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### A History of Missouri Synod Work in Japan

Arthur Strege

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A HISTORY OF MISSOURI SYNOD WORK  
IN JAPAN

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A Thesis Presented to the Faculty  
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,  
Department of Historical Theology  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Sacred Theology

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by

Arthur H. Strege

June 1953

Approved by:

E. C. Zimmerman  
Advisor

52857

Thos. Stoyer  
Reader

51746

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photocopy

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

A year ago the writer completed a Bachelor of Divinity thesis entitled: "A History of Missouri Synod Work Among the Japanese." That thesis gave a brief history of missionary endeavors carried on by pastors, missionaries, chaplains, teachers, and laymen of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod among people of Japanese ancestry living in the United States till 1952, among Japanese people living in China till 1950, and among Japanese people living in Japan till September, 1948. The latter date was chosen as a terminating point for the work in Japan itself because that date marks the arrival of the Rev. William J. Danker, first resident missionary of the Missouri Synod in Japan.

The present thesis is entitled: "A History of Missouri Synod Work in Japan." It gives a brief history of the work done by members of the Missouri Synod in Japan itself from September, 1948, to January, 1953. In order that this thesis might give a more complete picture, Chapter II will be devoted to an overview of the past activities of the Missouri Synod which led to the opening of the field in Japan in 1948. For a more detailed picture of those activities, the reader would do well to consult the B.D. thesis mentioned above.

This overview will be followed by a discussion of the

survey trip to Japan made by Dr. O. H. Schmidt, Executive Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, including the arrival of the Rev. William J. Danker and the beginnings of his work.

The Missouri Synod's work is taking place in three separate areas: (1) the Tokyo-Yokohama area (also known as the Kanto area); (2) the Niigata area, about three hundred miles north of Tokyo on the Sea of Japan; and (3) the Hokkaido area, the northernmost of the four main islands of Japan. Since the development of the work in each of these areas is a story in itself, each will be taken up in a separate chapter.

The Missouri Synod has already done considerable work in the field of education in Japan. It has established and maintains Sunday schools, Vacation Bible Schools, kindergartens, a high school, young people's summer camps and clubs, and leadership training institutes. All of these will be discussed in a chapter devoted to various phases of education.

The production of suitable literature in the vernacular is essential for the growth and maintenance of any church. In this field, too, the Missouri Synod mission has been active. It has concerned itself with Sunday school literature, the translation of its Synodical Catechism, Vacation Bible School materials, quite a number of tracts and pamphlets, various theological works, and the like. The extent of the work in this field will be the subject of a separate chapter.

Every year the missionaries of the Missouri Synod have held a Japan Mission Conference. Besides providing spiritual growth for the missionaries themselves, these conferences serve as the policy-setting agency for the work in Japan, subject to the approval of the parent church body through its Board of Foreign Missions. A chapter will be devoted to an overview of the discussions at these and other conferences. Certain phases of the work in Japan that are not conducted by the individual areas, but rather take in the whole field of Japan, as medical missions and the Lutheran Hour, will also be considered in this chapter.

A list of the American missionary personnel in Japan, a statistical review for 1952, an annual statistical summary, attendances at meetings, land and buildings in Japan, and a summary of expenditures by the Board of Foreign Missions for the Japan mission are given in the appendices. The latter does not include funds sent directly to Japan without passing through the office of the Board.

If some phase of the Missouri Synod's work in Japan is omitted or is incomplete, this was not done intentionally. Every effort has been made to gather complete information on every phase of activity, insofar as this was possible for one some seven thousand miles removed from the subject he is writing about. The history here given is based altogether and only on information supplied to the writer. For any omissions or failure to give due recognition as well as for possible

errors he humbly offers apologies.

Throughout the thesis the terms "Missouri Synod" and "Synod" refer to The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, and the term "the mission" is to be understood as referring to the Japan mission being sponsored by that church body.



## CHAPTER II

### OVERVIEW OF THE PAST

The Missouri Synod had its first opportunity to begin mission work in Japan sixty years ago. That opportunity came when a man named Henry Midsuno came to the United States from Japan. Midsuno decided to visit various churches in San Francisco. One Sunday he came to St. Paul's Lutheran Church. One of the elders of the congregation introduced Midsuno to the pastor, J. M. Buehler, who later instructed and confirmed him. He then prevailed on him to study for the Lutheran ministry. Midsuno attended Concordia College, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, and Concordia Seminary, Springfield, Illinois, where he was graduated in 1895. Early in 1895 his mother requested that he return home immediately because of family circumstances. Hence Midsuno made arrangements to take his final examinations early. In April, 1895, he left the United States and returned to Japan, leaving with the understanding that the Missouri Synod would later send him his call to begin work in Japan. But the call was never sent.<sup>1</sup>

In 1941, George Shibata, a young man of Japanese ances-

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<sup>1</sup>For a more detailed discussion on the life and work of Henry Midsuno, see the writer's unpublished B.D. thesis: "A History of Missouri Synod Work Among the Japanese," pp. 4-18. The thesis is in Pritzlaff Memorial Library, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.

try, enrolled at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri.<sup>2</sup> Throughout his seminary days he frequently spoke about his desire to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the people living in Japan, the land of his ancestors. Dr. Louis J. Sieck, then president of Concordia Seminary, a number of others at the seminary, and leaders in the Board of Foreign Missions of the Missouri Synod had the same thought in mind. They recognized that the Synod's second opportunity to get into Japan lay in the person of George Shibata and they were determined to take advantage of this opportunity.

During his stay at Concordia Seminary, Shibata was very active in promoting the cause of missions among people of Japanese ancestry. He made frequent trips to Minneapolis to encourage the people of Japanese descent who were in membership at St. Peter's Lutheran Church there.

Shibata was graduated from Concordia Seminary on July 13, 1945. For some time previous to this the question had been asked as to where he should be placed. Because of the war in the Pacific, the Board of Foreign Missions was in no position to call him for work in Japan. The suggestion that he work among the Japanese living in the Hawaiian Islands also posed almost insurmountable obstacles because of the war just ending. Dr. Sieck then arranged a call for him through the

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<sup>2</sup>See the writer's B.D. thesis, op. cit., pp. 41-51, for a biographical sketch of George Shibata.

Emergency Planning Council by which he was assigned to serve among the people of Japanese descent living in the Minneapolis area.<sup>3</sup> In 1946 Shibata was transferred to Seabrook Farms, New Jersey, to work among the Nisei living there temporarily.

After the close of World War II, the insistent cry continued to go up that the Missouri Synod must get to work in Japan. Especially the activity and letters of chaplains and members of the American armed forces stationed in Japan helped to create interest in Synod to undertake work there. The College of Presidents, the Board of Directors, and the Board of Foreign Missions discussed the matter and they, too, expressed their earnest desire that mission work be begun. The report of the Board of Foreign Missions given to Synod's Convention held in Chicago in 1947 stated:

The Board of Foreign Missions is endeavoring to enter Japan for the purpose of establishing mission work also in that country. It is hoped that before long a survey can be made, as a preliminary move towards work in that field.<sup>4</sup>

At this Convention Synod gave its wholehearted support to the beginning of work in Japan when it adopted a resolution encouraging the expansion of mission work in foreign fields.

The resolution reads in part:

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<sup>3</sup>The work in the Minneapolis area is discussed in detail in the writer's B.D. thesis, op. cit., pp. 29-40.

<sup>4</sup>Proceedings of the Fortieth Regular Convention of the Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, July 20-29, 1947, p. 368.

. . . Whereas, This undeserved mercy of our God should move us to profound gratitude, which should evidence itself in more fervent love and zealous devotion in spreading this Gospel of peace; and

Whereas, The Lord Himself invites us to do so by opening up doors in the Philippines, where we have already begun the work, and probably in Japan and other countries; therefore be it

Resolved, That we commend our Mission Board for its courageous efforts in sending nine men to the Philippines and that we encourage them to go forward with that same aggressive spirit wherever the Lord opens the doors for us.<sup>5</sup>

When it became evident that the Missouri Synod would be able to enter Japan in the not too distant future, the Board of Foreign Missions made definite plans to send George Shibata to Japan as soon as possible. But until he could be sent, he was enrolled in the Far Eastern and Russian Language School of the University of California. After one semester there, he was tutored by a ninety-one year old former tutor of his mother, a Mr. M. Hayakawa.

At about this same time the Board of Foreign Missions extended a call for work in Japan to the Rev. William J. Danker, of West Chicago, Illinois. Pastor Danker accepted this call, and on June 27, 1948, Dr. O. H. Schmidt commissioned him as missionary to Japan in the latter's own church in West Chicago. The Rev. Paul F. Mehl, who had just returned from an official visit to Japan in behalf of the Armed Services Commission, delivered the sermon. Pastor Danker had been in the ministry eleven years prior to accepting this call.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 358.

<sup>6</sup>"News," The Lutheran Witness, Aug. 24, 1948, p. 266.

## CHAPTER III

### BEGINNING IN JAPAN

It was not easy for the Missouri Synod to enter Japan after the close of World War II. The country was under very strict military control and it was difficult for a church body to enter which had not been working there before the war. The Missouri Synod, which had not been in Japan prior to the war, had no experience in church work there, had no property, no connections with Japan, no one who spoke the language, and no evident means of securing housing and food. The military authorities were inclined to discourage any new mission from coming in because they looked upon such as a potential liability, as another mouth to feed, another person to supply with housing and fuel, another responsibility. It was only after a good deal of negotiating that permission was secured for Dr. O. H. Schmidt, the Executive Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions, to go to Japan, and his stay was limited to the period between August 14 and October 14, 1948.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. O. H. Schmidt left Seattle by plane on August 14 and landed in Tokyo early on August 16. He was met at the airport by Chaplain and Mrs. Oscar W. Schoech, who also were his hosts during his stay in Tokyo. They, together with Chaplains Lu-

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<sup>1</sup>O. H. Schmidt, "Open Doors Overseas," 1949, p. 2.

ther G. Schliesser, William J. Reiss, and Walther Huchthausen, were of tremendous assistance to him because they knew where to go and whom to see, and they were strategically located to show him around in Japan. They offered a great deal of helpful advice. Much credit should be given to these chaplains for the major role they played in helping the Missouri Synod get its start.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Schmidt's first day in Japan was devoted to a lengthy conference with Chaplains Huchthausen and Schoech in outlining plans for the survey and in trying to establish the strategy to be followed in working in Japan. That evening they made a call to the home of Dr. Paul S. Mayer, of the Committee of Six, which had charge of post-war religious affairs in Japan. Through this visit permission was gained for the Rev. William J. Danker to come. The next morning a conference was held with a certain Dr. Bunce of the Department of Civil Information and Education, and a plan was worked out by which the status of "representative missionary" of the Missouri Synod was transferred from Dr. Schmidt to Pastor Danker. This gave Danker an opportunity to live for sixty days in an Army billet and to secure food, transportation, and other supplies from Army sources.<sup>3</sup>

After spending several days in Tokyo, holding conferences

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 3 f.

with other Lutherans, government and bank officials, and the like, as well as making a survey of possible areas for beginning work in Tokyo itself, Dr. Schmidt made a trip through northern Honshu and Hokkaido. On the way he visited Niigata with Chaplain Huchthausen, who had also investigated mission possibilities in Nagano. His itinerary after that included Sendai, Jinmachi, Yamagata, Yonezawa, Akita, Tsuruoka, Honjo, Yokote, and Aomori with Chaplain Schliesser; Sapporo, Otaru, Chitose, Josankei, Nopporo, and Asahigawa with Chaplain Reiss; and Gifu, Nagoya, Kyoto, Osaka, and Yokohama with Chaplain Huchthausen.<sup>4</sup>

Everywhere these men went they received the urgent request that missionaries be sent. Chaplain Reiss stated:

Every place we visited on Hokkaido, all whom we contacted, begged our Church to send men. The government of Hokkaido, the mayors of cities, all brought the same invitation, "Come!" "Please, come!" The Protestant ministers, the Catholic priests, asked for our help in spreading Christianity among the Japanese. There has been no indication of objections to our Church's work, either from clergymen or from the government. One mayor made the statement that if we came to his city, he would provide the ground; others said that they would help us to locate and settle in their areas. . . . I am sure Secretary Schmidt's reception is much the same throughout Japan.<sup>5</sup>

General Douglas MacArthur, then Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers, pointed out the challenge and the urgency that

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>E. H. Meinzen, "That Japan May Revive," The Lutheran Witness, Nov. 2, 1948, p. 354.

Japan presented after the war when he said to Pastor Paul F. Mehl, a member of the Board of Foreign Missions: "I wish that for every missionary you send, you would send one hundred, and for every dollar you spend, you would spend one thousand."<sup>6</sup>

Later MacArthur said:

If you agree that now is the chance to bring the Japanese people under the influence of Christian teaching, your missionary effort is on far too small a scale. You want to multiply your effort about a hundredfold. This is going to cost money. If you can get the Christian world convinced of the greatness of the call, surely there is no doubt of its rising to the height of the opportunity.<sup>7</sup>

The Rev. Kosaku Nao accompanied Dr. Schmidt during his trip on Hokkaido and interpreted for him in his meetings with the Japanese. Pastor Nao was formerly a pastor in the Japan Lutheran Church, which is affiliated with the mission of the United Lutheran Church in Japan. He is at present enrolled in the Graduate School of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri. After the conclusion of Dr. Schmidt's trip, Pastor Nao wrote a letter to Dr. Theodore Graebner, then editor of The Lutheran Witness, in which he expressed his astonishment and pleasure that the governor of Hokkaido volunteered his assistance if and when the Missouri Synod missionaries would arrive. The mayor extended "a warm and cordial invitation" through Dr. Schmidt to the missionaries from the Missouri

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<sup>6</sup>Schmidt, "Open Doors Overseas," op. cit., pp. 4 f.

<sup>7</sup>Herman H. Koppelman, "Is General MacArthur Right About Japan?" The Lutheran Witness, Nov. 6, 1949, pp. 6 f.



Synod, "urging them to visit him the minute they arrived, for he would be most happy to meet them and to assist." Pastor Nao also added his own personal request: "I personally have met so many young people who are eager to hear His Word and to enjoy Christian fellowship, I earnestly pray that you will send your missionaries to us--soon."<sup>8</sup>

As was mentioned previously, Chaplains Schoech and Huchthausen accompanied Dr. Schmidt to the conference with Dr. Bunce to make arrangements for Danker to come to Japan. Mrs. Schoech was also with them. While the men were on the sixth floor of the Radio Tokyo building in consultation with Dr. Bunce, Mrs. Schoech remained in the lobby, looking over souvenirs and silks in a gift shop belonging to Mrs. June Otsu, who understood some English. Mrs. Schoech explained to her what kind of negotiations were going on six floors above them. When Mrs. Otsu heard about it, she immediately offered the use of her house as a meeting place for the new missionary when he would arrive.<sup>9</sup>

Danker had originally planned to go with his wife and children to Berkeley, California, to study the Japanese language there. As a result of Dr. Schmidt's negotiations in Japan, Danker's military permit to enter came through very

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<sup>8</sup>Theodore Graebner, "We are Welcome in Japan," The Lutheran Witness, Feb. 22, 1949, p. 52.

<sup>9</sup>William J. Danker, "A Modern Lydia," The Lutheran Witness, Feb. 8, 1949, pp. 39 f.

suddenly and unexpectedly. So that no time would be lost, he flew alone to Japan, after only a week's notice.<sup>10</sup> He left from Chicago on the evening of September 11, 1948, and landed at the Tokyo airport early on September 14, where he was welcomed by Chaplain and Mrs. O. W. Schoech.<sup>11</sup>

The very next evening Danker, Dr. Schmidt, and Chaplain and Mrs. Schoech called on Mrs. Otsu. She was as good as her word. She invited her friends to her house for services and on the following Sunday, September 19, Danker held his first service in her home, with nine people present. Mrs. Otsu also provided an interpreter for this service.<sup>12</sup>

For six days Danker was able to confer with the mission secretary on matters relating to the establishment of the new mission field. A service was held at the GHQ Chapel Center in Tokyo<sup>13</sup> on September 19, in which Dr. Schmidt formally declared the Japan mission opened. About thirty people attended the service, most of them Lutheran civilians in Japan at the time, together with a few interested Japanese. The following day Dr. Schmidt left Japan and continued on his

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<sup>10</sup>William J. Danker, "A Hand Over My Shoulder," The Walther League Messenger, Jan., 1950, p. 17.

<sup>11</sup>O. H. Schmidt, "Pioneering in Japan," The Lutheran Witness, Nov. 30, 1948, pp. 393 f.

<sup>12</sup>Danker, "A Modern Lydia," op. cit.

<sup>13</sup>Description accompanying slide no. 15 of a set of slides completed by William J. Danker about May, 1950, a copy of which is in the visual aids library of the Foreign Missions Society, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.

journey to survey Missouri Synod mission fields in China, the Philippines, and New Guinea.<sup>14</sup>

A residence was purchased and remodeled for Danker and his family some time later. This project was financed by the Northern Illinois District of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League, a group for which Danker had served as pastoral advisor for seven years prior to his going to Japan.<sup>15</sup>

Mrs. Danker and children were not able to join Danker in Japan until February 12, 1949.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Schmidt, "Open Doors Overseas," op. cit., pp. 7-13.

<sup>15</sup>Description accompanying slide no. 87, op. cit.

<sup>16</sup>Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 37, March, 1949, p. 9.

## CHAPTER IV

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOKYO AREA

All the missionaries of the Missouri Synod to come to Japan first spent some time in the Tokyo area. That period of time varied from just a few weeks for the first missionaries to arrive to a year spent in language school by those arriving later. A complete listing of the American missionary personnel and the dates of their arrival in Japan is given in Appendix A, together with the chief station or stations they serve or served. During the time the missionaries were in the Tokyo area, most of them were active in one or several of the mission stations in that vicinity, making a complete and accurate account of the activity of each man in each station in the Kanto area (Tokyo, Yokohama, and vicinity) almost impossible. However, a brief historical sketch of the development of each station will be given instead. These stations will be considered, as far as possible, in the chronological order of their beginning.

Following his first service in Japan just five days after his arrival, Missionary Danker immediately began to take advantage of some of the opportunities that presented themselves for conducting Bible classes, either in English or through an interpreter. In a letter dated November 3, 1948, he writes: "This Friday I shall begin an English Bible Class at the Im-

perial University, No. 1 college of Tokyo's 30 to 40 schools of college level."<sup>1</sup>

Danker was not to remain the only Missouri Synod missionary in Japan for long. Shortly after his arrival, the Nationalist Government in China began to crumble before the Communist armies as they surged forward. The American Consul gave notice advising all American citizens in Central China to leave the country. Each successive notice became more urgent. On November 16, 1948, the Missouri Synod missionaries in Hankow gathered to discuss possible means of scattering their personnel, so that only a few families would be at any one station in case that station should be taken by the Communists. The missionaries considered it best that those families with very small children and those who had just begun language study should be moved to places of relative safety. The first plan was to send three missionary families to Manila, but the following day a cable came from the Board of Foreign Missions in St. Louis, requesting that two of the families be evacuated to Japan instead. Several days later the American Consul announced a deadline after which the United States would not be responsible for evacuating personnel from Central China. Until that time, however, the American Army would fly the missionaries out free of charge. On November 26, Missionaries LeRoy Hass and Richard Meyer and their families, together with

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<sup>1</sup>Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 36, Dec. 15, 1948, p. 6.

about twenty other missionaries, boarded a giant Army cargo plane and were soon in Shanghai.<sup>2</sup>

Here there was another period of waiting until the written permit to enter Japan would come through. Danker was trying to get these permits for them. He was able to give recognized assurances for the physical support of the new missionaries. He had also been able to rent a house temporarily in devastated Tokyo, on the strength of which he had applied for a military permit for his family. But because this permit was held up for several months, he had room to receive these waiting missionaries from China.<sup>3</sup>

The missionaries in Shanghai had already made alternate bookings to the Philippines when through a series of unusual coincidences they discovered that their permits to enter Japan were already in the hands of the Consulate General in Shanghai. Ordinarily such a permit required several months, but these had come through in less than two weeks. Since the Meyers were expecting their first child to be born soon, they flew to Tokyo, landing there on December 10, 1948. Missionaries LeRoy Hass and Ralph Egolf and their families left Shanghai at the same time on a Navy Destroyer which was pressed into service to evacuate Americans.<sup>4</sup> They arrived

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<sup>2</sup>Letter from Richard Meyer to A. M. Kuehnert, dated April 23, 1949.

<sup>3</sup>William J. Danker, "A Hand Over My Shoulder," The Walther League Messenger, Jan., 1950, pp. 28. 30.

<sup>4</sup>Meyer, op. cit.

in Yokohama on December 18. These missionaries were able to locate other housing by the time Mrs. Danker and family arrived. Thus because of this situation in China it became possible to add workers immediately in the Japanese field far beyond what would have been possible in the normal course of events.

In September, 1949, the two nurses, Miss Norma Lenschow and Miss Adelheid Mueller, who had been working with the Missouri Synod's mission in China, were also evacuated to Japan.<sup>5</sup> Each of them conducted Bible classes, gave health lectures, organized and promoted the activities of the Lutheran Medical Association in Japan, and carried on other work in the Kanto area. In May, 1952, Miss Lenschow was transferred to Sapporo, Hokkaido.<sup>6</sup>

The first Christmas service by Missouri Synod missionaries in Japan was conducted by Danker and Meyer in Mrs. June Otsu's home, with twenty-five in attendance. Up to this time Mrs. Otsu had paid all the expenses for the services held in her house--electricity, fuel, hymnals, Bibles, etc. She wanted to begin holding collections each Sunday at the service to start a fund to buy a lot and build a church. She did not want a church built with American money.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>William J. Danker, Letter dated Jan. 6, 1950, The Badger Lutheran, March 30, 1950, p. 7.

<sup>6</sup>Norma Lenschow, Missionary's Report, May, 1952.

<sup>7</sup>William J. Danker, "Christmas in Japan," The Lutheran Witness, Feb. 22, 1949, p. 59.

The opening of the first Sunday school of the mission took place largely through the efforts of a Japanese boy named Johnny Hasegawa, who first served as houseboy and interpreter for Danker. He took great interest in the efforts of Danker and Meyer to begin a Sunday school. They had been looking for a meeting place for some time to which they could transfer the meetings held in Mrs. Otsu's house. One day Hasegawa came home very excited, having found a privately conducted kindergarten room which could be rented on Sundays. He immediately had one of his friends paint four posters concerning the Sunday school that was to be organized. On Saturday morning Meyer accompanied him as he pinned them up on four prominent spots. The fact that he was accompanied by an American caused curiosity to be aroused. At each place they soon had a small group gathered around them, watching and reading. That was the extent of the publicity for the Sunday school. The next day, February 6, 1949, over seventy children were present for its opening.<sup>8</sup> On the following Sunday, one hundred two were present. By the last Sunday of the month attendance had increased to one hundred fifty.<sup>9</sup> The two teachers for this Sunday school were Johnny Hasegawa and Miss Haruko Morishita.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Letter from Richard Meyer to A. M. Kuehnert, dated Feb. 14, 1949.

<sup>9</sup>Herman H. Koppelman, "Anfaenge in Japan," Der Lutheraner, June 20, 1949, p. 211.

<sup>10</sup>Meyer, op. cit., Feb. 14, 1949.



As soon as possible the missionaries began to extend their efforts into the neighboring city, Yokohama. By April, 1949, Meyer reported that he was teaching a Bible class on two afternoons each week for the students in a commercial college in that city.<sup>11</sup>

Missionary Ralph Egolf arrived in Japan on December 18, 1948, following an offer by the United States Navy to evacuate him from Shanghai, as was mentioned earlier. But he had no military permit to enter Japan. Thus he had only thirty days to find himself a place or he would have to return to the United States. By intercession of the chaplains, he managed to remain there until early in February, 1949, when he secured a position as teacher of the social sciences in the American high school at Yokohama. This gave him a position with the Occupation forces and made it possible for him to stay. Mrs. Egolf also secured work so that she could remain there. He continued as teacher at the American school until August 31, when he accepted the call to Japan which the Board of Foreign Missions had extended to him a month earlier.<sup>12</sup> Even while teaching, he had openings for preaching the Word. At Easter, April 17, 1949, he preached to a gathering of about two hundred. His wife was also active in bringing the essential

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., April 23, 1949.

