



Serving the Lord in ASIA

News from the Jastrams



January 2022

"I will cause your name to be remembered in all generations; therefore nations will praise you forever and ever" (Epiphany antiphon, Ps 45:17).

Witnessing in Japan

A Witness in Marriage

"You can have the wedding service here, but just not the reception," two of our LCMS expats are informed, and this just two weeks before the scheduled event. Clara and Nick have been diligently making the necessary arrangements with me [as their pastor], but have faced numerous delays, the need to acquire international confirmations, and venue frustrations because of COVID fears. Planning a Christian wedding is difficult enough in regular times in one's own country; but, for this couple in a foreign country, with ever-changing Omicron precautions, planning becomes doubly difficult!

Epiphany—the manifestation of salvation in Christ — is the theme of our mission work in Japan and for the world. So, despite the obstacles, what a wonderful thing it is that this couple will witness their Christian faith to all their friends and colleagues in Japan by inviting them to their wedding as part of our Sunday Divine Service in Yokohama! Although international friends and relatives living outside of Japan are not permitted to enter Japan for the event (they can only join by Zoom from Asia and the US), the couple fervently

want their Japanese friends and acquaintances *in* Japan to see Christ in their marriage and wedding.

During these uncertain times, we entrust the near-future accomplishment of these arrangements and this witness into the hands of our merciful Lord.

DID YOU KNOW: MARRIAGE IN JAPAN

You may be surprised to learn that marriage laws of Japan require only a registration between two parties: the government office, and the couple getting married. One simply registers a change in one's marital status by submitting proper documentation and signatures to the local government office. Unlike the United States, no "solemnization" or marital vows ("Do you take this man...") or pronouncements ("I now pronounce you...") are required. No "wedding" of any kind is needed.



Wedding photos in the park

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

SPECIAL Thanks to:

- *Our partners in mission, for your generous December 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.*
- *Growth 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

Want to catch up? Here’s our archive link: tiny.cc/dvv9iz

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To be ADDED or REMOVED from our mailing list, you can send an email message to daniel.jastram@lcms.org with the word ADD or REMOVE in the subject line.

Witness in Okinawa

This last month included our second LCMS Sacramental Service provided for our LCMS expats in Okinawa. We had twenty-one individuals who gathered, with potluck and catechetical study following. We were especially thankful that Joan was able to accompany me on this visit to interact with the women of the group. (And it was a special treat when one of the wives gave Joan a can of pumpkin pie filling for her to make pumpkin pie, however belatedly.)



Some of the Okinawa crew!

Witness through texts

I am also pleased to report that our Japanese translation of Walther’s *Law and Gospel* is 95 percent completed. Please pray that its completion and plans for the next project progress smoothly.

And through the generations

During this past Christmas season I had the opportunity to work with LCMS Japan Mission archival material. Some of the first-generation missionary records have migrated to my study where I am identifying, organizing, and classifying them in a usable way to fill out our picture of original LCMS work in Japan.

My parents, Robert and Phyllis Jastram, were a part of this LCMS team which witnessed the amazing blessings of God from its beginning in 1948, to their initial five years of work. During that time it “had grown from nothing into a sizeable staff of twenty-two permanent [*i.e., career*] missionaries” (Meyer, *The Japan Mission*, 1996, pp. 27).

Thank you for supporting this Epiphany witness in Japan!

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

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

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

Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website, on my online giving page at lcms.org/givenow/jastram.

