



Serving the Lord in ASIA



News from the Jastrams

October 2021

“Your name, O LORD, endures forever; your renown, O LORD, throughout all ages” (Psalm 135:13).

New Doors Opening

As previously reported, the Japan Lutheran Church has walked away from fellowship with the LCMS by their April decision to approve the ordination of women pastors. Because this decision has dissolved altar and pulpit fellowship with us, it has also caused the cessation of related activities. But, even as God closes some doors, he graciously opens others. We have found this a reality also for us.

First Door Opened

Ever since COVID precautions began more than a year and a half ago, we have been conducting Sunday chapel services in our apartment, welcoming an occasional friend or acquaintance to worship with us. But in May of this year, things took on a new direction with the regular attendance of two LCMS international expats. What if we could include even more expats? We would need a larger site!

Since the start of September, God has blessed us with the establishment of a chapel site in Yokohama

for regular LCMS worship on the first and third Sunday afternoons. This offers a workable location, both for those of the metropolitan area of Tokyo as well as for those further south at the Yokosuka Naval Base. All the logistic arrangements have gone smoothly, wonderfully accommodating the nine or ten of us who have been able to gather, with room to grow. What an incredible joy to see God at work in this new direction! “Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!” (Ps 133:1).



AFTER-SERVICE CATECHESIS IN YOKOHAMA

Entering a Second Door

Another opened door this past month resulted from a line of inquiry about promoting a better understanding of Lutheran identity. As it happens, although the several Lutheran church bodies of Japan all originate from various lines of Lutheran missionary work, they have not all retained a recognizable Lutheran identity when it comes to the teaching and practice of the faith.

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*Rev. Dr. Jastram is the Asia Lutheran Resource Coordinator:
Making Lutheran resources of theology and worship available in Asia.*

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SPECIAL Thanks to:

- *Our partners in mission, for your generous September support, and for the sustaining contributions of individuals, congregations, districts, and LWML groups that make this mission work possible.*

We Praise God for:

- *The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod which is the source of the International Development Grant that makes possible our translation project of Walther's Law and Gospel text into the Japanese language.*
- *New venues and development for LCMS worship at sites in Tokyo and Okinawa.*

Please Pray for:

- *The Japan Lutheran Church, for a humble, repentant heart.*
- *Ongoing Lutheran resource projects throughout Asia, numbering over one hundred, in Hong Kong, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Papua New Guinea, and Taiwan.*

NEWSLETTERS INFO

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Some may even consider it an advantage to be non-denominational rather than distinctively Lutheran, even in a global context. But this is where a better understanding becomes invaluable regarding Luther's Small Catechism and the Lutheran Confessions as summaries of sound Christian teaching and practice. So where did this line of inquiry led me?

The second door God recently opened came with the opportunity to transcribe, edit, and translate a series of theological lectures already delivered here in Japan on the topic. A few years ago, a Lutheran seminary professor from the States was invited to deliver a series of lectures in which he carefully laid out the Lutheran fundamentals of faith and life (including the diagram insert regarding the "Rhythm of Confession in the Bible").



And, although the original audience and occasion has come and gone, the audio-visual recording of that series still remains just waiting to be made available in Japanese for years to come.

Information about this past event, the availability of audio-visual recordings of the lectures, the approval from the lecturer to proceed with the project, the significant interest and trust regarding the lecturer from those who arranged the event, and the presence of a Japanese pastor-translator--and an LCMS missionary very eager to accomplish this new Lutheran resource project--all combined to allow entrance to this door God had opened.

Third Door Opening?

We should be able to tell you more next month about possibilities in Okinawa where communications are still ongoing. And of course, *The Law and Gospel* translation work still continues.

Through all of this, we are extremely grateful to God that he provides not only these open doors, but also the gracious support in prayers and financial resources from you, our generous partners in ministry. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

To support the LCMS through the work of Daniel Jastram, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
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Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Mark checks "Support of Asia-Jastram."

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