

# CJM REPORTER

Spring 2007

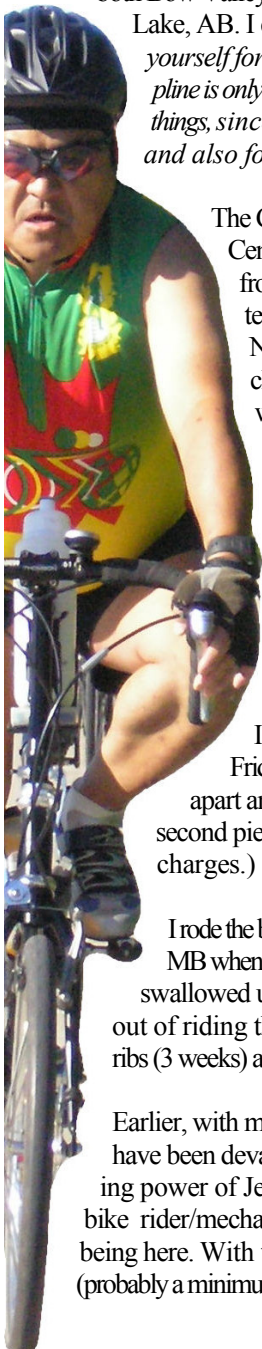
Published by the CANADIAN JAPANESE MINISTRIES

## BIKE FOR BIBLES

CENTENNIAL RIDE 2006

by John Maruyama

**I** struggled to write in a few words the experience of a lifetime -where do I begin? The story really begins with Nori Kana-shiro and his grooming me specifically for Christian sports ministries and encouraging and tutoring me in the Christian faith. I served for a number of years as sports director for CJM camps at both Bow Valley in Canmore, AB and Sunnyside in Sylvan Lake, AB. I chose 1 Tim. 4:7,8 (NASB) "... *discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come*", as my life's verse.



The Canadian Bible Society's Bike for Bibles Centennial Ride 2006 commenced July 2, 2006 from mile 0 (Victoria, BC) and ended on September 3, 2006 on Signal Hill (St. John's, NF). The trip was divided into 9 legs so cyclists could cycle their own province or do the whole tour. I had elected to do the whole tour. The daily cycling distance averaged between 150 - 175 km. This was to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bible Society's work and to honor the colporteurs who previously distributed Bibles. The goal to raise \$500,000.00 was realized with a grand total of \$510,000.00 being raised.

I had purchased a special custom bike (Bike Friday Air Glide Morph) that allowed me to take it apart and fold it so that I could take it along as my second piece of luggage. (No additional oversize charges.)

I rode the bike to just 10 km outside of Portage La Prairie, MB when I hit a humongous pothole which could have swallowed up a car, let alone a bicycle. This put me out of riding the rest of the tour as I was out with bruised ribs (3 weeks) and a damaged bike.

Earlier, with my competitive sports background, I would have been devastated. However, knowing the transforming power of Jesus and having signed on the tour as a bike rider/mechanic/pledge raiser, I knew my purpose for being here. With the number of cyclists on the road (probably a minimum of 60-70 at any given time) kept me and the

(Continued on page 3)

## cjm Sunnyside de Camp

July 29 - Aug. 4, 2007

Sylvan Lake, AB (16 km. west of Red Deer)



An intergenerational Family Camp like no other!

Speakers: English: (To be announced)  
Japanese: Rev. Edward Yoshida  
Wesley Chapel Japanese Congregation  
Toronto, ON

For further information:  
Dr. David Tano  
Tel: 403-242-5270  
Email: mdtano@gmail.com

Please register early

CJM Annual General Meeting

Mon. July 30, 2007  
at Sunnyside Camp during the camp week.  
All are welcome!





# LETHBRIDGE JAPANESE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

By Pastor Satoshi Akiyama, CJM Missionary



*Nori & Blanche Kanashiro  
Nori has been the General  
Director of CJM since 2000*

I am one of those people who likes to read three books at a time. One of the books which I recently read and deeply identified with was called "The Last Christian Generation" by Josh McDowell. Particularly moving and disturbing to me is this notion that if our young people grow up in our churches and stay in Sunday School and do the things we expect of them, that somehow they will all turn out to be God-fearing and exemplary Christians. When they go off to colleges and universities they will somehow remain strong in their faith knowing the differences between right and wrong.

Statistics have readily shown that kids brought up in the church are no better off in judging spiritual or moral matters when confronted in the real world. Josh McDowell challenges parents and church leaders to really nail down with strong teaching the fundamental truths of the Word and become mentors and role modelers so that the kids will see and understand the transforming grace of Jesus Christ.

