



# JCFN Japan & North America

## Directors Letter June 2021

### ✿JCFN Japan Ministry Report✿ (Chihiro Okada, Japan Director)

As the state of emergency continues to be declared in the metropolitan area in Japan, I pray for strength and guidance for those involved in the response in various places and for the medical personnel.

### ◎GRC21was BLESSED!! (May 2~4, [www.globalreturnees.org](http://www.globalreturnees.org))

Thank you so much for praying for the GRC21 - Global Returnees Conference. It was held during the three-day weekend of May 2-4. The decision to hold the conference online was made in January, and intensive preparations were made in a short period of time from then on. In the end, 173 attended, which made us aware of the importance of "connections" with each other even if it was in the form of online. There were 150 participants from Japan, 11 from the U.S., 4 from the U.K., and some from New Zealand, Australia, Germany, Canada, and China.



The main speakers, Dr. Eiko Takamizawa, Rev. Nobuyuki Toyoda, and Rev. Mitsuru Fujimoto, spoke on the theme of "In Jesus' Name...". Even with the online format, I could sense that the participants were not only encouraged but also responded to the challenge from God in a positive way. The theme has "... " which was for participants to hear from God and respond to Him. I was especially encouraged by the way each participant expressed it in concrete words. I pray that their future steps will continue to be guided "in the name of Jesus".

In addition to the small groups, the regional networks were also able to continue to meet with the same members throughout the conference. It was a time to talk and pray about the future of the work of welcoming returnees and encouraging them, and it seems that even now that GRC21 is over, the conversation is continuing in various regions. We will continue to pray and look forward to it.

Here are some of the comments from the participants from the survey. "I was reminded of God's grace. As a believer of the TRUE God, I would like to be the fragrance of Jesus in the workplace." "I have been attending church, but I have not been able to have fellowship with others. I was given strengths from fellowship in small group and regional meeting times. Also, although I tended to focus on the hardships I faced as a returnee, I learned that there are many people who work for Japanese people and returnees, such as people who are not returnees but are there for returnees, and people who evangelize Japanese people living overseas, share their faiths, and send them to Japan. I can't express my gratitude enough for these people. I had been feeling frustrated that I could not grow as much as I wanted to because I was worried about what others thought of me, but this GRC made me want to turn to Jesus and listen to His voice, not my own or others."

The GRC21 meeting and breakout sessions can be viewed on the GRC Youtube channel. If you were not able to attend, please take this opportunity to watch the video. <https://www.youtube.com/grc-jcfn>

### ◎ Report on Inauguration Ceremony for Shiori Furuya

The inauguration ceremony for Shiori was held on April 29<sup>th</sup> online. Shiori shared her testimony of receiving callings. It was a true blessing to witness God's work in her life as we also celebrated JCFN 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Please pray and support her and JCFN. Daisuke Tsuchida continues to work in the support raise period, but we are praying that he will be able to take office during 2021. Please pray for his progress as well.

### ✿Please pray for JCFN Japan ✿

◎Please pray for the continuous God's work for each participant of GRC21.

◎Please pray for Shiori's ministry. Pray also for Daisuke for the support raise.

## ✿JCFN North America Ministry Report ✿ (Setsu Shimizu, North America Director)

It's graduation season in North America. There are many online graduation ceremonies this year as well, and every time I attend one, I feel relieved and proud that the students have continued their studies and graduated in this extraordinary situation. As I send them my heartfelt congratulations, I feel sad and empty. It goes without saying that campus life is not only about classes, but it is even more so when it comes to studying abroad.

The other day, a nurse friend of mine told me about the delayed state of medical response due to the shortage of manpower. She said that the phenomenon of nurses who have worked to the limit in the pandemic leaving their workplaces has become noticeable after more than a year. They are so exhausted that they have to leave their beloved and rewarding workplaces that they served with pride.

It will take time to vaccinate, but eventually we will be able to do many things face-to-face. In California, businesses will reopen on June 15, provided that they meet some criteria. Churches are also beginning to be able to offer face-to-face services with various measures in place. The situation is not "back to normal," but we are moving forward little by little. Let's continue to raise our hands in prayer for those who are working in the medical field, for those who lost loved ones, and for those who are in difficult financial and other situations.

Let's also pray for the new students who are going to study abroad this coming fall semester, that their visas and school procedures will go smoothly, that they will be able to enjoy "campus life" and learn well, and that they will be able to meet Jesus. Let's also pray for the international student evangelism ministry!

### ◎ Central Conference 21

By the time this letter arrives, the Central Conference may be underway. This year's theme is "My Neighbor's Kokoro ~Who is My Neighbor~". Please pray for this conference. 

(<https://sites.google.com/view/cc2021>)

You can also watch it on Youtube (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCH1R88qb5IIN52JeZwT9xTw>).

### ◎ Please pray for WIT21, leadership camp.

This year's WIT will also be held online, and we are preparing a program that can only be done online: we will have a small group of people that can fit on one screen in ZOOM, and we will use a breakout room to have time to interactively engage with the participants. This year's theme is "Come!(Unity)", which translates to "community". The importance, necessity, unity, and humility of gathering.... We hope that the leaders will learn from various angles, apply them, and pass them on to others. Please pray for us.

### ◎ C-link21 is coming up!

The program, which is usually held within GRC, mainly for clergy, lay leaders, and those who work with returnee ministry. This year, it will have a separate date this time. <https://sites.google.com/view/c-link21/home>  
Theme: "A Theological Examination of the Online Approach"

The first session on Saturday, July 10, 9am-12pm (Japan time) will be on "Online Worship".

In the second session on Saturday, July 17, 9am-12pm (Japan time), we will discuss "Online Church".

At this year's C-link21, we will have two panelists who are both a pastor and a theologian, who will examine theologically these two hot topics that are attracting attention around the world. The seminar will proceed with arguments from both sides of the debate.

Fee: One session only: \$10.00 USD, Two sessions both days: \$15.00 USD, Free for JCFN Supporting Members for 2021. You can find more at the above site. We hope to see you there!

## ✿Please pray for JCFN North America✿

◎Please pray for CC21. Pray that God will continue to encourage each participant.

◎Please pray for the WIT21 to be held on June 19 and 26. 25 people, including staff, will learn about community.

◎The JCFN Annual Board Meeting will be held online on June 21-23 (Japan: June 22-24). At the meeting, we will discuss and decide on many things concerning the future ministry of JCFN. Please pray that the Lord's wisdom will be upon each of the board members.

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B. In USA: By check: Make it payable to JCFN and mail it to the address above, P.O. Box.

C. In Japan: Postal Account: Account Name: JCFN Account No. 00100-8-565348

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