

## I Bethel Temple's History

Bethel Temple Heritage ..... 1

The Testimony of My Healing  
(by Pastor William Henry Offiler) ..... 14

## II Bethel Temple's Mission in Japan

History of Mizuho Christ Church ..... 18

History of Rikuzentakata Christ Church ..... 20

History of Fussa Bethel Church ..... 25

History of Kurume Bethel Christ Church ..... 31

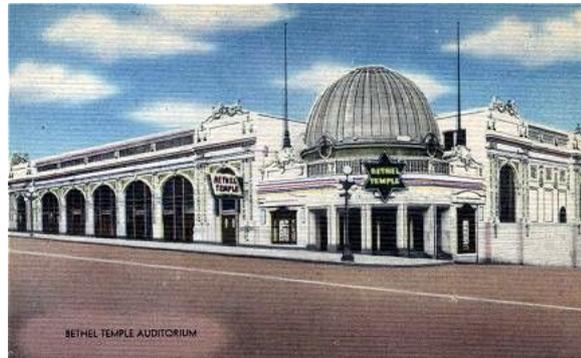
History of Munakata Bethel Christian Center ..... 34

# Bethel Temple Heritage

A journey of Faith and Miracles

## A Spiritual Heritage

An appreciation for our Christian heritage is important to the continuity of our faith as it fuels our vision with testimonies of God's grace. Past stories of faith and sacrifice by men and women of God inspire us to believe for increase and multiplication in our present field of ministry.



This would be true of an Englishman by the name of William Henry Offiler, the founder and Pastor of Bethel Temple who was indeed one of the great pioneers of the Pentecostal movement in the Northwest. His life and ministry had a profound affect on thousands of people in Seattle and untold influence on people around the world.

Heritage according to Webster, is "that which is inherited; an inheritance; the lot, condition, or status into which one is born; a birthright." The story of Bethel Temple provides for us a record of God's grace poured out on a people who diligently sought Him. Every church established, missionary sent, soul converted and miracle performed is a memorial stone of remembrance to which each succeeding generation can lay claim and give God the glory.

This was also the early days of the mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit which ignited the church and resulted in a series of miraculous accounts of God's provision, revelation and passion to spread the gospel message world-wide.

## A man prepared of God

1875



William Henry Offiler was born in Nottingham, England, on December 20, 1875, the third child among six children. He was brought up in the Anglican faith, was confirmed by the Bishop of Southwell in 1890 at the age of fifteen and became a member of the church choir. Later in his ministry he would testify that he really hadn't come to know the Lord during his Anglican years. However, his heart was moved with the gospel and he would dedicate himself to be a missionary. During his training Brother Offiler learned much of his missionary technique and gained a great burden for missions, which was distinctive throughout his life.

1899

After leaving England in 1898, Offiler spent some time employed by the Canadian Pacific Railroad. On August 10, 1899 he settled in Spokane, Washington where he received Christ as his Savior and was soon Spirit-filled. Brother Offiler would meet and become attracted to a young lady who played the pump organ at street meetings. A romance developed which culminated in his marriage on November 16, 1900, to Gertrude Riley, the daughter of Kelly Riley, who was the plumbing and heating inspector for the City of Spokane. Gertrude was a frail person, however God gave her many years to be an intercessor for her husband and their three children, Harriet, William Edward and Edith.

1914

The Offiler family moved to Seattle in obedience to God's call upon Pastor Offiler's life. Ministering in a campmeeting that summer opened the door for Pastor Offiler to become the Pastor of a congregation which experienced revival for eight years in the Pine Street Mission. During his years of ministry in Seattle, Pastor Offiler's family was touched by grief as all three children experienced premature death. During these seasons of loss and tragedy, Pastor Offiler continued to minister, fixing his eyes on Jesus. He had experienced a tremendous revelation of Christ's Glory and learned to trust in His unfailing love.

## Early Beginnings

1914 - 1921

Pastor Offiler's ministry in the Pine Street Mission grew not only numerically but spiritually as God blessed him with insight in the World of God. Despite the fact that Pastor Offiler had no formal theological training, he was very successful in attracting a large following. The ministry rapidly developed into a revival center. For eight years the mission had continuous revival and manifestations of power. Prayer and fasting were foundational to Pastor Offiler's lifestyle and as a result many miracles and conversions occurred under his leadership. The Mission was not adequate for the rapid growth of the congregation. Two buildings, one at the corner of Seventh and Olive Streets and later one on Virginia Street, would become places of worship for the Pentecostal Mission and Apostolic Assembly, the names of the church at that time.

1921

The first missionaries were sent to the Dutch East Indies (now known as Indonesia) as a result of a miraculous healing. Emily Malquist was so grateful for God's healing power in her body that she gave \$500 to Pastor Offiler, who in turn gave it to the missionaries to fulfill their obligation in paying for their boat fare. This was the firstfruit of a missionary endeavor which continues today.

## Bethel Temple

1922

Pastor Offiler and the congregation moved to a new location on Third Avenue between Blanchard and Bell Streets. The name of the church was changed to Bethel Temple, where the congregation worshiped for 22 years. God's presence in the services drew hundreds of people who received Christ as their personal Savior. Many missionaries were commissioned to their fields from its platform as they caught the vision to preach the gospel in distant lands. Saturday night Youth services were the big attraction in the city. Young people would come from the greater Seattle region desiring to experience revival atmosphere.

The spirit of prayer permeated the prayer room before services and continued throughout the service and around the altar after the ministry of the Word.



Bethel Temple, Third Avenue and Bell Street, where the congregation worshipped 23 years and many were called to enter God's harvestfield. This picture is of a missionary rally in 1935.

1944

Once again, the congregation outgrew the place of worship. As Pastor Offiler sought the Lord for this need, the Lord said to him "Crystal Pool", a building on Second Avenue and Lenora Street. After months of renovation, the congregation moved into a larger facility. World War II was on, and it was not a good time to build, but God did provide, and many lent assistance. A good number of well-known evangelists ministered at Bethel Temple including J. S. Eaton and Leonard W. Hero, delivered stirring messages under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Scores of people were saved, delivered, healed and called to the ministry.



1944 Bethel Temple at  
2nd and Lenora



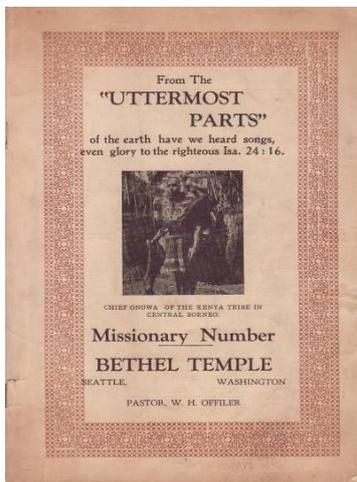
Crystal Pool  
2nd and Lenora

## Missions

Missions have always been the centerpiece of Bethel Temple's 90 year history. We discover it's prominence in the Heart of Pastor Offiler as he describes it.

