

My Journey to Bethesda

Many of you are familiar with *Bethesda ~ Home for Challenged Children and Adults*. Although you may not know me, *Bethesda* has been a part of my life at various times and in various ways. I never dreamed, however, that God would lead me there to serve Him.

My connection with *Bethesda* began at birth. Born to missionary parents in the hospital right next to *Bethesda*, I started attending *Bethesda's* yearly Christmas program after I turned one year old. As a child, watching the Christmas program presented by the residents gave me great respect for them as I saw their joy and wonderful talents.



Ruth Estell

During my adolescent years, I joined a youth group in one of the local churches in Taiwan. There were also several *Bethesda* youth in that group. Together, we grew in our walk with Christ.

During high school, I spent one summer vacation volunteering at *Bethesda*. I played with the younger children, helped out at meal times, and simply took part in life at *Bethesda*. I also grew to love the children in a very special way.

At age eighteen, I returned to the USA to attend Wheaton College. After completing graduate school, I felt God leading me to the mission field. For ten years, I served in China as an English teacher. God taught me many important lessons during that time. In early 2012, it became clear that God was leading in a new direction: back to Taiwan and back to *Bethesda*. The latter half of 2012 was spent in the USA and I am currently in Germany. In early August of 2013, I will be moving to Taiwan.

I thank God for how He has led in my life and for this new opportunity I have to serve Him. I also thank God for people like you who so faithfully pray. Your prayers are cherished as I make this transition to *Bethesda*.

Ruth Estell, an American MK, is returning to her hometown in Hualien, Taiwan to nurture, lead and spiritually teach the special needs children in *Bethesda ~ Home for Challenged Children and Adults*.



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Christ alone can save the world, but Christ cannot save the world alone.

- David Livingstone

March ~ April 2013

Dear loyal mission-partners,

Christ *cannot* save the world alone! He chose to entrust the awesome task of preaching the Gospel to His disciples, commanding them to go into the whole world. The Gospel is the Good News of salvation through the finished work of Christ on the cross *alone*, thus atoning for our sins. *But He needs men and women to communicate this message*. It will not get out there without *us*. He needs *you*. He needs *me*.

In this issue of BRIDGES, you'll read about two women who have recently joined *Liberty Corner Mission*. Both have personally accepted the MISSION to spread this message that Christ *alone* can save the world. **Miss Rie Miura** is Japanese and her heart's longing is to bring the love of Jesus to the people of her hometown in Fukui. Read how God is making this possible through the help of *LCM*. **Miss Ruth Estell** is a missionary kid turned missionary, who served Jesus in Mainland China for ten years. Now she is returning to the country of her birth, Taiwan, to serve the challenged and disabled residents of *Bethesda* in Hualien. These women know that Christ cannot save the world *alone*. He needs feet to go, hands to heal, eyes to see, and arms to embrace others. He needs voices to resound in the silence and in the clamor, loving voices sharing Christ, so that Christ *alone* can save them.

Liberty Corner Mission sends missionaries from our homelands, as well as indigenous church planters to their own people, to share Christ. They need your prayer and financial support to make this happen. And Christ needs some of *you* to go.

In Christ and for Christ,

Sister Maria

Sister Maria Baha
Director of Liberty Corner Mission

Liberty Corner Mission is the foreign mission arm of Fellowship Deaconry Ministries, Liberty Corner, New Jersey. Serving in cooperation with Marburger Mission of Germany, we preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, hold high the Cross, make disciples and plant churches, that God might be glorified among the nations. Presently Liberty Corner Mission serves in Taiwan and Japan.

Japan




Andy & Shoko Pfeiffer

our budget a tithe for the Lord that will be used in support of Christian ministries in Japan and abroad.

To our great joy, there was consensus among all ten members that “we want to build a lively, spirit-driven, generous church from the start.” We were united in this common goal and purpose. This is all the more remarkable in that the large majority of our membership accepted Christ only in the last four years and are just starting to live the Christian life. One of our members remarked, “While we have come to see the blessing of tithing privately, we want to make sure our church, as such, shall be no different.”

How best to use these funds? Our hearts and prayers are drawn toward the people in the tsunami-stricken areas of Tohoku. It has been two years since nature unleashed its devastating power, uprooting thousands of people. Our sanctuary has a box for donations that are forwarded regularly to spiritual caregivers in northeast Japan.

A second donation box was added more recently for the support of Miss Rie Miura, a young woman who envisions planting a church in her hometown. Our members became acquainted with Rie at the summer camps in Karuizawa. Her testimony and passion greatly blessed our hearts.

