

# The Bencke Family in Japan

Volume 25, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010



Left: Pastor Dinah delivers a message at our English Service

## We're feeling hot, hot, hot



Summer is here, as evidenced by the ceaseless rain, terrible humidity, and noisy cicadas. Today, in fact is "Umi no hi" (Day of the Sea), so there's not school today. I think we're supposed to be lying on the beach somewhere, with the sound of crashing waves filling our ears. Instead, we're taking advantage of our last 'day off' to prep the house for our upcoming home assignment and pack a few suitcases. I confess that summer in Japan is my least favorite time of the year simply because it is so uncomfortable. However, life goes on and good things continue to happen, *despite* the weather, thanks be to God!

This past Sunday night, we were blessed to have Pastor Dinah, an Indonesian member of our Suidocho congregation, serve as the officiating pastor at our English service. We sang hymns that were from Indonesia, China and the Philippines, and the communion rites were offered entirely in Indonesian. It was rich, not just from an aesthetic standpoint, but also offered us a chance to re-affirm our global perspective in missions.

We are also seeing an increase in the number of youth and young adults attending the services at Murozono Lutheran Church, where we attend on Sunday mornings. I believe this is largely due to the efforts of Pastor Yuki Goto and her enthusiasm for youth evangelism.

Our part, while small, is to put together music for worship on Sundays that are designated as services that are geared toward evangelism. On these Sundays, while the liturgy is still used and remains fully intact, the music that is provided is specifically aimed to connect our younger generations to the worship experience. This means that we provide a combination of the traditional hymns that older worshippers connect with, along with shorter, more contemporary selections that offer Scriptural affirmations or personal reflections on Jesus as our Savior and Redeemer. In this way, no sector of the congregation – long-time members nor first-time seekers – are alienated by the older language of the hymns or newer genre of the music. The results we are seeing are extremely positive! Younger folks are coming back a second and third time, and members who have been members for years and years are happy to enjoy some new music and fresh faces in the congregation. Please pray for this ministry!

*We'd like to extend a message of thanks for your continued support of our ministries here in Japan. We recognize that in these turbulent economic times that supporting a ministry so far away requires a little extra leap of faith. Know that your prayers and financial support are appreciated, especially by those who have come to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Thank you for making these important ministries possible.*



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**Missionary Sponsorship**

For more information on ELCA missionary sponsorship, please contact:

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[www.elca.org/missionsponsorship](http://www.elca.org/missionsponsorship)

**Did we miss anyone?**

If you know anyone who might like to receive our newsletters, please have them send us an e-mail requesting to be added to our mailing list.

**ELCA— Global Mission**

If you are interested in learning more about the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's global mission, please visit:

[www.elca.org/globalmission](http://www.elca.org/globalmission)

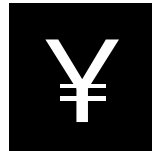
**JELC: Mission in India**

If you wish to support the efforts of the Comprehensive Rural Health Project in Jamkhed, India, please send donations to Rev. Twila Schock (address above). **Please make sure to mark donations as "Level 2 funding (JELA): Helping Children in Need."** A gift of \$25 will buy materials for an artificial leg for someone who cannot afford that expense on his/her own. We are thrilled that this past year some college students from Kumamoto went to Jamkhed as a part of the work camp! These students called the trip 'life changing.'

# Kids Corner

Thought you didn't have to think about math during the summer? Well, here's a puzzle for you. I wonder if you can help me out. Recently the Japanese yen has been "gaining strength against the dollar." Any idea what this means? Does it mean that milk seems MORE expensive, or LESS expensive, even if the price in Japanese yen stays the same?

For example, 1 liter of milk is 190 yen. In 2006, the exchange rate was 110 yen for every dollar. This week, 1 liter of milk is still 190 yen, but the exchange rate is 89 yen per dollar. Does it seem cheaper now, considering the exchange rate, or is it more expensive? Should we be finding alternative sources of calcium, or should we stock up now?



Thank you for your partnership with us as together we live out God's call to missions. Here is our summer travel schedule for visiting congregations. If your congregation isn't scheduled this year, we look forward to seeing you in 2012!

- July 26<sup>th</sup> -30<sup>th</sup> SMC/CND in Kenosha, Wisconsin
- Sun. Aug. 1<sup>st</sup> Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Wheat Ridge, CO
- Sat. Aug. 7<sup>th</sup> JOINT: LeRoy, St. John's Elkton, OSL Rochester
- Sun. Aug. 8<sup>th</sup> Faith Lutheran, Forest Lake, MN
- Sun. Aug. 8<sup>th</sup>(p.m.) North Valley Lutheran, Centuria, WI
- Wed. Aug. 11<sup>th</sup> All Saint's, Norwood, MN
- Sun. Aug. 15<sup>th</sup> First Lutheran, Bemidji, MN
- Sun. Aug. 15<sup>th</sup> (p.m.) OSL, Warren, MN
- Wed. Aug. 18<sup>th</sup> First Lutheran, Kenyon, MN
- Thurs. Aug. 19<sup>th</sup> Central Lutheran, Mondovi, WI
- Fri., Aug. 20<sup>th</sup> Menomonie Alliance Church, Menomonie, WI
- Sun. Aug. 22<sup>nd</sup> OSL, Menomonie, WI
- Sun. Aug. 29<sup>th</sup> Paynesville Lutheran, Paynesville, MN
- Mon. Aug. 30<sup>th</sup> Word of Peace, Rogers, MN
- Sun. Sept. 5<sup>th</sup> ORL, Benson, MN
- Sun. Sept. 12<sup>th</sup> Peace Lutheran, Ashby, MN
- Sun. Sept. 12<sup>th</sup> Bethel Lutheran, Herman, MN
- Wed. Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> Trinity Lutheran, Eau Claire, WI
- Sun. Sept. 19<sup>th</sup> Bethesda Lutheran, Alexandria, MN