Youth are not only the foundation for our churches but also our best ambassadors of the living God whom we can send into this dying world. □

**W**e began our ministry in Lethbridge as CJM missionaries in June 2004, and our fourth year is just around the corner. We have been able to devote ourselves in peace to our ministries, since we have sufficient financial support and prayers from many Christians and churches all over the world. We appreciate all your love and kindness from our hearts.

Lethbridge Japanese Christian Fellowship (LJCF) began a new church year on March 1, 2007. This year, LJCF will be focusing on the theme, "The Church That Keeps Its Eyes On Jesus," a take off from Hebrew 12:2 - "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith." Our challenge is to whole-heartedly trust and pray, listen to His Word and obey our Lord. We will fix our eyes on Jesus, His love and His will for us. Please pray that we will experience unity as the body of Christ, and to pray and encourage each other in order to continue to build His church.

Since last October, LJCF has had several "Praise Nights", which is a fellowship time with supper, singing praise songs, praying and sharing together. We've also had "Japanese-Reading Bible Times," and a children's ministry. We call it "Joy Kids" for which we have been praying for sometime. LJCF continually seeks God's wisdom and guidance as we have great opportunities to reach Japanese students for Christ. As many meet the Lord here and their spiritual roots strengthen, we pray for continuance of their new life in Japan. Our daily prayer is that we would always be a servant of God in the church, and to the Japanese people in our community.

Back in December 2005, we made an application to the Government of Canada for permanent residency here. We still have not heard back from them. Please pray in this regard for us and for the ministries of the Lethbridge Japanese Christian Fellowship. □



*Satoshi & Mari Akiyama  
with Joshua 8 and Amy 6 years*



"Joy Kids" leaders

## DONATIONS

You hold an important piece in our "puzzle". Without you, we will not succeed!



For support of the **AKIYAMA'S** or the **CJM GENERAL FUND**

Donations  
may be sent to:



**BRENDA OHARA-PETERS**  
669 Hillman Cres., Mississauga, ON L4Y 2J1  
Tel.: 905-949-4182 Email: bjobjo@aol.com

We owe a lot to our spiritual mother, Mrs. Sharples, who nurtured us in the early days of our walk in the Christian faith in Kelowna, B.C.

When Margaret Ridgway, who was instrumental in directing me to the Lord, left Kelowna for Alberta, her mantle fell to Mr. & Mrs. Ed Sharples. The Pacific war had caused a lot of prejudice so it was no easy decision for the Sharples to open their home on Harvey Avenue for us Niseis. But their home became a spiritual haven for us. Having two daughters they were warned of the possibility of intermarriage but that did not deter them from welcoming us. They completely identified themselves with the Nisei. I was impressed that in order to make more room for the twenty to thirty who met, they sacrificially spent money to renovate their home. The choruses, hymns and Bible studies were the mainstay of our spiritual growth. Daughter Mabel would always play the piano. I think the love the Sharples had for us rubbed off on Mabel as she too always welcomed us with her big smile. The wonderful aroma from Mrs. Sharples' kitchen permeated the house and refreshments were enjoyed after the Friday night meetings. She fussed over us like a mother hen talking to everyone. Noreen (Uchida) Kitagawa says that the Sharples home was the one place she felt completely at home. Their home became our spiritual home not just on meeting days but any day we wanted to come and talk. "Mom" Sharples who was always home would welcome us and talk to us over a cup of tea. I personally had good talks with her. She would say, "Now Iwa,....." and I would receive good advice. Some-

## Memories of (Mom) Mary Sharples



times we would not see eye to eye, but she was always gracious. Directly or indirectly we were encouraged to attend Bible School. Consequently, out of the group at least five people went on to Bible School and to later, take on leadership roles. When I felt led to start Sunday School in Rutland for Nisei children, the Sharples were the first ones to volunteer. Stan Yokota told me that it was at this Sunday School that Mr. Sharples led him to the Lord. When Sachi and I became missionaries, they gave us monthly financial aid even though they were never flush with money. Mrs. Sharples helped at the Kooteney Camps and in later years at Bow Valley and Sunnyside Camp where she was always there to cheer us on and to listen to our Bible mem-

ory verses. She identified herself with the Japanese into her latter years by moving into the Hinode Home built for Japanese seniors. From there grandma Sharples who had opened their earthly home to us was called to her heavenly home prepared for her and greeted by her Lord whom she has served so faithfully.