*"The missionary spirit is the life of the church! Missionary effort cannot be carried on but by the greatest self-denial and consecration of congregations. This attitude must be the order of the day. It is this wonderful spirit upon the people, that has made our effort possible at all and which has given to this church the enviable reputation for foreign missionary work that it now enjoys throughout the world."*

Space does not allow the 75 names of those who responded to God's call to minister in foreign lands: Japan, China, Taiwan, Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Mongolia, India, Pakistan, Persia/Iran, Italy, Palestine, Holland, Sudan, Uganda, Barbados, Costa Rica, Cuba, Mexico, Columbia, Brazil, Guatemala, Nicaragua (Latin America), New Zealand and Australia.



It would be worthy to note that some of Bethel Temple's missionaries sowed seeds of the message in countries that are today formally closed to Christianity. Only eternity will reveal the extent of their sacrifices. The precious "seed" of God's Word has brought forth much fruit and continues to flourish in many places. All glory belongs to God.

## Bible School Training

Pastor Offiler worked to raise up people to know God and His Word. In the late 1920's he established a Bible School within the church which convened once a week. Later in his ministry Pastor Offiler commented concerning the value of the Bible School.

*"We feel that the work is not yet done, and that the Harvest Time of the Church Age is upon us, and that in the near future there will break upon the world a clearer understanding of the Word of God accompanied by the convictions of the Holy Spirit, so that every worker in the Vineyard of the Lord will be necessary, to reap the abundant harvest of souls of men. The Son of God is about to take over the direction of final things, as the end of the present age comes into clear view. Shall we all pray to this end that these eleventh hour workers shall be fully equipped for what ever may be demanded of them by the Head of the Church, even Jesus Christ the Lord."*



It is reported that the presence of God would be so real as Pastor Offiler spoke that he would have to stop teaching. He and the students would just sit there and praise God for twenty minutes or more before they could continue the lessons. Many people attending these

sessions became pastors and missionaries. Bible Schools were established in some of the foreign mission fields and are still being blessed with graduates who continue to evangelize and pastor their people.

In 1952, Pastor W. W. Patterson, successor of Pastor Offiler, started the Bethel Temple Bible School. At this point the school began its two year program which eventually evolved into a three year course. This school continued for many years under the direction of Pastors James Apple, C. J. McKnight and Renus Cabe. The student's training didn't end in the classroom but included practical experience in street services, jail ministry, hospital visitation, nursing homes, missions, Sunday school and Saturday night youth services.

## Camp Meetings



Mirror Lake Camp Meeting Site  
currently owned by Bethel Christian Center

Since 1914, Pastor Offiler was involved and ministered in many camp meetings. These annual get-togethers were in various places around the Seattle area, such as Green Lake, Lake Washington, River Mission and Fort Lawton. In 1934, Bethel Temple purchased property at Mirror Lake, Federal Way and in 1936 began yearly camps there. People came from far and near to attend camp meeting. Scores of people were saved, healed and filled with the Holy Spirit.

These meetings were held every year after that, generally starting around the Fourth of July and going to Labor Day, which would be fifty days of continuous camping. Sometimes there would be two evangelists ministering the

duration of the camp. A prayer room was housed underneath the vast wooden platform that was filled with people in prayer seeking God's presence for the meetings.

Bethel Youth Camp began in 1954 and has continued to this day with great impact on many young lives. Great speakers and Spirit-filled counselors volunteered their time to minister to the campers. Pastor Renus Cabe faithfully organized and led camp for 34 years, and he was followed by several others. Not one camp has gone by without significant results in the lives of the campers. Many are fine Christians and some of them are in the ministry today as a result of meeting God at camp. Often services would end with kids flooding the altar for salvation and the infilling of the Holy Spirit resulting in dedication to the purposes of God.

## Radio Broadcasts

In 1925, Pastor Offiler became one of the first radio preachers with his program called "God and His Bible". This ministry continued for more than sixty years under the leadership of ensuing pastors. The broadcast would begin with the song "Nearer My God to Thee" and end with "Lest I Forget Gethsemane". Each broadcast magnified the Lord with the Gospel message of salvation, baptism in the Holy Spirit and the power of God to heal. Testimonies came in confirming that that radio ministry had communicated the wondrous blessing of God to its listeners.

The Word of God ministered to countless souls, many of whom reached out with prayers for salvation and healing, thus lifting the sorrows and burdens of life. Bethel Temple desired to have men and women remember the works of Calvary, as it is here the sinner through his or her faith in Jesus Christ experienced wonderful transformation! Many lives have been eternally impacted through Bethel's radio ministry and no doubt more testimonies can be told.

## Bethel Temple Pastors

Pastor William H. Offiler  
1914 – 1948

Pastor William W. Patterson  
1948 – 1955

Pastor James Apple  
1955 – 1958

Pastor C. Joe McKnight  
1958 – 1985

Pastor Renus R. Cabe  
1985 – 1986

Pastor Robert G. Brodland  
1986 – 1993

Pastor Daniel W. Peterson  
1993 – 2003



## Fellowship Ministries



Federal Way, Bonney Lake, etc. gathered for a blessed time of feasting in God's Word and His Holy presence.

- Rev. Ken Gaub, a graduate of the Bethel Temple Bible School, established The Ken Gaub Evangelistic Association in Yakima, Washington and has ministered in over 77 nations.
- Rev. John Benton, raised in Bethel Temple and graduated from the Bible School, joined Teen Challenge. He and his wife, Elsie, are founders and directors of the Walter Hoving Home in Garrison, New York and Pasadena, California, which rescues and disciples female drug addicts and prostitutes. Hundreds of women have been saved and marvelously delivered from bondages.
- Rev. Dick Benjamin was saved at Bethel Temple and moved to Alaska where he and his wife founded Abbott Loop Christian Center in Anchorage, Alaska.
- Pastor Ernest B. Gentile, the founder of Christian Community Church in San Jose, California, received his diploma from Bethel Temple Bible School.
- Others who have been impacted by the influence and Word ministry of Bethel Temple include Dr. Kevin Conner from Australia and Graham Truscott from New Zealand, who both have authored books and traveled extensively in teaching ministry.
- Some of the greatest fellowship groups Bethel Temple has are in Indonesia with the Pentecostal Church in Indonesia (now numbering over 10,000 churches), as well as Holland, Japan, South America, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore.

## Bethel Fellowship International

Today there are a network of pastors and ministries in Bethel Fellowship International under the leadership of Pastor Floyd Earlywine. Pastors and missionaries from the Northwest, Japan and Holland look to the Fellowship for support and relationship. Over 20 Indonesian ministers, who now pastor

Indonesian works in the United States, have recently joined the Fellowship.



<http://www.bfi-online.org/>

## Joining with The City Church

In the fall of 2003, Pastor Dan Peterson and Pastor Wendell Smith met together to discuss urban ministry. The City Church, then located in Kirkland, on the Eastside of Seattle, was considering purchasing a building in downtown Seattle in order to establish their first satellite campus in another part of town. Their vision was to launch sites in various parts of the city to reach more people with the Gospel.