<sup>12</sup>Personal note from Herman H. Koppelman to the writer, dated March 25, 1953.

doctrines of Christianity to Japanese women.<sup>13</sup>

Before proceeding further, it should be mentioned that most of the missionaries' wives have also been active in conducting Bible classes or Sunday schools.

A modest room which served as a chapel was dedicated in Yokohama on Pentecost, June 5, 1949.<sup>14</sup> The first membership class was received there on June 25, 1950.<sup>15</sup> After the arrival of the six vicars sent out from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, in August, 1951, Vicar Dean Lueking was assigned to the Yokohama area. His reports indicate that he conducted a good many Bible classes, including some among people living in houseboats.

At the time when the missionaries began their activity, the opportunities and challenges they faced were literally unlimited. A letter to the Board of Foreign Missions signed by Chaplains Walther Huchthausen, William J. Reiss, and Oscar W. Schoech, and by Missionaries Danker, Meyer, and Shibata states:

In one small service on Palm Sunday, ten out of twelve young people present confess Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. -- A Sunday School is opened on the first Sunday in February and by the second Sunday the missionary is already swamped with more than one hundred chil-

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<sup>13</sup>Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 38, n.d., p. 8.

<sup>14</sup>H. W. Gockel, "Pentecost--in Yokohama," The Lutheran Witness, Aug. 23, 1949, p. 274.

<sup>15</sup>"Significant Dates in 1950," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 45, March, 1951, p. 15.

dren. -- A missionary's wife organizes a Bible class. The very first time 99 young people come, after being strictly told not to enroll at all unless they intend to come regularly. -- All this and much more in eight months from the time when your first lone missionary left Chicago, in a time when missionaries have had to spend the bulk of their time looking for housing and studying the language. This is only a part time harvest. . . . General Douglas MacArthur . . . terms it "an opportunity without parallel since the birth of Christ."<sup>16</sup>

Miss Adelheid Mueller gave the following report about a month after her arrival in Japan:

Never in the history of Christian Missions has there been such a unique challenge presented to the Church. Who would ever have dreamed that in the very same country in which only a few years ago Christianity was waging a life and death struggle for its very existence, it would today be "the thing to do" to study Christianity? Much as we hate wars, it is nevertheless very obvious that the Lord used the last war with Japan as an instrument to destroy many of the false hopes and beliefs upon which the Japanese people had been taught to rely. There seems to be a soul hunger among them, and many apparently sense that Christianity has something to offer them to satisfy that hunger. No, there is no mass movement toward Christianity, but the people are in a receptive mood. Now is the time for the Church to get busy! If we don't grasp the opportunity now while American influence is making it possible and easy for missionaries to come in to Japan, the opportunity may escape us. Most of our missionaries are finding it impossible to do justice to all the opportunities which arise. It is something like one of them said the other day: "Mission opportunities don't merely come your way in Japan, they literally explode in your face!"<sup>17</sup>

A number of men and women who were with the American Occupation forces in Japan readily volunteered their free time to assist the missionaries in meeting the tremendous opportu-

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<sup>16</sup>Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 38, op. cit., pp. 13 f.

<sup>17</sup>Mimeographed letter from Adelheid Mueller, dated Oct. 21, 1949.

nities that Japan presented. Mrs. Charlotte Polk of Decatur, Illinois, had been conducting a class for nurses and doctors already before Danker arrived. Captain William Seeber of Jefferson City, Missouri, taught a group of about twenty students at Zenring Commercial College in Yokohama. Mr. Gilbert Sieving of Ft. Wayne, Indiana, conducted Bible classes at two places.<sup>18</sup> Others who gave freely of their time and effort to the infant mission include: Miss Lorraine Yelden of Des Moines, Iowa; a Mr. Nixon of Washington, D.C.; Lt. Col. Erwin Jones; Sgt. and Mrs. Nick Sembra (on Hokkaido);<sup>19</sup> W. O. and Mrs. Lester Grau;<sup>20</sup> and Mrs. Eleanor Heinecke.<sup>21</sup>

The first anniversary of Danker's first Bible class (held in June Otsu's house) was observed on Sunday, October 16, 1949. The service was held in the rented kindergarten building, mentioned above. The group gave the missionary a vase upon which had been painted in Japanese his name, the occasion, and Christ's Great Commission.<sup>22</sup>

Christmas, 1949, was the scene of a good deal of activity in the Kanto area. It began on December 18 when the Sunday

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<sup>18</sup>"Lutheran Missions in Japan," pamphlet issued by The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, n.d., p. 5.

<sup>19</sup>Danker, "A Hand Over My Shoulder," op. cit., p. 31.

<sup>20</sup>Richard Meyer, Missionary's Report, Nov., 1950.

<sup>21</sup>Adelheid Mueller, Missionary's Report, April, 1951.

<sup>22</sup>Herman H. Koppelman, "First Anniversary of Our Work in Japan," The Lutheran Witness, Nov. 29, 1949, p. 394.

school at Totsuka, under Missionary Meyer's supervision, presented the mission's first children's Christmas service. About two hundred fifty children took part in the program, complete with songs, recitations, and costumed tableaux of the nativity. On December 23 a Christmas celebration was held in a Japanese home where Mrs. Danker regularly conducted a Bible class. All the arrangements were made by the daughter of the family, and the service included a Japanese-made slide film on the life of Christ. The following evening seventy-two people came to the Danker home for the Christmas celebration held by the Bible class that was regularly meeting there. Each one received some used clothing which friends in America had sent and a gift of candy. On Christmas Day more than two hundred fifty children in the Tokyo Sunday school presented a service under the direction of Shibata. At this presentation there were nearly four hundred people in attendance, crowded into a room measuring about thirty by thirty feet. This gives an indication of how desperately the mission was in need of chapels. On Christmas Eve, Missionary and Mrs. Egolf chartered a bus to take their group caroling. The young people sang on the streets and distributed handbills announcing their Christmas morning service. Captain and Mrs. William Seeber contributed wonderful gifts at this time in the form of six hundred pairs of socks for the Sunday school children and a slide projector for the use of the mission in

showing Bible stories.<sup>23</sup>

On Sunday, January 29, 1950, five persons were baptized and two others were confirmed in Tokyo. One of those confirmed was Mr. Frank Shibata, president of the New Empire Motor Company, the Ford agency of Tokyo. The rite was performed by his son, Missionary George Shibata.<sup>24</sup>

Another member of this class was Miss Haruko Morishita. Danker first met her at the home of Mrs. Otsu. Miss Morishita immediately began to serve as an interpreter for the missionary.<sup>25</sup> From February to June, 1950, she served as his full time secretary and interpreter. Out of 6,700 entrants, she was one of one hundred forty-two young people who successfully passed an examination given by the American Government through the Institute of International Education and was awarded a scholarship to the University of Cincinnati for one year.<sup>26</sup> After a year there, she enrolled in September, 1951, for one year at Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana,<sup>27</sup> an in-

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<sup>23</sup>William J. Danker, Letter dated Jan. 6, 1950, The Badger Lutheran, April 13, 1950, pp. 4 f.

<sup>24</sup>"Japan," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 41, March 15, 1950, pp. 2 f.

<sup>25</sup>William J. Danker, "Japan's Women Want Jesus," Lutheran Woman's Quarterly, Oct., 1949, p. 3.

<sup>26</sup>Harriet L. Ilse, "Meet Haruko Morishita," The Walther League Messenger, Jan., 1951, p. 8.

<sup>27</sup>"Miss Morishita to Valparaiso," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 47, Sept., 1951, p. 6.

stitution maintained by an association composed of members of the Synodical Conference. Upon her return to Japan in the summer of 1952, she took a position assisting Missionary E. J. Bergt in developing youth activities at the Tokyo Lutheran Center.<sup>28</sup> -- Other exchange students who were members of the mission include Mr. Koji Ikeda and Mr. Miura, members of Izumi Lutheran Church, Yokohama,<sup>29</sup> and Mr. Motohashi, from Tokyo.<sup>30</sup>

The first meeting of "Occupationaires" and missionaries in the Kanto area, called "Lutheran Fellowship," was held on May 21, 1950. Besides the Christian fellowship enjoyed by those who attended the meeting, it gave the missionaries an opportunity to present a picture of the work being carried on in Japan to the American personnel present.<sup>31</sup> This monthly meeting has continued to the present time.

#### Meguro, Tokyo

Danker started a Sunday school and Bible class in Meguro, Tokyo. Shibata took over the Meguro field after his arrival in Japan on April 29, 1949. He began Sunday services, organ-

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<sup>28</sup>William J. Danker, "Japan News Letter," Oct. 8, 1952, p. 11.

<sup>29</sup>"Guests from Okinawa and Japan at California Chapel," The Lutheran Witness, Oct. 2, 1951, p. 332.

<sup>30</sup>"Miss Morishita to Valparaiso," op. cit.

<sup>31</sup>William J. Danker, Missionary's Report, May, 1950.

ized the Sunday school, and trained teachers for it.<sup>32</sup> On June 25, 1950, ground was broken for the first chapel to be erected by the Missouri Synod in Japan. Shibata presided at the ground-breaking ceremony. The first shovel was turned by Danker, the second by Mr. Frank Shibata.<sup>33</sup> A special gift of \$5,000 from a consecrated Christian lady who wanted to do something for Japan assisted greatly in covering the \$10,000 cost of the structure. Memorial funds in honor of Mrs. O. H. Schmidt, the wife of the Executive Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions, who had passed away shortly before, were used to equip the chancel of the Meguro chapel.<sup>34</sup> The building, named "Martin Luther Chapel," was dedicated on Sunday, November 19, 1950, at 3 p.m. Four hundred children were in Sunday school that morning. In the afternoon dedication service, four hundred six were in attendance. The "Lutheran Fellowship" had a committee carrying on a fund raising campaign for the new chapel, under the chairmanship of Mr. R. Dixon, an American. That evening he was able to offer the new chapel fund a gift of three hundred dollars.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Letter from George Shibata to the writer, dated Dec. 11, 1951.

<sup>33</sup>"Forward in Our Overseas Missions," The Lutheran Witness, Aug. 8, 1950, p. 246.

<sup>34</sup>"First Chapels for Japan," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 42, July 31, 1950, p. 3.

<sup>35</sup>"Japan," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 44, Dec. 31, 1950, pp. 8 f.



The erection of this prominently located chapel in Meguro greatly increased opportunities to bring the Gospel to the people in that area. Before the chapel had been erected, Shibata gathered people as he met them on the streets, in shops, and in business contacts. At one time he had more people coming to services from outside of Meguro than from Meguro. After the building of the chapel, more people from the surrounding area began attending.<sup>36</sup>

In August, 1951, Shibata received the assistance of Vicar William Lange of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

In 1952 the baptized members of Martin Luther Church resolved to organize themselves into a congregation and drew up a constitution. They requested that they might become formally affiliated with the Nippon Luteru Kyodan and The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod.<sup>37</sup> The Fourth Annual Convention of the Japan Mission Conference, held in Tokyo, July 1-4, 1952, resolved that its Executive Committee study the Constitution of Martin Luther Church and make suggestions for revision or improvement where necessary.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Shibata, op. cit.

<sup>37</sup> A Memorial to this effect appears in "Reports and Memorials of the Japan Conference of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod," Fourth Annual Conference, June 30-July 4, 1952, p. 60. The Constitution of Martin Luther Church is given in the same book, pp. 61-65.

<sup>38</sup> "Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Convention of the Japan Mission Conference of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod," July 1-4, 1952, p. 39.

## Azabu, Tokyo

About two years after Danker's arrival, a surplus Army prefabricated building was erected in Azabu, Tokyo, at a cost of less than \$1,600, to serve as a chapel for the mission in that part of Tokyo. The cost of the chapel was covered by a special gift from the Minnesota District Lutheran Women's Missionary League.<sup>39</sup> The first service was held in the chapel on November 12, 1950, with fifty in attendance.<sup>40</sup> The group decided to name it "Seisen Lutheran Church." There happens to be a spring on the property on which the chapel stands and "Seisen" means "sacred spring" or "fountain."<sup>41</sup>

In January, 1951, Vicar Lester Hall of Concordia Seminary, Springfield, Illinois, began assisting with the work at Seisen Lutheran Church and in other stations in the Kanto area.

## Kugenuma

The work in Kugenuma had an interesting beginning. Through a Dr. Chapman, a member of General MacArthur's staff, Meyer and Danker were introduced to a Japanese man named Mr.

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<sup>39</sup>"Japan," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 43, Sept. 30, 1950, pp. 5 f.

<sup>40</sup>J. Theodore Mueller, "Nachrichten aus unsern auslaendischen Missionsfeldern," Der Lutheraner, Feb. 13, 1951, p. 55.

<sup>41</sup>Description accompanying slide no. 73 of a set of slides completed by William J. Danker about April, 1951, a copy of which is in the visual aids library of the Foreign Missions Society, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.

Kato. They held their initial interview with him on December 18, 1948.<sup>42</sup> Mr. Kato wanted the missionaries to begin Christian work in his home town, Kugenuma, and offered the use of his house for such purposes. Kugenuma before World War II was a beach summer resort, where some of the most influential people in Japan had their summer homes. But since many of these people lost their homes in the city because of bombings or their being taken over by the Occupation forces, they were then living in Kugenuma all year. No Christian work of any kind was being done there, except for a small "Sunday school" run by volunteer Christians. Mr. Kato is a graduate of Harvard University. At the time of this initial interview a Mr. Ohnuma was also present. He had formerly served in the Japanese Consulate General in New York City. These men stated that they did not want education. They had that. They wanted to know more about Christianity. They wanted to have the missionary living among them so that they could see how he raised his family and trained his children. He was to establish a spiritual center for the whole community.<sup>43</sup>

Meyer held his first class in Kugenuma on January 9, 1949, for which Mr. Kato had gathered together six or seven men. By the last Sunday of that month attendance had in-

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<sup>42</sup>William J. Danker, "Wanted--Christianity," The Mission Call, Jan., 1949, p. 5.

<sup>43</sup>Letter from Mrs. Richard Meyer to A. M. Kuehnert, dated Jan. 1, 1949.

creased to fifteen.<sup>44</sup>

Meyer's Easter service in Kugenuma on April 17, 1949, was conducted in the garden of the home of Mr. Kato. About thirty-eight people were present. After the service they kept the missionary there for almost two hours, asking question after question. Meyer states: "Almost all of the adults stayed, asking, listening, searching, until I finally had to break away in order to catch the last train back to Tokyo."<sup>45</sup>

The first people to be baptized in Kugenuma consisted of six men, whose baptism took place on January 6, 1950.<sup>46</sup>

On Easter Sunday, April 9, 1950, Meyer and his interpreter, Mr. Imanari, were driving along the beach at Enoshima, near Kugenuma. They noticed that a stage had been built there by the local "Chamber of Commerce" to draw sightseers during the cherry blossom season. Microphones which had been put up for the occasion were live, since a program was to begin shortly. Meyer and his interpreter asked for permission to use the loud speakers for ten minutes and permission was granted. The missionaries took advantage of this opportunity to tell those on the beach that they, too, had a living Lord.<sup>47</sup> They

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<sup>44</sup>Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 37, March, 1949, pp. 6 f.

<sup>45</sup>Meyer, op. cit., April 23, 1949.

<sup>46</sup>"Significant Dates in 1950," op. cit.

<sup>47</sup>"Beach Preaching at Enoshima," The Lutheran Witness, Nov. 14, 1950, p. 367.

received permission to return on the following two Sundays. The stage and loud speaker were again available on the second Sunday. On those two Sundays the missionaries spoke to estimated crowds of 2,000 and 1,500 respectively. On the third Sunday the loud speaker was not available, but they attracted as many as possible by using a flannelgraph, and in that way reached about one hundred children and about two hundred adults. Some 4,000 tracts were distributed on these three Sundays.<sup>48</sup> Some of the baptized members of the Kugenuma group were present for the second and third Sundays to sell Bibles, answer questions, and take down names and addresses. As a result, at least one person came to the Totsuka Bible class and afterwards joined the membership class.<sup>49</sup>

Meyer had a somewhat similar experience in May, 1951. At that time he was able to use Shibata's public address equipment on three afternoons, and spoke eight times to groups numbering from fifty to two hundred. Once at Enoshima Beach there were about five hundred present. He also distributed some 2,000 tracts and Gospel papers.<sup>50</sup>

Ground was broken for a chapel at Kugenuma on September 10, 1950.<sup>51</sup> The building of this chapel was a lesson in

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<sup>48</sup>Richard Meyer, Missionary's Report, April, 1950.

<sup>49</sup>"Beach Preaching at Enoshima," op. cit.

<sup>50</sup>Richard Meyer, Missionary's Report, May, 1951.

<sup>51</sup>Richard Meyer, Missionary's Report, Aug., 1950.

cooperation and charity. A United States layman donated \$1,000, the landlord donated \$1,000 worth of ground, the architect donated his services, the lumberman sold the lumber at cost, and the people of the area raised \$1,000. The remainder was paid by loans.<sup>52</sup> Thus the local group at Kugenuma took a large share of the financial responsibility upon themselves. The chapel, named Megumi (Grace) Lutheran Church, was dedicated on December 17, 1950.<sup>53</sup>

In August, 1951, Vicar Donald Becker of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, arrived to assist Meyer in the Kugenuma-Totsuka field.

A kindergarten was begun in Kugenuma in April, 1951, with an opening enrollment of thirty-four.<sup>54</sup> This is discussed more fully in Chapter VII.

#### Totsuka

The work in Totsuka began through the voluntary efforts of Johnny Hasegawa, who, under the guidance and supervision of Danker, opened a Sunday school in his own home in Totsuka. The Sunday school held its first session on Pentecost, June 5, 1949. This was the second Sunday school begun by the mission. At first there were about eighty children in attendance. Soon

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<sup>52</sup>"Here and There," The Mission Call, V, No. 10-11, 13.

<sup>53</sup>"Significant Dates in 1950," op. cit.

<sup>54</sup>Norma Lenschow, Missionary's Report, April, 1951.

there were two hundred attending regularly.<sup>55</sup> In October, 1949, the supervision of the Totsuka Sunday school was placed into the hands of Meyer. At that time Danker reported that there was no Christian Church in Totsuka, with its 20,000 inhabitants.<sup>56</sup>

The Sunday school was conducted on the upper levels more like a Christian day school. The room was equipped with benches, desks, and a notebook for each pupil.<sup>57</sup> The pupils themselves paid the rent for the building they were using out of their Sunday offerings.<sup>58</sup>

In November, 1949, Missionary and Mrs. Meyer started a Sunday school in the living room of their home. At Christmas, 1949, one hundred twenty-five children came to this Sunday school. Over three hundred fifty children attended the Sunday school Christmas service at Totsuka.<sup>59</sup>

Shibata shared the teaching of Bible classes at Totsuka with Meyer until June, 1950, at which time the Totsuka field was turned over completely to Meyer.

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<sup>55</sup>William J. Danker, "Gute Nachrichten aus Japan," Der Lutheraner, March 28, 1950, p. 99.

<sup>56</sup>William J. Danker, Missionary's Report, Sept., 1949.

<sup>57</sup>Description accompanying slide no. 129 of a set of slides completed by William J. Danker about May, 1950, a copy of which is in the visual aids library of the Foreign Missions Society, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., slide no. 128.

<sup>59</sup>Letter from Mrs. Richard Meyer to A. M. Kuehnert, dated Jan. 5, 1950.

A building was purchased and remodeled for school and church at a cost of \$6,000.<sup>60</sup> It was named the Totsuka Christian Center and was dedicated on November 26, 1950.<sup>61</sup> The building also housed the kindergarten opened there on September 8, 1950, with an enrollment of about sixty, and was used for the sessions of the "Saturday Seminary." These two subjects will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter VII.

The first baptisms at Totsuka took place on November 5, 1950, when seventeen persons were brought into the Church.<sup>62</sup>

Meyer and Becker also began to spread into other areas. One such effort was in Fujisawa, where Vicar Becker started a Bible class in the Soko English Institute in September, 1951. The average attendance at first was about thirty.<sup>63</sup> In his Missionary's Report for December, 1952, Becker indicates that the attendance was averaging about ten at each session. Work was also begun in Yamato. By the end of 1952, there were twenty enrolled in the Sunday school and twenty-three in the Bible class.

#### Ikegami

In her Missionary's Report for September, 1949, Mrs.

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<sup>60</sup>"Japan," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 43, Sept. 30, 1950, p. 6.

<sup>61</sup>"Significant Dates in 1950," op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

<sup>63</sup>Donald Becker, Missionary's Report, Sept., 1951.



Danker reported that she had started a women's group some time previously in Omori, a part of Tokyo. But by September, 1949, men were also attending. In June, 1950, Mrs. Danker added a Sunday school to her activities there. The group became known as the Ikegami mission. The work at Ikegami was turned over to Vicar Lester Hall from January, 1951, until June, 1952. From then until the latter part of September, 1952, Vicar William Lange was in charge. The Ikegami mission was then turned over to Missionary Delmar Glock.

The first baptisms at Ikegami consisted of two adults and three children, who were baptized in April, 1952.<sup>64</sup>

#### Atsugi

In looking through the Missionaries' Reports, one notices that there are a number of instances in which a Bible class was begun, flourished for a time, and then had to be discontinued for lack of interest and attendance. One such example was at Atsugi. Atsugi is about an hour's ride from Tokyo. The lead to begin work here came as a result of an address by Danker delivered before the conference of Women's Club Presidents of Kanagawa Prefecture at Yokohama in the fall of 1949. Eighteen were present at the first meeting and forty at the second.<sup>65</sup> Later Miss Adelheid Mueller took over the Bible

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<sup>64</sup>Delmar Glock, "Statistics Requested by Home Office for the Year 1952," p. 3.

<sup>65</sup>William J. Danker, Missionary's Report, Feb., 1950.

class. On February 4, 1951, Mr. Imanari began worship services for this group, in addition to the Bible class.<sup>66</sup> Supervision of the group was taken over by Missionary Glock on May 13, 1951.<sup>67</sup> But interest waned, and at the Executive Committee meeting in March, 1952, Danker reported that the work at Atsugi had been closed in the interest of good stewardship of manpower and resources.<sup>68</sup>

#### Hanno

Mr. Gilbert Sieving, a layman from Ft. Wayne, Indiana, was already in Japan when the first missionaries arrived. He began teaching a Bible class in Hanno, one and one-half hours by train from Tokyo. This beginning led to the acquisition of a high school in Hanno by the mission.<sup>69</sup> This high school will be discussed in Chapter VII. Mr. Sieving also gathered the funds to purchase a modest church building in Hanno.

In November, 1949, Missionary Paul Kreyling made the trip to Hanno with Mr. Sieving. He began work there on December 4, 1949.<sup>70</sup> Since that time he has expanded the work to include a number of Bible classes, Sunday schools, and

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<sup>66</sup> Adelheid Mueller, Missionary's Report, Feb., 1951.

<sup>67</sup> Adelheid Mueller, Missionary's Report, May, 1951.

<sup>68</sup> "Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting," March 7, 1952, p. 7.

<sup>69</sup> Danker, "Japan News Letter," *op. cit.*, p. 10.

<sup>70</sup> Paul Kreyling, Missionary's Report, Nov., 1949.

worship services. But his chief duty has remained the supervision of the high school.

