

Dear friends in the Cell Church Mission Network,

March 23, 2011

Greetings in the name of Christ from Japan! **JCMN (Japan Cell Church Mission Network)** would like to update you on what is happening, how JCMN is responding, how the situation (and needs) change rapidly, and how you can pray for us.

As you know, the largest earthquake in Japan's recorded history, followed by a devastating tsunami, struck the Tohoku region north of Tokyo on March 11, wiping out entire coastal towns. More than 20,000 people are dead or missing, with 350,000 homeless. Many other factors continue to threaten the Tohoku area and beyond: radiation fallout, landslides and unstable ground, more than 650 aftershocks, and infrastructure damage to water, electricity and gas systems.

JCMN desires to show the church in Japan that their brothers and sisters around the world stand with them in their time of need. With your help, we want to help Japanese believers take advantage of this extraordinary opportunity to express the love of God to their fellow Japanese in word, deed and power.

We believe that local churches and leaders in the affected areas represent the best hope for relief, care, and recovery, which is expected to take many years. While we are grateful for the efforts of the government of Japan and many large-scale relief agencies in this crisis, there are many victims whose physical, spiritual, emotional and family needs will not be met unless the Body of Christ makes itself available to them.

Basic Direction

JCMN's "Reconstruction Coordination Team" ("FC Team" in Japanese) has established three major objectives to guide our church-based recovery activities and fund-raising:

1) Supporting victims in the hardest-hit areas (Iwate, Miyagi & Fukushima prefectures)

JCMN has been supporting relief efforts through the work of CRASH (Christian Relief, Assistance, Support & Hope www.crashjapan.com) and staying in touch with various JCMN-related churches that are reaching out through their own denominations and networks. This will also open the way to send volunteer teams to respond to various needs.

From March 31, a team composed of members from Mizuhashi Bible Church and Otsu Baptist Church (and perhaps CCMN Hong Kong) will serve for two weeks in the city of Sendai, where CRASH has already established a base for volunteer teams.

The situation in each prefecture, city and village is different. Because there are fewer churches in less-populated areas, it may take some time to establish bases for volunteer teams in other cities and towns in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima.

Another key factor: unlike other places in the world where disasters have occurred, Japan's extensive government bureaucracy can close off entire towns to unofficial, volunteer recovery efforts. Thus we cannot assume, for example, that the kind of manual-labor-intensive clean-up efforts typically done by disaster-response volunteers will be needed, or even allowed in such areas.

We will continue to monitor recovery efforts by CRASH and other Christian groups and government measures.

2) Supporting evacuees (refugees) who are being resettled in cities throughout Japan

As of March 22, about 30,000 people left homeless by the Tohoku calamity will be resettled in other parts of Japan. This number will surely rise. Implications: churches all over Japan will have the opportunity to befriend, help, and care for the spiritual needs of these evacuees as they adjust to life in new places. Because of the language skills required, Japanese believers will be best suited to provide spiritual care, and to share the joy of “cell life” with people.

Short-term teams from overseas may also be able to serve these evacuees, perhaps through music, sports, children’s ministries, and other kinds of outreach, when we, the JCMN churches become ready to host them.

3) Supporting victims in needy but less-damaged/less-visible areas (e.g., Chiba & Ibaragi prefectures)

Other areas east and north of Tokyo have also been damaged, though they don’t rate much coverage in the media. From what we know, not many churches are helping in these areas. JCMN is sending a team this week to survey the area and see what opportunities there are for cooperating with local churches to provide assistance.

Supplies and Donations

Both secular media and church-based efforts have stated that relief supplies from overseas are no longer needed. The media may show evacuation centers that lack basic supplies, but this is largely a problem with distribution, not supply. **Please understand: Church-based efforts now need money more than supplies.**

Thank you for your understanding.

We pray that there will be a true spiritual tsunami, a tremendous awareness of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea (Habakkuk 3).

JCMN Assistant Coordinator (on behalf of the “FC Team”),
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Donation to JCMN:

We encourage you to gather your donation together through your church or local network, and then contact CCMN, or you can directly send cheques or TT:

Send Cheque:

CCMN, 3/F, no. 10 Anchor Street, Tai Kok Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

(Please write down clearly “ support Japan disaster” and write down your name, email and contact no.)

Please state the name “Cell Church Missions Network” on the cheque clearly.

Send TT:

Here is our bank account information:

Name of Bank: Hang Seng Bank Limited

Address of Bank: Head Office, 83 Des Voeux Road, Central, Hong Kong

Swift Code: HASE HKHH

Name of Account: Cell Church Missions Network

Account No.: 227-257979-668

Bank Code: 024

(Please write down clearly “ support Japan disaster” and write down your name, email and contact no.)

About donation enquiry, please email to Naomi: ccmfun@gmail.com