Each conversation and meeting between the two pastors was touched in a special way with an unusual anointing of the Holy Spirit. Their conversations led into more and more discussion of the possibilities of joining together to fulfill the task of reaching people in the urban core of the city. Bethel at that time had already sold its property on Second and Lenora and was looking for another place to continue ministry, while The City Church was looking to launch a ministry that would target a growing population downtown, unreached by a church of its style and background.

In August of 2003, Pastor Wendell and Pastor Dan made the decision to join together to continue the work of the gospel in Seattle, Bethel Temple's board and the board of The City Church made official written agreements between the two churches in the month of September and Bethel became part of The City Church family, with resources dedicated to the ongoing common mission and vision of reaching the city and the world for Christ.

When we consider the years of heritage of Bethel Temple, we are all deeply stirred to know that it will continue through the ministries of a united church as we keep preaching, praying and ministering to needy people in the urban area of downtown Seattle.

We recognize that there have been many prayers, tears and faithful service given by hundreds and even thousands of people, over many generations through the wonderful ministries of Bethel Temple, to our city. We believe that ministry will continue into the 21st Century as we work together for the sake of the Gospel.

Bethel Temple has been a landmark church in the city of Seattle since 1914. Founded by Pastor W. H. Offiler, it grew into one of the West Coast's largest Pentecostal churches, and through passionate missionary efforts, was instrumental in starting hundreds of other churches around the world, including over 33 churches in the Northwest, and countless churches and Bible Schools in Asia and other parts of the world. It had a dynamic radio broadcast for many years here in the City. And it purchased the old "Crystal Pool" on

2nd and Lenora and was at that location (just seven blocks from the new Belltown City Church Campus) until the year 2000.

We honor the heritage of Bethel Temple and its many godly Pastors and Missionaries. Already The City Church has been blessed to have many former members, ministers and missionaries as part the church family in Kirkland. Our church has also been strongly influenced by ministries that were converted or trained or raised up under Bethel's influence including Rev. W. V. Grant, Apostle Dick Benjamin, Prophet Earnest Gentile and Dr. Kevin Conner among many others.

We believe there will continue to be a strong missionary anointing that The City Church will inherit and continue to propagate. We will do our best to honor that heritage and maintain that calling to both reach our city and send workers to the harvest fields of the world as the Lord enables us on into the 21st century.

In 1992 Pastor Wendell and Gini Smith received a prophetic word that said, "You will inherit what others have labored to produce". That word already came to pass when the church moved into the wonderful facility on Rose Hill in Kirkland (a beautiful facility that the Overlake Christian Church family built over the years of 1974 – 1997).

Now, once again, we are inheriting a legacy and spiritual grace that generations of believers who lived in Seattle have passed on to us. Thousands of people prayed and preached and prophesied before we were ever born. Now we are walking in the fulfillment of those prayers and promises. And a great crowd of witnesses who laid down their lives in Seattle years ago, for the sake of the Gospel, are watching and cheering us on!

Pastor Dan and Lavonne have joined the staff of The City Church as associate Pastors and will continue their work in the city, as well as continuing their passion for missions (as a child, Dan was raised in Indonesia). They recently received many confirming prophecies themselves--words that mentioned a "*new season*" and a "*transitional time*".

The City Church, along with Pastors Wendell and Gini Smith and the Board of Elders, has made a commitment to carry on the rich heritage of faith inherited from Bethel Temple and its founders. We thank the Lord for His amazing grace, His miraculous provision and for our Partners in the Gospel, and may both our boats be filled to capacity (Luke 5)!

Bethel Temple Heritage  
A Journey of Faith and Miracles.  
Written by Dan Peterson and Pastor Wendell Smith

# THE TESTIMONY OF MY HEALING

by Pastor William Henry Offiler



The Testimony of my healing has never been written or published in my more than fifty years of public ministry, but in the last few months so many calls have come in for my testimony, that I decided to write it out, so that all who were interested might have a copy. That is my only reason for this article, and of course, whatever Honor of Glory there be in it, belongs on Him. So many of my friends in Bethel Temple have expressed the same desire for my testimony, here it is.

I shall not go back to the days of my childhood, but begin this testimony where the Lord began to deal with me. I arrived in the States of Washington August 10th, 1899, and consequently have been in this state for more than fifty years. Prior to my coming to America at the age of 25 years, I had been in the Church of England as an active worker in the Gospel. I was confirmed by the Lord Bishop of Southwell when I was sixteen years of age, and at that time was placed in the Soudanese Missionary Society for several years of training for the work of the Lord on the foreign field, in Central Africa, and it was in this same society that I learned much of the missionary technique, that has been a great help to me in my thirty-six years of active pastoral work in Bethel Temple, at Seattle, Washington.

At the time of my arrival in the State of Washington I was alone. Not one soul in all this great country knew me, and I felt very solemn. The first night in the City of Spokane, where I landed, I was standing on the corner of Howard and Main Streets, smoking a cigar. In a little while there came a group of gospel workers, and with them they had a small street organ, and they formed a small semi-circle and began to sing the old gospel hymns that I had sung while in England, then they prayed sang some more hymns, and then gave a testimony to the power of God to save from sin, and all in all it was a very nice service.

They were there for about one hour. Long before that my cigar had gone out, and I threw away the stub. Then they formed a line and went down the street.

I was curious and followed them, until they turned into a small store building. On the windows was a sign painted, "Gospel Mission". I went in and sat down in the back seat, and at the close of the meeting the leader came down to greet me and said "are you a Christian"? Oh certainly, said I, I have been in the church all my life. He said, will you come and pray with us? Oh yes, I would go and pray with them. I kneeled down at the altar bench and I really prayed, for I had not been in the gospel service for two years, and the people made me feel quite at home.

In my pockets I had everything in the line of smoking, tobacco, cigarettes, papers, bull durham and matches, and all the makings for I smoked on an average sixteen hours a day. But while I was in prayer, something strange happened to me. The pockets of my coat suddenly became very heavy, they pulled down on my neck until it ached almost unbearably, perspiration stood on my face, and almost unconsciously I put my hand in my pocket to see what had gotten in there. I pulled out a handful of tobacco, pipe and matches and dropped them on the floor, and as I did, one side of me became light and wonderful. Then I pulled out of the other pocket another handful of the same stuff and dropped it on the floor also. There were three old ladies gathered around me and were praying for me and when they saw what was happening, immediately they exploded in praise and thanksgiving to God. I turned to look at them, tears ran down their cheeks as they praised the Lord for His wonderful work, and as they praised the Lord, there came upon me a marvelous glory and blessing from heaven. For weeks this glory prevailed in my heart.