Iwao "Ike" Ikenouye

*Editors Note: Mom or Grandma Sharples, as she was affectionately known, was called to her heavenly home four days after celebrating her 102nd birthday. She was blessed with good health throughout her life and departed by natural causes on March 23, 2007.*

*(continued from page 1)*

other designated mechanic quite busy handling mechanical problems. Reflecting back, I believe the Lord allowed the accident to happen so my concentration and focus would NOT be on the bike but rather on service.

I was in awe by the vastness and diversity of Canada. It put into perspective just how small and insignificant I am compared to the rest of God's creation. I was amazed at the unity found in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Many times when we were in out-of-the-way places, whole communities would come out to support us -- Nazarenes, Protestants, Catholics, to feed and shelter us. I was truly blessed by their gifts of hospitality and generosity.

As each one has received their special gift from God, we want to exercise it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. (1 Pet. 4:10 NASB)

The highlight of the tour for me was the spectacular mountain plateau view of the Atlantic Ocean from Signal Hill in St John's, NF. I was reminded of the fact that mountains played a significant role in Biblical times (Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount on a mountain plateau. Jesus sought the solitude of the mountains to pray prior to his crucifixion and Moses was given the Ten Commandments on a mountain top.) It was as if the Lord had reserved this view as a reward and that it was his way of saying, "Well done, my good and faithful servant." □



## Edmonton Japanese Christian Church

by Pastor Yuri Nakano  
www.telusplanet.net/public/ejpc

A big change for us as a church was a move to a new location! Since December of 2006, we have been worshipping at Zion Baptist Community Church. For over 28 years we had been worshipping at the Evangelical Covenant Church, but due to a need to have wheelchair accessibility, we decided to make this momentous change. This move to a new location has brought forth a sense of "newness" and anticipatory hope of a renewal in the church. We are still renting the space, but the Zion Church has welcomed us with open arms and a desire to cooperate with us.



Zion Baptist Community Church - new home of the Edmonton Japanese Christian church

Since moving to our new location, we've been able to have closer ties with the North American Baptist Conference churches of which we are a part. The biggest change is that Pastor Yuri can have more contact with pastors of her denomination and also be able to get more work done with an official "office" from which to work. So far, the arrangement is working out quite well.

In the past, we had to rent other church buildings in order to do baptisms, so it is very nice to be able to have baptisms in our own location. On January 14, 2007 we were able to celebrate the baptism of Ai Yamamoto. Her testimony was in the previous youth section of the CJM reporter. Ai had made a personal decision to follow Christ at Sunnyside Camp and she now wants to live for Christ wherever the Lord will take her. She will go back to Japan and we appreciate prayer for her that she would continue to be discipled in Japan and be used by Him there. □



Pastor Yuri Nakano (L) about to baptize Ai Yamamoto, January 14, 2007

## NORTHEAST NIKKEI CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

**August 4-6, 2007**

Location: Crieff Hills Community Retreat Centre  
RR#2, Puslinch, ON (just east of Cambridge)

Theme: "Key to Blessings; Trust in the Lord"

Speaker: Rev. Tetsuo Kagiwada  
San Fernando Valley Holiness Church



For further information and to register:

Mariko Ogasawara (519) 634-8935  
Email: mariko\_ogasawara@hotmail.com

*Please register as soon as possible!*

*"Through this conference I learned the big difference between knowing God and believing God, and the invisible blessings from God of which I have not recognized to the extent of appreciation in the day-to-day life, .... those really reset my Christian life I had had till this conference. I felt like the moment I was saved. What a big joy it was!!!"*

Carney Nishijima

Sponsored by Canadian Japanese Ministries

# Vancouver Japanese Gospel Church

www.japanesegospelchurch.com  
by Pastor Robert Brown - English Department

Spring is upon us, and with its coming we prepare to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He is our hope, our joy and love. Whether at church or in the community, our lives are to be focused on Him.

24,000 Japanese live in the Greater Vancouver area, and our vision is to grow into a congregation representing at least 300 of them. The English department is a vital part of that realization, and helps to bridge the gap between Japanese and Canadian society.

The ministry of Talk Time (English conversational practice), past and present, connects us with newly arrived visitors to Canada who are seeking to improve their proficiency in our language. This initial contact often leads to church attendance among the English speaking members of the

congregation, but before long they are asking to be excused that they might listen to the message in Japanese. A beginner's Bible class in the Japanese language, and the faithful witness of church members has led many to salvation, baptism and subsequent incorporation into local church involvement upon their return to Japan.