#### Urawa

The activity in Urawa began with an address to the Urawa Mothers' Club by Danker in April, 1950. Fifty were in attendance. His Missionary's Report for that month has the notation: "This group desires a Christian day school." The following month he had a class with the Urawa Mothers' Club and a high school Bible class. The work at Urawa was turned over to Kreyling in July, 1950. Missionary Max Zschiegner took over at Urawa on April 26, 1952.<sup>71</sup> More will be stated concerning the proposed Christian day school at Urawa in Chapter VII.

#### Itabashi

Mission work in Itabashi, a section of Tokyo, began when a Mr. Nanri, who had been baptized by Missionary Hass in Sapporo, moved to Tokyo with his family. He was not able to attend services in Meguro regularly because of the distance involved. Shibata then began a Bible class in the home of Mr. Nanri's neighbor, Mr. and Mrs. Wada, in May, 1950. Sunday school and services had to be postponed because of the limitations of Shibata's time. Missionary Ralph Bringewatt took

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<sup>71</sup>Max Zschiegner, Missionary's Report, April, 1952.

over the Itabashi field in April, 1951. In June, 1951, he began a Sunday school with the help of Mr. H. Yabe, a member of the Meguro Church. This Sunday school had to meet in the streets because the owner of the only building available in that locality would not consent to the children being brought into her building. She would permit the service and Bible class to be held there. Other members of the Meguro Church also assisted at Itabashi.<sup>72</sup>

Missionary Milton Popp took over the work at Itabashi in July, 1951, when Bringewatt was transferred to Niigata. Popp's Missionary's Report for October, 1951, stated that the Sunday school had to be dropped two Sundays because of heavy rain, since they were still obliged to meet outdoors. He summarized his feelings with the words: "Tragic: S.S. postponed because of rain!"

Missionary Paul Heerboth took over all meetings and responsibility at Itabashi on September 21, 1952, when Popp was transferred to Shibata, a city in Niigata Prefecture. Concerning the Itabashi Sunday school, Heerboth's report for September, 1952, states: "Meet in Mr. Nanri's yard under the trees, God's own beautiful church roof." His December, 1952, report states:

In midst of coldest winter  
 We still must meet outdoors,  
 But even so the Newborn Babe  
 Hath where to lay His Head--  
 In the hearts of little children.

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<sup>72</sup> Shibata, op. cit.

## Ofuna

After turning over Totsuka to Meyer, Shibata moved on to the next town, Ofuna, and began a Bible class there.<sup>73</sup> His first meeting was held on June 12, 1950. Over one hundred twenty were present for this session. The missionaries had been turning down requests to begin here for three months before they were finally able to accept the invitation.<sup>74</sup> A Sunday school was started with the help of Mr. Y. Imanari, Mr. J. K. Hasegawa, and Mrs. Ohta.<sup>75</sup> Part of the work at Ofuna was turned over to Vicar Dean Lueking in September, 1951.

In June, 1952, almost twenty people from Ofuna were baptized. At that time Lueking was being assisted by Mr. Imanari, a student at the Tokyo Bible Institute. The group in Ofuna also raised a considerable portion of the cost of building a chapel.<sup>76</sup> Financially and otherwise the Bible class of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Kansas City, Missouri, is aiding the Ofuna group.

## Tokyo Lutheran Center

In 1950 the mission was looking for a building which

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<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>"From the Tokyo Area," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 42, July 31, 1950, p. 2.

<sup>75</sup>Shibata, op. cit.

<sup>76</sup>Danker, "Japan News Letter," op. cit., p. 3.

they might purchase to use as their headquarters and perhaps as a future seminary. It came to their attention that the Protestant Union Theological Seminary (Kyodan, or United Church of Japan) was interested in selling a building in the heart of Tokyo so that they might relocate on the outskirts of the city where they would have more room. This building seemed ideal for the present and future needs of the mission. First payments on the building were made on September 15, 1950. It came into the possession of the Missouri Synod about April 1, 1951.<sup>77</sup> This structure, named Tokyo Lutheran Center, is located only a short distance from the Imperial Palace grounds in the heart of Tokyo. It was purchased at the bargain price of slightly more than \$76,000. An additional \$25,000 was spent to install a central heating system and to renovate the building completely. The structure itself, only fifteen years old, was built of reinforced concrete, with steel window frames and sashes.<sup>78</sup> Its four stories provide adequate space for classrooms, student dormitory facilities, a beautiful chapel seating two hundred, offices for the chairman, business manager, literature secretary, members of the seminary faculty, the Lutheran Hour, and for other purposes. Upon arrival in Japan, missionaries have also found temporary residential quarters here.

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<sup>77</sup>"Japan," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 44, Dec. 31, 1950, p. 9.

<sup>78</sup>Mimeographed letter from Max Zschiegner, dated Sept. 4, 1951.

The Lutheran Women's Missionary League at its convention in Cleveland on July 27 and 28, 1949, adopted as one of its projects for the following two years the erection of a student center at the Imperial University in Tokyo, at a cost of \$35,000.<sup>79</sup> This amount was contributed by the League for the purchase of the Tokyo Lutheran Center. In addition, Gamma Delta, an organization of Missouri Synod college and university students, raised in excess of \$5,000 for furnishings for the Tokyo Lutheran Center. Such items as Japanese hymnals, an organ, visual aids equipment, and books for the library were among the items included as furnishings for the Center.<sup>80</sup> Gamma Delta dedicated this mission project to the memory of its co-founder and honorary member, Dr. Walter A. Maier.<sup>81</sup>

The Tokyo Lutheran Center was dedicated on September 9, 1951, with about three hundred thirty people present. Dr. Eugene Bertermann, director of radio with the International Lutheran Hour, was guest speaker. General Matthew B. Ridgway sent Chaplain Ivan L. Bennett, Chief of Army Chaplains in the Far East, as his personal representative. Chaplain Bennett conveyed the greetings and congratulations of the Supreme Commander. He called attention to the happy coinci-

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<sup>79</sup>"Here and There," The Mission Call, Aug., 1949, p. 2.

<sup>80</sup>Lester G. Weber, "The Gamma Delta Tokyo Student Center Project," The Walther League Messenger, Jan., 1951, p. 45.

<sup>81</sup>"Gamma Delta to Equip Tokyo Student Center," The Lutheran Witness, Aug. 8, 1950, p. 253.

dence by which the dedication was taking place on the very day of the signing of the Japanese peace treaty. In the dedication service, the hymns were sung simultaneously in Japanese and English. Mr. Itagaki, a faithful member of the mission in Sapporo, Hokkaido, spoke in the name of all the Japanese members. Captain William Seeber spoke as chairman of the Kanto "Lutheran Fellowship." Dr. Knudten of the United Lutheran Church spoke on behalf of the other Lutheran groups in Japan. A number of congregations sent floral gifts and greetings.<sup>82</sup>

Missionary E. J. Bergt was put in charge of activities at the Tokyo Lutheran Center. A mission station was opened there on October 7, 1951. By the end of 1952, this station had twenty-one communicants and thirteen voting members.<sup>83</sup> Bergt also did a good deal of work with the American armed forces personnel in Tokyo before the arrival of the Rev. Edwin Sohn, the service pastor for the Tokyo area.

#### Johnson Air Base

According to the Missionaries' Reports, work was started at Johnson Air Base in March, 1951, with Shibata conducting two meetings and Zschiegner one during the month. After that

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<sup>82</sup>William J. Danker, "Missionaries' Memorandum," n.d., p. 1.

<sup>83</sup>The only other stations with voting members at the end of 1952 were: Meguro, 14; Ofuna, 10; and Yokohama, 20.



time all the Johnson Air Base activities are given on Zschiegner's reports. He reported that the opportunity to begin work among the 6,000 Japanese personnel at this American installation was made possible through a Missouri Synod chaplain.<sup>84</sup> Zschiegner continued to serve this group. But as time went on, more and more of the Japanese employees were being released. Finally on October 19, 1952, the Sunday afternoon Bible class and services were discontinued in the interest of good stewardship of time. The three adults baptized and one confirmed at the air base on that date became communicant members of the nearest mission, Hanno. They were still able to attend a Bible class conducted at the air base by a Missouri Synod chaplain stationed there.<sup>85</sup>

#### Omiya

After spending a year in language study in Tokyo, Zschiegner, who is the eldest son of the late Missionary Max Zschiegner of China, moved to Omiya in April, 1952. He took over the work in Urawa, five miles from Omiya, and some of the work in Omiya itself, thus enabling Kreyling to devote more time to the Hanno High School and the Hanno chapel.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>84</sup>Mimeographed letter from Max Zschiegner, dated April 2, 1951.

<sup>85</sup>Max Zschiegner, Missionary's Report, Oct., 1952.

<sup>86</sup>William J. Danker, "Missionaries' Memorandum," April 17, 1952, p. 3.

The first mention of any meetings in Omiya appears on a Missionary's Report for April, 1952, by Takeo Suzuki as reported by Zschiegner.

Since the mission had no building of any kind in Omiya except the house in which the missionary lived, Mrs. Kreyling offered the use of their living room for beginning the first Bible class there. The meeting time was set for 7:30 p.m. on May 15, 1952. The missionaries felt they would be fortunate if fifteen or twenty would attend. But at starting time they found eighty people crowded into the living-dining room of their home. Only about twenty of these were middle school pupils and children, the rest being adults.<sup>87</sup>

#### Talent Festival

The first Talent Festival was held at the Tokyo Lutheran Center on May 3, 1952, with about two hundred in attendance. A wide variety of talent was displayed, both in musical numbers and in so-called silent entries. Musical numbers included the playing of both the Western cello and the Japanese koto and flute. Silent entries included such things as Japanese doll making, flower arranging, and calligraphy. It is planned to make this Talent Festival an annual event.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>87</sup>"Max Zschiegner Starts a Bible Class," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 50, June, 1952, p. 2.

<sup>88</sup>Danker, "Japan News Letter," op. cit., p. 1.

## Koppelman's Survey Trip

The Rev. Herman H. Koppelman, Assistant Executive Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions, made a survey trip to the Missouri Synod's Asiatic fields in the latter part of 1951 and first part of 1952. He arrived in Japan on May 31, 1952, in the course of his year-long trip. His schedule took him into the home of every missionary, into every chapel, and into most of the Bible classes in places where the mission does not yet have a chapel.<sup>89</sup> He was also present for the Fourth Annual Japan Mission Conference. During his stay in Japan he made a five-day trip to Korea, where the Missouri Synod is considering opening a mission. Military permission for this trip, which was made in July, was secured through Chaplain James Wilson, Far East Chief of Army Chaplains, and especially through the good work of Chaplain John Gaertner, a Missouri Synod chaplain. Secretary Koppelman left for the United States on July 27 from Haneda Airport, Tokyo.<sup>90</sup>

## Church Workers' Conference

On September 23, 1952, fifty representatives from about ten of the churches in the Kanto area met at Tokyo Lutheran Center for the mission's first Church Workers' Conference.

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<sup>89</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

The theme for the conference was: "Building a Stronger Church." This was broken down into three discussions: (1) Through organization; (2) Through stewardship; (3) Through mission outreach. These three sections were led by Shibata, Meyer, and Danker, respectively.<sup>91</sup>

Concerning this conference, Danker writes:

We were glad to see the way in which the Japanese who took part in the discussion faced up to their responsibilities as Christians and church members and we believe this bodes well for the future. They are looking forward to the time when they themselves will be able to look after their own affairs and when Japanese pastors will be trained to man their churches. We are all looking forward to and praying for that day.<sup>92</sup>

The same thoughts were expressed in the Executive Committee meeting held in October, 1952. The committee emphasized that the missionaries must faithfully continue to apply themselves to the training of their members so that they will be firmly grounded spiritually and sufficiently self-supporting economically when the time comes for a formal organization of a Japan Lutheran Church.<sup>93</sup>

To summarize briefly, at the close of 1952 the following personnel were stationed in the Kanto area: Missionaries Bergt, Danker, Egolf, Epp, Glock, Heerboth, Kreyling, Meyer, Neujahr,

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<sup>91</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>93</sup>"Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting," Oct. 1-2, 1952, p. 24.

Shibata, Tewes, Theiss, and Zschiegner; Miss Mueller; and Vicars Becker, Lange, and Lueking. Work was being done in thirteen stations, with Azabu, Kugenuma, Meguro, Ofuna, Iidabashi (Tokyo Lutheran Center), Totsuka, and Yokohama as the chief centers. These stations are listed in Appendix B. The area had a total of three hundred sixty-five baptized souls, two hundred eighty-seven communicants, and fifty-seven voting members.

## CHAPTER V

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE NIIGATA AREA

#### Niigata

The city of Niigata lies about three hundred miles north of Tokyo on the Japan Sea, the west coast of Japan. It is a city of some 200,000 inhabitants, located in a prefecture of 2,000,000. In the early part of 1950 there was only one Protestant missionary in the entire prefecture, and he was in the southern corner.<sup>1</sup>

Missionary Danker made a trip to Niigata in October, 1949, to find housing for two missionaries allocated to that city. He left Tokyo on October 13, arrived in Niigata the following day, and returned to Tokyo on October 16. On the train shortly before his arrival in Niigata, Danker met a middle-aged lady who invited him to have breakfast with her at the Occupation billet in the Niitsu House, the mansion of a former oil king. She was Mrs. Fannie Mayer, head of the Education Section of the Niigata Civil Affairs Team, herself the daughter of former missionaries to Japan. She made arrangements for Danker to stay at the Niitsu House at her expense while he was in Niigata. She placed at his disposal

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<sup>1</sup>William J. Danker, Letter dated Jan. 6, 1950, The Badger Lutheran, April 13, 1950, pp. 4 f.

her assistant, a Japanese man who was an excellent interpreter. This man made arrangements at Danker's request for interviews with the governor and the mayor of Niigata. The mayor sent his own automobile for them and in the interview assured them of his utmost cooperation in finding housing for the missionaries the Missouri Synod intended to send. The governor of Niigata assured Danker that he would urge the mayor to help him with the housing problem. The mayor then offered Danker two small houses for rental for not more than six months, during which time the mission could build missionaries' residences.<sup>2</sup>

By one o'clock of Danker's first day in Niigata he had already met two former members of the United Lutheran Church who were to become the first members of the Missouri Synod mission in Niigata. Mrs. Mayer contacted these people and asked them to visit Danker at the Niitsu House. They were Professor and Mrs. Tasaka.<sup>3</sup>

Mrs. Tasaka was educated at Wilson College, a United Lutheran Church institution at Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. She spoke excellent English and was thus very valuable to the new mission. Mr. Tasaka was a professor at the Prefectural University in Niigata in the School of Education. During World War II he was imprisoned by the Japanese gov-

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<sup>2</sup>Letter from William J. Danker to the Board of Foreign Missions, dated Oct. 17, 1949.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

ernment for six months for his Christian stand in a contribution by him to the United Lutheran Church's Sunday School Teachers' Quarterly. Since there was no Lutheran Church in Niigata prior to the opening of the mission there, the Tasakas had been attending the Presbyterian Church and teaching Sunday school and Bible class there. They were very happy when they learned that soon there would be a Lutheran missionary in their midst.<sup>4</sup> Prof. Tasaka had become a Christian very early in life through attending a kindergarten conducted by the United Lutheran Church. He and his wife were pillars of strength to the mission in Niigata during the first eighteen months of its existence. After that time he was transferred to Tokyo where he taught in another college.<sup>5</sup>

Within a month after Danker's visit to Niigata, Prof. Tasaka came to Tokyo for a professors' conference. At that time he also visited with Danker. He related more of his prison experience during the war. He said to Danker: "During the war we were told to follow the voice of a man--Tojo. Today again many are telling us to follow the voice of a man--Stalin. It is time that we follow the voice of God." Prof. Tasaka stated the same thing in an address to the conference

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Description accompanying slide no. 63 of a set of slides completed by William J. Danker about April, 1951, a copy of which is in the visual aids library of the Foreign Missions Society, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.



of college professors that he was attending at that time.<sup>6</sup>

In November, 1949, Missionary Roy Suelflow and his family were unexpectedly transferred from China to Japan. They arrived in Tokyo from Hong Kong on November 16, 1949. Danker and Suelflow immediately made plans for another visit to Niigata. They arrived there by train at 6 a.m. on November 20, and were met at the station by Prof. and Mrs. Tasaka. In the meantime the Tasakas had located a house which the mission could rent for the missionaries for one year, with the option of purchasing it.<sup>7</sup> Dr. Suelflow and his family went to Niigata on December 1 as the first resident missionary in this new station.<sup>8</sup>

Since the Tasakas found housing suitable for the missionaries, the mission did not rent the houses the mayor had reserved for them, because they were very small. However, through this contact, they learned that the mayor's daughter had been suffering from tuberculosis for five years and was in need of streptomycin, which they were able to secure for her through Miss Adelheid Mueller, a registered nurse.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Letter from William J. Danker to the Board of Foreign Missions, dated Nov. 22, 1949.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>William J. Danker, Letter dated Jan. 6, 1950, The Badger Lutheran, March 30, 1950, p. 7.

<sup>9</sup>William J. Danker, Letter dated Jan. 6, 1950, The Badger Lutheran, April 13, 1950, pp. 4 f.

On December 17, 1949, Missionary Victor Zwintscher and family arrived in Tokyo. Zwintscher had originally been called to China, but because of the situation there, was re-allocated to Japan. He had been studying Japanese in California for about eight months before he came to Japan. By Christmas, 1949, he and his family joined the Suelflows as missionaries in Niigata.<sup>10</sup>

Only seven persons were present at the first meeting conducted in Niigata in December, 1949. But by the next month the group had grown in size to thirty-six. Their Sunday school room was soon filled to overflowing.<sup>11</sup> Included in the group of worshippers in the infant days of the mission were five university professors and the wives of three of them, all of whom attended services regularly.<sup>12</sup>

Dr. O. H. Schmidt, Executive Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions, arrived in Japan on February 17, 1950, on a tour of the Asiatic mission fields of the Missouri Synod.<sup>13</sup> In March, 1950, he accompanied Danker to Niigata, where they purchased a house for the mission.<sup>14</sup> This building served as

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<sup>10</sup>William J. Danker, Letter dated Jan. 6, 1950, The Badger Lutheran, March 30, 1950, p. 7.

<sup>11</sup>William J. Danker, "Gute Nachrichten aus Japan," Der Lutheraner, March 28, 1950, p. 100.

<sup>12</sup>"Japanese University Professors at Worship," The Lutheran Witness, Sept. 19, 1950, p. 301.

<sup>13</sup>"Travels," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 41, March 15, 1950, p. 9.

<sup>14</sup>William J. Danker, Missionary's Report, March, 1950.

a missionaries' residence as well as a meeting place for Sunday school, Bible classes, and church services.

The first baptism in Niigata took place on April 9, 1950, and the first group of five individuals was baptized on December 24, 1950. The first communion service for Japanese was on December 31, 1950.<sup>15</sup>

Suelflow and Zwintscher conducted a number of evangelistic gatherings in the city and prefecture of Niigata during the months of April and May, 1951. Danker obtained the Moody Bible Institute's color film entitled "God of Creation" with Japanese sound.<sup>16</sup> At each place a sermon was delivered together with the showing of the film. During April, 1951, about 13,300 attended twelve showings,<sup>17</sup> and the following month about 10,000 attended nine showings.<sup>18</sup> At the Japan Mission Conference held in July, 1951, Suelflow and Zwintscher emphasized that these mass meetings helped much to identify the missionaries in the villages. Zwintscher stressed the value of summer outdoor meetings for getting people to gather who would otherwise be hesitant to attend. It was pointed out that a follow-up system would be necessary to gain some

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<sup>15</sup>"Significant Dates in 1950," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 45, March, 1951, pp. 15 f.

<sup>16</sup>Roy A. Suelflow, "Our Foot is In," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 46, June, 1951, p. 6.

<sup>17</sup>Roy A. Suelflow, Missionary's Report, April, 1951.

<sup>18</sup>Victor Zwintscher, Missionary's Report, May, 1951.

of the souls contacted in such mass meetings. Literature was suggested as a necessary part of such a follow-up plan.<sup>19</sup>

During the month of July, Suelflow and family moved to Tokyo, and Ralph Bringewatt and family moved to Niigata to replace the Suelflows. Suelflow took charge of the missionaries' Japanese language school and taught in the Tokyo Bible Institute until he left Japan on May 5, 1952, to accept a call to Formosa.

As soon as possible, the mission established in the city of Niigata began to spread to other points in Niigata Prefecture. Each of the stations entered will be considered in the order in which they were begun.

#### Shirone

In January, 1950, Zwintscher held his first meeting in Shirone, a city of about 20,000. Nineteen attended this first meeting. Two years later, in January, 1952, Zwintscher reported concerning the Shirone Sunday school: "In the absence of a meeting place the children gather on the street at an appointed time each Sunday to receive the weekly leaflet."<sup>20</sup> This situation was remedied with the dedication of a chapel on June 22, 1952. The sermon on dedication day was preached by Bringewatt. Among the honored guests on this occasion was

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<sup>19</sup>"Minutes of Japan Mission Conference," July 10-13, 1951, p. 16, par. 131.

<sup>20</sup>Victor Zwintscher, Missionary's Report, Jan., 1952.

the Rev. Herman H. Koppelman, Assistant Executive Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions. He addressed the congregation after the close of the service.<sup>21</sup>

On December 31, 1952, the group at Shirone consisted of twelve baptized members and five communicants. There were seven in membership classes. Enrollment in the Sunday school was sixty-five and in the Bible class thirteen.<sup>22</sup>

### Shibata

The first Bible class in Shibata, a city of 35,500, was conducted by Zwintscher on June 29, 1950. Thirty attended that meeting.<sup>23</sup> The work in Shibata was taken over by Vicar Clifford Brege, of Concordia Seminary, Springfield, Illinois, in January, 1951.<sup>24</sup> Missionary Milton Popp and family moved to Shibata in October, 1952, to take over the work there.<sup>25</sup>

During 1952 the first four individuals were baptized by the mission in Shibata. At the end of 1952 there were six enrolled in membership classes. The Bible class had an enrollment of eighteen. A residence was built during the year.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Victor Zwintscher, "Statistics Requested by Home Office for the Year 1952," p. 3.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., pp. 1 f.

<sup>23</sup>Victor Zwintscher, Missionary's Report, June, 1950.

<sup>24</sup>Clifford Brege, Missionary's Report, Jan., 1951.

<sup>25</sup>Milton Popp, Missionary's Report, Oct., 1952.

<sup>26</sup>Clifford Brege, "Statistics Requested by Home Office for the Year 1952," pp. 1 f.

## Kamo

Suelflow conducted the first Bible class in Kamo, a city of 30,000, in June, 1950.<sup>27</sup> The meeting place for this Bible class was secured by a doctor who was head of the Department of Ophthalmology at Niigata Medical College.<sup>28</sup> In January, 1951, the work at Kamo was turned over to Vicar Richard Poetter, of Concordia Seminary, Springfield.<sup>29</sup> While Secretary Koppelman was in Japan during June, 1952, a building at Kamo was purchased which served both as a chapel and as living quarters for Poetter. Poetter received permission earlier from the Board of Foreign Missions and from Concordia Seminary, Springfield, to finish his final year of study by correspondence and to remain in Japan as a regular full-term missionary.<sup>30</sup> He moved to Kamo on December 1, 1952, thus becoming the first American or European to establish residence in Kamo.<sup>31</sup>

At the close of 1952 the group consisted of fifteen baptized members, eleven communicants, and seven enrolled in

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<sup>27</sup>Roy A. Suelflow, Missionary's Report, June, 1950.

<sup>28</sup>Roy A. Suelflow, "From Niigata," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 42, July 31, 1950, p. 3.

<sup>29</sup>Richard Poetter, Missionary's Report, Jan., 1951.

<sup>30</sup>William J. Danker, "Japan News Letter," Oct. 8, 1952, p. 3.