The joy of partaking in Jesus’ mission has refreshed our church life tremendously and has generated great enthusiasm among us. We thank you very much that we of Yamanomachi Church are also on your hearts and in your prayers. Your financial support has enabled us to become who we are. We are still a young church, but from the start serving and honoring the Lord Jesus with the blessings He has generously given to us. 

Andy and Shoko Pfeiffer have served at Yamanomachi Christian Church in northern Kobe since April 2009. Their church-planting ministry includes the training of core members to become strong pillars of His church.

Tithing for the Lord

“A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.”

Proverbs 11:24

The motion was carried. All active members of Yamanomachi Church voted unanimously at our fourth annual business meeting to include in

Taiwan


Can you imagine having to live in a jail cell without a moment of privacy, with a view of only a patch of sky through the iron bars, as you count the days, months and years until you are finally permitted to leave that place where you had lost your freedom?

Such is life in our local prison. In our weekly Bible studies with the inmates, we share with them the life-transforming truth of John 8:36, **“If Jesus Christ sets you free, you will be free indeed.”** Over the years, many of them have experienced God’s liberating power. Even though they are still imprisoned, they are free in their hearts, free from the tyranny of their dark past, and free for a future with Jesus.

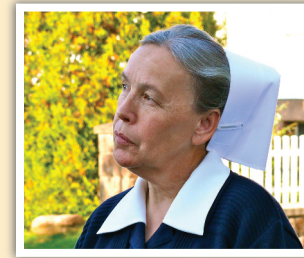
Life is also extremely difficult for those prisoners who have been released and who are trying to find their way back into society. They also need our prayer and our help. We send many former prisoners “The Upper Room,” the devotional we also use in our Bible studies.

A former prisoner named **Jeremy** visited us recently and introduced us to his bride of a few months. He had told her how the Bible study during his imprisonment had changed his life and that he had become a Christian and was baptized in prison. We urged him to seek the fellowship and support of a local church. At Jeremy’s request, we prayed that the Lord would become the center of their marriage.

Brandon is also married and lives with his little family in another part of Taiwan. Once when his marriage was falling apart, he asked us to pray for him, which we gladly did. God helped him to find love again for his wife. During a recent visit with us, Brandon asked if we could sing some of the songs that had given him such comfort and strength while he was in prison. As we sang “Amazing Grace” together, I could tell that the words he was singing from the bottom of his heart were also his words of testimony to the saving, liberating grace of God.

Thank you for your prayerful support of this life-changing prison ministry. One day, you will hear, **“I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”** (Matthew 25:36) 

Sister Monika Gottschild, veteran missionary of 23 years, serves the residents and staff of “Bethesda”~ Home for Challenged Children and Adults, in Hualien, Taiwan. Also reaching out to inmates at a local prison, she joys in sharing God’s love and salvation with them.



Sister Monika Gottschild



Japan

Born and raised in a rural port town in Fukui, facing the northern Japan Sea, I recall the strong cultural and religious customs stemming from Buddhism and Shintoism as a child. These were fervently believed and adhered to by most.

I was baptized in my mid-twenties when I lived in Tokyo. The Lord guided me to Kotake Mukaihara Christian Church, where Sister Maria and Pastor Ueda were leading worship services and I was convicted that Jesus, whom I had heard about as a child, was definitely my God and Savior.


Only two months after my baptism, I returned to Fukui. However, as a Christian, I didn’t feel comfortable in my hometown anymore. There were so few Christian churches, and the rural society was closely associated with idol worship. I prayed earnestly that God would send a Christian to plant a church here.

It was during that time the Lord constrained me to attend theological seminary. After ten years in Fukui I returned to Tokyo to study the Bible. While in school, God showed me that the “Christian to plant a church here” for whom I had been praying was *me*, and the constraining love of the Lord sending me to seminary

was His preparation. Many insisted that preaching the Gospel in such a traditionally Shinto and Buddhist town was fruitless, but to me it is imperative that those I love in my hometown would have the chance to know my Savior and receive forgiveness and salvation from God!

After graduating from seminary, I volunteered for one month in Liberty Corner in April 2012. There someone asked, “Where is your place of service?” As I answered, “It’s my hometown”, instantly I clearly realized that I was not only “going back” to my hometown, but that I was being “dispatched” with a mission.

What a joy to be sent out and partially supported by my Kotake Mukaihara Christian Church, in conjunction with Liberty Corner Mission! How deeply I appreciate this provision! I praise the name of Jesus, who gives the vision, goal, and guidance.

Thank you for all your prayer and support! You cannot imagine how encouraged I am to have you pray for me and this new ministry in Fukui. Please intercede according to the Scripture in Romans 15:21, **“Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand.”** 

Rie Miura lives in Fukui Prefecture, about 5 hours by train from Tokyo. She earnestly desires to witness for Jesus, planting His church in her hometown.



Rie Miura