In January, we initiated a 12 week English language school. More advanced and intensive than Talk Time, God is using this to minister to 7 members of our Japanese congregation and 5 new contacts within the general population. Our prayer: that it might bridge the gap between our church and community with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In the coming year, we hope to establish a Junior High youth ministry. As well, we hope to begin a College and Career group in the near future. The ministry looks bright and we rejoice in God's provision. □



Pastor Robert Brown  
- leading a workshop session at  
the RJC conference

## "Reaching Japanese for Christ" (RJC)

Conference – Seattle, WA - by Pastor Robert Brown

With nearly 450,000 Japanese visiting Canada in 2005 and a goal of 800,000 Japanese visitors by 2010, it doesn't take much imagination to see that we have a mission field on our doorstep. This is in addition to the 75,000 Japanese who make their home in Canada and of which 35,000 identify Japanese as their mother tongue.

While much of the focus is upon the even greater number of Japanese (nearly 4 million) who visit the United States each year, the "Reaching Japanese for Christ" conference was a valuable tool for the 9 members of our church who attended this year.

I (Robert) attended the pre-conference on "Networking" with Dave Hackett of Vision Synergy, who led us in understanding the bigger picture and how networks help us accomplish collaborations such as RJC. During these sessions, we identified working groups and developed some action plans for the future.

The rest of our group arrived on Friday. We began with a plenary session introducing Pastors Teruo Saoshiro, Nobuo Watanabe (both of Japan) and Ken Milhous (Boston). These men challenged us over the weekend to grab hold of the many opportunities presented to us in North America, to effectively reach the Japanese people. A recurring theme was that the Japanese are 20 times more likely to receive Christ outside their country than within. Also stressed was the establishment of working relationships between churches in Japan and those abroad in order to reach these individuals.

A host of workshops were made available, and those attending were given numerous choices. Whether well versed in Japanese culture, or unacquainted with the subtle and not so subtle differences, there was something for everyone. Culture, theology, relationship building and outreach were all addressed. Most sessions were conducted in English, but a few were presented in Japanese. A good cross-representation and pollination was experienced. Young and old alike learned together, worshipped together and were challenged together. This year's conference seemed to have something for everyone.

On Sunday, Jennifer and I stayed to observe a Japanese tea ceremony presentation followed by communion. A case has been made that there are similarities, and that the former flowed out of the latter as a means by which persecuted Christians could observe the Lord's death on their behalf.

Plans are underway for the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual "Reaching Japanese Conference" to be held in Seattle in 2008, as well as some regional conferences in Southern & Northern California, Hawaii and possibly the northeastern United States. We highly recommend the attendance of CJM supporters, if the opportunity presents itself. □



# CALGARY JAPANESE GOSPEL CHURCH

www.calgarygospel.com

by Pastor Brian Lavender (English congregation)



Pastor Brian & Cindy Lavender  
with sons Noah 6 and Ethan  
4 1/2 years

**G**reetings in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

In writing an update for the English congregation at Calgary Japanese Gospel Church, the question has come to my mind, "Why am I writing this?" I could report on new ministries or events in the church, but I don't really know how that would be beneficial to anyone.

I decided that I would share about some difficult questions our ELT

(English Leadership Team) has been addressing. Maybe some of you are grappling with some of the same questions. The questions arose as we considered who we are as an English congregation, and who God wanted us to be. The First question is simply, "Who are we?"

What is the culture of our congregation? Are we an English speaking Japanese Church, or have we become something else? Who is our target audience - who are we trying to reach? Once we know whom we are trying to reach, how do the ministries of our church, and the lives of our brethren assist in bringing the good news of Jesus to these people?

With these questions (and others) in mind, we have been endeavoring to seek God's vision for our English congregation. The reality is that the Christian church, as a whole, has become insignificant to most of the people in our country. Ironically, a recent survey found that most people still respect and admire Jesus Christ. How is it that people can admire and value Jesus' teaching, while regarding Jesus' church as irrelevant? Perhaps all the blame does not fall on the church, but maybe some of it does. It is our responsibility to be sure that we are following Jesus' example in reaching lost people. We need to go where they go, empathize with their hurts, and share the gospel (which is good news!) in a context that is meaningful to them.

