



JCFN North America & Japan

Directors Letter February 2022

✿JCFN North America Report ✿ (NA Director : Setsu Shimizu)

◎EC21 Youth Camp (12/27-30) <https://www.instagram.com/ecyouthjesus/>



Thank you for your prayers. 12/27-30 Youth Camp was held at the campground on the mountain. There was some concerns as the Omicron strain began to spread, but we did everything we could to make it a face-to-face camp, including pre-PCR testing, temperature checks, and sanitization. We experienced the richness of fellowship and the joy of being able to praise together in person. However, in the middle of the camp, we had to stop the camp and go down the mountain due to a severe snowstorm. At the time, we wondered what would happen, but all 67 campers and staff made it down the mountain safely. Thanks to God's protection and West Covina Christian Church's provision of a venue and place to stay on such short notice, the camp was able to continue and we had a wonderful final day. All the youth received the theme "Kingdom Identity" from the Lord and responded seriously to the invitation. As I watched the youths, I thanked the Lord from the bottom of my heart that the camp was able to be held. I can see from the testimonies of the youths that the prayers of the prayer warriors were answered powerfully by the Lord. We give all the glory back to the Lord!



◎ JCFN Countdown Worship

As an extension of the EC21 Youth Camp, we held a countdown worship and the time of testimonies and praise on December 31. It took an hour and a half for the youth and staff to share their testimonies including their decisions, lessons learned, and blessings from the camp. We welcomed 2022 with heartfelt praise and enjoyed New Year's Eve soba noodles (instant "Midori no Tanuki" due to the pandemic).

◎ JXJ Reunion ~Under the same sky~ (<https://bit.ly/JXJyoutube>)

After 15 years in the Seattle area, JXJ, a regional meeting of JCFN, has come to an end in 2021. JXJ is a ministry started by a few student and young adult leaders who were given a burden to lead an evangelistic meeting once a month with games, food, praise, testimony, fellowship and sharing. They also had an evangelism camp in the summer, as well as Bible studies and praise meetings. For the past 15 years, they have been cooperating with nearby Japanese churches and international student evangelism groups, faithfully sowing the seeds of the gospel, and many people have made up their minds to believe in Jesus. On the 9th of January 2022, we held an online reunion, where the original members were able to share their testimonies and see the faces of many people they had missed. (You can watch the testimonies and worship at the link above.) I wonder what the next step will be. Please pray for the Lord's guidance for future international student evangelism in the Seattle area.

◎ EC20 BEYOND REUNION Gather at the reunion!

The EC reunion was held online. 130 or so people attended, were touched by the worship, inspired by the message, encouraged by the testimony, and enjoyed the sharing. (Oh, it was fun!). If you were not able to attend, or if you have never attended an EC before, please watch the video on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/VkyqCPmo3wM>

We are preparing for EC22 to be held at the end of this year, in person. We are very excited! Please pray especially for the location (we were planning to use the facility we used for our Youth Camp, but due to the possibility of a snowstorm, we decided to look for a new location).

✿ Prayer Requests from North America Office ✿

◎The visa application for the Tsuchida's is making some progress. Please pray that the Lord will grant him a visa in His best timing and that He will bless the preparations for their move to the United States (finding a place to live, finding a school, buying a car, etc.).

◎Please pray for the search for a venue for EC22.

✿JCFN Japan Report ✿ (Japan Director : Chihiro Okada)

The sixth wave of the spread of the Omicron strain of the new coronavirus is spreading fast and furious in Japan. We had hoped to resume in-person gatherings, events, and small groups around December, but it looks like the ministry will continue to be online for the time being.

◎ The journey for returnees to connect with a church

Around autumn, I was involved in finding a church for a returnee to Fukui. We received an inquiry from an international student ministry worker in the U.S., and while communicating with the returnee, we were trying to connect her to a church in Fukui. Along with the ongoing relationship with the sending people, there was also prayer and encouragement from the receiving people. We were informed by both the receiving church and the person herself that she had started to attend church from Christmas. Please pray for her continuous walk of faith.

One of the major issues that JCFN is facing in the follow-up of the Covid is finding churches for the returnees. Not only is it difficult to find a church during online worship services, but it also seems that returnees do not recognize the importance of being connected to a "church" and do not have the faith that belonging to a church is a response to God's invitation. Perhaps this is not an issue only for returnees. However, I felt that it is important to continue to engage with returnees together with the sending and receiving sides. In the case of Fukui, I think it was a big help that the people around her continuously told her about the importance of connecting with the church. I pray that the returnees will be protected in their search for church.

◎ Movements in the regions

There were no particular regional returnee ministry activities in December and January. Many meetings are preparing for online gatherings during the month of February. Please remember their ministries, pray for them, and join them.

GiFT ~Growing in Fellowship Tokyo The Tokyo returnee meeting, GiFT, is continuing to hold online meetings. The next meeting will be held on Saturday, February 19 at 10:00. There will be a panel discussion with Christian couples featuring Valentine's Day, which was very popular last year.

R35+ (read as R thirty-five up) R35+, a ministry for returnees who are 35 years old, continues to meet every three months, and the second meeting was held in late November. The second meeting was held in late November, with a message from the Word of God followed by a full hour of small group time, emphasizing the importance of sharing. The next meeting will be held on February 23, a holiday, at 10:00 a.m. We will meet online.

ANRK - All Nations Returnees in Kansai The Kansai returnee meeting, ANRK, also continues to hold online meetings. The next gathering is scheduled for Saturday, February 26, at 10:00. People from across the Kansai region, some of whom are overseas for work, are also involved in the planning and management of the meeting. Small groups for women returnees in the Kansai area continue to be held every other week. We have received reports of gratitude from some returnees who have been able to connect with the church through prayer and encouragement in the small groups.

Chushikoku and Kyushu Groups (CSK) The Chushikoku and Kyushu prayer meetings are held on the last Saturday evening of each month and are a time to remember and pray for returnees in the area and to encourage one another. In January, they will meet on the 29th, and in February, they will join the ANRK online meeting.

Inspireunion (Tokai) (a.k.a. Inspa), a returnee meeting in Tokai, continues to hold a monthly online small group called "Recafe," which is open to returnees from other parts of Japan as well as from Tokai, since it focuses on the JCFN returnee workbook. In addition, a prayer meeting for returnees in the Tokai area was started in January on the second Sunday evening of each month (30 minutes).

✿Please pray for JCFN Japan ✿

◎Please pray for the returnees who need encouragement to find a church in the pandemic. Pray that they will continue to have the desire to connect with churches, and that they will receive courage and strength from God to stand up and try to go to church.

◎Pray that the prayer connection for returnees in the regions will be strengthened and be a driving force for returnees in the regions.

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