The elderly ladies who prayed with me were always teaching me the Bible, they belonged to the Christian Missionary Alliance and were all out for God and the souls of men. Day after day they taught me and prayed with me and told me that the Lord had a great work for me to do. Well, a great spirit of prayer came upon me, I was hungry for God and to know whether the bible was true, and as I read of the mighty miracles of Jesus, I said unto the Lord in my prayer, "Lord is this true, and if it is true, is it for us today, right now"? Again the Spirit of prayer came upon me and I could neither eat nor drink, so intense did my desire become to know Jesus. My friends came and tried to get me to eat, but my appetite was completely gone, and almost before I knew it three full weeks had gone by, and there alone in my room I came face to face with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now I must tell you that I was brought up as a boiler maker and iron ship-builder and in the course of my work I was struck on the chin, and then later kicked in the same place in a football match. Little by little the pain

increased until the tears would run down my cheeks in a hot stream, and at times I was almost frantic. I used chloroform and Laudanum to help me bear the pain but nothing helped me, all my big molars were left in my mouth by the dentist, half pulled, and my jaw bone began to decay. While in this condition I made up my mind to go to America, so I sailed for Canada, where I was wonderfully received and kindly treated by the government officials. When I had learned about the dollars and cents, I came out to Medicine Hat, and this was 1898. I worked for the Canadian Pacific Railroad, and one morning after a sleepless night I walked out on the prairies, and by the railroad track I fell in a faint. The engineer of the passenger train saw me, stopped the train and put me on board and took me back to Medicine Hat where I lay in a hospital for four long months. Well, the doctors operated on my jaw, took out all my teeth, scraped the jawbone and put me into poultices for four months, one every four hours.

Now back to my three weeks of fasting and prayer. On the twenty second day of my prayer my jawbone blew up, my face swelled all out of shape, my mouth wide open, blood and corruption streamed out of my mouth and this continued for three days and nights. At this time as I was praying a voice spoke to me and said, "You have prayed yourself into a place where you do not belong, stop this praying, and never read the Bible again, or a worse thing will come upon you." I was staggered, and a terrible anger came over me, I took my Bible and threw it as far as I could, and said, "as long as I live never will I read the Bible, and never again will I pray, if this is what I get for my weeks of prayer, I will never pray again." Such an awful feeling came over me. I did not know the voice of Satan, just a young man, as green as grass in spiritual things. I jumped to my feet to go to the drug store to get something to ease my pain. I threw on my coat and was just going through the door, when a mighty hand was laid on my shoulder, it turned me around and kneeled me down in the very place where I had been kneeling for twenty four days and nights, and in a moment I knew it was the touch of God.

I was alone, repentance came upon me as I realized what I had done in throwing away the Bible, and saying that I would never pray again. The Power of God came upon me mightily. As I kneeled there, suddenly something struck me in the heart, like an explosive bullet. It burst within me and out of my mouth came the crashing sound of a name, Jesus! The Power of God swept over me and this was long before there was any Pentecostal Work. Again there came the crashing of that explosion in my heart, and again came out of my wide open mouth with a great ROAR, Jesus. I was dumbfounded as the Power of God surged through my being like the waves of a mighty sea. I was in fear and trembling, where for a THIRD time the Name of JESUS came

out of my lips with a great SHOUT, and at this third manifestation of His Name I knew that the Lord Jesus was standing by. In a moment He stretched forth His Hand and the First finger of the Lord went into my mouth, it touched my upper and lower lip, I can feel it now as I write! And the moment that the finger touched my jawbone I was WELL. Instantly the Power of God touched me I was well, and then I heard a Voice speaking to me and said: "If I with the FINGER OF GOD cast out devils, then know that the KINGDOM OF GOD IS COME VERY NIGH UNTO YOU." And the next moment I stood in the Kingdom Glory, mine eyes have seen the Glory of that Kingdom, the Beauty and Brilliance of the Throne of God, the clouds were as thick as a thick darkness under my feet, and burning brightness of the Glory of God was all about me. And to this day the Power of God comes over me as I remember the touch of that Finger and the blinding Glory of that Light that came down upon the Finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Fifty three years of time, and ministry, have passed into eternity since I felt the touch of that finger. We have prayed for thousands of sick ones and have seen the same touch come upon them. Cancers have melted and passed away, tumors have dissolved, Tuberculosis, and almost every disease known to science have been healed, and are still being healed as we dare to believe God, and to obey His Word. To Him who has washed us from our sins in His Own Blood, even unto Him be all the Glory and the Praise. Amen!

William Henry Offiler

# Bethel Temple's Mission in Japan

## Serving in Mizuho, Tokyo

### History of Mizuho Christ Church



Missionary Mary Taylor was sent to Japan by Bethel Temple in 1950. She started a church in Hamura-city. There she met a Korean Christian, Chin, who introduced her to Tamura-san, who was also living in the Mizuho area, close to Mary's house. So Mary began having home meetings at Tamura-san's house. At one of these meetings, Pastor Megumi Tanabe was saved upon hearing the scripture "I am the light of the world." She was 30 years old. Since then Pastor Tanabe has preached the gospel with missionary Taylor. She was involved in Japan mission from 1950 to 1953.

Missionary Mary Taylor preached Jesus with unconditional love of God to the Japanese people who were living in the devastation after World War II. Despite living in poverty, she voluntarily continued street evangelism for the sake of the gospel. She was the instrument of God's love, giving up her dream to become an actress, and gave herself fully to God as a missionary for Japan.



After her, missionaries Manfred and Hope Askew came to Japan from Bethel Temple. The foundation of the church was established by the couple and the buildings of the church and the kindergarten were completed in 1955. Christian education for young children was started in Mizuho area at that time.

The Askews utilized tents, set up on unused land, for their evangelical meetings, and many people attended these meeting. Many of these people were spiritually very hungry, and they would gather in the church without being called.

Mr. and Mrs. Askew's oldest son, Donald (who later died in a car accident) and Mitsuyasu Fujita, a future pastor (and currently the pastor of Next Town Mission of Japan), were saved at these meetings. Their oldest daughter, Ruth Naomi Askew, got married and is presently living in the US state of Texas.

"Mizuho Nozomi kindergarten" which was built on the church property, has seen more than 1,463 children pass through its doors since 1955. The name "Nozomi", which means "Hope", was adopted from Hope M. Askew's name.



Old building

Mizuho Christ Church celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2010. The old buildings, including the kindergarten and the church, were torn down, and a new church, incorporating a kindergarten, was built.

## Pastors from Mizuho Christ Church

Tamekichi & Emiko Morita	Rikuzentakata Christ Church
Eizaburou Kumagai	Hanamaki Christ Mission Chapel
Tokuei & Ai Itou	Hidaka Christ Church
Somi Ohhara (Somi Nakagami)	
Mitsuyasu Fujita	Matsuzaka Christ Gospel Church

# Serving in Iwate Prefecture's Rikuzentakata

## History of Rikuzentakata Christ Church



Missionary work began in the 7th month of the 40th year of Showa (July 1965).

The first church service was held in a tent.  
The church building was built in the 7th month of the 58th year of Showa (July 1983).

