

“Mirjam, I know where you should go next. Bethesda! You should move to Taiwan and help Sister Monika in Bethesda!” Bethesda? And who is Sister Monika?



Mirjam Wentland

I listened politely, to my friend Rebekah, but did not think much about it. I had just come back from sixteen years working as a missionary in East Asia helping orphans with all kinds of disabilities. Now I was back in Germany, my homeland, sensing that God was leading me to serve somewhere, but was it Bethesda?

The following Sunday, a guest speaker announced that his text would be John 5, and that he would be speaking about the story of “the sick man at the pool of Bethesda.” When I heard the word “Bethesda” for the second time that week, my ears perked up and I stole a glance over at Rebekah who was looking straight at me.

Was this a coincidence too? I’m not certain, but “Bethesda” definitely got my attention. I contacted Sister Monika and eventually Skyped with her and learned more about her ministry. When I told her of my plans

to visit my former foster children in the USA, she told me about LCM’s missions conference, CROSSroads 2021. The conference was to be held in the exact area where I would be visiting my first child, and the timing was perfect!

Another coincidence?

I did attend the conference.

There the missionaries and the staff of LCM USA told me about the wonderful Sister Monika, about the children and adults in Bethesda, and all the prayers and finances that had been poured into that ministry over the years. They gave me a warm farewell and I promised that I would seriously consider whether my next path might be to Bethesda. Back home in Germany, I seriously prayed about this possibility and I did get a clear “YES” from God. After doing deputation in Germany, I once again came to Liberty Corner, and at CROSSroads 2022, was commissioned to serve in Bethesda.

In mid-November, I flew to Taiwan. In Haulien, I received a royal welcome from the residents and staff of Bethesda, and officially began serving there alongside Sister Monika.

Mirjam Wentland, a veteran missionary with a deep passion for challenged children, has begun her ministry at Bethesda. After years of waiting on the Lord for a coworker to help Sister Monika in serving the residents and staff, God knew this was His time and this was His chosen vessel. Let us unfold both Mirjam and Sister Monika in our prayer.



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Bridges
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Building Bridges between God and Man



**The Spirit alone gives eternal life.
Human effort accomplishes nothing.
And the very words I have spoken to you
are spirit and life.**

John 6:63 NLT

Dear Friends of LCM,

One of my “Life Lessons”, as I call them, I learned years ago from a missionary co-worker. She reminded me that every now and then, the Lord gives us a brief glimpse of what He is accomplishing through our efforts. It’s just enough to encourage us to keep on serving, but not so much that we might think that we had somehow caused these spiritual results in people’s lives. As the above verse clearly reminds us, it is God’s Spirit working in hearts that brings forth life, and produces fruit that lasts for eternity.

“God’s work, done in God’s way will never lack God’s supply.” This famous quotation from revered missionary, J. Hudson Taylor, highlights the interplay between our work for the Lord, and the work of the Holy Spirit to supply everything we need. In this issue of BRIDGES, our missionaries tell us stories of their work for the Lord, and how He graciously changes hearts and supplies, in His time, what is needed. In previous issues, we have told you about the Tokyo Church Building Project. Construction has become a necessity because of serious structural damage to the present building, and the lack of space for both the flourishing congregation and the Headquarters of LCMJapan. As you pray for all our missionaries, would you also make a commitment to pray for the congregation in Tokyo and for the Lord to abundantly supply what is desperately needed so that construction can begin in the spring of 2023?

Thank you for partnering with us to help supply the needs of His work through LCM missionaries, in each area of Taiwan and Japan where they serve. Be encouraged and assured today! Although you may not see the results of your prayer, your service, and your financial support this side of heaven, your love and labor in the Lord are not in vain.

Gratefully and joyfully in Christ,

Connie Hartman

Connie Hartman
Secretary of LCM USA Board of Trustees www.LCMissionUSA.com



Liberty Corner Mission, established in 1935, is the foreign mission arm of Fellowship Deaconry Ministries, Liberty Corner, New Jersey. Serving in Taiwan and Japan since 1951, we preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, hold high the Cross, make disciples and plant churches, that God might be worshipped and glorified.

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Japan



Andy and Shoko Pfeiffer

In planning a special church event, our aim is not just to seek the favor of our neighbors, but to ask Jesus if the program pleases Him. With this in mind, this fall we organized our first open-air worship service concert. We knew that many neighbors would likely refuse to come if we had written on the flyer “reihai”, or “worship service”. Nevertheless, our congregation decided to use these words anyway. We didn’t want to hide the fact that the main purpose of our gathering is for the worship of our Lord.

A decade ago, when we distributed 4,000 flyers saying “Christmas Service”, only one person from our neighborhood came. It was shocking that people in our area had such little interest in Christianity, even at Christmas! We didn’t give up. Instead, we tried to build bridges through our Summer Kids Festivals, our Advent-Park Illuminations, and through personal contacts.



