



April—May 2025

SERVING THE LORD IN

Japan

News from
Pastor Dan and Joan Jastram

<https://www.lcms.org/jastram>



Pastor Dan and Joan Jastram

Rev. Jastram serves as the
Asia Lutheran Resource
Coordinator:

*Making Lutheran resources of
theology and worship
available in Asia.*



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May Theological Conference

What a delight it was to see
all the attendees gathered
together !!

Our May 2025 Confessional
Lutheran "Free" Theological
Conference in Echigo Yuzawa was
an outstanding success.

Keynote speaker, Rev. Roger
Mullet from Buffalo Wyoming,
presented five lectures on "The
Necessary Distinction between Law
and Gospel." Seven other speakers
rounded out the conference with
presentations applying law and
gospel to the mission field.

Conference meals in a dedicated
dining area provided numerous
opportunities for new friendships;
the mountain resort town provided
ample selections for occasional
fresh-air strolls; the hot spring
facilities provided a soothing balm
for weariness of the body.

During the conference, one
attendee was grateful to learn how

a faithful proclamation of God's
Law can be consistent with a
proper understanding of Christ's
words "judge not lest you be
judged."

Another attendee confided to
me that the presentation on
"Christians Living in an Ancestor-
Worship Culture" fundamentally
changed his mind on the matter.

One of the presenters stressed
that in the Church "we work to
agree, to say the same thing that
God says—that you agree with
one another—not by assuming
unity, but by a unified profession
of the faith and by resolving
misrepresentations."

Our wrap-up session indicated
general agreement about the
significant benefits of these
conferences and a strong desire
to increase participation through
broader invitations for the future.

Thanksgiving and Prayer:

- thanksgiving for the 27 attendees at our May theological conference:
 - 17 were Japanese
 - 10 were American
 - 5 traveled from the northwest Japan
 - 17 traveled from the mid-east Japan
 - 5 traveled from overseas
 - 13 were from LECC & WELS
 - 10 were from LCMS
 - 4 were independent
- thanksgiving for our additional missionary for Japan, Vicar Turley, currently preparing for his work through mission orientation in St. Louis and through his endeavors with the LCMS network-supported missionary sending model;
- thanksgiving for our Chinese sisters in the faith, “Sunny” and “Gloria”, as they undergo catechesis for confirmation and baptism respectively;
- thanksgiving for God’s blessings at our three current worship sites: Shinjuku (twice a month), Yokosuka (once a month), and Numata (once a month);
- thanksgiving and prayer for our LCMS Asia regional director Rev. Charles Ferry (now completing his responsibilities in that capacity on June 30), our area facilitator Rev. Matthew Wood (continuing), and our fellow LCMS Asia missionaries each with individual challenges and blessings;
- thanksgiving for the faithful prayers and support provided by our LCMS Jastram-Asia mission partners.



Upper left: May conference travel with R. & M. Mullet, D. Jastram; Right: Conference attendee with a question; Lower left: Vicar Turley assigned to mission work in Japan

Vicar Turley At the end of April we watched the lived-streamed vicarage assignment service at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne proclaiming the announcement: Vicar Zachary Turley—Office of International Mission . . . JAPAN !! (pictured above, lower left). We are overjoyed! Ever since the church-relations break between the Japan Lutheran Church and the LCMS, we have been praying that God might provide additional missionary personnel for work in Japan to help navigate a new course for Lutheran sound doctrine and practice. Now begins the careful arrangements necessary for the next two years of team work for us two LCMS missionaries in Japan. ♦

Sojourners In our previous newsletter article “Sojourners in Worship”, I described the circumstances of a Chinese Christian lady guided to our Tokyo worship service by her Chinese husband working in Africa. Our newsletter photo showed her and her non-baptized friend she brought along, saying: “I want her to find God too.” Although both can use Japanese and English in addition to Chinese, I was able to introduce them to some Chinese members of a confessional Japanese Lutheran church with wonderful results. I joined them in worship services there and saw them participating in the liturgy and following the sermon through a Chinese language handout. They were embraced with friendship by church members during the fellowship and church lunch. Then they received personal catechesis by the Japanese pastor using occasional language assistance from a Chinese church member. My heart filled with thanksgiving to God for his gracious arrangements. These two from China are well-set with their preparation for confirmation for the one and baptism for the other. May God richly bless their continuing sojourn! ♦

YOUR SUPPORT is vital for our continued mission work in Japan: regular services at our worship sites, translation of theological resources, and nurturing relations with local Lutheran pastors facing individual challenges to the faith. We are humbly grateful for your continued prayers and support. **Thank you!**

Your missionaries, Dan and Joan Jastram

“Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of the faithful, and
kindle in them the fire of your love”
(Day of Pentecost, Liturgical Verse).

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