

# Hope Miyagi

Relief Ministry of Japan Earthquake

Newsletter -No.11  
2016. Spring  
Shiogama Bible Baptist Church



Christmas concert at Yarn Alive house  
in Shichigahama



Charity concert  
Family Christmas 2015



Hula in Watari



Making Flower Arrangement,  
Takiyama Church



Making Hawaiian Lei,  
Morgan Hill Church



Baptism service



Team from Taiwan at Konan Housechurch



Hula in Shichigahama, C4



Hand massage  
by Mrs. Endo  
from Yamato  
Calvary Chapel

## Looking Back Past Five Years

It has been five years since the disaster on March 11, 2011. As I looked through photos from the last five years, I remembered the many volunteer teams and the various ways they served our community. People who suffered in disaster-affected areas received much needed help,

supplies, and encouragement from the various volunteers who came as well as those who sent various items. Thank you so much for your generous and thoughtful support. We are thankful that you became a part of our lives and encouraged us in Christ.

Hope Miyagi is the social ministry of our church. As the

church is called to be the Body of Christ, we have sought to be the hands and feet of Christ to serve and to share his love through our volunteer work. Many people heard and responded to the good news of Jesus Christ and the eternal hope that he offers. God has given us a lot of joy in seeing precious souls saved in the midst of great suffering.

"Love your neighbor as yourself." "Cry with those who cry." "Go into all the world and preach the gospel." We were motivated by these teachings of Jesus. When we first began our volunteer work, I struggled with pride and with seeking to be a hero. I did not communicate well with our staff nor with those who volunteered alongside Hope Miyagi. When I remember those early days, I realize that I made many people feel uncomfortable and disappointed through how I interacted with them. I still feel badly about that and want to apologize; yet by God's grace and mercy, he still allowed me the privilege of serving various communities for the last five years as part of the body of Christ.

We became friends with the people we visited in temporary housing. Most of these friends have since moved to their new long-term homes and are starting a new season of life in new locations. Although they were initially excited to move to their new homes, many feel alone and isolated. We desire to help to reconnect the with their friends and provide opportunities to interact with one another to help foster good community. We had our first event at the long-term housing recently and about 30 people attended and connected with one another.

Hiromi, our volunteer coordinator, decided to serve with Hope Miyagi for another year. She has become the face of Hope Miyagi in Shichigahama (\*\*one of the communities we have been serving since the disaster\*\*). Hiromi is in the process of raising support to continue this work and is halfway toward reaching her goal. Please consider supporting her and her ministry.

Through the disaster-related relief ministry of Hope Miyagi, we have discovered that serving our community

by meeting felt needs is vital ministry. We have therefore started a food bank NPO called Bread of Life in order to continue serving the community long-term even after the relief effort connected to 3.11 will end. We would like for you to be a part of our new vision, and we thank you for your support and prayers. (Yukimasa Otomo)

## House Church Updates

### Watari (from Kogos)

We are excited to share about the fourth person in our community was baptized since the disaster. Praise the Lord! Mr. Goto, whom we have gotten to know through temporary housing events and the food bank ministry, was baptized in September. He has since moved to his new long-term home, which is close to our house. We have had continued fellowship with him by going to events and doing various activities together. Last Christmas we had many guests attending various programs and concerts. We were very busy getting ready for events and posting fliers, and we are thankful to God for good health during this busy season. We made many friends through temporary housing events. Most of them have moved to their new long-term homes and communities, but they are experiencing deep loneliness in the their new apartments. When we invite them to monthly events, many friends are very happy to come and see us (often giving rides for those lacking transportation). Please pray with us as we are looking for new location for our monthly events after June 10. We are welcoming a missionary lady who just has graduated from the Tokyo Christian University in March to serve with us in Watari starting in April. Please pray that her needs will be met regarding housing, transportation, and health. We have been planting seeds for the last five years, and we trust that Jesus will use her to be a part of seeing a harvest. Please pray that we will see much fruit in this new season..

### Sendai Konan (from Otomos)

It has been 5 years since the disaster, but through the relief ministry our amazing God is continuing to spread his

good news in our region. Through the food bank, we met Mr. and Mrs. T. We visit them monthly to share the love of Christ with them. Additionally, we visit Mr. M who has invited us into his life to learn about the Bible. Together we use a tracing book that has Bible verses in it.

