ms. Abe, we think of how she was so close to starting life in a new home, we remember the grave words of Mr. Tomoshi Okuda (Higashi Yahata Church) spoken right after the



"I want to have tea with Ms. Takeyama again." Ms. Abe always looked out for Ms. Takeyama in the temporary housing estate. Without her shopping cart Abe-san couldn't even go for a walk.




2011.3.11 Great East Japan Earthquake

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disaster to "Not allow solitary death". We are understanding the difficulty and the limits of staying involved in our support. The disaster is still on going. (Shinkichi Ito, Taitomi church)

- Passed away from a bathroom fire -
(NHK news article, Feb 16, 2014)

When I heard that Ms. Tokuko Endo, a friend from the Ayukawa Teramae district, had passed away in a fire, I remember feeling my legs give way in shock. Whenever the Miyagi team visited, she would cheerfully call out to us. We would chat and talk about the reconstruction taking place, and talk about the Season and the weather. Talking with her was always delightful and I never knew who was encouraging who when it came to our conversations. Ms. Endo's neighbor, Mr.

 石巻の仮設住宅で火災1人死亡
2014年 10月16日



Takeda, the barber, moved out soon after the fire, perhaps due to the burn smells.

On the other side of the building was Ms. Eiko Abe. She was very kind, and often worried about Ms. Endo. Everyone in the temporary housing would worry about each other. "I'm still better off, because you visit me with your smiles. Im so thankful." On February 2017, everyone in Ayukawa Teramae temporary housing moved out, and no one lives there anymore. I would love to see Ms. Endo and Ms. Abe again.

(Hiroshi Mukaida, Sendai Church)



Ms. Endo's front porch. When she was found, her front porch was not cleaned. The flowers placed on her porch looked very sad.

Miyagi team member and Ms. Endo.

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