



From the Editor

“Dear Readers, we do apologies for being 'off the air' for a few months with a few hiccups, but now we're happy to say that we are up and running again! Here in Japan we are coming into winter, and soon it will be Christmas again! We would like you to keep praying and supporting us. God Bless you as you read this edition

News and Prayer Points

Membership Department has been approved by WEC Japan and WEC International as well. Then, from now on, all missionaries would have one heart for raising Japanese believers to listen to God's call and to be God's labor. Jangbaeg, Peter, Eunjeong and Emily would work well together for all setting up and doing all process step by step.

Japan Congress Evangelism (JCE 6) in Kobe, by Matthew

The September event, held every seven years, drew 2,000 participants from all over Japan to Kobe. At the conference, some present trends and realities emerged. For one, statistics: the overall number of Protestant Christians in Japan still stands at 0.4%, or about 500,000 people, who attend 8,000 churches. (Of this 500,000, only half attend weekly worship.) Rural areas especially remain barren: 1,800 towns lack churches entirely, and many more have few. While Christianity has made progress,



the sobering reality is that, in missions-speak, these numbers make Japan the largest unreached nation on earth

Looking around the conference, the number of elderly ministers and laypeople reflects the church's lack of youth. While exceptions exist, the typical Japanese church is ageing, small (average 30 members), and struggling to reproduce

Amid the struggles, good news exists. The city of Osaka has large, thriving, Japanese-led churches. Osaka lay-Christians, helped perhaps by the more out-going culture, seem to be actively evangelizing and using their gifts. Nagoya contains solid ministries as well, and though I didn't hear reports on Tokyo churches, one assumes they are doing well. For those wondering about the effect of the Northeast Japan earthquake and tsunami of 2011, a study revealed that it has resulted in about 40 new churches and “preaching points”, 300 converts, and 250 seekers. This is not as dramatic a breakthrough as hoped, but is encouraging nonetheless

Three factors emerged for renewal of the church in Japan. One, greater unity among the large number of denominational bodies and missions agencies. Two, laypeople need to be mobilized to use their gifts for service and evangelism. Such work tends to be left to (or monopolized by) the pastor, which keeps churches small and outreach at a minimum. Finally, more churches need planting if Christianity in Japan is ever to reach a large scale breakthrough for the gospel. While from a human standpoint these things need to be done, we must also remember the words of the psalmist, “Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labor in vain.” (Psalm 127:1)

WEC Japan Membership Department, by Jangbaeg Lim

WEC International has a long history of worldwide mission especially working in the least-reached areas through evangelism and church planting. God has, and still continues to

wonderfully use WEC International in many countries to reach people with the gospel of Christ.

One WEC ministry is mobilization for missions. This is one of our core aims characterized by training and recruiting people for mission. Mobilization is a very Biblical concept of long-term mission work. We see in the Bible that Jesus trained His disciples in order to fulfill the task He had given them. In spite of their many mistakes, Jesus continued to teach and train them in preparation for the time He would return to His Father. His disciples would be ready to fulfill their Lord's commission to preach the Good News to the whole world instead of Him through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Although we don't fully know the final days of the many of the disciples' earthly life except for John, we do find them in many pagan countries boldly proclaiming the Gospel, even to the extent that they would be found amongst the many martyred in the annals of history.

In the book of Acts we find that Paul's priority was to preach the Gospel in unreached areas, and to train leaders within the churches to effectively enable them to minister and manage the churches. Timothy is one good example of this in the Bible.

WEC's emphasis is on mobilizing and recruiting new workers, and so the establishment of a mobilization ministry within WEC Japan, with vision and challenge, will provide us with clear goals for our ministry in evangelism and church planting. As missionaries, it is also an opportunity to reaffirm God's calling to our ministry and life in Japan, enable us to run our race with faith, overcoming many obstacles with fresh vision and hope. Mobilization will take WEC Japan to new and higher levels of ministry beyond our 60-year history of missionary work in Japan.

We need your cooperation and support in order for us to effectively achieve our goal and vision. Through your prayers and support we will be able to renew our present ministries, and to provide new opportunities of ministry for our Japanese brothers and sisters to serve Christ.

WEC Japan Membership Department is a new concept of WEC International's ministry as a sending base with field ministry, and as such, it will **eventually** function the same as other WEC sending base ministries in areas of mobilization, training, member care, official work, international networking as a WEC entity.