<sup>31</sup>Richard Poetter, "Statistics Requested by Home Office for the Year 1952," p. 3.

membership classes. The Sunday school had seventy-five pupils and there were twenty-five enrolled in the Bible class.<sup>32</sup>

#### Nagaoka

Suelflow assisted Poetter in getting started in Nagaoka, a city of some 75,000, in March, 1951. Poetter was then put in charge. The average attendance for the first four meetings was twenty-one.<sup>33</sup> Attendance there suffered at first because of the necessity of moving the meeting place a number of times.<sup>34</sup> The work in Nagaoka was transferred from Poetter to Vicar Arbie Patschke, of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in September, 1951.<sup>35</sup> At the close of 1952, twelve were enrolled in membership classes. The combined enrollment in two Bible classes was forty-five.<sup>36</sup>

#### Niitsu

Suelflow assisted Brege in getting started in Niitsu, a city of some 38,000, located about twelve miles from Niigata. The first meetings were held there in March, 1951.<sup>37</sup> The

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid., pp. 1 f.

<sup>33</sup>Roy A. Suelflow, Missionary's Report, March, 1951.

<sup>34</sup>Suelflow, "Our Foot is In," op. cit.

<sup>35</sup>Arbie Patschke, Missionary's Report, Sept., 1951.

<sup>36</sup>Arbie Patschke, "Statistics Requested by Home Office for the Year 1952," pp. 1 f.

<sup>37</sup>Roy A. Suelflow, Missionary's Report, March, 1951.

group first met in a large room in the house of a prominent citizen, who himself seemed quite interested. Though the man charged a comparatively high rent, the mission benefited from the owner's good name among his townsmen.<sup>38</sup> At the close of 1952 there were seven enrolled in membership classes. The Sunday school had an enrollment of seventy and the Bible class an enrollment of twelve.<sup>39</sup>

### Sanjo

The first mention of a Bible class at Sanjo appears on Suelflow's Missionary's Report for June, 1950. This report records three Wednesday evening Bible class meetings during the month. At this time Suelflow reported to the Board of Foreign Missions that a medical interne who attended services in Niigata had found a meeting place in the largest hotel in Sanjo which the mission could use free of charge. A doctor who attended services in Niigata heard about it, and volunteered to take care of all the publicity for the project, to the extent of going personally to Sanjo to see that posters were put up beforehand.<sup>40</sup>

But no further mention is made of the Bible class at Sanjo until April, 1951, when it appears on Poetter's Mission-

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<sup>38</sup>Suelflow, "Our Foot is In," op. cit.

<sup>39</sup>Brege, "Statistics," op. cit.

<sup>40</sup>Suelflow, "From Niigata," op. cit.



ary's Report. Since there is an urgent appeal for more missionaries attached to Suelflow's Report for June, 1950, the Bible class at Sanjo apparently had to be discontinued for ten months because of manpower shortage.

Suelflow assisted Poetter in getting started in Sanjo in April, 1951. The work there was turned over to Patschke in January, 1952.<sup>41</sup> At the close of 1952, there were eight enrolled in membership classes at Sanjo and the Bible class had an enrollment of eleven.<sup>42</sup>

#### Haniuda

Poetter began a Bible class in Haniuda in June, 1951. The average attendance was seventy-six for the first five meetings.<sup>43</sup> But, as was usually the case in Japan, later on the numbers dwindled considerably. At the end of 1952, the group at Haniuda consisted of three baptized members, three communicants, and six enrolled in membership classes. The Bible class had a membership of fifteen.<sup>44</sup>

#### Kuzuzuka

Brege conducted the first Bible class at Kuzuzuka, a

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<sup>41</sup>Arbie Patschke, Missionary's Report, Jan., 1952.

<sup>42</sup>Patschke, "Statistics," op. cit.

<sup>43</sup>Richard Poetter, Missionary's Report, June, 1951.

<sup>44</sup>Poetter, "Statistics," op. cit., pp. 1 f.

city about midway between Niigata and Shibata, on October 27, 1951. Ten attended the first meeting. In the beginning, meetings were held in a doctor's residence. But, since the doctor also held an important political office, many of the ordinary townsmen hesitated to come to his residence. Hence a different meeting place was being sought.<sup>45</sup> At the close of 1952, one person was enrolled in a membership class and sixteen were enrolled in the Bible class.<sup>46</sup>

#### Nuttari

Patschke began a Bible class at Nuttari in November, 1951. The average attendance for the first three meetings was twelve.<sup>47</sup> By the close of 1952, the membership in this Bible class had dropped to five.<sup>48</sup>

To summarize briefly, at the close of 1952 the following personnel were stationed in the Niigata area: Missionaries Bringewatt, Popp, and Zwintscher, and Vicars Brege, Patschke, and Poetter. Work was being done in ten stations, with Kamo, Niigata, and Shirone as the chief centers. These stations are listed in Appendix B. The area had a total of fifty baptized souls and thirty-five communicants.

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<sup>45</sup> Clifford Brege, Missionary's Report, Oct., 1951.

<sup>46</sup> Brege, "Statistics," op. cit.

<sup>47</sup> Arbie Patschke, Missionary's Report, Nov., 1951.

<sup>48</sup> Patschke, "Statistics," op. cit.

## CHAPTER VI

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE HOKKAIDO AREA

#### Sapporo

Chaplain William J. Reiss of the Missouri Synod was stationed for some time in Sapporo, Hokkaido, Japan, with the Occupation forces after World War II. Besides his duties with the military, he organized a class of thirty Japanese whom he was teaching the fundamentals of Christianity, preparing them for baptism and confirmation.<sup>1</sup> Then word came to Chaplain Reiss that he was to be transferred to Tokyo. The Missouri Synod mission sent Missionary LeRoy Hass and his family to Sapporo in February, 1949, to carry on the work begun by Chaplain Reiss. Hass arrived in time so that Reiss could introduce him to the work and turn it over to him. Since the Army was short of chaplains at that time, Hass was also given permission to conduct the services in a station hospital which had been in charge of Reiss.<sup>2</sup>

Besides carrying on the work Reiss had started, Hass soon began a number of other mission activities. On June 2, 1949, he opened a Bible school. His Missionary's Report for the

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<sup>1</sup>William J. Danker, "Wanted--Christianity," The Mission Call, Jan., 1949, pp. 5 f.

<sup>2</sup>Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 37, March, 1949, pp. 6 f.

following month indicates that he was conducting a Bible class and making calls at Misumai Tuberculosis Hospital. Six Bible classes were meeting weekly in Sapporo, most of them with an average attendance of twenty or more. One of these was conducted by Mrs. Hass. The first session of the Sunday school met on July 24 with fourteen present.

Missionaries Paul Heerboth and Paul Strege and their families arrived in Tokyo on July 31, 1949, and were allocated to Sapporo. On August 18, 1949, they boarded a train in Tokyo and arrived in Sapporo about two days later.<sup>3</sup>

In a letter dated September 7, 1949, Missionary Danker reported that Hass was starting a Sunday school in his own home. Several Sundays later he had eighty-two children gathered in his living room.<sup>4</sup>

The first baptism service on Hokkaido was conducted at Sapporo on December 25, 1949, with a class of seven adults. All three Hokkaido missionaries, Hass, Heerboth, and Strege, officiated in the service, and a group of fifty Japanese crowded into two small rooms in the residence of Hass, which was being used for church services.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Mimeographed letter from Paul Strege, dated Sept. 20, 1949, pp. 6 f.

<sup>4</sup>William J. Danker, "Japan," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 39, Sept. 30, 1949, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>Mimeographed letter from Paul Strege, dated Feb. 1, 1950, p. 4.

On January 8, 1950, the Rev. Kosaku Nao began conducting a church service in Japanese for the mission.<sup>6</sup> Nao had formerly been a pastor of the Japan Lutheran Church. At this time he was employed by the Occupation forces as an interpreter and advisor to the Post Chaplain at Camp Crawford, near Sapporo.<sup>7</sup> Nao had become acquainted with the Missouri Synod through Chaplain Reiss, who also baptized his three children.

In 1950 the Japanese National Police Reserves came to Camp Crawford. Nao conducted a Japanese service for several hundred of them every Sunday afternoon. From this group, Nao instructed and baptized one hundred two within one year.<sup>8</sup>

The second baptismal class of four, also at Sapporo, was baptized on Easter Sunday, April 9, 1950, by Strege.<sup>9</sup> The first communion service for the Japanese in Sapporo was held on October 1, 1950, with eight members attending.<sup>10</sup>

On October 31, 1950, Mrs. Strege organized a women's Bible class in the home of Mrs. Kanamitsu, who was a graduate of Kobe Women's College, spoke very good English, and served as Mrs. Strege's interpreter and language teacher. This was

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<sup>6</sup> LeRoy Hass, Missionary's Report, Jan., 1950.

<sup>7</sup> Strege, op. cit., Feb. 1, 1950, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> Personal interview of Kosaku Nao by the writer on Oct. 29, 1952.

<sup>9</sup> Letter from Paul Strege to the writer, dated April 10, 1950.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., dated Oct. 2, 1950.

the first class in Hokkaido conducted definitely for those beyond the age of university students. However, a few adult individuals had been attending some of the other Bible classes conducted in Sapporo.<sup>11</sup>

Christmas, 1950, in Sapporo centered around the three Sunday school children's services. Two of these services were held in a small gymnasium in one of the primary schools in Sapporo. A large box of snow was packed around the base of the Christmas tree to hold it up. In spite of the fact that the room had two stoves, the temperature did not rise much, so that not a bit of the snow melted throughout the afternoon and evening programs. -- Three more individuals were baptized in the Christmas service on December 24.<sup>12</sup>

On December 31, 1950, Vicar Elwood Fromm, of Concordia Seminary, Springfield, Illinois, arrived in Sapporo.<sup>13</sup> His activities in Sapporo, Asahigawa, and Otaru were of great assistance to the infant mission on Hokkaido.

After meeting in the home of Hass for quite some time, the mission used a room on the second floor of the Sapporo office of the Mainichi newspaper for its classes and services. Towards the end of 1950, land was purchased in two sections of Sapporo, one adjoining the residence of Hass, and the other

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., dated Oct. 23, 1950.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., dated Dec. 26, 1950.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., dated Jan. 1, 1951.

near the residences of Heerboth and Strege. During the early months of 1951 a former Army barracks was erected on each of these lots, which then served as chapels.<sup>14</sup> The chapel near the home of Hass was dedicated on March 25, 1951.<sup>15</sup> It was known as the Yamahana chapel and was later named Immanuel Lutheran Church. The dedicatory service for the chapel in the area where Strege and Heerboth lived (they were frequently called "Streboth," since both they and their wives had been so closely associated for a number of years) took place on April 1, 1951.<sup>16</sup> It was known as the Maruyama chapel and was later named Grace Lutheran Church.

With the use of the two new chapels, attendance immediately increased in all the classes and services conducted in Sapporo. Shortly after dedication of the Maruyama chapel, two hundred twenty-three children attended Sunday school one Sunday. The chapel was so crowded that one of the teachers had seventy-seven children on straw mats nine by nine feet in size. After this it became necessary to split the Sunday school and have it meet in two sections.<sup>17</sup>

The months of July and August, 1951, were particularly

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<sup>14</sup>Mimeographed letter from Paul Strege, dated Jan. 15, 1951.

<sup>15</sup>Letter from Paul Strege to the writer, dated March 11, 1951.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., dated April 2, 1951.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., dated April 16, 1951.

noteworthy because of the changes in mission personnel that took place in the Hokkaido field. Heerboth and family were transferred from Sapporo to Tokyo. Since Heerboth was chairman of the Literature Committee, this transfer was necessary to facilitate the literature work. They left Sapporo on July 2.<sup>18</sup> On July 17, Missionary Hugh Auw and family arrived from Tokyo to replace the Heerboth.<sup>19</sup> At the end of July, Nao and his family left Sapporo for Tokyo and the United States, arriving in the States on September 3, 1951.<sup>20</sup> Another addition to the missionary personnel in Sapporo came on August 17, with the arrival of Vicars Roy Schroeder and Robert Wennerstrom, both of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.<sup>21</sup>

Missionary Richard Hintz began work in Sapporo in January, 1952.<sup>22</sup> He was allocated to organize and maintain the activities at the Sapporo Youth Center, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Miss Norma Lenschow arrived in Sapporo on May 12, 1952.<sup>23</sup> She took over some of the Bible classes formerly conducted

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., dated July 3, 1951.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., dated July 23, 1951.

<sup>20</sup> Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 47, Sept., 1951, p. 6.

<sup>21</sup> Letter from Paul Strege to the writer, dated Aug. 21, 1951.

<sup>22</sup> Richard Hintz, Missionary's Report, Jan., 1952.

<sup>23</sup> LeRoy Hass, "Statistics Requested by Home Office for 1952," p. 3.



by Vicar Elwood Fromm when he returned to the United States in July, 1952. Auw took over all the work Fromm had been doing in Otaru at that time.

On August 26, 1952, Hass conducted his first meeting in the small town of Tomari.<sup>24</sup> More than one hundred children were present.<sup>25</sup>

Activities in the Sapporo area included work done at Misumai Sanatorium, mentioned above, by Hass and Schroeder and at Teinekozan Sanatorium by Fromm and Miss Lenschow.

#### Sapporo Youth Center

The Sapporo Youth Center is a project worthy of special consideration. Its history goes back to the International Walther League Convention held in Houston, Texas, in 1949. At this convention it was resolved to raise \$10,000 for Japanese mission work. At that time there was a great deal of interest among the youth of the Missouri Synod in mission activities in Japan. Various missionaries wrote to Walther League headquarters in Chicago that their efforts on Hokkaido would be greatly advanced through the erection of a youth center at the University of Hokkaido in Sapporo. This challenge was accepted.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> LeRoy Hass, Missionary's Report, Aug., 1952.

<sup>26</sup> "\$20,000 Gift," The Walther League Messenger, July, 1951, pp. 29 f.

Ash Wednesday, February 22, 1950, marked the beginning of the Walther League's annual mission project. Their goal was to raise \$10,000 during Lent, 1950, for the establishment of the Sapporo Youth Center.<sup>27</sup> The call went out to the Walther League societies to help stimulate interest in the mission in Japan and at the same time to demonstrate that interest by the gathering of funds. To create enthusiasm for this project, societies were encouraged to arrange a "Night in Japan" program. At these meetings, pictures on Japan were shown, members sometimes wore Japanese costumes, former soldiers who had been stationed in Japan gave brief talks on their impressions of the country, members often played Japanese games, and frequently ended their "Night in Japan" with Japanese style refreshments.<sup>28</sup>

General Douglas MacArthur, then Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers, wrote the Walther League:

I am greatly interested to learn of a plan for the construction of a Christian center that will open its doors to all students of one of the great universities of Japan. . . . It is extremely important that the youth of Japan be given strong spiritual guidance during the present day period when so many different ideologies are competing for their allegiance. . . . I deeply appreciate your interest and I am confident that you will be richly rewarded for your efforts.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>"Program," The Walther League Messenger, Feb., 1950, p. 39.

<sup>28</sup>"\$20,000 Gift," op. cit.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

An anonymous donor, who had been a consecrated leader in the Walther League about twenty-five years previous, contributed \$5,000 for the project.<sup>30</sup> This gift together with the great enthusiasm manifested by Walther Leaguers all over the United States and Canada resulted in a total contribution of \$20,000. The Walther League presented a check for that amount to the Missouri Synod. Dr. O. H. Schmidt received the gift on behalf of the Synod.<sup>31</sup>

Meanwhile things were also happening in Japan. After searching for a suitable piece of property for months, the missionaries in Sapporo finally located a lot that would be ideal. The property was located in downtown Sapporo, on the main parkway through the center of town, only a block from the main streetcar lines, a few blocks from the large stores, and a few blocks from the Prefectural and City government offices. The property itself cost about \$10,000.<sup>32</sup> The mission came into legal ownership of this land in the last few days of 1950.<sup>33</sup>

The ground-breaking service for the Sapporo Youth Center took place on August 7, 1951. The first spade full of ground

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<sup>30</sup> O. H. Theiss, "\$5,000 Gift for Sapporo," The Walther League Messenger, April, 1950, p. 38.

<sup>31</sup> "\$20,000 Gift," op. cit.

<sup>32</sup> Letter from Paul Strege to the writer, dated Nov. 12, 1950.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., dated Jan. 1, 1951.

was turned by Mr. Itagaki, the faithful worker in Sapporo who had been serving as interpreter for all the missionaries besides doing many things by himself. Each of the missionaries and a soldier from Cape Girardeau, Missouri, the latter having participated in the drive for funds by the Walther League the previous year, then turned a spade full of soil.<sup>34</sup>

Because of high building costs, only one floor and the missionary's residence of the proposed two-story structure could be completed at first.<sup>35</sup> Dedication of this part of the Youth Center took place on June 15, 1952. About one hundred thirty people were present. Pastor Herman H. Koppelman, Assistant Executive Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions, had the sermon and the dedication in the name of the Board of Foreign Missions.<sup>36</sup>

A further allocation of \$15,000 by the Board of Foreign Missions made possible the completion of the Center by the addition of a second story, which was to provide space for a chapel. Dedication of this second floor took place on November 31, 1952.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., dated Aug. 12, 1951.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., dated Aug. 6, 1951.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., dated June 16, 1952.

<sup>37</sup>Richard Hintz, "Statistics Requested by Home Office for 1952," p. 3.

## Asahigawa

The second major field on Hokkaido is the city of Asahigawa, located about one hundred miles northeast of Sapporo. Missionaries Strege and Danker made a survey trip to Asahigawa in August, 1949. Strege began work there on the weekend of September 17 and 18, 1949. His attendances were eighteen and twenty-one in two meetings held that weekend.<sup>38</sup> Strege made the trip to Asahigawa every other weekend, conducting Bible classes on Saturday evening and Sunday morning.

Christmas, 1950, was observed on the weekend of December 17. After the close of the usual classes, the Japanese asked many questions, including the following: "How could the almighty Jesus be murdered so cruelly?" "Why do you call God 'love'?" "What do you mean by 'Amen' and 'Our God' when you pray?" "Is it wrong for the government to execute people?" Mrs. Strege, who also made the trip that weekend, was asked about various Christmas customs in America.<sup>39</sup>

The arrival of Vicar Elwood Fromm in Sapporo in January, 1951, made it possible to serve Asahigawa every weekend. Strege and Fromm alternated in making the trip. They began regular Sunday worship services there on January 21.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>Mimeographed letter from Paul Strege, dated Sept. 20, 1949, p. 8.

<sup>39</sup>Letter from Paul Strege to the writer, dated Dec. 18, 1950.

<sup>40</sup>Paul Strege, Missionary's Report, Jan., 1951.

The first persons to be baptized in Asahigawa were two girls who received that rite on Easter Sunday, March 25, 1951. A third person, Mrs. Arai, who has faithfully served as interpreter in Asahigawa from the beginning of work there up to the present time, was received into membership with the church by profession of faith. Forty-four were present for the service that morning, which followed a Bible class attended by fifty-eight.<sup>41</sup> The first communion service for these three members was held on April 8, 1951.<sup>42</sup>

Land for the erection of a chapel in Asahigawa was purchased on May 10, 1951, for \$8,000.<sup>43</sup> The cost of land on all of Hokkaido was considerably more than in other parts of Japan because Hokkaido did not suffer the damage from bombings that other areas had suffered. Land was also purchased for a missionary's residence. In the summer and fall of 1951 a chapel and a residence were erected.

Vicar Robert Wennerstrom arrived in Sapporo in August, 1951.<sup>44</sup> From that time on until he left Hokkaido for the Philippines in February, 1953, he took over all the work in Asahigawa that had been carried on by Vicar Fromm. He began a number of new Bible classes and other activities and served

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<sup>41</sup>Letter from Paul Strege to the writer, dated March 26, 1951.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., dated April 9, 1951.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., dated May 14, 1951.

<sup>44</sup>Robert Wennerstrom, Missionary's Report, Aug., 1951.

very faithfully in carrying on mission efforts in that area.

The chapel in Asahigawa was dedicated on October 14, 1951. About one hundred thirty adults and fifty children were present for the service.<sup>45</sup> The group later chose the name "St. Paul's Lutheran Church." Since they now had a meeting place, the group began a Sunday school on November 4, 1951, with an opening enrollment of thirty-two.<sup>46</sup> This enrollment soon more than doubled itself.

Strege and family and Wennerstrom moved from Sapporo to Asahigawa on November 20, 1951,<sup>47</sup> thus becoming the first resident missionaries of the Missouri Synod in Asahigawa. Their full time work in that city resulted in the strengthening and expansion of the mission.

On Christmas Day, 1951, a class of fifteen was baptized in the new chapel. Included in this group were Mr. and Mrs. Kotegawa.<sup>48</sup> A group of sixteen was baptized on Easter Sunday, April 13, 1952. All of those in the latter group were brought in through Mr. Kotegawa.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>Letter from Mrs. Paul Strege to the writer, dated Oct. 15, 1951.

<sup>46</sup>Letter from Paul Strege to the writer, dated Nov. 5, 1951.

<sup>47</sup>Letter from Mrs. Paul Strege to the writer, dated Nov. 22, 1951.

<sup>48</sup>Letter from Paul Strege to the writer, dated Dec. 26, 1951.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., dated April 13, 1952.

A most interesting development in Asahigawa has been the beginnings of work among the Ainu, descendants of the original inhabitants of Japan who lived there before the Japanese themselves. The Ainu look anything but Japanese and have large black bushy eyebrows.

A group of the Ainu live in a small village called Chikabumi, located just a few miles from Missionary Strege's home. Strege planned a noon-day meditation at the Asahigawa chapel on Good Friday, April 11, 1952, as a means of contacting some of the office workers in the area immediately surrounding the chapel. He mimeographed several hundred invitations and members of the church distributed them. Among the thirty who attended the noon-day meditation was a middle aged Ainu man who works at the city office just across the street from the chapel. He was so impressed by the message of Good Friday that he brought his wife along for the Easter Sunrise service at the chapel, which was attended by about one hundred sixty. This proved to be such a welcome experience for them that they contacted two of their daughters who joined them in attending the regular 10:30 service that morning, which was attended by one hundred ten. By the following Saturday, Strege had received an invitation from this man, named Mr. Arai (no relative of the interpreter by the same name mentioned above), to come to Chikabumi to tell his people about Christianity. Mr. Arai



offered the use of his own home for a meeting place.<sup>50</sup>

Strege and Mr. Kotegawa went to Chikabumi for the first meeting there on April 19, 1952. Mr. Arai had made all the arrangements for the meeting in his home. About forty-five were present, some thirty of them adults, and many of them old people. This was very unusual in view of the previous experience of all the missionaries in Japan, who found that almost ninety per cent of their work was among young people. One grandmother who attended the meeting was eighty-one years old. She and another of the women present had a large blue mustache tattooed around their entire mouth, as was customary among the Ainu years ago. This was meant to be beautiful, and a girl was so tattooed when she became of age. Most of the middle aged women had only a blue spot tattooed in the depression under the nose instead of the large mustache. Several old men with long beards were also in attendance. One man present was the chief of one of the two main tribes of Ainu living around Asahigawa. He stated that he had attended Sunday school about fifty years ago under a Missionary Pierson but had forgotten most of what he had learned at that time. Since that time the Salvation Army and Nichiren Buddhism had come in. The Ainu said they were confused about religion and wanted to know what is the truth.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>Mimeographed letter from Paul Strege, dated May 10, 1952.

<sup>51</sup>Letter from Paul Strege to the writer, dated April 20, 1952.

On October 2, 1952, Missionary Paul Pallmeyer and family left Tokyo for Asahigawa. They had spent a year in the Tokyo language school.<sup>52</sup>

On October 31, 1952, a group of twenty-five was baptized in Asahigawa. One other person was accepted by profession of faith who had been baptized previously. This class included an Ainu family of four. At least thirteen of the twenty-five baptized came to baptism through the direct influence of Mr. Kotegawa.<sup>53</sup>

Strege opened a new Sunday school at Chikabumi on November 2, 1952, at the home of the Ainu who were baptized on October 31. Forty-six children were present.<sup>54</sup>

On December 4, 1952, Pallmeyer began his first Bible class in Miyashita,<sup>55</sup> a different section of Asahigawa than that in which the chapel is located. The average attendance for the first three meetings was about twenty.<sup>56</sup>

#### Otaru

Work in Otaru began when Missionaries Heerboth and Strege

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<sup>52</sup>William J. Danker, "Japan News Letter," Oct. 8, 1952, p. 10.

