

Aug-Sept-Oct 2023

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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The Biggest News

By far the biggest news these last three months has been the long-awaited September 3 ordination of Dr. Hiroaki Yoshimura, the Lutheran Japanese national born and raised in Japan who has been such a blessing for our work here.

After his master's degree in political science from Keio University in Tokyo, Yoshimura earned a master's and doctorate of theology from Åbo Akademi University in Turku Finland.

Since then, he has been serving as missionary to Japan with the Luth. Ev. Association of Finland, an official entity of the Ev. Luth. Ch. of Finland.

His confessional work with the Suomi Lutheran congregation in Shinjuku Tokyo has been a significant factor in support of sound Lutheran doctrine and practice in Japan.



Rev. Dr. Hiroaki Yoshimura

Now, after 13 years of patiently suffering wrongful exclusion from ordination within the liberal ELCF and within the liberal Japan Ev. Luth. Ch. due to his steadfast opposition to the ordination of women, Dr. Yoshimura finally received ordination this last month, through extra-ordinary LEAF arrangements, at the Church of Saint Mary in St. Petersburg from Bishop Ivan Laptev of the conservative Ev. Luth. Ch. of Ingria in Russia, with

which the LCMS has been in altar and pulpit fellowship since 1998.



Rite of Ordination

His ordination, along with that of his four like-minded LEAF colleagues at the same occasion, has received critical, sharp, Finnish public media attention due to its implication against the support of woman's ordination as forcefully required in the ELCF.

Additional reactionary retribution also seems likely within ELCF and its congregations against non-conforming conservative clergy and their conservative LEAF mission association within ELCF.

All this comes during the same year that LEAF has terminated its mission relationship with the liberal JELC due to theological differences, and at the same time that the Suomi Lutheran congregation in Shinjuku Tokyo is entering into its new status as a conservative independent Lutheran congregation no longer associated with the JELC.

This Suomi Lutheran congregation in Shinjuku Tokyo is the site of our English LCMS Worship Fellowship where we have had such beneficial mutual encouragement for mission work in Japan.

Prayer and Thanksgiving:

- thanksgiving for the long-awaited September 3 ordination of Dr. Yoshimura and his four LEAF colleagues;
- prayer for steadfast faith in the midst of Finnish public media criticism and possible liberal church retribution over LEAF opposition to woman's ordination;
- prayer for steadfast faith as Suomi Lutheran congregation enters into its new status as a conservative independent Lutheran congregation no longer associated with the JELC;
- thanksgiving for the delightful visits of stateside friends;
- thanksgiving at the opportunity for wonderful home service mission presentations during our time in the States this summer;
- thanksgiving for the healthy birth of our daughter's third child—our seventh grandchild—during our time in the States this summer;
- thanksgiving for a wonderful LCMS-Asia missionary workgroup gathering in Chiayi Taiwan in late September;
- thanksgiving for wonderful headway on our newest translation project of Engelbrecht, *The Lutheran Difference* (CPH 2014) (now over 10% completed);
- thanksgiving for God's continual blessings at our three LCMS Japan worship sites: Shinjuku, Yokosuka, Okinawa;
- thanksgiving for our LCMS Asia regional director Rev. Charles Ferry and 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.

To support this LCMS mission work:

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Visitors

“One of the great blessings of LCMS missionary service in Tokyo is the privilege of greeting various visitors from the States.

Late this summer we had a visit by Koh and Marie from Fort Wayne IN.



Koh & Marie in Mitaka Tokyo

He is a fourth-year LCMS seminarian with background in Japan somewhat similar to mine—to the extent that we were able to bicycle around our Mitaka Tokyo neighborhood and reminisce about childhood experiences at various locations, each from different decades. We were even able to attend Niigata worship together.



Niigata Worship

Then, we greeted LCMS members from Missouri—Daniel and Mayumi with their five children—who are visiting relatives in the area. What a delight to provide extended pastoral care to the whole family on behalf of their Versailles MO home congregation at our LCMS Worship Fellowship in Shinjuku Tokyo!

Finally, it was a special treat to greet Wendy and her daughter Joy visiting from Post Falls, ID. Wendy served in Japan for 3.5 years with the Volunteer Youth Ministry—serving for two of those years in Shibata City, the same town where I grew up!



Joy & Wendy in Shibuya Tokyo

Lastly, we had the joy of welcoming a new military family—Steve, Katelyn and five children—to our worship gathering at the Yokosuka Naval Base. Welcome one and all! ♦

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

**“The Spirit and the Bride say, ‘Come.’ Let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’
Let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires
take water of life without price.”**

(Rev. 22:17, Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost, Liturgical Verse)

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