

Haruaki Odate
6/18/2020
Ministry update

Dear brothers and fathers in Christ in the Presbytery of Mississippi Valley,

I hope and pray that everyone is doing well, even in this COVID 19 situation. I am so thankful for your prayers for my family and me and your faithful support.

Since I was ordained as a teaching elder at the Presbytery meeting in November 2019, my position and responsibility at my home church in Japan are slightly changed. I became a "cooperative missionary" from an "intern" and became able to do benediction and conduct the sacraments. I could have the opportunity of conducting communion twice so far. I am preaching for four different congregations regularly. Two of them are the congregations of my home church, Oyumino Christ Church, where Dan Iverson started about 30 years ago. The other two are newly established churches in the Presbyterian Church in Japan (PCJ). One of them is in Tokyo, and the other is in Sendai, the area where Tsunami hit in 2011. Interestingly, both of them have international congregations and bilingual services. The church in Tokyo was just particularized in the PCJ a few months ago, but the church in Sendai is still a mission church and looking for a pastor.

This time, I want to share the plan for my ministry. I belong to the Keiyo Team of MTW Japan as an ordained minister of PCA. The Keiyo Team covers the ministry in Chiba and the East side of Tokyo, and Dan Iverson has been the team leader. Because Dan needed to focus on his another responsibility as a country director of MTW Japan, the Keiyo Team should have been re-organized. Under this process of re-organization, the Team is going to be four different teams/groups. I will plant a church with support from one of them. As you may know, my call from the PMV is "a church planter in Tokyo/Chiba area." So, I will not be a member of any team nor leader of any of them, but one of them, we temporary call "Chiba City Center Team," will support my church planting in the center of Chiba city. I can make a plan for the church planting and ask the team help, and the team will help/support my ministry. Bob Drews, an experienced elder in the PCA, an MTW missionary to Japan, is a leader of Chiba City Center Team though he is living in the U.S. now. The team has two missionary families and one single missionary guy for now. I have started having conversations with the team and sharing my vision.

Chiba is the biggest city in Chiba prefecture and plays a role as a hub station for commuting to Tokyo. It looks like one of the ancient big cities where Paul planted churches strategically. There is a national university nearby, and we want to do college ministry as a part of our outreach ministries. Because Chiba is a hub station, many different people are passing by every day. Also, many internationals are living in Chiba city. I want to build an international church focusing on college ministry, discipleship, and music ministry with bilingual services.

We are currently living in a place not far from my home church, but we might need to move somewhere close to the center of the city at some point. Before we decide the location to move, we need to pray more and think about the details of our plan for church planting.

These are the overview of my plan so far. I send my update regularly to my supporters. If you have the interest to get my regular update via email, please let me know your email address.

Thank you for reading my annual update.

In Christ,
Haruaki "O-Chan" Odate