<sup>53</sup>Letter from Paul Strege to the writer, dated Nov. 3, 1952.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

<sup>55</sup>Paul Pallmeyer, "Statistics Requested by Home Office for 1952," p. 3.

<sup>56</sup>Paul Pallmeyer, Missionary's Report, Dec., 1952.

made a survey trip to that city in October, 1949.<sup>57</sup> Otaru is a city of about 150,000 inhabitants located thirty miles west of Sapporo. A student from the Otaru College of Commerce had been attending one of the Bible classes in Sapporo and had invited them to come to his college to begin Bible classes there. When the missionaries arrived at the college, they noticed a poster announcing a Bible class. Heerboth inquired from the college student who was their guide as to who was teaching this Bible class. The student replied: "You are!" The student immediately took the missionaries to a classroom where twenty-eight young men were assembled and waiting for the first class to begin. There was no need to investigate possibilities. The students were ready to hear about Christianity.<sup>58</sup>

Heerboth took over the work in Otaru. But because of the heavy snowfall in winter in northern Japan, and because of the necessity of adjusting Bible classes to school terms, the work there had a rather fluctuating and difficult beginning. After about three months, Heerboth had to discontinue classes.<sup>59</sup> In the middle of May, 1950, he again began going to Otaru every week. The college Bible class started with

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<sup>57</sup>Mimeographed letter from Paul Strege, dated Dec. 1, 1949, p. 1.

<sup>58</sup>William J. Danker, Letter dated Jan. 6, 1950, The Badger Lutheran, April 13, 1950, pp. 4 f.

<sup>59</sup>Paul Heerboth, Missionary's Report, Jan., 1950.

an attendance of one hundred twenty, but this tapered off somewhat later on.<sup>60</sup> It had to be discontinued again from July 11 to September 12 during summer vacation.<sup>61</sup>

In the middle of May, 1950, Heerboth also began a Bible class with Otaru business men, including traders, bankers, educators, insurance agents, and others. This class could be conducted in English because Otaru is a seaport and trading town and many of the men knew English. It soon became evident that the purposes of class and teacher were not always the same. On a first survey, sixty-one of the ninety members of this class stated that their aim in coming was to learn conversational English. Fifty-one had never studied Christianity.<sup>62</sup>

Vicar Fromm's arrival in Sapporo in January, 1951, made it possible to begin Sunday work in Otaru.<sup>63</sup> With the beginning of a more concentrated effort there, the mission also grew. There was an increase in the number of Bible classes conducted and in attendance at those classes. A Sunday school was begun in the fall of 1951.

After Missionary Auw arrived in Sapporo, he also began

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<sup>60</sup>Letter from Paul Strege to the writer, dated May 30, 1950.

<sup>61</sup>Paul Heerboth, Missionary's Report, June, 1950.

<sup>62</sup>"Forward in Our Overseas Missions," The Lutheran Witness, Aug. 8, 1950, p. 246.

<sup>63</sup>Paul Heerboth, Missionary's Report, Jan., 1951.

to work in Otaru, and when Fromm left Sapporo, Auw took over the mission in Otaru completely.

In the fall of 1952, negotiations were underway for the purchase of land for a chapel and a missionary's residence in Otaru so that a resident missionary could be stationed there.

### Obihiro

As was mentioned earlier in this chapter, the Rev. Kosaku Nao baptized a number of Japanese National Police Reserves at Camp Crawford. After such a baptism service on February 11, 1951, an informal send-off was given to about forty baptized Police Reserves who were being moved from Sapporo to Obihiro, a city about one hundred miles east of Sapporo. On February 24, 1951, Missionary Hass left for Obihiro with his interpreter, Mr. Itagaki. The next day they held the first Missouri Synod service in that city, with twenty-nine Police Reserves in attendance.<sup>64</sup> Hass, Schroeder, and Itagaki continued to serve the group in Obihiro every other week for about eighteen months.

When Hass heard that the earthquake of March 4, 1952, had affected also Urahoro, which is one and one-half hours from Obihiro by train, he immediately thought of a former pastor of the Japan Lutheran Church and other Christians he knew there. Missionary and Mrs. Hass together with some of their

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<sup>64</sup>LeRoy Hass, Missionary's Report, Feb., 1951.

members from Sapporo packed up twenty-six boxes of used clothing that had been sent from friends in the United States and set out for Urahoro, where the clothing was distributed to the needy.<sup>65</sup>

Several months later most of the National Police Reserves who had been baptized returned home, since their two-year term had expired. This resulted in the discontinuation of services in Obihiro on September 21, 1952.<sup>66</sup>

#### Bihoro

Several of the National Police Reserves who had been baptized by Nao were transferred to Bihoro, a city in the northeast corner of Hokkaido. At first the mission did not have sufficient personnel to serve them. But when Vicars Schroeder and Wennerstrom arrived on Hokkaido, plans were made to serve them twice a month.<sup>67</sup>

In August, 1951, Hass conducted one service in Bihoro, which was attended by twenty-one.<sup>68</sup> For the next few months Schroeder served the group. Beginning in December, 1951, Wennerstrom took over the work in Bihoro. At that time there

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<sup>65</sup>"Earthquake in Japan Offers Opportunity for Christian Charity," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 49, March, 1952, p. 7.

<sup>66</sup>Hass, "Statistics," op. cit.

<sup>67</sup>Robert Wennerstrom, Missionary's Report, Jan., 1952.

<sup>68</sup>LeRoy Hass, Missionary's Report, Aug., 1951.

were about twelve Police Reserves and about twenty other people attending services. Fifteen were attending the baptism class which was conducted just after the service.<sup>69</sup> On the weekend of August 10, 1952, Strege accompanied Wennerstrom to Bihoro to baptize two men there.<sup>70</sup> However, shortly after this the Lutheran Police Reserves stationed there resigned and returned home. Wennerstrom made his last trip to Bihoro on the weekend of August 31, 1952.<sup>71</sup>

### Fukagawa

On August 28, 1951, Strege and Wennerstrom made a survey trip to Fukagawa, a city about twenty-five miles west of Asahigawa. The city has about 13,000 inhabitants and at that time had only one small church.<sup>72</sup> On September 14 the two men returned to Fukagawa to show the movie "God of Creation." The showing took place outdoors in front of the city bank. By the time it was over, almost four hundred people had gathered to watch it. The missionaries handed out tracts and announced that the first Bible class would be held on Sunday

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<sup>69</sup> Letter from Robert Wennerstrom to the writer, dated Dec. 4, 1951.

<sup>70</sup> Letter from Paul Strege to the writer, dated Aug. 11, 1952.

<sup>71</sup> Letter from Robert Wennerstrom to the writer, dated Aug. 25, 1952.

<sup>72</sup> Letter from Paul Strege to the writer, dated Sept. 2, 1951.

afternoon, just two days later. When Wennerstrom arrived there on Sunday, he found that not a single person came for the class. Schroeder had a similar experience near Sapporo.<sup>73</sup> By this time the missionaries were noticing that the Japanese were no longer so curious about Christianity as they had been just after the close of the war. However, Wennerstrom was able to organize a class the following month, which he taught in English. The first worship service in Fukagawa was conducted by Pallmeyer and Wennerstrom on October 26, 1952.<sup>74</sup> On November 2, 1952, these two had their first baptism there, the class consisting of seven individuals. Thirty attended the service, which was held in a hotel room.<sup>75</sup>

To summarize briefly, at the close of 1952 the following personnel were stationed on Hokkaido: Missionaries Auw, Hass, Hintz, Pallmeyer, and Strege; Miss Lenschow; and Vicars Schroeder and Wennerstrom. Work was being done in eight stations, with Asahigawa and Sapporo as the chief centers. These stations are listed in Appendix B. The area had a total of one hundred fifty-two baptized souls and one hundred thirty-seven communicants.

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<sup>73</sup>Ibid., dated Sept. 17, 1951.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., dated Oct. 26, 1952.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., dated Nov. 3, 1952.



## CHAPTER VII

### EDUCATION

From its very beginning the Missouri Synod mission in Japan devoted a great deal of time and effort to the establishment of various agencies of Christian education. They include: Sunday schools and Sunday School Teachers' Institutes; Vacation Bible Schools; kindergartens; Urawa Christian day school; Hanno High School; young people's summer camps; Sunday Seminaries; Tokyo Bible Institute; and the proposed seminary, which is to begin in April, 1953. These topics will be discussed in the order in which they appear above.

#### Sunday Schools

The Sunday school was one of the first agencies the mission used in carrying on its work. The establishment of the first Sunday schools was discussed in Chapter IV. In almost every station, the work began either with Sunday schools or with Bible classes, or both. Missionaries reported that they could start Sunday schools anywhere at any time and they could get children to attend by the hundreds, if they only had the manpower and the buildings in which to conduct them. Another church body found it necessary to hand out admission tickets for Sunday school and only children with a ticket would be admitted. This measure was necessary because their

meeting place could only accommodate a certain number of people and there was no other meeting place available. As was mentioned previously, several of the Sunday schools organized by the mission had to meet outdoors because they could not find any available building. The erection of chapels greatly alleviated this unfortunate situation. After the mission had been in Japan for several years, its Sunday schools were still experiencing a healthy growth, but the extreme interest that had been shown by the Japanese just after the war was no longer as great as it had once been.

The mission organized a number of Sunday School Teachers' Institutes to give further training to the teachers and thus to help them take advantage of the tremendous opportunities and challenges they faced. The first such institute in Japan was held on November 23, 1949.<sup>1</sup> That date was selected because it was a national holiday, the annual Harvest Festival. Forty-four young people were invited, since Missionary Meyer's home would not accommodate any more people. A typhoon on November 23 nearly wrecked all plans. But of the forty-four invited, forty-two were present, and the other two could not attend because of illness. These young people were from the various stations in the Kanto area.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Arnold C. Mueller, "Japan," Concordia Sunday School Teachers' Quarterly, Oct.-Dec., 1950, pp. 7-9, gives the complete program for this conference.

<sup>2</sup>Adelheid Mueller, "Harvest Season," The Walther League Messenger, March, 1950, pp. 14 ff.

Exactly one year later the Sunday school teachers of Tokyo met in an all-day conference in Martin Luther Church in Meguro. At this conference the missionaries had charge only of the devotional exercises. The rest of the program was furnished by the Japanese themselves. This was a decided step toward building an indigenous church.<sup>3</sup>

The first Hokkaido Lutheran Sunday School Teachers' Conference met in Asahigawa on March 21, 1952. About forty people were present for the all-day session, including representatives from Sapporo, Otaru, and Asahigawa. The topics discussed were: "Maintaining Interest in the Sunday School," "Sunday School Organization," and "Keeping the Children with the Sunday School." The next meeting of the Hokkaido group was set for April 29, 1953, the emperor's birthday, a national holiday.<sup>4</sup>

The real problem with which the Sunday schools in Japan had to contend was that of a great turnover in pupils. This meant a constant loss to the church. The Education Committee of the mission suggested that such means as special instruction, social groups, Parent-Teachers' Associations, etc., could be used to help the situation. The committee urged the missionaries to encourage their teachers to make calls at the

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<sup>3</sup>"Sunday School Teachers of Tokyo Meet," Parish Education, Oct., 1951, p. 128, gives the complete program for this conference.

<sup>4</sup>Letter from Paul Strege to the writer, dated March 22, 1952.

homes of their pupils.<sup>5</sup>

### Vacation Bible Schools

The first Vacation Bible School referred to in Missionaries' Reports was conducted in Niigata for three half days from August 1-3, 1950, with an average attendance of about seventy-five.

Several were held in the summer of 1951. A three-day school in Niigata had a total attendance of three hundred sixty.<sup>6</sup> A two-day school in Niitsu was attended by sixty-five.<sup>7</sup> A four-day school in Sapporo for the junior high school age group had a total attendance of eighty-one.<sup>8</sup> This school led to the establishment of a regular junior high school Bible class.<sup>9</sup> A five-day school in Urawa had a total attendance of four hundred seventy.<sup>10</sup> A twelve-day school, the first full length Vacation Bible School, meeting Monday through Saturday, was conducted by Vicar Lester Hall at Azabu Chapel.

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<sup>5</sup>"Minutes of Education Committee Meeting," March 5, 1952, "Reports and Memorials of the Japan Conference of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod," Fourth Annual Conference, June 30-July 4, 1952, p. 36.

<sup>6</sup>Richard Poetter, Missionary's Report, Aug., 1951.

<sup>7</sup>Clifford Brege, Missionary's Report, Aug., 1951.

<sup>8</sup>Paul Strege, Missionary's Report, Aug., 1951.

<sup>9</sup>William J. Danker, "Missionaries' Memorandum," n.d., p. 2.

<sup>10</sup>Paul Kreyling, Missionary's Report, Aug., 1951.

About forty children attended.<sup>11</sup>

According to the Missionaries' Reports for July and August, 1952, Vacation Bible Schools were conducted in Asahigawa, Niigata, Shirone, Niitsu, Kamo, Meguro, Azabu, Yokohama, Totsuka, and Kugenuma.

### Kindergartens

The mission recognized early the value of a Christian kindergarten in promoting its cause. A rather lengthy discussion concerning kindergartens was held at the 1950 Japan Mission Conference in Tokyo. A letter stating the need and value of such church kindergartens from Sataho M. Tasaka, Division of Education of Niigata University, was read. A resolution was adopted encouraging the missionaries to organize kindergarten work when and where possible and advisable. They were urged to keep in mind the importance of providing Christian workers and Christian literature for such work.<sup>12</sup>

The Totsuka Kindergarten, opened on September 8, 1950, was the first to be organized within the mission. Missionary Meyer was in charge.<sup>13</sup> After one month, it had an enrollment of seventy-two.<sup>14</sup> Mr. Imanari, one of the first converts,

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<sup>11</sup>Danker, op. cit.

<sup>12</sup>"Minutes of Japan Mission Conference," March 1-3, 1950, pp. 11 f., par. 99. 113.

<sup>13</sup>Richard Meyer, Missionary's Report, Aug., 1950.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., Oct., 1950.

served as principal.

The Kugenuma Kindergarten was opened in April, 1951, with an enrollment of thirty-four.<sup>15</sup> From April to September, Miss Norma Lenschow was active in this endeavor, after which it was given into the hands of Vicar Donald Becker.

At a meeting of the Education Committee on March 5, 1952, Meyer, on the basis of his past experience with kindergartens, gave a detailed report on starting a kindergarten, difficulties encountered in the work, teachers, weekly program, needs, and meeting those needs.<sup>16</sup>

A third kindergarten was begun in Sapporo on April 15, 1952, with about fifty children enrolled.<sup>17</sup>

Kindergarten work was discussed quite extensively at the 1952 Japan Mission Conference. In his opening message, the chairman stated that kindergartens are one of the standard missionary methods in Japan since they fit so well into the Japanese educational picture, because the government does not sponsor them, and because they can usually be self-supporting from the start.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Norma Lenschow, Missionary's Report, April, 1951.

<sup>16</sup>A detailed account of Meyer's report is given in "Minutes of Education Committee Meeting," op. cit., pp. 36 f.

<sup>17</sup>LeRoy Hass, Missionary's Report, May, 1952.

<sup>18</sup>"Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Convention of the Japan Mission Conference of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod," July 1-4, 1952, p. 5.

Two important resolutions were passed at this conference. The first stated that since not all local station groups who may wish to establish a kindergarten have sufficient capital to cover initial equipment expenses, a fund for such equipment was to be set aside, and amounts up to 50,000 yen from this fund should be granted as a gift to any station needing and requesting it. After this initial grant the kindergarten was to be self-supporting.<sup>19</sup> The second resolution dealt with the dire need for teaching materials for the religious program. To meet this need, Mr. and Mrs. Epp were requested to prepare teacher guidance materials together with Japanese helpers. They were to prepare two sets, one for trial use in the 1953 term and the second for the following year.<sup>20</sup>

#### Urawa Christian Day School

A group of people living in Urawa established a kindergarten which they hoped would grow into a Christian elementary school. They heard that the mission was interested in Christian education and therefore appealed to Danker to come to Urawa and survey the situation.<sup>21</sup> Danker first spoke to this group, known as the Urawa Mothers' Club, in April, 1950.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>21</sup>"From the Tokyo Area," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 42, July 31, 1950, p. 2.

<sup>22</sup>William J. Danker, Missionary's Report, April, 1950.

In succeeding months, other missionaries alternated with him in speaking to them. Since it seemed quite apparent that the mission would soon begin an elementary school at Urawa, the Board of Foreign Missions extended a call to Mr. Robert Epp to serve as teacher for this school.<sup>23</sup> He accepted the call and sailed with his family in August, 1951. Until the Urawa school would be established, Mr. Epp studied the Japanese language and directed the missionaries' language school in Tokyo.

Because of certain developments, the mission decided not to take over the kindergarten already existing there, but to set up a completely new plant which would in no way be associated with the former. In March, 1953, the new school building was under construction and plans called for the opening of the school as soon as the structure was completed.<sup>24</sup>

#### Hanno High School

The development of the Hanno High School is most interesting. It began as a sericultural training school in Hanno in 1903 by Mr. Jinsaku Suda, an expert in sericulture and a man of some means. As time went on, other courses were added, including agriculture, commercial, and college preparatory

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<sup>23</sup> Mimeographed letter from Max Zschiegner, dated Sept. 4, 1951.

<sup>24</sup> Personal note from Herman H. Koppelman, dated March 28, 1953.



courses. In 1931 it was enlarged to become a complete senior high school, with five years of secondary education. However, through wartime regulations and otherwise, the school was reduced to a four-year, and finally to a three-year high school. In 1949 the middle school was added. Mr. Suda, the founder, was also the principal all this time. In 1950 he resigned because of his age and his inability to raise funds for the school. He had been somewhat attracted to Christianity, and, in seeking someone to take over the school, he visited the Hanno Methodist minister, the Rev. Masataro Fujiwara. Fujiwara became chairman of the Board of Directors and, with another director, formed a scheme to finance the school, which, however, failed. By the early summer of 1951, the school was deeply in debt and the creditors were becoming impatient. The teachers were underpaid and the morale of the school was very low. Repairs were badly needed, as well as equipment and a library. Fujiwara then appealed to various groups, also to the Missouri Synod mission.<sup>25</sup>

Throughout the summer of 1951 the mission carried on its investigation of the school, and finally decided to ask the Board of Foreign Missions for permission and funds to take it over. The permission was granted and the school was transferred toward the end of October, with Missionary Kreyling

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<sup>25</sup>"Report on Seibo Gakkuen (Hanno High School)," "Reports and Memorials," op. cit., p. 48.

acting as principal pro-tem and chairman of the Board of Directors.<sup>26</sup>

The Board of Foreign Missions was very generous in its subsidy to the school. Besides subsidizing its running expenses, the mission had to assume a debt of over 1,200,000 yen (about \$3,300). Numerous necessary repairs also had to be made.<sup>27</sup>

The property consisted of about thirteen widely-scattered acres of land. The school buildings included a chapel seating about three hundred, two classroom buildings, two houses, and several minor buildings. On another campus about five miles west of Hanno there was another chapel, two classroom buildings, and a residence.<sup>28</sup>

In the spring of 1952, four courses were being offered, agriculture, commercial, home economics, and college preparatory (or terminal). Dropping the agriculture course was being seriously considered, since there was little demand for it. The addition of some trade courses was being discussed. After a number of years, the school should become self-supporting.<sup>29</sup>

Chapel services were conducted daily and religion classes weekly. Attendance at both was compulsory. The teachers had

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., pp. 48 f.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

a weekly Bible class. A religion club carried on a program of religious education and evangelization in the community. The principal made visits in the homes. A Sunday school was conducted in the school chapel every Sunday.<sup>30</sup>

Mr. Robert Neujahr, a high school teacher in Moline, Illinois, accepted the call from the Board of Foreign Missions to serve as head of the Hanno High School.<sup>31</sup> He and his family arrived in Japan on September 21, 1952. He was to study in the language school at the Tokyo Lutheran Center until the spring of 1953, after which he was to move to Hanno and assume the position now held by Missionary Kreyling. Kreyling is scheduled to return to the United States on furlough at that time, being the first to return.<sup>32</sup>

#### Young People's Camps and Clubs

A number of young people's summer camps have been conducted, of which the first was held August 4-8, 1950, at a Y.W.C.A. cottage at Hayama, just an hour from Tokyo by train. About one hundred twenty-five campers<sup>33</sup> from all over the Tokyo area and a few from Niigata attended. All the mission-

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., pp. 49 f.

<sup>31</sup>"To Japan," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 49, March, 1952, p. 6.

<sup>32</sup>William J. Danker, "Japan News Letter," Oct. 8, 1952, p. 8.

<sup>33</sup>"For the Youth of Japan," Lutheran Woman's Quarterly, Jan., 1951, pp. 12 f.

aries in the Kanto area contributed to the camp program.

Mrs. Egolf served as housemother and nurse.<sup>34</sup>

Two summer camps were held in 1951. The first one in the Niigata area was conducted July 27-30, fifty miles north of Niigata. Every station in Niigata Prefecture was represented. Four persons from Hokkaido and one from Tokyo were also present. Total attendance was seventy-two campers and seven missionaries. The program included seven lectures (three by Shibata, two by Kreyling, two by Fromm), one worship service (Zwintscher), two morning devotions (Bringewatt, Poetter), and three evening devotions (Brege).<sup>35</sup>

The Kanto area camp met over the weekend of August 5, 1951.<sup>36</sup> An eager delegation from Hokkaido attended.<sup>37</sup> About one hundred seventy-five registered over the three and one-half day period. Lectures were given by prominent Japanese Christian professional men and by missionaries. A Japanese Lutheran professor at a large university in Tokyo delivered an excellent address on "Personal Evangelism."<sup>38</sup>

Four summer camps were held in 1952. The first such

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<sup>34</sup>Richard Meyer, "Japanese Young People's Camp," The Walther League Messenger, Feb., 1951, pp. 44 f.

<sup>35</sup>Clifford Brege, Missionary's Report, July, 1951.

<sup>36</sup>Letter from Paul Strege to the writer, dated July 23, 1951.

<sup>37</sup>Danker, "Missionaries' Memorandum," op. cit.

<sup>38</sup>Mimeographed letter from Max Zschiegner, dated Sept. 4, 1951.

effort in Hokkaido was held July 25-29, at the small town of Yoichi, some one hundred miles from Asahigawa. Total attendance was over one hundred. The camp site was a primary school. Two classrooms were cleared of desks, and tatami mats were placed on the floor for beds. Shibata and Heerboth were the main lecturers. The theme of the camp was: "Christians Live." At the camp these young people could live together with fellow-Christians in Christian surroundings, something many of them could not do in their homes where they were surrounded by non-Christian brothers, sisters, and parents.<sup>39</sup> The entire camp was run by the young people themselves. Only the devotional exercises and lectures were conducted by missionaries. The vicars handled the hymn singing after supper. The outstanding event of the camp was the worship service. It was the first time about half of the campers ever attended a worship service, although they were perhaps attending a Bible class regularly. Shibata explained the liturgy before the service began.<sup>40</sup>

The Kanto area camp in 1952 was held at Gotomba, a resort town near the base of Mount Fuji. About one hundred thirty young people shared in the inspirational lectures by Japanese Christians and missionaries.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Mimeographed letter from Robert Wennerstrom, dated Aug. 1, 1952.

<sup>40</sup>Roy Schroeder, Missionary's Report, July, 1952.

<sup>41</sup>Mimeographed letter from Max Zschiegner, dated Oct. 1, 1952.