Another friend of ours, Mr. W, comes to our monthly events, and we started a Bible study together in February.

Many volunteer teams have helped Mr. and Mrs. O with their vegetable garden throughout the year. They made decisions to trust Jesus and were baptized on March 13! We have experienced how important and what a blessing it is to work together with volunteer teams and other Christians in providing tangible service to individuals in our community.

It has been two years since we have moved to our new house. Five or six neighbor friends join our house church events including the monthly café, handcraft class, Christmas events, and worship service. Please pray as we seek God's direction and go forward with the gospel. We appreciate your prayer and support!

#### **Testimony of Baptism (Mr. G from Watari town)**

My first experience of Christianity was going to a ESL class in Kanda, Tokyo when I was 25 years old. My teacher was an Irish missionary. One day he told me that he has to go back to his country without explaining why. We used the Bible as my English textbook. That was my first time reading the Bible. On Christmas day, I attended Christmas mass, and I remember being in awe of the atmosphere of the church in Akasaka. Being interested in the Bible, I watched the movies The Ten Commandments and Ben Hur, which I found very moving.

After 3.11, I was living in a temporary housings and met volunteers and the Kogos through events. I started reading the Bible again, which calmed my heart and mind. I began to understand more ways I was unknowingly sinning against God. I realized Jesus was redeeming me from sin, and I wanted to believe in him and get baptized. While studying the Bible with the

Kogos, I knew I wanted to trust Jesus more and more. I realized by believing that I would be a member of God's family.

"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16).

"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2:38-39).

(Baptized at SBBC on Sep. 6, 2015)

#### **Regional Reports**

##### **Sakuragi Park Ministry, Sakuragi Smile**

Every Tuesday afternoon, we go to a park in a tsunami-affected neighborhood called Sakuragi to play with kids. Through these friendships, kids and their parents from this area come to church events and hear the good news of Jesus. As in other years, we had a fun Christmas program in this community.

##### **Shichigahama Town**

Most of our friends from temporary housing in Shichigahama have moved to their new long-term homes and communities by the end of last year. After they moved, several friends had health problems and were hospitalized for several weeks. Many people are feeling a lot of stress due to moving yet again in their 70s and 80s in addition to the cumulative stress of living in temporary housing for the last four and a half years. We visit individuals we have gotten to know from doing events at temporary housing over the past several years. Additionally, we were encouraged by having our first event at the long-term apartments and seeing familiar faces again gathering together. Although they have started to get used to living in this new community over the last three months, they still have insecurities and questions about life. Some have expressed deep loneliness and developing sleep problems. Our desire is

to continue visiting regularly as well as sharing the love of Jesus by listening, praying when we have the opportunity, and hopefully introducing them to Jesus. We believe that Jesus is with each one and cares about their loss and their lives.

#### **Hope Miyagi Staff, Hiromi's Testimony**

I have decided to extend another year to serve with Hope Miyagi. This will allow me to continue to serve and love the people in communities affected by the disaster. The needs have changed over the last 5 years as most of the residents in temporary housing have moved to their new long-term homes and communities. I trust that God will continue to bless these people we have been serving and getting to know over these last five years. I hope that my continued presence here will be helpful as I have been trying to build safe and trusting relationships during my time with Hope Miyagi. I will continue the ministry of visiting, listening, and building friendships that hopefully reflect the love and care of Christ and his church. This next year I will continue to visit individuals regularly; including widows who have lost loved ones recently. One is Hoshi san whose husband passed away last summer. She shared with me that they had planned to move to their new apartment together. Because she is lonely and would rather stay home than go out right now, I have been visiting her regularly to talk with her over a cup of tea.

I am praying how Hope Miyagi can love and serve our friends in their new communities. I trust God has led this far and that he wants to continue to bless the region through Hope Miyagi and its ministry in the future.

To continue in this position, I will need to raise \$1,000 per month towards my total monthly need of \$2,000. Donations can be made through World Venture via Japan Hope Miyagi earthquake relief web page. Please leave a note in the comment box that your giving is for Hiromi Takahashi. What I can do is very little, but I trust Jesus will take my little lunch of five loaves of bread and two fish to bless and feed many. (Hiromi Takahashi)

#### **About NPO "Bread of Life"**

Hope Miyagi began as a relief effort immediately following the East Japan Earthquake. This work has been made possible through the generous support from many Christians and churches. After three years of this work, however, we felt called to start a food bank ministry after being advised by a missionary from Taiwan. As the relief work of Hope Miyagi is coming to an end, we were advised to form a different organization for the food bank, which will seek to continue to support people in need. We received official NPO status in August of last year.

