

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Greetings from Japan.

I am writing to inquire whether you are interested in participating again this year in the Christmas Card Project with our partner churches in Japan. These churches have historical ties to our UCC/Disciples denominations, and have been facing unprecedented issues as a result of the ongoing nuclear disaster in Fukushima.

If you decide to participate, I will be asking you 1) to send a Christmas card to one or two churches in early December, and 2) to lift these churches up in prayer sometime during the advent season. Once I have a firm count of US churches participating, I will send you the names and updated information pertaining to the churches to which you will be assigned. If you have participated in this project before I will try to match you with the same churches that you had before. Our partners in the Kyodan (the UCCJ) have asked that we continue this project, and I am encouraged to see how the Spirit is leading us as brothers and sisters in new patterns of partnership.

This is now the sixth year for this project. It is one way to reach out globally through prayer. Please discuss this with your congregation and **let me know by October 15th (TUE)** whether you will be participating. I will then send you the contacts and necessary information by November 12th (TUE). This will give you time to prepare the Christmas cards to send off by the beginning of December. Also, please let me know the name and contact address for the contact person from your congregation this year. If you need stories and current information on what is happening in Japan please go to my blog at (<http://jeffreyfromjapan.blogspot.com/>).

The Christmas Card Project aims to connect partner churches across the ocean by reaching out globally through prayer each Advent. In the spirit of the mutuality of mission, I pray that this small gesture of solidarity will be a sign of hope for churches both in the US and Japan. When writing, please do not hesitate to mention your prayer concerns for what is happening in and around your congregation. In this way we share in the mutuality God's mission.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Jeffrey Mensendiek (Jeff is our PNEC missionary), Global Mission co-worker,
Tokyo, Japan