



Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church (JELC)

Congregations in Kumamoto

Rev. Hitoshi and Satoko Adachi

ELCA Missionary and Associate

BOTH HITOSHI & SATOKO ARE BACK TO NORMAL and THANK YOU

Satoko returned to Kumamoto on October 13th and both got back to normal for the remainder of October. However, in November there was a tragic incident described in the rest of this newsletter. Thank you for your thoughts and prayers.

THE PASSING OF NOZOMU HOPE SHIGAKI and Hitoshi's Reflection

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. (Philippians 4:4-5)

The scripture above is a part of ELW's Thanksgiving texts this year. Even though we are taught by the scriptures to Rejoice always, there are traumatic situations where we can't "always" rejoice.

On Friday, November 11th, a motorcycle, and a car collided head-on on a curvy road going up Mt. Unzen in Nagasaki Prefecture, killing an American man who was riding the motorcycle.

NHK's (Japanese National Public Broadcasting Entity) Nagasaki branch reported that the deceased was Nozomu Hope Shigaki. Nozomu, 71 years old, his wife, and their three children are members of the Resurrection Lutheran Church where Hitoshi and Satoko are also members.

Nozomu's parents were originally members of Kuwamizu Church and served at Jiaien. Nozomu graduated from Kyushu Gakuin (Lutheran High School in Kumamoto where Hitoshi has often preached these past four years) in 1969 and went to Lebanon Lutheran Church where Missionary Maud Powlas attended after her retirement from Jiai-en. Nozomu became a US citizen later and lived in the US for over 50 years. For the last three decades, he ran a popular teppanyaki restaurant in Yorba Linda, CA. This summer, when Hitoshi and Satoko returned to the US, they visited Nozomu and enjoyed the delicious teppanyaki.

Nozomu returned to Japan on October 20th this year for the first time in three years and en-

joyed Japan's beautiful autumn on his favorite motorcycle. However, due to the tragic accident, his wife and one of their children rushed to Kumamoto from the US on the 13th (Sunday). When Hitoshi met his wife that afternoon, she didn't mention the cause of the accident. All she said was, "I'm glad the car's driver was not injured." Hitoshi feels that this sentiment represents Nozomu's belief in truly loving your neighbors.

Hitoshi visited the cremation site on Monday, the 14th, and on Friday the 18th, his funeral service was held at Kengun Lutheran Church, which was planted by Powlas and Kuwamizu members, like Nozomu's parents, in 1952. Both Nozomu and his wife were church members there before they came to the US. Hitoshi served as the preacher and Satoko served as the organist for the service.

Nozomu was born on August 30th, 1951, and was baptized on Easter 1952, and was born again on that blessed day. At that point, it was assured that the Lord was always with him. He began walking the promised path of eternal life. During his first 20 years, he grew up in Kumamoto, and his last 50 years were in the US.

This time, on November 11th, he began his eternal life in heaven. Traffic accidents causing deaths are events that are a tragedy in this world, but it is a third birth for the baptized entering the next world. The decedent and their loved ones assured that the Lord is continually with us.

The words of the scripture in the beginning read, "Rejoice in the Lord always." Looking back on his life and family life, we learn: "No matter where you are, the Lord will live with you." Even during a tragic accident, he is still alive in the Lord. And when we are born into the next world, we remember that the Lord is with us. And we may rejoice in the Lord always. Thanks again for all your continued support, thoughts, and prayers.