The article 3 of the statutes of "Bread of Life" says the followings: Our aim is to contribute toward bringing joy and comfort to people living in challenging financial and social circumstances through the spirit of Christian charity. We desire to give encouragement and increase quality of life through means such as providing basic food supplies and meeting together.

One goal of our church is to preach the gospel. Yet church is not just for our members; we have been given a calling to serve the local community. Although non-profits are not allowed to do any religious activities, we are not restricted from social activities based on Christian convictions. To serve the community in this way is the foundation for bringing the gospel to the people. We also hope that we will someday see revival among these communities. We therefore believe that this food bank ministry is very important and are anticipating other churches will join in taking this service to other communities - also laying the groundwork for revival. We deeply appreciate your contributions and support in the coming days.

There are two practical ways to help us. One is to become a supporting member. A supporting member is either a group or an individual who becomes a member of this nonprofit corporation in order to support its activities. For an individual, the annual membership fee is 5000 yen (with no registration fee). For a group, the fee is 10,000 yen with a 5000 yen registration fee. If you become a supporting member, we will send you regular

reports of our activities.

A second way to help is to tangibly provide food. It should have longer than one week before the sell-by dates. If you live close by, we can arrange to pick up the food, but if you live further away, please send it through the mail. ( Michio Sugawara, Bread of Life)

### Request for Food Bank Supplies

Here is a list of needed items for the NPO Bread of Life:

1. Food items: 5kg bags of rice, noodles, instant food, canned food, snacks
2. Cooking items: Miso, soy sauce, salt, sugar, furikake, ochazuke
3. Living items: Kleenex, toilet paper, dish soap, laundry detergent, cleaning supplies
4. Other: Instant coffee, tea bags, fruit juice, canned drinks

When you send grocery items, Bread of Life will receive them give them to Hope Miyagi. Items will then be delivered to those who are in need (primarily those who were affected by the tsunami). If ordering items online, the shipping cost should be minimal.

**Shipping Address:** 2-11-45 Kasagami Tagajo, Miyagi 985-0831 Bread of Life

**Phone number:** 022-362-7468

**Facebook:** inochi-no-pan **Web:** [www.breadoflife.jp](http://www.breadoflife.jp)

### Want to join the “Hope Miyagi Family”?

Hope Miyagi has been helping tsunami victims after the 3.11.2011 disaster in Sendai, Tagajo, Watari, Shichigahama, Higashi Matsushima, Ishinomaki, and other areas. What is the Hope Miyagi Family? HM Family is made up of those who 1. pray for Hope Miyagi’s ministry, 2. come to volunteer with a team, 3. send items and, 4. support us financially. When you come as a volunteer, we would like you to know at least some Japanese or bring at least one person who speaks Japanese. This will help the team get better connected with the locals and serve more effectively.

### How to sign up to stay in the Hope House

If you desire to stay at the Hope House, please let us know at least one month in advance by phone, fax, or email with the following information:

- 1 Name (all volunteers)
- 2 Number of people (Men/Women)
- 3 Dates
- 4 Use of Hope House or not
- 5 Type of volunteer work desired (physical labor, music, crafts, etc.)
- 6 Contact information

### “Power of Gospel”

On the radio throughout Tohoku region. Please let your friends know about “Power of Gospel” FM radio broadcasting! You can listen to previous messages and also listen to Yukimasa’s message at <http://www.twr-jp.com>

### A request

The Hope Miyagi newsletter is published in Japanese and English and can be sent to you via email. Please contact us if you or anyone you know would like to receive this newsletter.

Also, if your address has been changed or you do not want to receive this, please let us know.

### Prayer Requests

1. Please pray for friends who have moved from temporary housing to their long-term homes and apartments to find the good community. Pray for Hope Miyagi to plan good community-building events to help people to get connected as well as where people will experience the love and care of Jesus.
2. Please pray as we go and visit widows and those who live alone. Pray that they would be encouraged and that we would have opportunities to share the love of and hope we have in Christ.
3. Pray for us to meet people of peace - people who are already seeking and open to Jesus. We would like to see people come to know Jesus in the region of Shichigahama.
4. Please pray that through the Bread of Life food bank, people in need will receive food and hope in Jesus.