The Niigata area camp in 1952 was held in Senami, August 1-3. It was attended by a total of sixty-seven young people, including five from the Kanto area, and eight missionaries. The program included lectures (two each by Meyer and Zwintscher, one by Mrs. Zwintscher), Sunday worship service (Zwintscher), morning devotions (Bringewatt, Poetter), and evening devotions (Patschke, two by Brege).<sup>42</sup>

Since the Nagaoka group was not able to attend the Senami camp, it held its own camp at Ishiji, August 8-10, 1952. Forty young people attended. Lecturers were Zwintscher, Bringewatt, and Patschke. Though this camp also proved very successful, it will probably not be repeated.<sup>43</sup>

Young people's organizations or youth clubs similar to Walther League societies were organized in a number of the stations. Several young people's choirs were also begun.

Beginning in 1950, the Walther League initiated a program known as the Bible Reading League. Through this project, Walther Leaguers from all over the United States and Canada contributed one dollar each, for which each received a New Testament in twelve small pamphlets. A similar New Testament was sent to a "mission friend" in some foreign land. The names of these mission friends were gathered and sent to Chicago by missionaries over the entire globe. At the Inter-

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<sup>42</sup>Clifford Brege, Missionary's Report, Aug., 1952.

<sup>43</sup>Arbie Patschke, Missionary's Report, Aug., 1952.

national Walther League Convention in St. Louis, Missouri, July 8-12, 1951, it was reported that one thousand five hundred names of mission friends had been received from Japan.

On November 3, 1952, the first Hokkaido Youth Rally was held in the Sapporo Youth Center. It was sponsored by the two youth clubs in Sapporo as a first anniversary project. Seventy-five young people from Sapporo, Asahigawa, Otaru, and Fukagawa attended. The meeting itself consisted of an opening devotion, a report of activities from all youth clubs, a business meeting, lunch, and recreation. At the business meeting the group decided to have a very informal organization whose only purpose would be to prepare for the annual Youth Rally.<sup>44</sup>

#### Leadership Training Institutes

Beginning in January, 1950, a number of leadership training schools were set up in the three geographical areas in which the Missouri Synod mission is working. Though they operated under various names, the purpose of all of them was the same, namely, to make it more possible for the ordinary Japanese Christian to be a witness for Christ, to serve the Church intelligently, and perhaps to act as a Sunday school teacher or a worker in some other area of church endeavor.<sup>45</sup>

The first of these institutes opened in Tokyo on January 8,

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<sup>44</sup>Roy Schroeder, Missionary's Report, Nov., 1952.

<sup>45</sup>"Training Nationals as Church Workers," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 42, July 31, 1950, p. 4.

and was known as Nichioshingakko or "Sunday Seminary."<sup>46</sup> On May 7, a similar institute was begun in Sapporo, known as Ruteru Nichio Shukai or "Lutheran Sunday Gathering."<sup>47</sup> A third institute was set up in Niigata. Ordinarily these institutes were held on Sunday. After the usual Sunday school, Bible classes, and perhaps church services, the group, numbering from twenty to fifty, would assemble for classes. Each person brought his lunch so that the group did not have to break up for the noon hour. Several classes were conducted in successive periods. These classes led the individuals into a study of the doctrines of the Scriptures, into the contents of the books of the Bible and methods of Bible reading, and into different phases of personal evangelism. At times opportunities were given for practical use of the methods discussed, as, for example, an opportunity for the distribution of tracts after a discussion on this phase of personal evangelism. Through these various avenues of approach the Japanese Christians were shown the opportunities for service which existed and were encouraged to take advantage of them.<sup>48</sup>

A similar training school was set up in Totsuka in Sep-

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<sup>46</sup>William J. Danker, Letter dated Jan. 6, 1950, The Badger Lutheran, April 13, 1950, pp. 4 f.

<sup>47</sup>Letter from Paul Strege to the writer, dated May 7, 1950.

<sup>48</sup>"Training Nationals," op. cit.



tember, 1950, known as the Totsuka Saturday Seminary.<sup>49</sup> This school was repeated the following year. It began on September 22, 1951, and was known as the Saturday Afternoon Bible Institute. Classes met on Saturdays, 2-5 p.m. Here, as in some of the other institutes, the course lasted for a period of twelve weeks.<sup>50</sup>

### Tokyo Bible Institute

From the very first the missionaries realized that some sort of training program would have to be set up to prepare qualified nationals for full time church work. To meet this objective, the Education Committee of the mission worked out plans for a Bible Institute in the Tokyo Lutheran Center. The aims of this Bible Institute were:

1. To prepare male Evangelists and female Bible teachers for full time church work.
2. To give training in the Bible to those who desire it for their own growth in grace rather than for a professional career. It is not the aim of the Bible Institute to give complete preparation for the Holy Ministry. It should be emphasized that this is not a seminary but a Bible Institute.
3. The school is also serving to give valuable preparation to those who will go on to regular seminary training in the future. It has also served to clarify for our missionaries the actual problems and situations that they will meet in carrying on a regular seminary program. We shall be able to plan and conduct a better seminary than we could have without this experience.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>William J. Danker, Missionary's Report, Sept., 1950.

<sup>50</sup>Richard Meyer, Missionary's Report, Sept., 1951.

<sup>51</sup>"Report of the Tokyo Bible Institute," "Reports and Memorials," op. cit., p. 40.

The Bible Institute was opened on Monday, September 10, 1951, the day after the dedication of the Tokyo Lutheran Center. Ten students were enrolled in the day time course and twenty in the evening division.<sup>52</sup> The evening division made it possible for church members in the Kanto area to take part time courses while they continued their regular occupations. The Bible Institute staff consisted of: Danker, dean; Heerboth, registrar; Bergt, Shibata, and Suelflow.<sup>53</sup>

As time went on, it became apparent that a regular seminary training program would have to be set up in order that qualified Japanese pastors could take over the work in Japan, since the missionaries were obviously limited especially with regard to the language. But because of the shortage of manpower among the mission staff it would be impossible to organize and maintain an effective theological training program and at the same time continue the Bible Institute as it was being carried on. Hence at its 1952 Convention in Tokyo, the mission resolved to discontinue the course of study then offered at the end of its present term. However, this discontinuation was to be of a temporary nature only, until such time when available manpower would make it possible to resume the Bible Institute courses.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>Danker, "Missionaries' Memorandum," op. cit.

<sup>53</sup>"Statistician's Report for 1951 Japan Mission," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 49, March, 1952, p. 6.

<sup>54</sup>"Proceedings," op. cit., p. 26, par. 82.

At the same convention the resolution was adopted to encourage missionaries to organize and maintain local short-term Bible institutes. In planning these institutes, the missionaries were to keep in mind the possibility of getting assistance from the Tokyo Bible Institute and from theological students in the seminary after its establishment, in connection with their field work.<sup>55</sup>

A local Bible institute of this kind was conducted in Asahigawa, January 7-11, 1952. The daily program consisted of an opening devotion, a course in the introduction to the New Testament by Strege, some singing, a course on the Life of Christ by Fromm, some games, a course on the subject of prayer by Wennerstrom, and a closing devotion. Average attendance was from twenty-five to thirty. Some of these came every day from Fukagawa, twenty-five miles from Asahigawa.<sup>56</sup>

A one-day Bible Conference was conducted by the missionaries in the Niigata area in November, 1952. Forty-eight attended.<sup>57</sup>

#### Seminary

In the early months of 1952, the Board of Foreign Missions

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 29, par. 97.

<sup>56</sup> Mimeographed letter from Robert Wennerstrom, dated Jan. 30, 1952.

<sup>57</sup> Victor Zwintscher, Missionary's Report, Nov., 1952.

extended a call to Dr. O. H. Theiss, Executive Secretary of the International Walther League, to serve as head of theological training in Japan. Dr. Theiss accepted this call.<sup>58</sup> He and his wife arrived in Tokyo on October 12, 1952.

At its 1952 convention, the Japan Mission Conference resolved to initiate a theological training program which was to begin with the spring term in April, 1953.<sup>59</sup> Heerboth and Egolf were to be designated as full time instructors in the theological training course, since both of them were well qualified, had been active as staff members of the Bible Institute courses, and incidentally could be more easily relieved of other duties than some of the other men on the field.<sup>60</sup> In order to prepare the Japanese church to assimilate the seminary students upon completion of their training, the conference resolved that the missionaries encourage their groups of Japanese Christians to assume the responsibility of rendering moral and financial support to the training program as well as to contribute toward the support of theological students from their own localities.<sup>61</sup>

Realizing the necessity for an adequate library for a theological institution as well as the need for a missionaries'

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<sup>58</sup>"Dr. Theiss to Head Seminary Work in Japan," The St. Louis Lutheran, May 10, 1952, p. 2.

<sup>59</sup>"Proceedings," op. cit., p. 19, par. 51.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., pp. 20 f., par. 52.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 27, par. 85.

lending library, the same convention passed a resolution that such a library be established in the Tokyo Lutheran Center.<sup>62</sup>

Dr. Theiss submitted a report to the Education Committee of the mission and to the Board of Foreign Missions in the early part of 1953 in which he states that to be eligible for the theological training program a student must meet the following requirements:

1. Be a baptized member of the Christian Church for two years
2. Have the endorsement of the missionary under whose spiritual care he is
3. Be a university graduate or have acquired an equivalent education which enables him to pursue graduate study profitably
4. Have sufficient mastery of the English language to profit from courses presented in English and from the reading of English theological literature
5. Agree to accept no employment in addition to the field work of the theological program
6. Agree to board and lodge at the Tokyo Lutheran Center
7. Submit an official transcript of his academic record
8. Submit a certificate of a recent, thorough physical examination
9. Pass both a written and an oral entrance examination<sup>63</sup>

The requirement of university graduation was felt essential for the emotional security and social standing of these future Japanese pastors, since they will hold a very unique place of leadership in the church, especially because they will be the first pastors of the indigenous church. These men will guide the future of the church in Japan in every

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 30, par. 99.

<sup>63</sup>O. H. Theiss, Report to the Education Committee of the Japan Conference of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, received by the Board of Foreign Missions on March 9, 1953, p. 1.

phase of its activities. An adequate background, both culturally and spiritually, will be necessary to prepare them for these tasks.<sup>64</sup>

Offering the instruction in English will enable the seminary professors to keep their instruction on a graduate level and will spare the mission the necessity of engaging outside instructors, thus endangering the achievement of an integrated theological education.<sup>65</sup>

Dr. Theiss states that they have three young men desirous of entering the seminary who meet the requirements and a fourth who, because of eight years of experience and self-education, can be given the privilege of attempting graduate study at least on a probational basis.<sup>66</sup>

According to present plans, all instruction will be given at least initially by Theiss, Heerboth, and Egolf, with the following general assignments of fields: New Testament and Practical, Theiss; Old Testament, Heerboth; Dogma and Church History, Egolf.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid., pp. 1 f.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

## CHAPTER VIII

### LITERATURE

In a country like Japan, with its extremely high literacy rate, the production and distribution of Christian literature is very essential for the extension of Christian mission work. The Missouri Synod mission took recognition of this fact by selecting a Literature Committee already at the first meeting of the future Japan Mission Conference in Tokyo on August 9 and 10, 1949. The conference elected Danker chairman of the committee. He appointed Shibata, Meyer, and Heerboth as the other members.<sup>1</sup> In the conferences of 1950 and 1952, Heerboth and Shibata were elected to this committee.

The Literature Committee felt it best that the production of literature be a joint effort, not something done by individual stations for use by themselves alone. For that reason they presented a resolution to the second meeting of the Japan Mission Conference held in Tokyo in 1950, providing that the production of Japanese literature--Sunday school, Bible class, teacher training materials, tracts, etc.--should be a coordinated effort, the work of producing and the finished product being shared by all stations. This resolution was adopted.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Minutes of Japan Mission Conference," Aug. 9-10, 1949, p. 3, par. 22 f.

<sup>2</sup>"Minutes of Japan Mission Conference," March 1-3, 1950, p. 5, par. 44.

## Sunday School Literature

One agency very greatly in need of literature was the Sunday school. At first most stations attempted to mimeograph their own Sunday school leaflets. But this was expensive, time-consuming, and not too rewarding. In late 1950, the Rev. Kosaku Nao was engaged to translate Sunday school materials, with Heerboth in charge of this project. The first printed leaflets were ready for use on December 3, 1950. Two thousand copies were printed each week, at a cost of 19,750 yen, including the translation work. The first booklets for juniors appeared in April, 1951, in an edition of two thousand copies.<sup>3</sup>

In July, 1951, an attempt was made to interest other groups in the literature produced by the mission, since it was the first post-war group in Japan to be printing Sunday school literature regularly. In response, people from other Lutheran and non-Lutheran groups began to buy this literature.<sup>4</sup>

In May, 1952, 30,000 beginner leaflets were printed, of which 28,400 were distributed. Three thousand junior booklets were printed in the same month, of which 2,826 were distributed. The remaining materials were stockpiled for future

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<sup>3</sup>"Minutes of Literature Committee Meeting," April 30, 1952, "Reports and Memorials of the Japan Conference of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod," Fourth Annual Conference, June 30-July 4, 1952, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.



sales, which sometimes occurred in cases where new Sunday schools were started.<sup>5</sup>

Ever since the mission began printing Sunday school literature there was a demand for a Sunday School Teachers' Quarterly. The Literature Committee reported in April, 1952, that the first quarterly was to be ready for the period from July to September, 1952. The copies were to be undated so that they could be re-used every other year in accord with the Sunday school series. The translation of the regular material issued by Concordia Publishing House, the publishing company of the Missouri Synod in the United States, was done by a Mrs. Matsuda under the direction of Mr. Tewes. The first issue was to be printed in one thousand copies.<sup>6</sup>

#### Catechism

It was reported in a meeting of the Literature Committee in March, 1952, that the Lutheran Literature Society, which will be discussed later in this chapter, had already published a revised edition of Luther's Small Catechism. However, there was great need for a suitable explanation to the Catechism. At that time Missionary Shibata was completing the translation of the Missouri Synod's Short Explanation of Luther's Small

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

Catechism.<sup>7</sup> By April, 1952, he, together with others, completed the translation. An issue of 5,000 copies was to be printed.<sup>8</sup> On July 4, the final day of the Fourth Annual Conference, Heerboth displayed this Catechism, which had just come off the press.<sup>9</sup>

#### Vacation Bible School Materials

At its meeting in March, 1952, the Literature Committee appointed a special sub-committee to prepare suitable Vacation Bible School workbooks, teachers' guides, and handicraft packets in time for summer. This committee consisted of Meyer, chairman, Lange, and Hall. They were to ask the Japanese to help in the planning and preparation of these materials.<sup>10</sup>

This sub-committee appeared before the Executive Committee on May 2, 1952. They reported that materials for ten lessons and two reviews were to be included in the workbooks. This was planned with the idea of a two-weeks' session, six days a week, as the average Vacation Bible School. Two workbooks,

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<sup>7</sup>"Minutes of Literature Committee Meeting," March 19, 1952, "Reports and Memorials," op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>8</sup>"Minutes of Literature Committee Meeting," April 30, 1952, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>9</sup>"Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Convention of the Japan Mission Conference of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod," July 1-4, 1952, p. 38, par. 143.

<sup>10</sup>"Minutes of Literature Committee Meeting," March 19, 1952, op. cit., p. 11.

one for the kindergarten to third grade level, the other for the fourth to sixth grade level, were being prepared by Japanese workers. They were also working on the manual for teachers and the handicraft materials. The sub-committee hoped to have the material ready for printing by the beginning of June and into the hands of the missionaries by the beginning of July.<sup>11</sup>

### Tracts, Pamphlets, Books

A summary of the literature that had been completed or was being worked on at that time is given in the "Minutes of the Literature Committee Meeting" of April 30, 1952. The following material is taken from that source.<sup>12</sup>

#### TRACTS AND PAMPHLETS

Before the literature work was centralized in Tokyo, the following items were translated and published:

1. Kirsuto no Howa (The Peace of Christ) prepared by Rev. Nao and Paul Heerboth in Sapporo. Two printings of ten thousand each. Used mainly by our own missionaries in evangelistic work. Now slated for revision.
2. Fukatsu-zai-bi (Resurrection Day) prepared in Sapporo by Rev. Nao and Paul Heerboth. Ten thousand printed at cost of 23,300 yen, same as the tract above. This tract was revised and used by the Lutheran Literature Society for all the Lutheran Groups in Japan for Easter, 1952.
3. Senrei Ni Tsuite (Concerning Baptism) for adults. Prepared by George Shibata, Tokyo. Ten thousand printed. Received wide distribution. Language needs revision.

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<sup>11</sup>"Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting," May 2, 1952, p. 12.

<sup>12</sup>"Minutes of Literature Committee Meeting," April 30, 1952, op. cit., pp. 13-17.

4. Tsukuwareru Tame-ni (Concerning Salvation) prepared by George Shibata of Tokyo. Language needs revision for rural areas.
5. Kodomo-no Tame-ni (For the Sake of Children) a tract on child baptism designed for non-Christian parents of children to be baptized. Prepared by Richard Meyer of Yokohama. Language to be revised and reprinted.

The following items have been printed in Tokyo late 1951 and early 1952.

1. Aganai-ni Tsuite (Concerning Redemption) prepared by Mr. Igo of Sapporo, read and revised by Mr. Mitsuye and Paul Heerboth. Ten thousand printed. Used widely in connection with the Lutheran Hour.
2. Seisho-o Yomu Tame no Te-Biki (Guide for Bible Reading) prepared by Mr. Igo of Sapporo. Read and revised by Mr. Mitsuye and Paul Heerboth, Tokyo. Ten thousand printed. Used widely by missionaries and Lutheran Hour.
3. Kurisumasu Wo Mukaote (Welcome Christmas) Christmas tract written by Paul Heerboth, translated by Mr. Mitsuye. Twenty thousand printed in two printings. Enjoyed wide sale outside of our own group in addition to being used by our missionaries. Cover designed by Rev. Bergt.
4. Japanese Baptism Certificate prepared by Paul Heerboth and Mr. Mitsuye. Ten thousand printed. Cost: 15.75 yen per certificate. Sale price: To our missionaries: 30 yen. To other missionaries: 35 yen. To others: 50 yen. This is our first sample of multi-colored printing.

The following items are at the printer now:

1. Ruteru Kyokai no Oshie (What Lutherans Teach) a tract translated by Mr. Mitsuye and read by Paul Heerboth. A very necessary tract for Lutheran Hour follow-up work.
2. Only Believe an evangelistic tract on salvation translated by a student, Mr. Takizawa, corrected and read by Mr. Mitsuye and Paul Heerboth.

The following items are nearly ready:

1. What Must I Do to Be Saved? Translated by Mr. Takizawa. Still to be read and corrected and rewritten for the printer.
2. Why Be an Atheist? Dr. Graebner's tract, translated by Mr. Takizawa. Still to be read, corrected, and rewritten.

Lutheran Hour Bible Correspondence Course

In September of 1951 the Conference Literature Committee was asked by Dr. Bertermann to prepare a Bible Correspondence Course in Japanese for the Lutheran Hour Broadcast. The Stateside materials furnished by the Lutheran Hour were used as a basis for translation. . . .

It soon became apparent that the Stateside course material was good only as a hurried beginning. It assumes too much that the reader knows something about Christian background and terminology, and was lacking in adequate explanation of points. Proof passages also did not always prove to many people, because of the difficult language of the Japanese Bible. . . .

A new course is being written (not translated). This will be original material as outlined by a special committee, consisting of Rev. Glock, W. J. Danker, Dr. Kishi, Pres. of the U.L.C. Seminary, and Rev. Aoyama. Dr. Kishi is doing the writing. . . .

Note: The Correspondence Course Materials have proven useful among the baptized National Police Reserves and especially among shut-ins. . . .

MANUSCRIPTS ON HAND TO BE PRINTED  
(As money and opportunity permit)

A number of manuscripts have been submitted for publication. They must first be checked for doctrinal accuracy in translation and then held in readiness for printing.

1. Bedside Devotions for Shut-ins. Translated by Mr. Matsuo of Sapporo under the direction of LeRoy Hass.
2. God Loves You, an evangelistic tract, translated by Mr. Takizawa.
3. One Way...Only One!, an evangelistic tract, translated under the direction of Paul Kreyling.
4. Be of Good Cheer. A tract for shut-ins, prepared under the direction of Delmar Glock.
5. How to Read the Bible, a tract for inquirers and those who are beginners in Bible study. Translated under the direction of Delmar Glock.
6. Down Through the Ages, a Bible student series Church History prepared by Mr. Aoyama under the direction of Ralph Egolf.
7. Freedom from Worry, evangelistic tract translated by Mr. Takizawa under the direction of Paul Heerboth.
8. What Jesus Means to Me, being prepared by Mr. Itagaki of Sapporo under the direction of LeRoy Hass.
9. Our Bible by Weidenschilling, being prepared by Mr. Igo of Sapporo under direction of LeRoy Hass.

## MAJOR WORKS

There is a great need not only by our own Lutheran Church, but by all Lutheranism and the rest of Christianity in Japan for some of the most basic writings of our Synod. Therefore the following works will be undertaken as translation projects:

1. Koehler, Summary of Christian Doctrine, to be prepared by Mr. Imanari under the direction of . . . George Shibata.
2. Graebner, Doctrinal Outlines, to be prepared by Mr. Aoyama under the direction of . . . Ralph Egolf.
3. Walther, Law and Gospel, . . . by . . . Paul Heerboth. . . .

## Hymnal

Since the Japanese Protestant Hymnal was being commonly used by the mission and the doctrinal contents of some of its hymns was considered questionable, the annual conference in 1951 resolved that the Literature Committee make a study of this hymnal, paying particular attention to the baptism and communion hymns. This committee was also to study the possibility of undertaking the publication of a Japanese Lutheran Hymnal or joining with other Lutherans in getting such a hymnal published.<sup>13</sup>

Shibata presented the findings of the Literature Committee to the convention in 1952. He gave a classification of hymns made on the basis of his impressions, judgments, or suspicions as to whether the hymn taught Jesus. Hymns were classified as inclined to Calvinism, Arminianism, etc., as not objection-

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<sup>13</sup>"Minutes of Japan Mission Conference," July 10-13, 1951, p. 9, par. 60.

able, but sentimental, or as approved.<sup>14</sup>

No action was taken by the mission in regard to the publication of a Japanese Lutheran Hymnal, since the United Lutheran Church had already undertaken the task of preparing a Lutheran Hymnal with revised liturgy. It was hoped that this hymnal would be ready by 1955.<sup>15</sup>

#### Lutheran Literature Society

At the conference in 1951, Danker presented information concerning the All-Lutheran Conference and the proposed Lutheran Literature Society. He emphasized that these organizations provided a level on which the mission could work together with other Lutheran groups, get acquainted with them, and build up understanding and confidence before starting doctrinal discussions. He also stressed that the mission needed the abilities of these experienced Lutheran writers. Danker was a member of the committee that drew up the constitution for the proposed Lutheran Literature Society. This constitution included a phrase empowering each group to veto the production of any material considered not satisfactory by that group. The mission had already been able to influence the type of literature produced by the All-Lutheran Conference, as, for example, the Fukuin Shimibun (Gospel Newspaper) and the

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<sup>14</sup>"Proceedings," op. cit., p. 40, par. 157.

<sup>15</sup>"Minutes of Literature Committee Meeting," March 19, 1952, op. cit., p. 9.

