

What's new!

Lillian Shinoda in Japan

Holiness Conference Missionary

March 2008

This is my yard during the snowfall in February. Pretty, isn't it? My house is on the left. I understand that Los Angeles has had a lot of rain this year so things must be greener and beautiful too!



March marks the end of the academic year in Japan and it's also time for the seminary's graduation (March 18) and ministry assignments for pastors in the JHC. "Praise the Lord as eleven will be graduating!" At the annual JHC conference which just ended (Feb. 25-27), "16 pastors retired." However, four of the graduating students will receive pastorate assignments later this month. The shortage of pastors continues while the number of churches remains the same. Also two pastors were ordained and both were women!

My personal joy was to reconnect with my former students who are pastoring all over Japan, in Yamagata, Fukushima, Chiba, Kanagawa, Osaka, and Ehime. We spent hours talking about the joys and sorrows of the past year, but I was greatly encouraged by their commitment and desire to be obedient to the Lord.

Thank you for
your faithful
prayers
and support!

I am with the
TBS students
on Feb. 13 from
L to R: Me,
Fukuda-san
(from the West
Covina church),
Tanaka-san
(from the



Walnut Creek church), Takamatsu Sensei (TBS piano teacher), Ishita-san (from the Honolulu church), and Furuta-san (attended LAHC). Two of them are graduating. These are the students who have come from our Holiness Conference back home in the US.

I had a number of responsibilities at this year's conference as an OMS missionary and as a member of the JHC's Evangelism Committee and it's been a great joy to cooperate with the JHC like this and assist in any way I can. We commissioned a young couple (and former students) for missionary service which was an extremely moving ceremony. "Praise the Lord" for them but we are also challenged to uphold them as they enter a very dangerous mission.

The shortage of pastors is not the only shortage we are facing. In the church, there is a decrease in Sunday school attendance and staff. I spoke at a church in Chiba this past Sunday and there was only one junior high schooler at the church and a couple of kids. This is typical in many of the churches. Sakado church may have a few more kids, but we are hurting in staff and in providing sound biblical teaching for them. Our youth will have a weekend overnight fellowship at church on March 15-16 which we are preparing for now.

Coming up is the JHC's Annual Business Meeting (March 19-20) and OMS Japan's Annual Business Meeting (March 27-29). It's a three-day affair and we too will have much to discuss as two members of our three member leadership team will be returning to the states. I am the third member who will continue to be on the field. We pray for the Lord's wisdom and direction as important issues regarding our field will be discussed.

I have a number of Youth Jam '08 committee meetings this month as we approach the final months before the event itself. Three of us will have a meeting on the 8th and 9th to plan the program for three of the main sessions.

It's been very cold in Japan and twice we had some significant snowfall. I've had to put chains on my car once to go to church on Sunday. But spring is in the air. While I was in L.A. I wasn't all that aware of seasonal changes but now I just can't wait for warmer weather and the signs of spring. I really am a Southern Cal girl. I am so genki when the sun is out and the skies are clear and blue. I can't wait for the sakuras and tulips and for the trees to start budding.

Thank you everyone for your continued support and prayers. Without them, I could not be in Japan right now. I rely on your prayers and appreciate your support, cards, letters, phone calls and emails throughout the year. May God bless each one of you throughout the year!

In Christ,
Lillian

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