Pray for more businesses to provide us with food and other items.

5. Pray for the health and needs of our staff. Please pray specifically that Hiromi's support needs will be met.
6. Pray for churches in Tohoku to value networking and fellowshiping with other churches. Please pray that those involved in the Miyagi Mission Network will be led and blessed in planting more churches.
7. Please pray for more workers for the harvest.

## Contact

### HOPE MIYAGI

Shiogama Bible Baptist Church Disaster Relief Project

#### **Representative:**

Yukimasa Otomo

(Shiogama Bible Baptist Church Associate Pastor)

#### **Address & where to send relief supplies:**

2-11-45 Kasagami, Tagajo, Miyagi

985-0831, Japan.

TEL: 022-362-7468 FAX: 022-362-7497

#### **Contact:**

Yukimasa Otomo

contact@hopemiyagi.org

#### **Web Site:**

**<http://www.hopemiyagi.org>**

#### **To Make Financial Contributions:**

Contact: Madoka Hata

donation@hopemiyagi.org

#### **Financial gifts will be used for:**

Relief supplies, equipment for relief work, financial assistance to the survivors, food, kids ministry, stipend for Hope Miyagi staff, volunteer center management costs, transportation costs, etc. If you need a receipt, we can provide one.

支援・協力を受けたみなさま (2015年7月～12月まで)

Thank you for your supports! (July - December 2015)

個人名 (日本国内) Individuals in Japan
上野哲志・望/遠藤茂雄・清子/大場孝子/金子智恵/小西優子/小林高德・宮子/小松兆子/金野鈴道/金野正樹/坂本みちる /須賀庸子/鈴木雅子/高石しのぶ/高澤健/田中牧子/塚本裕子/中林撰/前田秀文/松江亨子/山口俊郎/和知京子/匿名

団体名 (日本国内) Churches and Organization in Japan
JECA 西日本地区災害支援室/アクアゆめくらぶ仮設サポートセンター/朝顔教会/アジアアウトリーチジャパン/アジアアクセス/ 渥美キリスト教会/大阪城東福音教会/大阪朝禱会/勝田聖書教会/キッコートキワ鎌田醤油株式会社/久留米キリスト教会/ 興戸キリスト教会/ゴスペルファミリー/サンタプロジェクト九州/シオン・キリスト教団蒲田教会/夙川聖書教会/湘南のぞみキリスト教会/ 昭和町キリスト教会/精華キリスト教会/仙台愛の教会/仙台福音キリスト教会/セント国際宣教団/高松シオン教会/滝山聖書バプテスト教会/ 日本国際飢餓対策機構/保守バプテスト津田沼教会/保守バプテスト同盟/保守バプテスト日本宣教団/宮城宣教ネットワーク/ 門戸聖書教会/ヤーンアライブ七ヶ浜/和歌山福音教会和歌山チャールズ

海外 Supporters from Overseas
Asian Access / Christ Centered Community Church / Crossway Church / Elms, Yumiko / Grau, Karlheinz and Brigit / Morgan Hill Bible Church / Ongole, Pavan / Sasamori, Keach / SEND /シアトル栄光教会/林婷, 施秀幸, 許秋蘭(石碑禮拜堂)/ 李慧敏, 楊阿香(魚池禮拜堂)

(敬称略)

We appreciate your supports very much.

For donations from overseas, please go to our website. <http://www.hopemiyagi.org>

Hope Miyagi Financial Report 2015 (2015.4～2016.2)

Income 2015 Total	
Donations (2015.4～2016.2)	¥4,598,493
Carry over from 2014	¥5,614,750
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>¥10,213,243</b>

Income fiscal 2015 +)	4,598,493
Expenses fiscal 2015 -)	7,408,587
<b>Total of income and expenses</b>	<b>-2,810,094</b>
2014 Carry over	5,614,750
<b>Carry over to fiscal 2016</b>	<b>2,804,656</b>

Expenses 2015 Total	
Staff salaries	¥3,671,856
Program expenses	¥3,180,749
Administrative expenses	¥326,777
Volunteer center	¥204,407
Others	¥24,798
<b>Total</b>	<b>¥7,408,587</b>
Carry over	¥2,804,656

Including the support for victims

Maintenance Fee

Carry over to next month