

The Prayer of 10 Years since the Great East Japan Earthquake/ March 11 2021

Lord, it is 10 years since the Great East Japan Earthquake and the accident at Tokyo Electric Power Company's Fukushima No. 1 nuclear powerplant. Huge shakings, such that we had never experienced before, and the tsunami took 15,899 lives¹, and there are still 2,526 persons missing². Additionally, there are still 41,781 who are forced to live in refuge due to the tsunami or the nuclear powerplant disaster³. 10 years after the great disaster, we are still overcome by the fear, anxiety, pain, and grief that it has brought. Lord, please give us comfort and peace.

In the disaster-stricken areas, construction work to raise the bank and build housings, seawalls and levees are progressing, but the ordinary lives of the residents and their relationships and communities have been severed, and it is not easy to repair them. Due to the delays in the reconstruction plans, many have left their homes and live elsewhere, while some live in public recovery housings but lonely without any relatives. Some recovery housing complexes are experiencing aging and depopulation. Lord, please give hope, and walk side by side with those who are striving to continue living, as well as those who are waning in their efforts.

Fukushima has been greatly damaged by the nuclear disaster. The radioactive materials emitted at the time and the ongoing accumulating water pollution continue to impact the lives and welfare of the people. There is no progress with the decommissioning of the Onagawa nuclear powerplant, and yet Onagawa town of Miyagi Prefecture and many other areas across Japan are caught up in a new wave of reopening nuclear powerplants. There is also confusion and division concerning the selection of the final disposal site of nuclear waste. We have not paid enough attention to this or felt responsibility, and have been unable to make our voices heard. Lord, lead us so that we may not repeat this mistake, that we may not turn our eyes away from reality but stay alert.

Lord, we thank you for your protection and guidance in the work of supporting the disaster-stricken areas until now. 10 years ago, in the confusion and anxiety amid the disaster, we often lost sight of your presence. We thank you that, in spite of that, you kept your eyes on us and stayed with us in those moments. We also thank you that the work of supporting the disaster-stricken areas remains not just the mission of the churches in those areas, but receives prayer and support from those who share our hearts around the country and abroad, which enables us to carry on our fellowship with those in the disaster-stricken areas.

10 years from the disaster, there have been earthquakes and flood disasters in Kumamoto, Osaka, Hokkaido and many other areas, and now COVID-19 has spread across the globe. Help us to turn our hearts toward those who suffer under new hardships all across Japan and the world, and make strong as we walk in the church's mission to be salt of the earth and light of the world. Lord, help us to always walk the path you have shown. May your Name be ever praised. Amen.

(This prayer was originally created by Taitomi Christian Church in Miyagi Prefecture, which the Committee finalized after discussion.)

¹ As of February 2021, *Kahoku Shimpō*.

² As of February 2021, *Kahoku Shimpō*.

³ As of January 13, 2021, Homepage of the Reconstruction Agency. Out of these, 28,959 are from Fukushima prefecture living elsewhere.