Pastor Tamekichi Morita, who was saved at Mizuho Christ Church, studied the bible and trained for service at Bethel Training Center. While he was training, God provided a clear path showing him where to establish the church in the Tohoku region of Japan. Heeding The Call, Pastor Morita searched for an area in Iwate Prefecture where a church had not yet been established, and he determined that Rikuzentakata City did not have one. There, Pastor Morita and his wife, Emiko, settled into "Japan's Tibet", as Rikuzentakata City was known then, living-and beginning the difficult work of establishing a church-there. This was in July 1965.

Having received support from Tokyo, Pastor Morita and his wife held the first church service in a tent on July 5th, 1965. This first tent assembly was a great success, with over 100+ children in the gathering, and many people receiving salvation. The following week, beginning on July 19th and continuing on for five days, Pastor Morita established the church tent in Oofunato City, where many people also received salvation. The church assembly grew, and in 1983 a new church building was built. With 1 million yen, Pastor Morita and about a dozen believers in Christ began building the church, and with the Lord's guidance, the group did not have to borrow any money from other churches in order to construct the first church.

## Pastor Tamekichi Morita's Testimony

I was saved at Mizuho Christ Church (Bethel, Mission), located in Tokyo's Nishi-Tama District, Mizuho Town. It all started when I met an American soldier, who gave me - and asked me to read - a one-page pamphlet, which was written poorly in Japanese. Afterwards, that person was discharged from the military, and he began missionary work in Japan, where he was dispatched to the Kansai region, Tokyo, and Hanno in Saitama Prefecture.

### The Calling

I studied the bible and trained at Bethel Mission Training Center. At the time, I was also helping Pastor Masaharu Misaka, who was visiting the Tokyo area, including Haijima City and Itsukaichi City, setting up a large tent he received from Ikoma City. Pastor Misaka was joined by John and Ruth Bell, married missionaries, in establishing the assembly. The work was good practice for me. Thinking that tent assemblies could be used to spread the gospel, I borrowed a new tent from church and went to Iwate.

### Why Iwate?

One day, while studying the Bible, I prayed to God and asked Him where he would be sending me, and the clear indication was the Tohoku area. Missionaries suggested Ooshima in Izu. There, they said, I would be guaranteed a living, and I would be able to receive support.

While checking to see which cities in Iwate Prefecture did not have a church, I discovered that a third of Rikuzentakata City's 33,000+ residents were migrant carpenters and plasterers. So I held a prayer meeting to prepare. At the prayer meeting, a young American missionary couple, who were stuck in Japan as they were trying to make their way to Indonesia, hugged and prayed for me. The young couple mentioned that their friends and families also hugged and prayed for them as they prepared for their trip, and I cried as I thought of how our paths were similar.

Taking a night train from Ueno, I arrived at Ichinoseki in the morning, and there I switched to the Oofunato train line. But, on the two and a half hour

trip to Rikuzentakata station, all I saw were mountains and more mountains, and I began to feel lonely and helpless.

But when I arrived, I witnessed the ocean, mountains, and streets lined with neat stores and houses, and the tiredness from the 15 hour trip simply faded away. I began looking for a place to live, but didn't find anything. However, while walking around, I noticed a "Rooms for Rent" sign, and I began to negotiate for the room. It was a very small and dingy apartment, but I thought it would protect me from the rain and the wind, so I rented it. (Later, my wife said it was a horrible place, and she cried.)

I returned to Tokyo, and I shipped my furnishings to my new apartment. Thinking about when my furnishings would arrive, I left Tokyo a week later, and on the morning of the seventh day and the seventh month of the 40th year of Showa (7 July 1965) I arrived in Iwate, where I intended to become a citizen. The cold and rainy day that greeted me is a day I'll never forget. My furnishings hadn't arrived yet, but they showed up that evening, and I thought 'It's time to begin!!'

At that time, Iwate was known as the 'Tibet' of Japan. Ken-nan (southern Iwate Prefecture), where we lived, was an easy place to reside in, with warm weather and lots of fruit, as well as kind-hearted people.

## Rikuzentakata City's first tent gathering

From Tokyo, a pastor, congregants and believers in Christ visited us in Rikuzentakata, for 5 days, from the 14th to the 18th of the 7th month of the 40th year of Showa (14 - 18 July 1965). There was a children's gathering and an adult's gathering. Before the gatherings, we used played accordions and banged drums while announcing these meetings to the people of the town. The town was small and quiet, so the sudden energy we released while announcing our gatherings made the town jump, I believe.

More than a hundred children gathered, and they recited and heard passages from the bible. From this group, a number of children became Christians, and a few became pastors.



2nd Tent Gathering

## Establishment of the church, 45 years on

While writing up this report, my heart became full of deep emotions, and my eyes welled up with tears. God's works are wonderful. From the 19th day of the 7th month of the 40th year of Showa (19 July 1965), and for five days, the neighboring town, Oofunato, was the next location for our tent gathering. The time from the Sanriku tsunami to the time we set up our tent in Oofunato was very short, so we were able to meet a lot of victims of, and view the damaged caused by, the tsunami. Many of the people who accepted Christ were baptized in the ocean and in the rivers.



Baptism in the sea of  
Takada-Matsubara

## Building the church

The 4th through the 7th month of the 58th year of Showa  
(April thru July 1983)



At the Old House

The church was built according to God's amazing plan. I had already purchased the land, but I hadn't thought about how to build the church building itself. But God gave the incentive and he pushed me along. I met with a few church members and we had heartfelt prayers. We drew up a blueprint and asked for an estimate. However, our church fund only had about ¥1,000,000, and many of the young Christians, of which there were more than 10, worried if this big project could even be accomplished; nevertheless, the works of Pastor Coote inspired us to advance in our work.

At that time, while working I also preached the gospel. There was a big construction company in the area, so we showed them the blueprints for our church and they provided us with a building estimate. At first, with an employee discount, the estimate for building the church was ¥18,000,000, but two days later, this amount was lowered to ¥16,000,000, and when it came time to sign the contract, the final price was ¥14,000,000. During this time, I did not negotiate on the price; instead, God helped us with the negotiations. In this

way, our independent church was not built using outside help, but instead was built using the offerings from attending Christians.

After that, many of the brothers and sisters who helped build the church found jobs in other areas, or got married and moved away. “Knowing God’s time is important, and there is a time for gathering, and a time for releasing, according to His plan.” Now, the village’s small church is alive and well.



Completion of framework



Gathering  
22 August 1982

Tamekichi Morita

# Serving in Fussa, Tokyo

## The beginning of Fussa Bethel Church



In 1952, Ruth Kyllonen, an older sister of missionary Hope Askew, started church planting and also began a ministry for missionaries at the local US Air Force base. Ruth purchased 487 "tsubo", a parcel of land, at 1101 Kumagawa, Fussa City. American soldiers built a small house there and she began ministering to U.S soldiers. Fussa Bethel Church was consecrated on October 15, 1955. After the consecration, Ruth returned back to the U.S.