With this in mind, our congregation is preparing itself (like a surfer) for the next wave God sends our way. We still have our programs - in fact, we have just added a new women's ministry (called PUREJOY), and monthly men's prayer breakfast. But in all we are doing, we are trying to adapt to reaching the people God has placed in our circles of influence - at home, at work, and in our communities. □

by Pastor Yoichi Taniguchi (Japanese congregation)

**L**ast Christmas the church celebrated the birth of Christ with an overflowing crowd at our annual banquet. In Calgary we have two Japanese language schools. One is the Review School held on Saturdays which pursues the study of the curriculum set by the Education Ministry. The other is the Japanese language school held on Fridays. These schools are conducted mainly for the Nisei children born here whose main aim is to learn to speak Japanese through the conversational mode. It is a great blessing to see our young people who were saved at Sunnyside Camp and who attend the two schools invite their many friends to the banquet. Incidentally, there are nearly 200 students who attend the Friday Japanese Language school. Japanese mothers in international marriages are those who bring their children to the school. We feel the need to reach these young mothers. So with their salvation in mind we have two home meetings during the weekdays.

We are also targeting seniors, whom, we want to reach as part of our evangelism efforts this year. Calgary has a senior's (Issei & Nisei) club called Kotobuki kai which holds meetings regularly at the Nikkei kaikan (Japanese Cultural Centre). Presently about 150 seniors attend. We are particularly concerned for the salvation of the Isseis. This year we are seeking the will of the Lord by considering starting a Bible Study for seniors.

In our evangelistic efforts we are again holding the Alpha course this spring having held our first one last fall. With the use of videos this course presents excellent basic teachings, introducing Christianity to non-Christians and to those young in the faith.

We will continue our study on the five purposes of the Purpose Driven Church. Presently we have activities in six different groups. The pastor attends these groups to give oversight and seeks to equip leaders for their next step. □



Pastor Taniguchi baptizing  
Nozomu Koshirae. Christmas  
service 2006



Japanese-speaking Fall Retreat 2006 at Camp  
Chestamere. Speaker Rev. Kaneda of Seattle.

## Japanese Gospel Church of Toronto

www.jgct.com

by Pastor Ray Ebisuzaki (English Department)

**T**would like to report on some of our main church activities and projects in the last 6 months:

At this writing, we are about to wrap up our “**Defining our Target**” project with a third leaders’ retreat this week. In the two previous retreats we sought to identify who we are and then to profile our targets. It’s really all about knowing where they are, meeting them and to begin developing relationships. Our source book has been Rick Warren’s “Purpose Driven Church”. We will seek to equip leaders of church ministries and small groups toward evangelistic targeting in their sphere of leadership.

On November 25, 2006, Japanese churches in Toronto held an evangelistic event called “**The Joy of Christmas**”. About 8 churches participated including the Japanese Roman Catholic Church, United Church, Anglican Church and various evangelical churches. We intentionally targeted ESL students from Japan and young Japanese families. With aim to be “seeker sensitive” we booked the “Toronto Mass Choir” (Juno award winners), and also prepared a “Children’s Christmas Party” for the ages of 4-10, together with child care for the entire evening. No admission was charged even though our expenses were higher. We trusted God together for His provision. As expected, God provided over and above what our expenses were. A bilingual message was delivered by Pastor Haruo Sato of the Japanese Gospel Church of Toronto. Many positive feedback was received from the event. Attendance totaled 570 in all. The Children’s Christmas Party entertained 50 children. It was estimated that half of the attendees were non Christians.



*Shizuka Tsuge, member of the Toronto Mass Choir explaining lyrics of gospel song to visitors was recently baptized at JGCT*

Around the beginning of 2007, new life has been sprung in our **Youth and College & Careers groups**. With new leadership and renewed vision they are each formulating their mission statements and programming for internal discipleship and external outreach.

A special Sunday evening **Baptismal service** was conducted on March 18. Four candidates, each with their unique experiences with God followed the Lord in obedience through the waters of baptism. Their amazing testimonies were a joy to listen to.

Our **Church Building Project** is still awaiting the City planning department’s site plan approval and building permits. However, the largest challenge will be to secure sufficient funding to minimize our mortgage with the bank. Our revised expectation is for ground breaking in May 2007. As the project continues, it becomes clearer to me that “Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labour in vain”. Psa. 127:1. Your prayers are appreciated as we continue in our walk with God in light of this huge project before us. □



# CAMP SHALOM

Vancouver Japanese Gospel Church  
Family Camp

Sept. 7-9, 2007  
Mission, BC

m

### SPEAKERS

**Rev. Y. Hattori:** *former Professor and Dean at Tokyo Christian University*

**Rev. D. Wright:** *former BGC Missionary in Japan*

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