This fall, to our great joy, 59 adults came to our open-air concert! Our guest musician, cellist Mrs. Yuko Ogano, shared her testimony. Under the open sky with very pleasant temperatures, we listened to her cello pieces and worshipped the Lord with prayer and hymns. One neighbor ran to join the audience after the concert had begun, because he wanted to hear the music better than he had from his balcony!

People from Andy’s gym, English classes, and family members of our congregation attended, along with neighbors we’d met in the park while walking our dog. In fact, with every attendee, we had already developed a personal relationship. It reminded us of the great impact we Christians can have as we cultivate relationships with others. Our congregation was encouraged to boldly and publicly confess what we believe. It also confirmed that we must bathe each endeavor in prayer in the planning stage, so that the focus of each event will be solely the Lord’s, and not ours. He gives the increase, as we follow His leading.

In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.

Proverbs 3:6

Thank you for your prayers and faithful support! We are privileged to partner with you for the salvation of souls in Kobe! 🙏

Andy and Shoko Pfeiffer have been serving at Yamanomachi Christian Church in Kobe since April 2009. Let us pray with them that many more will come to know Jesus personally!

Taiwan

In addition to the ongoing ministry of our church in Taoyuan, I have been participating in the ministry led by a local Chinese missionary to Taiwan, Pastor Gao Tienyuan. As I reported in the last issue of BRIDGES, Liberty Corner Mission is developing a partnership with Pastor Gao and his team to reach students and plant university campus churches. In addition to teaching a regular English class in one new church plant location, I had also been asked to be the main English teacher in their Summer Camp, targeting university students nearer to where I live. English is attractive to many people here, so using an English learning experience is an effective way to begin to reach those who are not yet in the faith. Building relationships with them and eventually leading them to Jesus is the goal. But I did not do this alone! I had the privilege of working with Pastor Gao’s team, so that through my English teaching and their living faith, relationships began to be developed with the participants.

Our time with them was not only in the classroom. On the final day we went to the beach for an outing, which we all enjoyed. I do think that this was the most meaningful time, being together in the car during the ninety-minute drive. It afforded the opportunity to talk about matters of the heart, and this is where the reality of the Gospel must begin to take root. Most people do not become Christians in a short time, but require multiple positive experiences with other believers before they are ready to commit their lives to Jesus. English camp was one step on the road that leads to eternal life, and we are privileged to be a part of it.

One of the people who attended camp just happens to live within walking distance from our house and church. We are following up on her, hoping that she and her mother will attend our church and find Jesus. Please pray as the Spirit leads. As always, thank you for standing with us in prayer and in financial support! 🙏

Karl and Kathy Schulz, in Taiwan since 1993, serve in Taoyuan, near Taipei. Karl is a church planter and Field Leader of LCM Taiwan. Karl and Kathy have three adult children, Ben (with wife Yvonne and son Jayce) in Taiwan, and David and Aurora in the USA.



Karl and Kathy Schulz



Japan

The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore, plead with the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.

Matthew 9:37~38

Ranking first in the world, Japan has the most aged population, with more than 29% over the age of 65. This number is expected to increase to 35% by 2040. The Church is no exception. Congregants over the age of 60 rank 60%, while those attending church who are under 30 comprise only 7%. Pastors are aging also, with 70% over the age of 60. Therefore, one of the major challenges for the church in Japan today is how to pass on faith to young Japanese, that they might take on responsibility for church leadership and evangelism in the future.



Given this dire situation in the Japanese church, we praise God that our Kotake Mukaihara Church in Tokyo has many young people! Often I hear the comment, “Wow! There are a lot of youth in this church!” In fact, we have young people in their twenties, whose faithful service has become an essential part of our church life.

When the pandemic made it impossible for us to gather in person for Sunday worship, the youth made it feasible to go online. Through their IT skills, we were able to offer weekly worship services, as well as other meetings. This labor of love is not visible to the public, though the benefit of live streaming has been evident. In contrast, some Japanese churches with aging congregants cancelled all services because they were not equipped to go online.

Our Sunday School ministry is also led by young people. Once they were Sunday School students themselves, but now are teachers. They serve with passion in bringing as many children as possible to know Jesus. Some of them also serve in mission organizations that share the Gospel with high school and college students. I’m greatly encouraged by their desire for the salvation of their own generation.

By God’s grace, our church has been endowed with these young people! Please pray with us that more of them would heed His call to become full-time, long-term workers in His great harvest field! Thank you very much for your support and faithful prayer toward this end! 🙏

Kazue Tanaka, a 2013 seminary graduate, completed an internship in Tokyo and then served at our church plant in Awara. More recently she helped in Sendai, and now she stands together with Fran Ueda at our church in Toyko. Kazue covets your intercession for the younger generation in Japan!



Kazue Tanaka