## Vision of Ruth Purvis Kyllonen

Called by God to be a missionary "Mother" to American Servicemen  
by Ruth Purvis Kyllonen

I first went to Homer, Alaska, in 1943, and built a small Church in the heart of town. Several years later I was challenged to stake out a homestead of Anchor Point, a new settlement, seventeen miles north of Homer.

Many of my friends from the lower 48 decided to come north to take advantage of the free homesteading property in the Anchor Point area. We soon had a fine group of Christian families, all working together to build homes, barns and eventually a school house. My homestead had large spruce trees growing on its 93 acres. A sawmill was erected and before long there was sufficient lumber for the needs of all of our neighbors.

A teacher joined our ranks, and thus the few children were taught in her cabin. When my son Buzz reached high school age, he enrolled in a correspondence school. It was not a satisfactory arrangement, as he was denied the fellowship of other teenagers.

We had been holding church services in my log cabin, so it was with great difficulty that I made the necessary decision to sell my homestead to a missionary from Anchorage. Buzz and I moved to Seattle, where he enrolled in the King's Garden Christian High School, where he graduated three years later as the Valedictorian of the Class of 1953, as well as the captain of the football team, and the President of the Student Body. Meanwhile, I worked in radio script-writing, and other areas as well. We both missed the rugged and exciting life of Alaska, to be sure.

The Korean War was raging, and we knew that eventually Buzz would have to enlist. At the close of his first year in college, he joined the Army, the Alaska Communications branch, and, in answer to prayer, he was assigned to Ketchikan, where his two sisters, Wini and Joyce, and their families, lived.

Now I was free. I could go to any mission field without having to worry about family. My children loved one another, and all was well.

Immediately I was invited to join my sister Hope and her husband at Mizuho, Japan, situated near Yokota Air Force base. My heart leapt for joy as I envisioned the fulfillment of my God-given dream of opening a Christian home for American servicemen.

Within a year I had built a church in Fussa-machi (Fussa City), with living quarters for myself, and for my interpreter, Mr. Nishimori, and his wife. We were soon working among the Japanese and the servicemen from the nearby air force base. Many souls were saved, and before I left in 1957 we had baptized 111 people in the Fussa River. I was tired so I decided to retire, only to learn that there is no retirement in the army of the Lord.

I hadn't been home very long before I got a letter from air force friends who had rotated to Chateauroux, France. They begged me to come to France and open up a home for the military men near the American air force base there. In 1960, I crossed the Atlantic on the Queen Mary. Within a few months I rented a paint shop within a five minute walk to the gate of Chateauroux Base.

The Christian boys helped paint and reshape the shed into a homey meeting place. After four years, the servicemen were sent to various bases, and the base at Chateauroux was closed forever, but many souls had found the Lord.

Again I came home to retire. I decided to return via Israel, India, and then Washington state. It was a marvelous homecoming. My children were all married, and by now I had grandchildren to enjoy, ten in all. I was asked to

take my niece to the airport. As we waited to see her embark, I was amazed to see about 30 young men who were on their way to Vietnam. Several were jesting, others were staring into space, probably thinking of loved ones at home. One young man was attempting to console a sobbing woman. I could hear him striving to comfort her, "Mom! Please don't cry. I'll come back! Please Mom. Believe me!"

In my innermost being I knew that their separation would be final. As I drove to my home, God talked with me. "I have trained you for such a time as this. Our servicemen are dying without Jesus, but you have chosen to retire." The inaudible voice continued to challenge me. Having walked with the Lord for many years, I knew that I should obey my Master. Yes! I would prepare to leave for Asia. I was soon enroute for Saigon, as I supposed, to settle where the fighting was most severe.

After a month in that war zone, I knew it would be suicidal to operate a home where soldiers would congregate. The Viet Cong would welcome this opportunity to bomb us out. I then received an urgent letter from a chaplain with whom I had worked while in France. He was now the Chief of Chaplains at Udorn Thani in Thailand. His letter was an answer to my dilemma. In nothing flat I was flying to my new assignment. I had perfect peace from above. The Lord performed many miracles in our effort to open a comfortable, homey place for servicemen to gather and worship the Lord.

Only eternity will reveal the results of our efforts to reach souls for Jesus. Before many months had passed, I was joined by two Christian "Mothers of Israel", plus one of my older granddaughters. In one revival alone, with one missionary speaker from the Philippines, 23 boys were filled with the Holy Spirit, and many others came to know the Lord Jesus as their Savior. One Buddhist was converted, and now has three churches in northeastern Thailand. I opened a home in Tainan, Taiwan, until the base there closed in 1971. I finally came home to retire from the mission field.

Ruth Kyllonen      July 1989

## History of the Far East Servicemen's Home (F.E.S.H.)

In June 1956 a revival was experienced in a little mission church near Yokota Air Force Base, Japan. Most of the people attending the nightly meetings there at Fussa Bethel were American Servicemen. The powerful word of God was being preached by the Reverend Charles Hardin.

Out of this revival came a nucleus of zealous workers for God headed by Master Sergeant Harry S. Holman and Master Sergeant William K. Gaylord. These workers plunged into a vigorous campaign of tract distribution in an effort to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ among the Japanese people.

The fellowship found in this group was so good that, as soon as the nightly meetings at Fussa Bethel were ended, Brother Gaylord's house bulged at the seams every night except service night. He opened his home to all the servicemen. The Lord gave the inspiration of the Far East Servicemen's Home (F.E.S.H.) where servicemen could come to spend their pass, leave, and R&R time in a Christian atmosphere and where worship services could be held.

The assets of the F.E.S.H. that time totaled 88 tsubo of land, and a small one-room house which was located on missionary Ruth Kyllonen's property. The F.E.S.H. board elected to trade the one-room house to the missionary, Ruth Kyllonen, of Fussa Bethel for 61 tsubo of land adjoining our 88 tsubo. This provided 149 tsubo of land.

To build the F.E.S.H. on this plot of ground was considered impractical for several reasons. The search for the ideal site was begun. After passing up two offers of land near Yokota 553 tsubo were located which was being offered for \$3,227.00. This was it! Thank the Lord He guided His people. The 149 tsubo of land near Fussa Bethel was sold and that provided the down payment for the new site. Construction of the home begun on 29 November, 1956.

- 1958 F.E.S.H. established by Harry S. Holman and other servicemen, and land on Rt. 16 purchased.
- 1980 Original church buildings renovated and enlarged. Name changed to Yokota Christian Center.
- 2004 Yokota Christian Center became a member of the International Christian Assembly.

## The beginning of Japanese ministry of Fussa Bethel Church



Missionary couple John & Elsie Benton came to Japan in 1956. They incorporated the church as a religious corporation in 1957. Suejirou Nishimori was acting as a translator at that time.

After returning to the U.S., John & Elsie Benton were involved in "Teen Challenge Ministry" and then they established "Walter Hoving Home" (A Christian prerelease center for drug addicts and prostitutes).