Bible History which was to be published, based on the Advanced Bible History published by Concordia Publishing House.<sup>16</sup>

The Board of Foreign Missions approved of the mission joining the Lutheran Literature Society and authorized the payment of the \$200 initial fee.<sup>17</sup>

The Lutheran Literature Society was formed at Nojiri, August 10, 1951, with every Lutheran body in Japan joining it. Danker was elected Vice-President of the organization. He had been authorized by the Executive Committee of the Missouri Synod mission to offer the Lutheran Literature Society office space in the Tokyo Lutheran Center, but no office space was needed at that time. At the organizational meeting, Heerboth and the Rev. Kiyoshi Hirai, who succeeded Dr. Chitose Kishi as president of the Japan Lutheran Church, were commissioned to make a survey of existing literature.<sup>18</sup>

Work done by the Lutheran Literature Society up to the middle of 1952 was reported as the following. A revised translation of Luther's Small Catechism, in more understandable Japanese, appeared in the fall of 1951. A large number of tracts for various purposes were to be coming off the press shortly. The Fukuin Shimbun (Gospel Newspaper) was

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<sup>16</sup>"Minutes of Japan Mission Conference," July 10-13, 1951, op. cit., p. 7, par. 56.

<sup>17</sup>"Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting," Aug. 2, 1951, p. 20.

<sup>18</sup>"Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting," Sept. 7, 1951, p. 22.



being published monthly, with circulation then at 8,000 copies. The Bible History, mentioned above, and a Church History were in work and were to be published by the end of 1952.<sup>19</sup> A devotional book with one page for each day of the year was planned.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>"Reports and Memorials," op. cit., pp. 7 f.

<sup>20</sup>"Proceedings," op. cit., p. 14, par. 25.

#### Missionaries' Language Preparation

The first major task for every field missionary who came to Japan was that of gaining a speaking knowledge of the Japanese language. The first men who arrived on the field immediately began mission work among the Japanese, either by conducting their classes in English, or by using an interpreter. At the same time they studied the language with private tutors, or, if possible, attended a language school. During the first part of 1859 several missionaries were attending the Nagasaki Japanese language school. However, at its convention in 1861, the mission decided to begin its own language school in the newly acquired Tokyo Lutheran Center.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Minutes of Japan Mission Conference, July 10-13, 1861, pp. 4-5, par. 22.

## CHAPTER IX

### ACTIVITIES OF THE JAPAN MISSION CONFERENCE

This chapter will attempt to bring together a number of topics which have contributed to the development of the Missouri Synod mission in Japan and which are related to the Japan Mission Conference. After a discussion of the language preparation of the missionaries, the chapter will consider briefly each of the annual conventions of the Japan Mission Conference, the All-Lutheran Free Conferences, Medical Missions, and the Lutheran Hour.

#### Missionaries' Language Preparation

The first major task for every full time missionary who came to Japan was that of gaining a speaking knowledge of the Japanese language. The first men who arrived on the field immediately began mission work among the Japanese, either by conducting their classes in English, or by using an interpreter. At the same time they studied the language with private tutors, or, if possible, attended a language school. During the first part of 1951 several missionaries were attending the Naganuma Japanese language school. However, at its convention in 1951, the mission resolved to begin its own language school in the newly acquired Tokyo Lutheran Center.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Minutes of Japan Mission Conference," July 10-13, 1951, pp. 4 f., par. 39.

The language school had its formal beginning on September 10, 1951, the day after the dedication of the Tokyo Lutheran Center,<sup>2</sup> with Missionary Roy A. Suelflow in charge. A number of Japanese people were selected and trained as teachers.<sup>3</sup> After Suelflow left Japan, Mr. Robert Epp was placed in charge.

The second quarter of the language school started on April 14, 1952. A couple from the Lutheran Brethren mission had been enrolled in the first quarter. They were well satisfied and told others about the school, with the result that in the second quarter thirteen students from other missions enrolled.<sup>4</sup>

In order to clarify its language study policy, the mission at its convention in 1952 resolved that a new missionary spend his first year on the field entirely in language study without other work except in such cases where the Board of Foreign Missions or Executive Committee or Conference Chairman recognize an urgency to do otherwise.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>William J. Danker, "Missionaries' Memorandum," n.d., p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>"Statistician's Report for 1951 Japan Mission," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 49, March, 1952, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup>William J. Danker, "Missionaries' Memorandum," April 17, 1952, p. 2.

<sup>5</sup>"Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Convention of the Japan Mission Conference of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod," July 1-4, 1952, pp. 31 f., par. 109.

In order to establish a definite language study policy by which the missionaries could be guided, the Executive Committee adopted the following three resolutions:

- a) That as a matter of policy, a missionary who has opportunity for one year of full time language study, during the next two years make a gradual transition from the use of English to Japanese in his mission work, this transition to be completed at the end of his third year on the field at which time he will dispense with the use of an interpreter in his mission activities.
- b) That those who have not had opportunity for one year of full time language study be granted until the end of their fourth year on the field to make the transition to the use of Japanese, at which time they will dispense with the use of an interpreter for mission activities.
- c) Whereas a three-year term of language study as provided for in the Missionaries Manual from experience has proved insufficient for a missionary to be self-proficient in the spoken and written Japanese,

It was further resolved that after three years on the field a missionary in Japan be granted the use of combination language-secretary help within the limits of the budget and with the approval of each individual request by the area conference and the Executive Committee.<sup>6</sup>

#### Japan Mission Conferences

On August 9 and 10, 1949, Missionaries Danker, Egolf, Hass, Heerboth, Meyer, Shibata, and Strege gathered at the Tokyo Y.M.C.A. for what came to be known later as the first session of the Japan Mission Conference. Danker was asked to serve as temporary chairman until a conference could be

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<sup>6</sup>"Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting," Oct. 1-2, 1952, p. 25.

formally organized.<sup>7</sup>

At this meeting, Dr. Negishi, professor of St. Paul's University, spoke on the topic: "Japanese Psychology and Characteristics Pertinent to Mission Work." Three essays were presented by missionaries, one by Shibata on: "The Use of the Japanese Bible in Missionary Work," one by Hass on: "What Can a Christian Pastor Do to Meet the Communist Challenge?", and one by Meyer on: "The Dynamic Relationship between Justification and Sanctification and Its Importance on the Mission Field."<sup>8</sup>

Mr. Kurosawa, founder and former president of the Nopporo Agricultural School (near Sapporo) was introduced to the conference and through an interpreter he explained the desire of the people of Hokkaido that the Missouri Synod missionaries would teach Bible classes in their two schools in Nopporo.<sup>9</sup>

Much of the remainder of the time at this conference was spent discussing the location and purchasing of property and houses for the missionaries.

Missionaries' Reports indicate that during the month of December, 1949, 7,785 persons were reached through Sunday schools, Bible classes, and worship services.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>"Minutes of Japan Mission Conference," Aug. 9-10, 1949, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>10</sup>"Japan," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 41, March 15, 1950, pp. 2 f.

The second Mission Conference held its sessions in the Tokyo Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., March 1-3, 1950. Since official organization took place at these sessions, this convention has been referred to as the birthday of the Japan Mission Conference. The following were present: Missionaries Danker, Egolf, Hass, Heerboth, Kreyling, Meyer, Shibata, Strege, Suelflow, Zwintscher; Miss Lenschow, Miss Mueller; and Dr. O. H. Schmidt, Executive Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions.<sup>11</sup>

Two essays were presented, one by Heerboth on: "The Christian Approach to the Buddhist Concept of Death," and the other by Hass on: "An Exegetical Study of James 4." Dr. Schmidt presented a number of matters in connection with the organization and building of an indigenous church.<sup>12</sup>

A great deal of time was spent on the adoption of a Constitution and By-Laws. After it had been adopted, the election of officers took place according to the listing in the Constitution. The results of the election were as follows. Chairman: Danker; Vice-Chairman: Shibata; Secretary: Meyer; Treasurer: Kreyling; Language Committee: Suelflow; Literature Committee: Shibata and Heerboth; Welfare Committee: Egolf and Hass; Education Committee: Suelflow, Strege, and Zwintscher; Radio Committee: Kreyling; Committee on History and Statistics:

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<sup>11</sup>"Minutes of Japan Mission Conference," March 1-3, 1950, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 1-3.8.

Suelflow.<sup>13</sup>

At the 1950 conference, there was a lengthy discussion on Christian education. Danker displayed a stimulating poster depicting the steps of development of native workers, beginning with the Bible class, church service, baptism class, Sunday Seminary, Sunday school teacher, Bible class teacher, seminary scholarship, teacher, evangelist, full time worker, and pastor.<sup>14</sup> The discussions on literature, kindergartens, and medical missions that took place at this conference are taken up under their respective subjects elsewhere in this thesis.

Concerning the opportunities and challenges that Japan presented in 1950, Danker wrote:

There are still 12,000 villages in Japan of 5,000 population and under where no Christian work has been started. And there isn't a single one where a thriving Sunday School could not be started at the drop of a hat--if we had the workers and the buildings.<sup>15</sup>

There is no mass movement to Christianity in Japan. It is a patient process of winning one by one just as it is in the States. But what is encouraging and significant is that the old hostility is gone. There is much interest in Christianity and there is no great difficulty in gathering hearers. But the people ask many questions, and that is probably all to the good. The number of those we are baptizing at this time is relatively small, when compared

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<sup>13</sup>"Minutes," 1950, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>15</sup>Description accompanying slide no. 57 of a set of slides completed by William J. Danker about May, 1950, a copy of which is in the visual aids library of the Foreign Missions Society, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.

with our Bible classes with their large enrollment, but we trust that this will help to lay a solid foundation for the future. The soil is receptive, and the word which is being heard by so many will surely bear fruit.<sup>16</sup>

Meanwhile in the United States, the Forty-First Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod convened in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, June 21-30, 1950. The report of the Board of Foreign Missions to this convention stated that up to that date the mission in Japan had no chapels of its own, but had to meet in private homes or in rented rooms. The Board emphasized the importance of acquiring places of worship, so that the condition would not continue which had been reported by one missionary, who said: "I don't dare say anything about a Sunday school because I don't know where to put the swarms of children who are clamoring for a chance to come."<sup>17</sup> An unprinted memorial referred to Committee Two of the convention presented the need and opportunities in Japan and asked that permission be granted to call twenty pastors and to appoint twenty vicars for two years, and that Synod make provisions for the added expenditures which this move would entail. The convention adopted a resolution that the Board be encouraged to undertake special and vigorous efforts to meet this extraordinary challenge and that the Fiscal Conference of the Missouri

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<sup>16</sup>William J. Danker, Letter dated Jan. 6, 1950, The Badger Lutheran, April 13, 1950, pp. 4 f.

<sup>17</sup>Proceedings of the Forty-First Regular Convention of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, June 21-30, 1950, pp. 467 f.



Synod be requested to make provisions for the special and additional costs of this unusual situation.<sup>18</sup>

A resolution of this convention was adopted which initiated a ten million dollar expansion program for missions and education, to be called "Conquest for Christ." Some of the funds later collected in this program were allocated to the mission in Japan.

During the month of December, 1950, the twelve missionaries in Japan reached some 17,000 people.<sup>19</sup>

The first four men sent on two-year vicarage assignments were Clifford Brege, Elwood Fromm, Lester Hall, and Richard Poetter, all from Concordia Seminary, Springfield, Illinois. After two weeks of intensive and concentrated study in the mission school of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, they left for Japan, arriving there the day before Christmas, 1950.<sup>20</sup> Vicars Fromm and Hall arrived back in the United States on July 16, 1952. At the present time they are completing their studies at Springfield.<sup>21</sup>

The third meeting of the Japan Mission Conference was held in the Tokyo Lutheran Center, July 10-13, 1951. The fol-

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. 472 f.

<sup>19</sup> "Japan," The Mission Call, VI, No. 3, 7.

<sup>20</sup> Herman H. Koppelman, "Missionary Travels," The Lutheran Witness, March 20, 1951, p. 87.

<sup>21</sup> "Arrived Home," Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 51, Sept., 1952, p. 6.

lowing were present: Missionaries Auw, Bringewatt, Danker, Egolf, Glock, Hass, Heerboth, Kreyling, Meyer, Popp, Shibata, Strege, Suelflow, Zschiegner, Zwintscher; Miss Lenschow, Miss Mueller; Vicars Brege, Fromm, Hall, and Poetter.<sup>22</sup>

Two essays were read to the convention, one by Egolf on: "Soteriology in Romans," and the other by Hass on: "Exegesis of James 5."

Considerable time was spent at the convention on constitutional changes. Other topics discussed and the action taken on them, such as the missionaries' language school, literature, All-Lutheran Conference, Lutheran Literature Society, Tokyo Bible Institute, Hanno High School, and medical work, are considered elsewhere in this thesis.

In August, 1951, six vicars from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Donald Becker, William Lange, Dean Lueking, Arbie Patschke, Roy Schroeder, and Robert Wennerstrom, arrived, as did also Mr. Erward H. Tewes, the business manager for the mission. The duties of the latter included serving as treasurer for the mission, supervising property and buildings, purchasing, managing the Tokyo Lutheran Center, and in general being of assistance to the missionaries wherever his business knowledge and experience were needed.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>"Minutes of Japan Mission Conference," July 10-13, 1951, p. 1.

<sup>23</sup>"Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting," Sept. 7, 1951, p. 23.

The Fourth Annual Convention of the Japan Mission Conference met in the Tokyo Lutheran Center, July 1-4, 1952. The following were present: Missionaries Auw, Bergt, Bringewatt, Danker, Egolf, Epp, Glock, Hass, Heerboth, Hintz, Kreyling, Meyer, Pallmeyer, Popp, Shibata, Strege, Tewes, Zschiegner, Zwintscher; Miss Lenschow, Miss Mueller; Vicars Becker, Brege, Lange, Lueking, Patschke, Poetter, Schroeder, and Wennerstrom. The Rev. Herman H. Koppelman, Assistant Executive Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions, was also present for this convention.<sup>24</sup>

Two essays were delivered to the convention, one by Zwintscher on: "Pastoral Care of New Christians as Demonstrated by St. Paul in Galatians," and the other by Bergt on: "The Wrath of God."

Taking as his theme a portion of Isaiah 54, the chairman in his opening message stressed that the phase of lengthening the cords in the mission was passing for the present. The time had come to emphasize even more than had been done in the past the words of Isaiah: "Strengthen thy stakes."<sup>25</sup>

The conference adopted a constitutional change regarding the Executive Committee, so that it would be composed of the Chairman of the conference and one member from each area, Kanto, Niigata, and Hokkaido. The Chairman of the conference

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<sup>24</sup>"Proceedings," 1952, op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

was to serve as chairman of the Executive Committee.<sup>26</sup>

Election results were as follows. Chairman: Danker; Vice-Chairman: Bergt; Secretary: Meyer; Treasurer: Tewes; Executive Committee: Heerboth, Zwintscher, Strege; Language Committee: Egolf; Literature Committee: Heerboth, Shibata; Medical Committee: Hass, Miss Lenschow, Miss Mueller; Education Committee: Epp, Strege, Meyer; Radio Committee: Bergt, Shibata, the Lutheran Hour Director (Glock); Committee on History and Statistics: Bringewatt; Auditing Committee: Kreyling, Glock; Representatives for the All-Lutheran Conference: Danker, Shibata; Representative for the Lutheran Literature Society: Danker.

A resolution was adopted by the conference stating that since they were already severely handicapped by a manpower shortage and since the time had come to build up the work already begun, no new work except that immediately related to the existing mission stations should be begun without approval by the local conference and thereupon by the Executive Committee.<sup>27</sup>

The discussion and the action taken in regard to literature, the Lutheran Hour, language study, Sunday school conferences, kindergartens, Vacation Bible Schools, local Bible institutes, Tokyo Bible Institute, the proposed seminary, the

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., pp. 11 f., par. 14.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 40, par. 154.

library in the Tokyo Lutheran Center, and medical work are taken up elsewhere in this thesis.

In 1952 the Executive Committee decided to establish area audio-visual aids libraries at Sapporo, Niigata, and Totsuka when funds would become available.<sup>28</sup> The Chairman appointed the following as the Audio-Visual Aids Committee: Epp, Glock, Kreyling, and Neujahr.<sup>29</sup> The Executive Committee had decided to submit a budget request for 1953 for loud speaker equipment, especially for Niigata and Hokkaido.<sup>30</sup> However, at a later meeting this matter had to be reconsidered in view of a reduced budget for the 1953 fiscal year.<sup>31</sup> In the fall of 1952 it was reported that besides the one movie projector then in Tokyo, another was on its way from the United States. It was decided that the new projector should be allocated to Hokkaido.<sup>32</sup>

Because of the Korean War, quite a number of Lutherans in the American military forces were again passing through Tokyo. To assist in caring for these people spiritually, the Lutheran Service Commission stationed the Rev. Edwin Sohn in Tokyo as service pastor. He arrived there in August,

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<sup>28</sup>"Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting," March 7, 1952, p. 8.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., May 2, 1952, p. 13.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., July 4, 1952, p. 23.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., Oct. 1-2, 1952, p. 24.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

1952. He thus relieved Bergt and other missionaries of many responsibilities in ministering to those in uniform.<sup>33</sup> Office space was rented by the Lutheran Service Commission in the Tokyo Lutheran Center.<sup>34</sup>

#### All-Lutheran Free Conferences

Danker and Shibata served as representatives of the Missouri Synod mission at the All-Lutheran Free Conferences at Kobe on October 9, 1951, and at Tokyo in April, 1952. At the Kobe conference, Danker delivered the first essay read at one of these informal conferences. His subject was: "Evangelism: A Scriptural Interpretation." He was asked to prepare a Lutheran comity map. This was done, and copies of it were distributed at the meeting in April, 1952.<sup>35</sup>

On August 13-15, 1952, a summer conference of Lutheran missionaries from nine different Lutheran groups was held at the Y.W.C.A. camp at Lake Nojiri. One hundred people registered for this free and informal gathering. It was learned that the total number of Lutheran missionaries working or appointed to work in Japan was about two hundred fifty. This

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<sup>33</sup>William J. Danker, "Japan News Letter," Oct. 8, 1952, p. 7.

<sup>34</sup>"Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting," Oct. 1-2, 1952, p. 34.

<sup>35</sup>"Reports and Memorials of the Japan Conference of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod," June 30-July 4, 1952, p. 7.

was from twenty to twenty-five per cent of the total Protestant missionary strength in the country. Missionary Heerboth of the Missouri Synod mission conducted a discussion of Dr. C. F. W. Walther's Law and Gospel during the sessions.<sup>36</sup>

#### Medical Missions

A discussion of possible medical mission work in Japan took place in the 1950 Mission Conference. The discussion centered chiefly around the possibilities of setting up a mobile unit or a dental clinic. The Chairman was asked to appoint a committee to investigate the matter of medical missions further.<sup>37</sup>

The same conference adopted a resolution stating that items of welfare from donors in the United States should be distributed free of charge to the most needy persons, that those among the Christians who received such gifts should be informed that they could show their appreciation in the form of an offering or some kind of service, and that all welfare activities were to be in accord with national and international regulations.<sup>38</sup>

At its 1951 meeting the Mission Conference resolved that each mission group be encouraged to appoint or elect a welfare

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<sup>36</sup>Danker, "Japan News Letter," op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>37</sup>"Minutes," 1950, op. cit., p. 11, par. 101 f.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., par. 103.

committee from among its members, both to investigate petitions for aid and available local resources, using such resources to the fullest possible extent.<sup>39</sup> The Welfare Committee of the conference was then dissolved, and a new Medical and Social Welfare Committee was organized.<sup>40</sup> Miss Norma Lenschow, Miss Adelheid Mueller, and Missionary Egolf were elected to this newly formed group.<sup>41</sup>

Miss Mueller presented a detailed report on the work of the Lutheran Medical Association to the 1951 conference. She stated that although the association had been organized only in May,<sup>42</sup> it had been carrying on many activities, including sick visits, interviews, welfare advice and instructions, sanitation inspections, streptomycin injections, examination of church employees and students, production of literature, etc., all with the goal of evangelization. Most expenses had been borne by the members themselves. Planned projects for the future included: a physician for summer camps, information for children concerning tuberculosis, lectures on welfare work, a society newspaper, training of workers in the United States, and training of mission workers in visiting

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<sup>39</sup>"Minutes," 1951, op. cit., p. 5, par. 42.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 12, par. 88.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 17, par. 138 f.

<sup>42</sup>Mrs. Egolf's Missionary's Report states that it was organized in March.



a tuberculosis hospital or a training institution.<sup>43</sup>

In 1950 and 1951 Missionary Heerboth was engaged in negotiations in behalf of Dr. and Mrs. Nobutaka Azuma, a Japanese couple who will probably play an important role in medical missions for the mission. Dr. Azuma is the son of a Buddhist missionary. He went with his parents to the Philippines at an early age. His father died when he was five years old, and he was sent by his brother to a Jesuit high school. He attended a university in the Philippines, where he received a degree in medicine, as well as a license to practice medicine in that country. It was suggested to him to go to Japan to obtain a medical license there, also. While he was there, World War II broke out and he could not return to the Philippines. Later the chance to return came with an offer to work at the Japanese Naval Hospital in Manila. He remained there a year and then returned to St. Luke's Hospital in Tokyo. All of his relatives, a total of thirteen, were lost in the war, including his brother, who had become a Buddhist priest. His mother, sisters, nieces, and nephews died of starvation and cold during the civilian evacuation.<sup>44</sup>

Dr. Azuma then worked for five years as clinical pathologist at an American Army hospital in Sapporo. He talked with a Lutheran doctor there, Captain Joel H. Richert. The latter

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<sup>43</sup>"Minutes," 1951, op. cit., p. 10, par. 76.

<sup>44</sup>"Japanese Doctor and Wife Here Preparing for Medical Missions," The St. Louis Lutheran, May 12, 1951, p. 9.

suggested that he visit Missionary Heerboth.<sup>45</sup> After instructing the Azumas for some time, Heerboth baptized Dr. Azuma and confirmed his wife on January 13, 1951.<sup>46</sup> He also took care of the arrangements for Dr. and Mrs. Azuma to come to the United States for further medical study at Lutheran Hospital in St. Louis, Missouri. They arrived in St. Louis on March 30, 1951.<sup>47</sup> They intend to return to Japan and set up a modern medical clinic in Sapporo, thus giving great impetus to the mission's medical work.

The 1952 Mission Conference devoted considerable attention to medical missions. A resolution was adopted expressing gratitude to the Board of Foreign Missions for beginning to make plans for Dr. Azuma's work in Hokkaido by placing Miss Lenschow in Sapporo where she could lay the groundwork for medical activities. The same resolution urged the Board to make plans for providing facilities for Dr. Azuma's work before his return to Japan.<sup>48</sup>

In October, 1952, the Executive Committee submitted a request to the Board for authorization of an expenditure of \$10,000 for purchase of land across the street from the Yama-

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Letter from Paul Strege to the writer, dated Jan. 15, 1951.

<sup>47</sup> "Japanese Doctor," op. cit.

<sup>48</sup> "Proceedings," 1952, op. cit., p. 22, par. 62.

hana (Immanuel) Chapel in Sapporo as a site for the proposed clinic.<sup>49</sup>

### The Lutheran Hour

Missionary Kreyling, reporting as the Radio Committee to the 1950 Mission Conference, stated that a Mr. Ninno of Radio Tokyo, who had made certain promises to the Lutheran Layman's League while he had been in America, was not able to keep his promises, since he had been replaced during his absence by a Mr. Manni, a man who was not favorable to the League's plan for radio evangelism. Although the mission had scheduled the Lutheran Hour on the regular religious broadcast of December 11, 1949, its program was suddenly displaced shortly before that date.<sup>50</sup>

At the 1951 conference, Kreyling reported that the Lutheran Hour was to be broadcast in English over the Armed Forces Radio Service (AFRS) every third Sunday. A Japanese broadcast might be possible in the future when the commercial stations would be in operation.<sup>51</sup>

At the same conference, Danker stated that several hundred responses had been received to the short wave broadcast of the Lutheran Hour from Manila. One person in Tokyo had

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<sup>49</sup>"Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting," Oct. 1-2, 1952, p. 25.

<sup>50</sup>"Minutes," 1950, op. cit., p. 5, par. 48.