Missionary couple Al & Wilda Bade came to Japan after passing through Indonesia on their way to China. In China they were preaching the gospel while managing an orphanage.

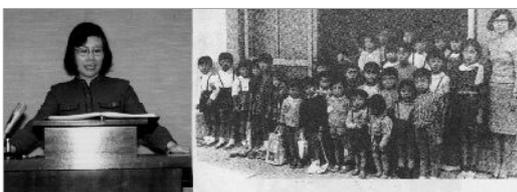


## Ministry of missionary couple Clyde & Yvonne Bade



Missionary couple Clyde & Yvonne Bade came to Japan in 1961. A missionary house was built by Al and Clyde Bade. At the same time the church was running a kindergarten and Bethel Bible School. Because of these ministries, many ministers were trained. Pastor Shigeru Mitsugi married Fumiyo, who was acting as interpreter. They worked for Fussa Bethel Church for awhile. At that time, Pastor Eiko Kishino and Sister Masako Akeda (now with the Alliance organization) were saved.

## Starting ministry in Akiruno-city



The new "Akigawa Bethel Church" was built in Akiruno-city on April 19, 1970. Missionary Bade and Pastor Eiko Kishino started their ministry in the

church. The congregation of Fussa Bethel Church was divided into two groups for each church at that time. Pastors Masaru and Eiko Ohmiya were assigned to work for Fussa Bethel Church. "Akigawa Eikoh kindergarten" was started on May 15, 1970, and the ministry in Akigawa provided early childhood education for 15 years. Pastor Emiko Hayashi (now at Tokyo Metro Church) and Missionary Kousei Kudoh (now in China) were products of this ministry.

After Pastor Ohmiya was assigned as pastor, Yoshio Tsuzaka, the present pastor of Fussa Bethel Church, was saved. The children's ministry was running every Saturday at Kumagawa, Kamidaira housing complex in Fussa-city. After Pastor Ohmiya's retirement, Pastor Michiko Koishi-izumi was assigned as pastor in 1971, and she worked around Fussa train station and the Ohme area. Three years later she left Fussa and started a church in Funabashi.

Brother Shouzou and Kikuyo Nishimura, who were opening their house for family meeting for evangelism in Nakagami, Akishima-city, were assigned as associate pastors of Fussa Bethel Church in 1975, and they began their ministry with help from missionary Clyde Bade. Around this time, Yoshio Tsuzaka received his calling from God and went to Assembly of God Central Bible College to study. Associate Pastor Shouzou Nishimura passed away in June 1978, and Pastor Yoshio and Noriko Tsuzaka were assigned as associate pastors. 2 years later they were assigned as pastors.



Pastor Yoshio and Noriko Tsuzaka

They celebrated the 20th anniversary of Akigawa Bethel Church and celebrated the 35th anniversary of Fussa Bethel Church in 1990. After Pastor Eiko Kishino's retirement, Pastors Takashi and Mayumi Kuboki were assigned as associate pastors. After the new Fussa Bethel Church building was built in 1995, the two churches became one body again.

# Serving in Kurume, Fukuoka Prefecture

## The beginning of Kurume Bethel Christ Church

### The arrival of George and Mary Beth Frazier, 1960

by Mary Beth Frazier



In 1960 we as a family of 5, left Seattle to go to Japan. We went by Japanese freighter, as that was the cheapest way to go at that time. We were a little like Abraham, not really knowing where we were going, only that the Lord had sent us, and we wanted so much to do His will. George was in Japan during the Korean War, although unsaved, and when he went back to the States, and

became a Christian, he wanted to return to Japan and share the good news of the gospel with the Japanese people. When we were 28 years old, Kathleen (4), Sharon (3), Dale (1), all of us together headed for Japan, the land of our calling.

During the two week journey, we and the 5 other passengers ate with the officers of the ship; they were all very kind to us, and when it was Dale's first birthday, they had a birthday party for him, with presents and all. It was really wonderful. After two weeks, we landed in Tokyo!!! What an experience for us. Our huge ship coming into the harbor and the harbor was dotted with very small fishing boats. Oh what a sight!!!! We will never forget it.

Then we went to Fussa and spent time with the Bades. Veteran missionaries, who were like our parents and we appreciated them and their help so much.

Then we went to Kobe by an overnight train. The announcements were unclear to us as we did not know any Japanese. We just knew we were to get off at Kobe. Another missionary met us there. Another veteran missionary, Phil Rounds, was a wonderful help to us, getting our things through customs, and Phil and his family were so gracious to us.

## The Ministry in Kyushu

In Kyushu we were working with an Assembly of God missionary named Arthur Greyell. He lived on an island, Amakusa, which was quite a famous island in Kyushu. He had started a church and an orphanage. He had a little house ready for us and there we took up living in Japan. We wanted to study Japanese, but we couldn't find anyone to teach us at all, so we went back to Tokyo to live there for about a year so that George could go to school and learn Japanese. We lived out in the Fussa area and we attended Fussa church. When we went out, we couldn't all go together. George rode a bicycle and took 3 children with him. Dale on a seat hooked to the handle bars and the girls on a seat in the back. Mother walked. We were asked to speak in different places, so we felt the need for a car, and somehow we were able to get one. It seemed like every provision in those days was a miracle. Truly it was, and we began going to a place--Zama base--down by Yokohama.

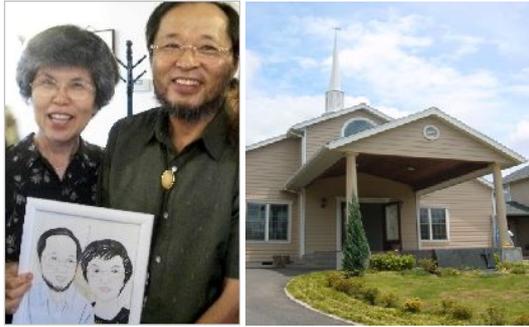
A missionary, who was a friend of the Bades, started a church in Zama base, Yokohama, and we began ministering and working together. From that group we got our first worker, an interpreter, for the ministry in Kyushu.

Returning to Kyushu was our vision, because this was where we began. We located a small city, Shimabara, on the ocean. We rented an old house and did a little remodeling, and we began a church there. Our young lady came to live with us and began interpreting for us. We had fellowship with other missionaries in Kyushu. There was a real close family-type of relationship between all of us.

At this time a missionary, Howard Larson, in Kurume invited us to come several times to speak at his tent meeting. Howard's wife was very ill and it looked like he would have to take his family and return to the States. He asked us to come and take up his work there. We had to pray about this as we already had a church going in Shimabara. We still lived in Shimabara, but we would go to Kurume and work on the land and building during the week; although it wasn't that close, we decided to do it. We helped out workers start churches in the towns and cities around there. At one time we trained 8 at once. All of them and more are out doing the work of the Lord. Then, after 38 years, we finished our ministry in Japan.

Mary Beth Frazier

- George and Mary Beth Frazier came from Bethel Temple in Seattle, Washington, in the U.S., in 1962. Their missionary work began in Kokubu-town, Kurume, Fukuoka Prefecture, with a church built from two Quonset huts that they received from the air base.
- The new church building was built at Kokubu-town, Kurume, in 1969.



Pastor Aritoshi and Takako Yoshida

- Pastor George Frazier retired and Aritoshi Yoshida succeeded him as a new Pastor in 1974.
- Kurume Bethel Christ Church moved to Kamitsu-town, Kurume in 2000. The church owned land (600 tsubo), and a rented parking lot (2,300 tsubo).

- Yukari Kudo, Nozomi Okubo and Issei Yoshida were inducted as new Pastors in 2007.
- Pastor Aritoshi Yoshida retired in 2010.
- Branch churches:  
Fukuoka Chapel and Kokubu Chapel



## Pastors from Kurume Bethel Christ Church

Pastor Shozo Shimokawa (since passed away)	Ogori, Fukuoka
Pastor Sumiko Hidaka (since passed away)	Yaku Island, Fukuoka
Pastor Masato Ishizaki	Komorimo-town, Kurume, Fukuoka
Pastor Harumi Ushii	Kobe, Hyogo
Pastor Mitsue Ikeda	Kobe, Hyogo
Pastor Yoshiko Inafuku	Shinjuku, Tokyo
Pastor Yasuhiro Kitamura	Miyazaki
Pastor Aritoshi and Takako Yoshida	Kurume, Fukuoka
Pastor Yukari Kudo	Kurume, Fukuoka
Pastor Issei and Nozomi Yoshida	Kurume, Fukuoka

# Serving in Kurume, Fukuoka Prefecture

## History of Munakata Bethel Christian Center (MBCC)

Munakata City, Fukuoka Prefecture, Japan

Nils & Andrea Olson---October 2005



We spent our first four years on the mission field learning the Japanese language, customs and ways of thinking at the **Kurume Bethel Christ Church** (formerly overseen by

George and Mary Beth Frazier). In the spring of 1982 we felt the Holy Spirit leading us to step out on our own and begin a new work. After several months of looking into many areas to begin a new work, we heard the voice of the Holy Spirit confirm to us that Munakata City was the place.

In September 1982, we moved to Munakata City, a bed town located directly between the two 1 million-plus population metropolises of Fukuoka City and Kita Kyushu City on the southern island of Kyushu. The city population at that time was 58,000, but has now grown to over 94,000. At that time there were only two churches with a combined Christian population of about 150 in the city. Since then, however, a total of ten churches of different Protestant and Roman Catholic affiliations have been established with an excellent rapport between church leaders. Munakata City is a very “religious” city with its huge Shinto shrine and many Buddhist temples. Shortly after moving to the city, we began praying and the Holy Spirit let us know that “the gods of this world will come to nothing and that the glory of God will flow in rivers of power into homes and families throughout the city.”

By June 1983, we began regular worship services in our rented home. During the ten months prior to beginning the work in our home, we found ourselves building relationships at neighborhood stores and in our local community.

One of our first special introductory meetings was when we rented a large hall and showed a very popular Christian movie. As a result, people began learning of our the church's existence. Special evangelistic meetings were also held at the same hall where we had some of our first converts. Water baptisms took place in our bathtub, nearby swamps, lakes and the ocean.

From 1983 until 1992 MBCC was in its pioneering stage. It seemed like a long process in leading and teaching those who are now the pillars in the church. Starting from "zero," we taught them about salvation and when it was time, we moved on to teaching about water baptism, Holy Spirit baptism, worship, tithing and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. All of these principles are in operation at MBCC today. We have found that the gifts of the Holy Spirit in operation in the local church make the Word of God very real. Even to this day, we find ourselves being comforted, edified and exhorted as we continue giving the Holy Spirit liberty to work in the local church Body.

In 1991, the owner of the facility we were renting told us we had to leave because he was planning on tearing down the pre-fabricated building to make way for a new permanent structure for his business. We were greatly disappointed because we had thought we would be able to stay there for several more years, however, we had to leave at the owner's request. Practically immediately, the Holy Spirit spoke in a still small voice of a thought and said, "Lease property and build." It had to be the Holy Spirit, because we had NEVER given it a thought, seeing that we only had about \$7000 in our (future) building fund. However, as we approached the realtor and asked him to search for lease property, God showed His favor once again and the owner of the house we had originally rented to begin the work of MBCC allowed us to lease the present church property.

At that time, the property had to be leveled and have a huge retaining wall built around it. God miraculously provided the funds from beginning to end. **Little Chapel**, Cordova, Alaska, offered some \$31,000 for the leveling and building of the retaining wall. At the time, **Bethel Temple (BT)** graciously provided some \$38,500 for part of the first payment of a \$150,000 building. At the death of former BT Board member **Mike Downs**, a life insurance policy was equally distributed to Bethel Temple missionaries on the field at that time. Our portion was put directly into the building in his memory. No longer in existence, **Bethel Tabernacle**, Carnation, Washington, gave \$2,000 dollars from their own building fund. Former BT missionary to Indonesia, **Bob Edmundson** gave \$1,200. And I have particular remembrance of a "pentecostal handshake" of \$20 designated for the MBCC building fund from **Nellie Foster**, who lived on the Mirror Lake Bethel Chapel grounds for many, many years. God miraculously provided the money for everything, even

down to the last blade of grass in the lawn! It was the Holy Spirit's gift of faith that was planted in my heart to literally believe for the building to be completely paid. When the last payment was due, a special offering was taken here in Japan and the bill was paid in full. ALL praise goes to God for **Munakata Bethel Christian Center!** It is His church! After all, it is **beth-el**: the House of God!

Since its completion, MBCC has been used for a multitude of gatherings, including Sunday worship, Bible studies, weddings, funerals, concerts, English lessons, church bazaars and much more.

As the years have gone by since we moved to Munakata twenty-three years ago, we have seen the city grow in population. Our love for the city has never grown old, but rather greater as its population increases. We have also seen the church in our city grow from just two to ten. Our desire and vision is to see a large, permanent piece of property we can call our own with facilities that can accommodate the increasing number of people's needs in our city.

MBCC's development is almost like the development of the church in the Old and New Testaments.

**First**, there was Moses' Tabernacle, a temporary dwelling. Ours was a rented house that was soon outgrown. **Second**, there was David's Tabernacle, another temporary dwelling place. Our second dwelling was torn down to make way for a new permanent structure its owner was going to build. **Third**, Solomon's Temple was built as a permanent structure, but was eventually destroyed and made way for Jesus to come and begin building His Church, against which the gates of Hell shall not prevail.



We envision the last dwelling place for MBCC to be on a very large piece of purchased property (with land title in hand and facilities completely paid) we can call our own.

We believe and speak it often: *"Thou art my son . . . Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."*

Nils & Andrea Olson