<sup>51</sup>"Minutes," 1951, op. cit., p. 5, par. 45.

been won through this means. Most of the letters received came from areas where the mission was not working and were therefore turned over to other Lutheran groups.<sup>52</sup>

Dr. Eugene R. Bertermann, Radio Director of the International Lutheran Hour, was in Japan from September 5-14, 1951, for the purpose of inaugurating the broadcasting of the Lutheran Hour there. During his stay the contract was signed with the first of the new private commercial stations, Station JOAR of Nagoya.<sup>53</sup> This 10,000-watt station opened on September 30 as the first commercial station ever to operate in Japan. The initial broadcast of the Lutheran Hour took place on October 28.<sup>54</sup> Missionary Glock became Lutheran Hour Director, with Danker and Meyer assisting.<sup>55</sup>

As a result of Dr. Bertermann's visit the Lutheran Layman's League received permission to transmit a one-half hour broadcast over the one hundred twenty station network of Nippon Hosso Kyokai, the Japan Broadcasting Corporation, on November 4, 1951. This government-owned, non-commercial network covers all of Japan from Hokkaido to Kyushu. This was a one-time broadcast only.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 6, par. 46.

<sup>53</sup> William J. Danker, "Missionaries' Memorandum," n.d., p. 1.

<sup>54</sup> "Reports and Memorials," op. cit., p. 20.

<sup>55</sup> Danker, "Missionaries' Memorandum," n.d., op. cit.

<sup>56</sup> "Report of First-Fruits from Japan," Bringing Christ to the Nations, Lent-Easter, 1952, p. 15.

As newer stations began operations, the Lutheran Hour steadily increased the number of outlets over which its program was broadcast. By May, 1952, the program was on the following eight stations:

JOAR	Nagoya	10,000 watts	October 28, 1951
JONR	Osaka	10,000 watts	November 18, 1951
JOFR	Fukuoka	5,000 watts	December 9, 1951
JOKR	Tokyo	50,000 watts	December 30, 1951
JOHR	Sapporo	3,000 watts	March 9, 1952
JOSR	Nagano	500 watts	March 30, 1952
JOIR	Sendai	3,000 watts	April 6, 1952
JOMR	Kanazawa	1,000 watts	May 11, 1952 <sup>57</sup>

By March, 1953, three more stations had been added: JOZR in Shizuoka, JODR in Nagota, and JOER in Hiroshima. These eleven stations covered more than half the population and brought the Gospel within reach of twelve million families.<sup>58</sup>

In order to integrate the Lutheran Hour with the Mission Conference organization and to make the Lutheran Hour responsible to it, the 1952 conference adopted a resolution changing the By-Laws of the Constitution so that the Radio Committee, instead of having one member would thereafter have three members, one to be the Japan Lutheran Hour Director and the other two to be elected biennially.<sup>59</sup>

The format of the Lutheran Hour broadcast is from start to finish a product created in Japan, and is not based on the

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<sup>57</sup>"Reports and Memorials," op. cit.

<sup>58</sup>"'Hour' Now on 11 Stations in Japan," The Lutheran Layman, March 1, 1953, p. 5.

<sup>59</sup>"Proceedings," 1952, op. cit., pp. 12 f., par. 19.

program as it is presented in the United States.<sup>60</sup> In May, 1952, Japan was the only one of the fifty-five countries in which the Lutheran Hour was being broadcast which received the greater portion of its support directly from Missouri Synod funds.<sup>61</sup>

Missionary Glock reported to the Executive Committee in its meeting in October, 1952, concerning the first year's operation of the Lutheran Hour. From October, 1951, to September, 1952, 273 broadcasts were made. The budget for the year was \$41,000. The average cost per station per broadcast was \$110. Considering a potential audience at that time of forty-three million, the cost for each listener had been 1/250¢. The mission of the Augustana Lutheran Church was paying the broadcasting costs over the Hiroshima station. Requests had been received from Hawaii and the Philippines for tape recordings of the broadcasts. These were to be sent out as soon as funds were received for their cost. One Sunday a month was being set aside for a sermon by one of the missionaries. A budget of \$85,000 was planned for the second year of operation. During September, 1952, mail response totaled 1,702 post cards and 3,743 letters. During the month 4,108 Bible Correspondence Course tests were received, and 1,744 people applied for the course, making a total of 5,852 Corre-

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>61</sup> "Reports and Memorials," op. cit., p. 21.

spondence Course contacts for that month. A total of 781 Bibles was sent out upon request. The Home Bible League supplied the Bibles free of charge and the Lutheran Hour paid only the postage on them. Income from Japanese sources during the month totaled about \$140.<sup>62</sup>

Names and addresses of those who write in to the Lutheran Hour are being sent to missionaries in the vicinity, who, in turn, visit the individuals and seek to bring them into Bible classes or other mission activities. Several people have thus been won as a direct result of the Lutheran Hour broadcasts and the follow up work being done by the missionaries.

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<sup>62</sup>"Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting," Oct. 1-2, 1952, p. 27.

The situation of the mission work in Japan has changed very much in a short time. A year ago, you could read of wide open doors, mass meetings, and revivals in Japan; today we are looking for mass meetings in vain. The situation after the war, brought it to pass, that American missionaries were almost the only ones who came to Japan. Many Japanese expected all help and salvation

## CHAPTER X

### CONCLUSION

Immediately after the close of World War II, there was a great deal of apparent interest and curiosity in Japan concerning the Christian religion. The Japanese came in large numbers to attend religious meetings, as has been indicated throughout this thesis. But, as Missionary Hass puts it: "Whenever reading of great numbers in Japan, a cautious interpretation is usually in order."<sup>1</sup> The curiosity subsided and the numbers attending Sunday schools and Bible classes were no longer what they had once been. The signing of the peace treaty in September, 1951, after which Japan was again independent and the Occupation forces were withdrawn, seemed to hasten the return of Japan to its former attitudes and concern for the ancient religions. There has been a great revival of interest in Shinto and Buddhism. This has become apparent to missionaries in all denominations. Otto Mosimann, of the Liebenzell Mission in Japan, states:

The situation of the mission work in Japan has changed very much in a short time. A year ago, you could read of wide open doors, mass meetings, and revivals in Japan; today we are looking for mass meetings in vain. The situation after the war, brought it to pass, that American missionaries were almost the only ones who came to Japan. Many Japanese expected all help and salvation

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<sup>1</sup>Mimeographed letter from LeRoy Hass, dated Nov. 23, 1952, p. 3.



from America. Now they have changed their attitude against America and with it against Christianity. They are putting Christianity and Communism on the same level and oppose it as "foreign ideology." This is not yet noticed in a general or in a mean way, but you realize it. Since the peace treaty came into effect, Japan very rapidly returned to her old traditions. The Emperor, personally, went to Ise a few days ago (where the Goddess of the Sun is worshipped as the patron of the Emperor's family) and reported to the ancestors what is going on in Japan. Recently you could read on a sign: "Let the eight million gods of Japan rise again." On my trip to the south of Japan I was amazed to see the building of new temples in progress.<sup>2</sup>

Missionaries of the Missouri Synod mission were also noticing the same thing. Vicar Robert Wennerstrom writes: "We are convinced that the wide open doors everyone was talking about in Japan two or three years ago are rapidly slamming shut and opposition is increasing."<sup>3</sup>

However, the fact that numbers were decreasing did not necessarily mean that the work was not progressing satisfactorily. In a survey of the year 1952, the International Review of Missions states:

American evangelists visiting Japan to conduct campaigns among specific groups note a diminution in the number of people attending meetings out of curiosity, and evidence, rather, of a search for a lasting faith. Results, therefore, while numerically less spectacular, may well prove to be more permanent in character.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Otto Mosimann, "Japan," Liebenzell Mission, Sept.-Oct., 1952, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>Mimeographed letter from Robert Wennerstrom, dated Dec. 2, 1952, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>"A Survey of the Year 1952," The International Review of Missions, Jan., 1953, p. 4.

The changing conditions in Japan did not mean that the Missouri Synod mission would decrease its efforts in that country. On the contrary, the change in attitude on the part of the people called for a renewal of consecration, prayer, and effort to meet the new challenge that Japan presented. Dr. O. H. Schmidt, Executive Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions, was asked by the writer on April 17, 1953, for a personal statement with reference to the present state of the mission's activities in Japan. He replied:

The first somewhat spectacular advance and rapid expansion has now turned into the second phase of a mission enterprise which is not so glamorous, but means a steady digging in, building up the members gained, working patiently to bring in others one by one, and training the members to do personal mission work. All of this is not so dramatic, but is very necessary for the healthy development of an indigenous church.

In the early part of 1953, Missionary William J. Danker wrote:

We are deeply grateful to Synod and to various groups and individuals for the generous support given our new mission in Japan over the past four years in the way of personnel, buildings, equipment, and maintenance.

Now it is up to us on the field to continue to strengthen our stakes, to dig in firmly and to preach the Gospel in season and out of season to consolidate the good beginning which God has permitted us, by His grace, to make.<sup>5</sup>

Danker feels that the needs for the immediate future lie especially in the area of additional personnel--a steady supply of new missionaries, together with trained personnel in certain

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<sup>5</sup>Letter from William J. Danker to the writer, dated April 2, 1953.

specialized lines, particularly in the fields of literature and student work.<sup>6</sup>

In looking over the facts presented in this thesis, one will doubtless become convinced that the first missionaries of the Missouri Synod to enter Japan did their mission work thoroughly, as they under God established the church there on solid ground. They are to be commended for the vision and foresight they have shown in these early years as they conducted their mission work on a firm Biblical basis with a view to the establishment of an indigenous church as soon as possible. In spite of the changing political and religious attitudes in Japan during these few years, which the missionaries had anticipated, they have not compromised their Christian principles, but have done all in their power to establish a truly Christian Church. They have continued to proclaim the Word of God, having full confidence that their efforts were not in vain, knowing that God's Word would not return to Him void, but that it would accomplish that which He pleased and would prosper wherever it was preached.

SOLI DEO GLORIA!

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF AMERICAN MISSIONARY PERSONNEL

Name	Date of Arrival	Principal Station(s)
Danker, William J. and Mrs.	Sept. 14, 1948 <sup>1</sup>	Azabu, Tokyo
Meyer, Richard and Mrs. <sup>2</sup>	Dec. 10, 1948	Kugenuma; Totsuka
Egolf, Ralph and Mrs. <sup>2</sup>	Dec. 18, 1948	Yokohama
Hass, LeRoy and Mrs. <sup>2</sup>	Dec. 18, 1948	Sapporo
Shibata, George and Mrs.	April 29, 1949	Meguro, Tokyo
Heerboth, Paul and Mrs.	July 31, 1949	Sapporo; Tokyo Luth. Center
Strege, Paul and Mrs.	July 31, 1949	Sapporo; Asahigawa
Lenschow, Miss Norma <sup>3</sup>	Sept. 21, 1949	Tokyo; Sapporo
Mueller, Miss Adelheid <sup>3</sup>	Sept. 21, 1949	Tokyo
Kreyling, Paul and Mrs.	Oct. 1, 1949	Hanno; Urawa
Suelflow, Roy and Mrs.	Nov. 16, 1949 <sup>4</sup>	Niigata; Tokyo Luth. Center
Zwintscher, Victor and Mrs.	Dec. 17, 1949	Niigata; Shirone
Brege, Clifford <sup>5</sup>	Dec. 21, 1950	Shibata; Niitsu
Fromm, Elwood <sup>5</sup>	Dec. 21, 1950 <sup>6</sup>	Sapporo; Otaru
Hall, Lester <sup>5</sup>	Dec. 21, 1950 <sup>6</sup>	Azabu, Tokyo; Ikegami
Poetter, Richard <sup>5</sup>	Dec. 21, 1950	Kamo; Haniuda
Bringewatt, Ralph and Mrs.	Jan. 7, 1951 <sup>7</sup>	Niigata
Zschiegner, Max	March 10, 1951	Omiya; Urawa
Auw, Hugh and Mrs.	March 30, 1951	Sapporo; Otaru
Glock, Delmar and Mrs.	March 30, 1951	Tokyo Luth. Center
Popp, Milton and Mrs.	June 1, 1951	Itabashi; Shibata
Bergt, Elmer and Mrs.	July 24, 1951	Tokyo Luth. Center
Becker, Donald <sup>5</sup>	Aug. 3, 1951 <sup>8</sup>	Kugenuma; Totsuka
Lange, William <sup>5</sup>	Aug. 3, 1951	Meguro, Tokyo; Ikegami
Lueking, Dean <sup>5</sup>	Aug. 3, 1951	Yokohama; Ofuna
Patschke, Arbie <sup>5</sup>	Aug. 3, 1951	Nagaoka; Sanjo
Schroeder, Roy <sup>5</sup>	Aug. 3, 1951	Sapporo
Wennerstrom, Robert	Aug. 3, 1951 <sup>12</sup>	Asahigawa; Fukagawa
Epp, Robert <sup>9</sup> and Mrs.	Aug. 16, 1951	Tokyo <sup>10</sup>
Tewes, Erward <sup>11</sup> and Mrs.	Aug. 16, 1951	Tokyo
Pallmeyer, Paul and Mrs.	Sept. 6, 1951	Asahigawa; Fukagawa
Hintz, Richard and Mrs.	Oct. 3, 1951	Sapporo
Neujahr, Robert <sup>9</sup> and Mrs.	Sept. 21, 1952	Tokyo <sup>10</sup>
Theiss, O. H. and Mrs.	Oct. 12, 1952	Tokyo Luth. Center
Carow, Albert	Feb. 6, 1953	Tokyo <sup>10</sup>
Jastram, Robert and Mrs.	Feb. 6, 1953	Tokyo <sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Mrs. Danker arrived on Feb. 12, 1949.

<sup>2</sup>From China.



## APPENDIX B

## STATISTICAL REVIEW FOR 1952

Station	Missionary in Charge	Yr. Begun	Baptized Souls	Communicants	No. Communed	Children Bap.	Adults Bap.	Confirmed	No. Services	Attendance	Sunday School Enrollment	Bible Class Enrollment
HOKKAIDO AREA												
Asahigawa	Strege	'49	68	59	233	28	23	2	100	4,275	86	82
Bihoro	Strege	'51			56		2		32	398	(Discontinued)	
Fukagawa	Pallmeyer	'51	7	7	7		7	7	10	278		37
Misumai	Hass	'49	3	3	5							20
Miyashita	Pallmeyer	'52										28
Obihiro	Hass	'51	6	6	22 (Discontinued)							
Otaru	Auw	'50	2	2			2	2	17	2,4547	60	46
Sap.(Gr.)	Hass	'51	16	15	90		8	8	55	1,482	62	75
Sap.(Im.)	Hass	'49	49	44	186	2	5	5	58	2,172	120	100
Sap.Y.Cent.	Hintz	'52							14	239		25
Tomari	Hass	'52	1	1	1						90	
Toyohira	Hintz	'52										8
NIIGATA AREA												
Haniuda	Poetter	'51	3	3			3					15
Kamo	Poetter	'50	15	11	48	1	2	1	53	744	75	25
Kuzuzuka	Brege	'51										16
Nagaoka	Patschke	'51							11	124		46
Niigata	Bringewatt	'49	16	16	68		2	1	58	1,807	149	29
Niitsu	Brege	'51									70	12
Nuttari	Patschke	'51										5
Sanjo	Patschke	'51										11
Shibata	Popp	'50	4				4		29	243		18
Shirone	Zwintscher	'50	12	5	14				51	480	65	13
KANTO AREA												
Azabu	Danker	'49	34	31	162	2	9	1	56	1,799		36
Hanno	Kreyling	'49	6	6	34				35	533	50	20
Iidabashi	Bergt	'51	207	21	84		10	2	28	1,858	92	89
Ikegami	Glock	'50	5	2	39	3	2		52	950	70	20
Itabashi	Heerboth	'51	6	6	11				47	1,115		10
Johnson AB	Zschiegner	'51					3	1	(Discontinued)			20
Kugenuma	Meyer	'49	68	48	288	9	13	1	97	3,401	175	95
Meguro	Shibata	'49	91	70	425	16	20	2	67	3,303	243	122
Ofuna	Shibata	'51	33	24	118	6	18	2	52	652	226	23
Omiya	Zschiegner	'52							5	94	223	24
Totsuka	Meyer	'49	53	32	253	7	4		60	2,108	100	81
Urawa	Zschiegner	'50	5	5	40		1		53	1,018	230	31
Yamato	Meyer	'52							1	25	20	23
Yokohama	Egolf	'49	44	42	341	2	16	2	157	3,654	126	188
GRAND TOTALS			567	459	2,525	76	154	37	1,182	35,206	2,332	1,393

APPENDIX C

ANNUAL STATISTICAL SUMMARY

Year	Stations	Souls	Communicants	Baptisms	Confirmations	Burials	No. Communed	Attendance at Services	School Enrollment	Sunday School Enrollment	Bible Class Enrollment
1949	12			11 <sup>1</sup>			92 <sup>1</sup>			742	740
1950	22	193	114	176	46	1	637	20,584	72	1,428	1,062
1951	26	433	278	197	68	2	1,661 <sup>2</sup>	33,740	360	2,727	2,271
1952	34	567	459	230	37	3	2,525	35,206	343	2,332	1,393

<sup>1</sup>Armed services and missionary personnel.

<sup>2</sup>Of these, 489 were armed services and missionary personnel.

## APPENDIX D

### ATTENDANCES AT MEETINGS

September 1, 1950 - December 31, 1952

Month	Reports	BIBLE CLASSES		SUNDAY SCHOOLS		SERVICES		SPEC. MEETINGS	
		Sess.	Attend	Sess.	Attend	Sess.	Attend	Sess.	Attend
Sept. '50	12	163	2,828	40	3,739	42	1,509	2	43
Oct. '50	13	190	3,252	48	3,906	40	1,508		
Nov. '50	14	209	3,775	39	5,433	45	2,727	9	734
Dec. '50	12	148	3,363	45	8,167	57	3,673	11	2,519
Jan. '51	16	171	2,751	41	4,023	49	2,249	1	835
Feb. '51	17	245	3,899	52	5,047	55	2,072		
Mar. '51	18	251	4,337	58	5,519	64	3,096	1	120
Apr. '51	21	324	4,951	74	7,584	79	3,407	18	13,693
May '51	21	244	5,175	75	5,859	65	2,447	18	10,594
June '51	21	324	5,315	76	6,477	66	2,115	12	1,744
July '51	21	237	3,110	90	5,817	76	2,887	9	177
Aug. '51	24	228	3,019	66	3,196	66	2,342	25	1,197
Sept. '51	25	365	5,186	75	4,503	92	3,411	28	3,585
Oct. '51	32	470	5,771	69	5,147	95	2,760	19	2,861
Nov. '51	32	478	6,159	85	6,885	95	2,844	9	576
Dec. '51	31	435	5,892	94	10,888	133	4,255	64	6,281
Jan. '52	31	356	5,439	100	7,424	93	2,653	32	1,690
Feb. '52	32	443	5,402	104	8,341	90	3,207	21	699
Mar. '52	31	469	5,683	125	9,749	132	3,849	57	1,414
Apr. '52	33	473	5,755	116	8,644	113	3,558	63	4,192
May '52	33	512	6,539	125	8,009	109	3,275	66	4,511
June '52	33	511	6,495	144	9,622	121	4,153	59	2,157
July '52	30	428	4,488	119	6,929	101	2,737	68	1,797
Aug. '52	29	506	3,415	112	5,224	111	3,077	154	4,795
Sept. '52	29	422	4,812	105	5,432	83	2,807	54	1,454
Oct. '52	30	493	5,100	98	4,651	96	2,541	84	2,399
Nov. '52	30	462	4,527	118	7,826	124	3,479	73	1,925
Dec. '52	30	351	3,585	103	8,387	115	3,118	134	6,244



APPENDIX E

LAND AND BUILDINGS IN JAPAN - DECEMBER 31, 1952

Place	Land (Tsubo)	Value	Type of Bldg.	Year of Acq./ Constr.	Bldg. Value
<b>HOKKAIDO AREA</b>					
Asahigawa	237.4	\$ 8,000	Chapel	1951	\$ 5,300
Asahigawa	111.	500	Residence	1951	8,000
Otaru	127.4	1,500	Chapel	1952	
Otaru		1,500	Residence	1952	
Sapporo	63.75		Residence #1	1949	6,500
Sapporo	79.82		Residence #2	1949	3,500
Sapporo	79.82		Residence #3	1949	3,500
Sapporo	190.2		Chapel (Maruyama)	1951	4,000
Sapporo	241.05		Chapel (Yamahana)	1951	4,000
Sapporo	100.		Youth Center	1952	53,000
<b>NIIGATA AREA</b>					
Kamo	113.27		Chapel-Residence	1952	3,750
Niigata	237.35		Residence	1949	12,500
Niigata	123.54		Chapel	1950	3,000
Shibata			Residence	1952	12,000
Shirone			Chapel	1952	1,500
<b>KANTO AREA</b>					
Azabu	285.		Residence #1	1949	10,000
Azabu	422.73		Chapel	1950	3,000
Hanno	85.		Native House	1950	500
Hanno			School	1951	35,000
Hanno			Residence	1952	8,500
Kugenuma	300.	1,000	Chapel	1949	5,000
Meguro		1,500	Residence #2	1950	6,000
Meguro	224.40		Chapel	1950	12,000
Ofuna		150	Chapel	1952	
Omiya	187.4		Residence	1951	8,500
Tokyo Center	370.		Office-School	1951	110,000
Tokyo			Residence #3	1951	4,700
Tokyo	334.27	4,200	Residence #4	1951	5,300
Tokyo			Residence #5	1951	5,300
Tokyo	304.3	2,000	Residence #6	1951	4,700
Tokyo			Residence #7	1952	11,000
Tokyo			Residence #8	1952	12,000
Totsuka	Rented		Center	1950	6,000
Totsuka	351.		Residence	1952	5,100
Urawa	1,574.	5,000	School	1952	11,000
Yokohama	Rented		Residence	1950	4,000
Yokohama		350	Residence	1951	6,800
Yokohama	200.		Chapel	1951	5,500
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>\$25,700</b>			<b>\$397,450</b>

Note: Where there is no valuation placed on the land, its value is included under the building valuation.

**APPENDIX F**

**EXPENDITURES FOR JAPAN MISSION**

	To January 31, 1950		
Subsidy		\$ 25,989.51	
Salaries in States		8,028.18	
Travel		7,277.14	
Scholarships		3,255.25	
Pension		383.11	
Medical		433.99	
Equipment Allowances		2,000.00	
Equipment		844.15	
Incidentals		659.15	
Peace Thank Offering -- Buildings		25,000.00	\$ 73,870.48
	To January 31, 1951		
Subsidy		105,662.14	
Salaries in States		1,042.00	
Travel		7,143.08	
Scholarships		2,918.00	
Pension		842.07	
Medical		180.35	
Equipment Allowances		700.00	
Miscellaneous		109.26	
Peace Thank Offering -- Buildings		48,802.45	
Centennial Thank Of. -- Buildings		11,765.73	
Luth. Women's Missionary League -- Bldg.		35,000.00	
Special Gifts		20,984.76	235,149.84
	To January 31, 1952		
Subsidy		224,824.65	
Land and Buildings		30,000.00	
Peace Thank Offering -- Buildings		32,961.23	
Special Gifts		13,304.05	
Travel		4,721.89	
Salaries in States		485.00	
Scholarships		580.50	
Pension		2,862.17	
Miscellaneous		115.93	309,855.42
	To January 31, 1953		
Subsidy		197,091.53	
Land and Buildings		15,732.79	
Peace Thank Offering -- Buildings		14,250.00	
Conquest for Christ -- Buildings		51,549.05	
Special Gifts		7,422.05	
Travel		6,790.28	
Salaries in States		1,793.62	
Scholarships		2,483.00	
Pension		5,448.69	
Equipment Allowances		1,800.00	
Medical		213.71	
Miscellaneous		193.32	304,768.04
			\$ 923,643.78
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>			

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